

## Session I - Vision and Mission

### Session outline

<i>Opening</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>
<i>Biblical study - Luke 1</i>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<i>Transition</i>	<i>5 minutes</i>
<i>Your ministry's vision statement</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>
<i>The regional vision statement</i>	
<i>small group</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>
<i>large group</i>	<i>20 minutes</i>
<i>Closing prayer</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>

### Items needed:

- one or two bibles or copy of the text (large print and different translations can be helpful)
- copies of the Study Guide Session for all
- copies of your ministry's vision or mission statement
- newsprint, tape, markers
- snacks and beverages healthy and inviting to all
- *With One Voice* or the *Renewing Worship Songbook* to include music (optional)

### Opening

*10 minutes*

Introduce the Respectful Communication Guidelines. Post and read aloud. Invite everyone to agree to abide by these common values.

Find out who is in the circle. Invite participants, by Mutual Invitation, to share their name and the name of the most recently born person that they know (everyone knows of a recently born baby, in the congregation, in their extended family, in the neighborhood or workplace). Invite the youngest person to start.

### Biblical study - Luke 1:26-56

*50 minutes*

Use the bible study process outlined in the introduction.

#### Reflections on vision and mission (read this for Step B)

Like Mary we may feel as though we were tapped on the shoulder with an overwhelming invitation. We too may have known that God has big desires and big dreams for all of creation, never realizing how we might feature in that plan. The mission is God's. We like Mary can say, "yes," because the one who invites is faithful to fulfill all things, and God's Holy Spirit will come upon us. If we are the means for God's new creation, surely the world is turning upside down!

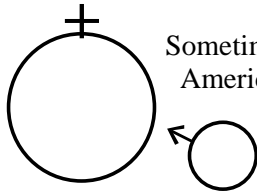
#### Question 2 for Step C

While the text is read the second time, invite the participants to listen for God's response to them in answer to the question "**How can it be since I've never done it before?!**"

## Transition

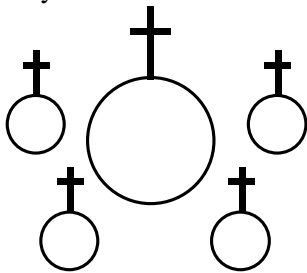
5 minutes

Like Mary, perceived in the culture of her day just a “lowly handmaiden,” who nonetheless recognized her role in God’s plan, the Latinos leaders in Region 1 see themselves as a vital part of the ELCA, even when it feels as though there is a “main” church and a “minor” church!



Sometimes it even feels as though ministries with African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Arab/Middle Eastern people, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Latinos are trying to “get into” the ELCA.

We know that we are already sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus, sharing in the baptismal identity of the People of God. If we come together and “fertilize” one another we’ll create new life, and multiply ministry!



If we don’t, we will each perish!

Keep this in mind as we consider the regional vision to, “empower the ELCA to journey together to proclaim the Good News in mission development to be a multicultural church”.

the process started.

This session focuses on the vision statement. The following questions get

## Your ministry’s vision statement

10 minutes

What is your ministry’s vision statement? Invite the group to recite it aloud from memory. Distribute copies. *Do participants recognize it?*

*How aware and fluent with the statement are the participants in your ministry?*

*How does your ministry explicitly express the statement in words and action?*

Give examples of ways the statement shapes outreach and discipleship – record them on newsprint and post them for all to see.

## The Regional vision statement

Small group 10 minutes  
Large group 20 minutes

There are five phrases in the Regional Vision statement. Breaking out into pairs or small groups of less than five with each group taking one of the phrases allows for more thorough consideration. When working with fewer than ten persons, each small group could address more than one phrase, or individuals could work separately on a phrase and together on the final phrase, multicultural church. Once the small groups are constituted, assign each a phrase and its accompanying commentary.

Invite each small group to record their reflections on newsprint.

**Empower the whole ELCA:** We envision that our efforts together will impact outreach and congregational life in Region 1 and will model and inspire individuals, synods and congregations throughout the ELCA to expand their Latino outreach

The regional vision recognizes that a small change allows for broader change, encourages others to imagine new possibilities for themselves and the ministries in which they are involved.

**Journey together:** People of all cultures, experiences and backgrounds accompanying in mutual relation.

The regional vision is for our learning and growing as partners together - existing ministries, longtime members, newcomers, people of color, persons whose primary language is other than English, youth, young adults, elders. Diversity enriches discerning God's will and strengthens us as we step forward into God's future.

**Proclaim the Good News:** The new reign of God's mercy and justice manifest and expressed for and among all peoples, Mark 1:14-15, Matthew 28:16-20

The regional vision embraces God's love for the whole person and God's promise of justice and mercy for all. Our commission is carrying out the reign of God's *shalom* as incarnated in Jesus' order-changing ministry, and death-defying resurrection.

**Mission development:** Relational outreach inviting new people to faith and discipleship

The regional vision understands mission development as deepening the evangelical skills of getting to know and love our neighbors

*How does or could your statement express a vision for the larger church, for your ministry as a part of God's larger mission for the whole world?*

*How does or could your statement explicitly affirm diversity and commit to working together with new ministry partners?*

*How does or could your statement express God's concern for the whole person, affirming all and standing against the powers of death?*

*How does or could your ministry statement specifically include multiplying ministry through evangelism and discipleship?*

because of the Love that “first loved us”, and walking together the journey of faith. This means multiplying ministry - starting new congregations, as well as helping existing congregations become new creations in Christ, inviting people into the life of grace.

**A multicultural church:** Faith communities expressing the expansive, abundant, transforming grace of God in Christ Jesus through the diversity of all their participants

The regional vision yearns for God’s future in which people of every race and people and language gather to praise God and there are no more tears or suffering (Revelation 7). The powerful, reconciling love of God in Jesus enables us to manifest multicultural communities of faith within our own neighborhoods now. Multicultural congregations are the goal and the inevitable result of our interrelated world. Though there are needs and reasons for ethnic specific congregations, all faith communities are called to minister in an increasingly pluralistic context.

*How does or could your vision statement explicitly describe your ministry’s role in realizing God’s vision for a multicultural Body of Christ?*

After nearly 10 minutes, bring the reflections into the circle of the whole. Hear from each small group, briefly. Post input on newsprint for all to see. Allow each report to stand alone without commentary from the other small groups. Encourage everyone to jot notes to contribute during the next portion of the session.

When all have reported, invite further insights and comments from the whole. Go phrase by phrase.

*What are the next steps for renewing your ministry’s vision/mission statement?*

## *Closing prayer*

*10 minutes*

Invite each person to jot down the completion of this phrase,

“I ask God . . . and I thank God . . . “.

Once all have gotten their thoughts together, join hands to pray aloud around the circle.

Close with the Lord’s Prayer.

## *Evaluation & Feedback Form- Session 1*

Congregation Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

How many people attended?

When and where did it take place?

Please rate the overall helpfulness of this process, 1-low, 5-high:    **1**    **2**    **3**    **4**    **5**

How did your group respond to the Bible study, vision statement and prayer processes?

How might your congregation look at and commit to your own vision statement?

How did this mission/vision statement session impact your perceptions about the relationship between existing congregations and African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Arab/Middle Eastern people, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Latino communities?

**The next sessions will be available soon!** How will you involve even more people for future sessions?

Additional comments:

*Please fill out by June 30<sup>th</sup>*  
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*www.elcaregion1.org \* 800 755-5831 \* 206 626-0987 (fax)*