



DRAFT MISSION AND VISION

Building Bridges Steering Committee

WHAT IS A MISSION STATEMENT?

- Describes who we are and what we do
- Relatively short and concise - shouldn't be more than a few sentences
- Thinks long-term while describing the present
- Offers grounding principles to decision-makers and staff, guiding direction around programming, partnerships, budgets, and more.
- Offers a common language for common purpose and inspiration

WHAT IS A VISION STATEMENT?

- Describes our vision of the future – in 10+ years, what has our mission activity accomplished?
- Dreams big, focuses on success
- Uses clear, concise, jargon-free language (keep it short!)
- Aligns with our values and goals
- Easy to communicate

GET ACQUAINTED

Looking at the draft mission and vision statements,

- What are your first impressions?
- What are you curious about?
- Are there particular words or phrases that stand out to you?

DRAFT MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Draft Mission Statement

Called by Christ to proclaim and embody God's boundless love for all creation, we grow:

- Collaborative communities of faith, walking the journey together;
- Innovative ministries, stretching beyond our walls;
- Courageous disciples, striving to transform systems of injustice.

We nurture relentless hope for a world longing for mercy, restoration, and peace.

Draft Vision Statement

A world transformed, in which all God's children are unconditionally welcomed, cared for, and loved.

LISTENING OPPORTUNITIES

- April 2021 - Feedback Survey (context of shared ministries during suspension)
- October 2021 - Diocesan Convention conversations
- Advent 2021 - Clericus Groups met with Internal Conversations Subteam
- March 2022 - Affinity Group conversations
- **August 2022 - Leadership Retreat (JSC, Councils, COMs, BBSC, Staffs)**
- **Advent & Epiphany 2022-23 - Online and In-Person Listening Sessions**



OTHER STEPS OF DRAFTING

- Examined other dioceses' statements, including but not limited to Michigan, the partnership in Western New York and Northwest Pennsylvania, and Minnesota
- Examined other organizational statements
- Examined our dioceses' current/old statements
- Examined the Baptismal Covenant, Catechism

LEADERSHIP RETREAT & LISTENING SESSIONS - CONSISTENT THEMES

- Values: joy, love, hope, collaboration, transformation, vibrancy, bravery, innovation, community, mutuality
- Practices: feeding, healing, justice-seeking, praying, worshiping, learning, proclaiming, discerning, provoking, including, sharing
- Emphasis on communal life AND the individual
- Formation, Justice-Seeking as a priority
- Inclusion as a priority: LGBTQ+, racial, ethnic, gender

WE WANT OUR MISSION/VISION TO REFLECT...

- The reality that not all of our faith communities are congregations. How can we be inclusive of a diverse economy of belonging?
- Alignment with our baptismal covenant and catechism.
- Recognition that our diocesan community is networked; we rely on one another, not top-down. Related words: interdependence, mutuality
- Articulation that our church is more than an individual congregation and its campus

DIGGING IN DEEPER: MISSION

Called by Christ to **proclaim** and **embody** God's boundless love for all creation, we **grow**:

- Collaborative communities of faith, walking **the journey** together;
- Innovative ministries, **stretching** beyond our walls;
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We **nurture** relentless hope for a world longing for mercy, restoration, and peace.

A note on the use of VERBS:

We focused on ACTION words, conveying development, future, and personal and collective responsibility to our call.

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Why "Christ"?

We exist as a community because of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Our mission statement would be incomplete without calling us to the Son.

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“Proclaim and Embody”

This language suggests action, personal responsibility, and incarnational faith. We are all called to proclaim the Good News and embody God's love in the world – this isn't something we can delegate to staff or clergy – it's all of us!

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"God's boundless love"

God loves all – no exceptions. Eastern and Western Michigan have been clear and consistent on this – there are no limits, no qualifications to receive God's love. This is part of our identity as followers of Jesus and part of our unique presence in the world we inhabit.

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"All Creation"

Creation is all of us – the birds that fly, the fish that swim, the bacteria working in our compost, the humans sitting in this room.

This conveys expansiveness while using language that we associate most commonly with the natural world we steward and that was identified as a core ministry area of both dioceses.

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"We grow"

"Grow" is an active word, a responsibility that each one of us holds as followers of Jesus. Bishop Singh reminds us that stagnation and decline are not Gospel values. As we live into our mission, we are called to active expansion and development.

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Start global, get local

These phrases describe who we are by starting globally (the network of a diocese, made up of faith communities), then moving into the smaller groups/initiatives exercised by those communities, and then describing the individuals who compose them. All contribute to our common life at every level.

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We are not meant to go alone.

Collaboration is a common theme that emerged from our listening sessions and is a common theme throughout scripture.

We wanted to convey that our communities are part of a larger network of church. When we lean on and learn from one another, we are all strengthened in seeking the Way of Love.

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Both of our dioceses have histories of and potential for innovation – different and new approaches to ministry – as the church. We want to honor and name that gift of our common life.

We chose “stretching” because it conveys *action*. Impact, relevancy, and engagement happen when our ministries go beyond the congregation, church, and building to seek relationship and proximity to others we have been called to serve and serve among.

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To be a person of hope in a culture of fear is to bring courage to our work and witness of discipleship.

In our baptismal covenant, we promise to strive for justice and peace among all people. We heard this reflected throughout our listening. Together, we can transform this world and reconcile it to God in Christ.

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The word "hope" has become very important to the work of Building Bridges – it's essential to seeking a way forward. How do we look forward if we do not have hope for what's to come?

The world we inhabit is hurting. Between school shootings, hateful rhetoric, dangerous censorship, senseless violence, and more, as people of faith we are called to offer a different lens, a different approach, a different source.

DIGGING IN DEEPER: VISION

A world transformed, in which all God's children are unconditionally welcomed, cared for, and loved.

This is one way of describing God's dream for us using language that resonates with the input we've received, the mission that precedes it, and reflects our Baptismal Covenant.

HOW WILL THIS BE USED?

- Guides the ongoing work of Building Bridges as we continue to shepherd the discernment and make recommendations
- Prioritizes collaborative communities, innovative ministries, and courageous disciples
- Guides the bishop in staffing and programmatic priorities
- Could become the mission/vision of a new diocese

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WORDS AND PHRASES THAT TRAVELLED WITH US

- Beloved Community, all of creation, radical love
- Shore to Shore; sunrise side to the sunset side
- Community of disciples; followers of Christ
- Incarnate, embodied, collective, interdependent, kinship, integrated, rooted
- A church like a tree – rooted in tradition/Gospel, stretching, reaching, expanding, growing for its own flourishing and providing a home to others
- Empowerment, cultivation
- Episcopal
- Make Christ's love evident in Michigan