



# **HOW TO CAST A NEW VISION FOR YOUR CHURCH**

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**THE UNSTUCK GROUP®**

## ***Where there is no vision, the people perish – Proverbs 29:18, KJV***

Every church needs a vision. It is crucial for developing your ministry strategies, making decisions, and deciding where you are headed next. But visions aren't "one and done."

In this season particularly, we've heard from many pastors that they are still living out a vision for their ministry that was embraced pre-pandemic—now out-dated and irrelevant. As uncertainty increases, so does the desire for a clear sense of direction. So, as your church grows and the world around it changes, your vision needs to be refreshed.

In this resource, we will walk through three steps towards a refreshed vision, three components of a leak-proof vision, and provide your next step for casting a new vision.

## **THREE STEPS TOWARDS A REFRESHED VISION:**

Agreeing on a vision helps you empower others to lead and carry out ministry. A clear vision will:

- Set expectations and foster unity
- Help facilitate decision-making that impacts your future
- Create a framework for defining ministry priorities
- Attract talent (both volunteers and staff) and financial resources
- Define success for your ministry

Vision is about creating a clear picture of where we're heading into the future. In other words, it's helping us understand a specific destination. In order to discern a fresh vision, you need to:

### **1) Understand the difference between a mission and a vision.**

A mission statement defines why the organization exists. The mission rarely changes throughout the existence of the church. A vision statement, on the other hand, clarifies where the organization is going in the future. The vision should be refreshed every 3-5 years based on the direction of your ministry.

### **2) Work with a team.**

While *communicating* the vision is one of the roles a senior pastor can't delegate, discerning the vision needs to be a collaborative process with the whole leadership team. You want (and need) your team to be on board with pursuing God's vision for your church.

Once the vision is identified, engage other leaders within your church. While you only need a small group of leaders to develop and refresh your vision, you'll need to incorporate and empower other leaders within your church to help champion it.

### **3) Be bold about your changes.**

A strong vision both attracts *and* repels. Your vision may upset people, and may even cause some people to leave your church. But, it will also cause others to buy-in to what you're doing even more. Uncomfortable change is often necessary for your church to become what God designed it to be.

## **THREE COMPONENTS OF A LEAK-PROOF VISION:**

Just “making the vision plain” is not enough to keep people focused on it—or to equip a church to accomplish it. Once your vision is clear, there are three questions you will need to answer:

### **1) Strategy: How will we accomplish this?**

Churches get stuck after clarifying the vision because they never define a clear strategy for reaching it. Your vision may be the destination you see for your church, but your strategy will help you determine what action steps you'll actually take to get there. Strategy helps you prioritize the right programs, events and ministries, and cut everything that is not in line.

### **2) People: Who is on the team and what are their roles?**

With a clear vision in place and core strategies outlined, you can easily identify the gaps—and excess—on your staff team. For your plans to be realized, you will need to have the right people in the right roles. Strategies fail when no one owns the action steps, or when the people who own them are ill-equipped to follow through.

### **3) Systems: How do we streamline what we do to improve our effectiveness?**

Every action plan needs a system for accountability. As your church grows, every individual ministry also needs systems to ensure people are well-cared for and the ball doesn't get dropped. Good systems keep your strategies on track. Without them, your staff will always drift towards focusing on the urgent over the important.

## **CAST A NEW VISION FOR YOUR CHURCH: YOUR NEXT STEP**

If we want to lead our church forward into the future, we need to hold tightly to our mission, but be open-handed with the vision God has for our ministry in the future. Here's what we recommend:

**Set aside a couple of days** with a team of 8-12 staff and/or lay leaders to pray, dream and discuss what God has next for your ministry. (You don't need to do this alone). Consider these questions:

- What will be different about our church in three to five years?
- What will be different about our community in three to five years?

- What might God do through our church if we believed He could?
- What concrete, bold moves does God have for our ministry?

As you consider these questions together...

- **Picture what you want for the future**, but don't think about the obstacles. Ask yourself what you would attempt if you knew you could not fail.
- **Put down the past.** When you are dreaming of what could be, don't let your past experiences or past methods hinder your creativity. Think like a church planter with a clean slate and no history to overcome.
- **Don't get stuck on the "how."** How you will accomplish this future direction will be defined after you agree on these bold moves. Put the "how" question aside for now.
- **Put yourself five years into the future** and try to imagine what your future looks like. What does it feel like? What do you hear? Who do you see?
- **Be bold. Think big.** It might start as a completely crazy idea... but incremental change will not inspire your team or your congregation. Free your mind to explore what could be accomplished.

This is not a mission statement. This is not about things you value. This is not about strategies you will implement. Instead, you are trying to discover the next mountain God wants you to take, and naming that mountain.

## ENCOURAGEMENT FOR A NEW VISION:

There are two things I believe that senior pastors struggling with vision might need to hear:

**Vision is not exclusive to you.** With the death and resurrection of Jesus, the veil was torn in two. Instead of only the high priest being able to enter the Holy of Holies, now every believer has full access to God. Every believer is a priest. We can all hear from God.

**Vision does not come from you.** Vision for the church doesn't come from a person—it comes from God. You don't have to come up with this sense of future direction on your own. In fact, we've found it's a lot easier to hear from God if you lean into the power of the Body of Christ. This process of hearing from God is a lot easier when there's a team of church leaders praying, listening, processing and confirming vision together.

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It's a simple fact: It's hard to both facilitate and participate at the same time. There are two things I've personally experienced when I've engaged an outside facilitator to help with vision and strategy:

**I'm able to fully engage.** When I'm not responsible for keeping the meeting on schedule, facilitating the conversation, or making sure everyone is engaged, I can be a more meaningful contributor to the process.

**I am able to focus my head and heart to hear from God.** When I'm not responsible for all of the talking, I can more easily listen as God speaks to me.

If you've ever tried to help your team get clear on the health of your church, clarify vision for the future, and then process all of the people and structure things that need to change as a result... you understand how challenging it can be to feel like you're responsible for making it all come together. Luckily, **you don't have to do it alone.**

At The Unstuck Group, we help pastors grow healthy churches by guiding them through experiences to align vision, strategy, team and action. Since 2009, we've led churches through a [proven process](#) that helps them assess ministry health, clarify the vision God's given them for the future, and create the team structure and action plans to see it through.

We'd love to partner with you and your team as you discern and navigate God's future vision for your church. [Start a conversation today.](#)

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## ABOUT TONY MORGAN



Tony was the Founder and Lead Strategist of The Unstuck Group. Started in 2009, The Unstuck Group has served churches throughout the United States and several countries around the world. Previously, Tony served on the senior leadership teams of three rapidly growing churches including NewSpring Church in South Carolina. He has five published books, including The Unstuck Church, and, with Amy Anderson, he hosted the The Unstuck Church Podcast which has thousands of listeners each month. Tony passed away in 2024, leaving behind a legacy of thought leadership, innovation, and a deep commitment to helping churches thrive.

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