

Focus on Mission

A well worded mission statement provides inspiration and a unity of purpose for teachers, parents and the whole congregation.

Developing a congregational vision of Sunday school as a vital tool for the spiritual growth and development of the children is a great way to begin or refresh a Sunday school program. Articulating specific goals may also help narrow the focus of what and how you teach.

Develop these ideas with teachers and parents, being sure to listen to their input as you move forward identify goals and create a mission statement.

Identify Goals

Whether working with volunteers who have contributed much to a program over many years, or working with people new to the task, taking a fresh look at your goals can bring renewal to your Sunday school.

- Effective goals should describe what it is you hope your program will nurture in children over the course of the entire program. Here are some examples.
- To inspire an affection for the Word, the habit of daily reading and regular worship.
- To understand that the Word is the connection between the Lord, the heavens, and people on earth.
- To foster each child's development of a personal relationship with the Lord so that they may become spiritually healthy adults.
- To prepare children for a useful life on earth and in heaven.
- To help children understand the relationship between the Word and their own lives.

When you have identified your program goals, re-state them as a mission statement.

Create a Mission Statement

Create a short statement of purpose that encapsulates your vision.

Here are a few sample mission statements for you to look at:

The mission of the _____ Church Sunday school is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ by teaching the truths of His Word and preparing children for life in the world and life in heaven.

_____ Sunday school, "Serving families through inspiring life-long commitment to the Lord's Three-Fold Word."

_____ Sunday school, “Where the Word of God is taught with affection so that children may seek Him and find Him in their own lives.”

_____ Sunday school, “Building spiritually strong lives.”

Use these samples as a springboard for designing a mission statement.

Keep Your Mission in Mind

Review your mission statement at teacher meetings—perhaps once a year. It is a wonderful way to renew your purpose. Use it to keep a vision before your teachers and affirm the work they do each week. Use it as a header or footer on emails to teachers or on stationery for notes that are sent home to families. Post the mission statement in each classroom.

Continue the Process

- You may wish to continue this process by identifying smaller age-specific goals within your program. These goals can help you design or choose a curriculum to ensure the learning outcome you want. Here are a few questions to get started.
- What should five-year-olds know about the Lord, marriage, life after death, etc.?
- What should ten-year-olds know about the Lord, etc.?
- By the time an adolescent is fifteen, what facts will he or she know about the Word—the books of the Old and New Testaments, major characters in the Word, basic spiritual meanings, etc.?
- At what ages will specific moral virtues be taught?
- What background knowledge will children have about the New Church, including Emanuel Swedenborg? (prophecies, founding, second coming, servant of the Lord, etc.)