

# The Mission of God

**BRIARCLIFF CHURCH**

*Vision Prayer Guide*

# Characteristics of a Strong Church

A strong and healthy church glorifies God and advances his gospel. Therefore, the characteristics of a strong church must be more than principles that create a strong organization. We believe a healthy church is one that reflects the character and nature of God. The characteristics of a strong church are reflections of the characteristics of God.

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*“The visible church is where you will find Christ’s Kingdom on earth, and to disregard the kingdom is to disregard the King.”*

*Michael Horton*

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Below is a list of seven characteristics of the character of God. This list is in no way exhaustive of God’s perfect character, but representative of where we believe God is leading our church.

It is our desire to pray together as a church. This prayer guide will serve as a point of unity as we go to the Lord in prayer individually and in groups. You may find it helpful to divide the seven points below as prayers for each day of the week or as a summer of prayer, spending a week on each topic.

## **LEADERSHIP**

*Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.*

Acts 6:3

We desire to be a church of disciples that make disciples. This cannot be accomplished outside of God's grace and provision. Please pray that:

- God will order the desires of our heart to please him and find our joy in him
- God will give wisdom and humility to those who lead Briarcliff Church
- God will continue to raise up leaders in our church
- God will guide the development of the intern and resident programs to pour into leaders for the next generation

## **BIBLICAL TEACHING**

*And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

Acts 2:42

We desire to be a church devoted to the Word of God. To be this kind of church we must have hearts that are inflamed and minds informed by God's Word. Please pray that:

- God will place the desire in everyone's heart to know his word

- God will place in our hearts an ever-increasing value for the knowledge of, and obedience to, the Bible
- God would make Briarcliff hearers and doers of his word
- God would increase the joy we find in glorifying the God of the Bible

### **UNITED IN PRAYER**

*All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer together ...*

Acts 1:14

We desire to be a people of prayer. A church that pursues God in prayer and sees prayer not as a part of life, but a way of life. Please pray that:

- God will unite our church in prayer
- God will give us a heart for the priority of prayer
- God will strengthen our relationship with him and others through prayer
- God will glorify himself through our prayers

### **SPIRIT OF UNITY**

*Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.*

Acts 4:32

*Holy Father, keep them in your name which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.*

John 17:11

We desire to be a church that is one in Christ. Please pray that:

- God will give us the heart to consider others before ourselves

- God will dissolve divisions and unite in love
- God will place high in our hearts the value of unity in his body
- God will give our church one mind in the pursuit of his glory

## **GENEROSITY**

*And all who believed were together and had all things in common.*

Acts 2:44

We desire to be a generous church because God is generous to us. Like love, God doesn't *have* generosity, God *is* generosity. To be a church that reflects the generosity of God we must reflect what he has done. Please pray that:

- God will give us a better understanding of his generosity
- God will help us reflect his gospel in how we display generosity
- God will give us joy in returning his blessings as praises to him
- God will lead us to delight in sacrifice for him in all we do

## **BEYOND OUR BUILDING**

*... You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching ...*

Acts 5:28

We desire to be a church that reaches beyond the walls of our building. The church is God's sovereign plan for the redemption of his people. Please pray that:

- God will give the people of our church opportunities in our community to declare and display the hope found in Jesus
- God will help each one of us to see our individual role in advancing His gospel in our community

- God will give us a passion to serve and share with everyone the hope we have found in the promises of Jesus
  - God will give us vision and wisdom in how we strive to advance the gospel in our hearts, church, community and beyond
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*May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*

Romans 15:6-7

