

# The Mission of the Church

Sunday, May 16, 2021 at 9:15 a.m.

## Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the ascended Lord and Savior of the Church. You have blessed us with opportunities to be your witnesses in our lives. Shape our thoughts and attitudes to be in line with what you want us to do. Send your Holy Spirit among us to guide us in living our God-given mission. Amen.

## Goal

Write a personal mission statement based on God's Word and evaluate our congregational mission statement.

## Getting started

- What do people mean when they say that a person is "on a mission"?
- What are the marks of a person or group that *lacks* a "mission"?
- How would you describe a group that is clear about its "mission"?

## Getting into the Word (NIV)

Read through the following passages.

- Underline words or phrases that reveal *what* our mission is.
- Circle words or phrases that reveal the *importance* and *urgency* of our mission.

Bible reference	Bible passage
1 Corinthians 1:23,24	We preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
Deuteronomy 32:46,47	He said to them, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law.

Luke 19:10	For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
John 10:16	I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.
Matthew 28:18-20	Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
Acts 1:8	But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
John 4:34,35	"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."
Ephesians 5:12,13	It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible – and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.
Ephesians 5:15-17	Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

➤ Put in your own words what you have underlined.

➤ Put in your own words what you have circled.

## Statements of your personal mission

- There are different ways to think about it, but perhaps a simple definition of our mission is that “God wants us to *grow* in his Word and *go* with his Word.” Each of us has different responsibilities or callings or vocations in life as we fulfill that mission. God has called us to fulfill different roles. List different roles or callings you have in life. Thinking about the above Bible passages, write a brief personal mission statement as you seek to fulfill those roles.

God-given calling	Personal mission statement to fulfill that calling

- Describe how you might rearrange your life to reflect a noticeable *focus* on your mission.

## Statements of our congregational mission

There are five key elements in a good mission statement.

1. A good mission statement is *Biblical*.
2. A good mission statement is *balanced*.
3. A good mission statement is *brief*.
4. A good mission statement is indeed a *statement*.
5. A good mission statement is *clear*, especially to members.

<b>Our congregational mission statement</b>	Emmanuel Lutheran Church shares the love of Jesus and the truth of his saving Word with people in our church, our community, and the world.
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How well does our congregational mission statement meet the five criteria of a good mission statement?

1. Is it Biblical?
2. Is it balanced, allowing for an emphasis both on outreach and on nurture?
3. Is it brief (50 words or less)?
4. Is it actually a statement (as opposed to a slogan or catchphrase)?
5. Is it clear, at least to members?

A mission statement should be looked at regularly. It is typically recommended that a congregation go through this process every three to five years. A mission statement, which is our reason for existence, does at least three things:

1. It reaffirms in minds and hearts what God's will is for his Church in our context.
2. It enables us to evaluate our congregational actions, activities, and organizations.
3. It helps us as we plan for the future, making sure our ministry is balanced.

It would be helpful for all our members to know for memory our church's mission statement.

- What might be the benefits of doing so?

## Reflect

- Summarize what you will take with you from this lesson.