

## Does your Stewardship have Vision?

A well-crafted vision informs most of our work in The Church, impacting strategy, program, formation, and staffing decisions. It helps us set parameters for what our particular mission is and will be – what we adopt, what we discard (for we can't all do everything!), and what we adapt to fit our view of the world. **A gospel-based vision inspires, attracts, and calls us to deeper discipleship.** It is the pulse of our community.



The successful vision or mission will shape our liturgy, our volunteering, and our fundraising. Our congregants will know, understand, and apply it in their life of faith and in their efforts to work in God's vineyard. **Vision is deeper than our tagline, it weaves its way through our relationships and our life of faith – it helps remind us of what we do and why we do it.** A well-inspired and shared vision sets the metrics by which we measure our impact.

Being guided by mission and vision is especially important as communities of faith prepare budgets and raise operating support for their work. **How we communicate our vision plays a vital role in developing our approach and message, and, ultimately, forecasts the success we will have in gathering the *time, talent, and treasure* we need to accomplish what God has called us to do.**

Vision starts with the leadership: the vestry, clergy, and staff who inspire and direct the congregation, and that vision starts with a charter or a statement of belief. On this we hang our work in fundraising, in evangelism, and in formation. Perhaps the congregation has done the important work of creating a vision, mission, or values statement in the past.

It might have been work that happened long ago, or recently. When is the last time we looked at it – *really* looked at it? Does it still fit the needs and vision for the people who gather today?

It is not that our central mission as Christians goes out of style or is no longer pertinent, after all the Great Commandment and the Great Commission have been our guiding principles since they were proclaimed by Jesus. Rather, **each generation or each change in leadership needs a chance to refresh the language, approach, and strategy for how we will follow Jesus' call.** It might be time to look at the vision statement, and it might be time to look at how our stewardship leaders form their work.

A charter or vision statement for the stewardship committee is a good place to begin this aligning work, and answering this simple question can start us on our path: **As we begin our annual campaign, are we resourcing a vision or are we funding a budget?** If our leadership is focused on the expenses and income of the daily operations of the budget, then we might be missing the point, and we are missing an opportunity to share the vision of our work with our community.

However, if we are seeking to follow the call to mission – to follow Jesus – then **we are asking people to recognize and realize a vocation, changing the lives of individuals and transforming the world.** We are funding a *vision*. Money follows mission.

Here are some samples of stewardship mission statements to get you started on aligning your vision with your values.

### Sample Stewardship Mission/Vision Statements

- To educate, encourage, and equip the saints of St. Mary's to live a Christ honoring lifestyle, acknowledging God's ownership of all we possess, and leading God's people into lives of gratitude, generosity, and good deeds all for the growth of God's Kingdom.
- To stimulate an awareness of spiritual stewardship involving time, talent, treasure leading to a desire for personal decision toward a disciplined life in a delightful communion of the saints.
- Since everything we have is from God, and we are God's stewards, we aim to teach and encourage all ages in the congregation to practice stewardship with intentionality and accountability, so that they may all reap the blessings and joys of being faithful.

- The Stewardship Committee's purpose is to help members mature in Christ as responsible stewards, recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God, we will encourage all members to use their God-given abilities for the benefit of others as an expression of thankfulness to God.
- The purpose of the Stewardship Team is to continually instruct, stimulate, encourage, and challenge the concept and ongoing practice of stewardship by the body of Trinity Church
- Because our world belongs to God, and God gives us all things to manage St. Timothy's Church desires to educate, train, and encourage its members to thoughtfully, joyfully, generously, and thankfully practice a godly *firstfruits* lifestyle; thereby meeting the ministry needs of our church community and beyond.
- Acknowledging that everything we have is from God, we strive to encourage and teach members of all ages within the church to practice stewardship as responsible citizens in the Kingdom of God.
- The Stewardship Committee is to provide an umbrella under which the united efforts of stewardship in the congregation take place. It will do so in close cooperation with the Vestry and clergy leadership. The Committee will promote and encourage joyful giving of time, talents, and treasure, coordinate stewardship initiatives, and work to advise the council and church leadership on policies and procedures that will encourage stewardship at Redeemer Episcopal Church.