

BRIDGEWAY CHURCH

A RENEWED VISION FOR A NEW DAY

Our Mission

**To spread a passion for the glory of God
By extending His Kingdom,
House to House, Life on Life,
In the Power of the Holy Spirit,
For the joy of all people**

Our central focus and driving passion is to magnify God and to make his glory known as His sovereign rule (i.e., His kingdom) is extended in Oklahoma City and beyond. We pursue this mission in the context of our many house churches where we do life together as the family of God. We are at all times and in every way dependent upon the power of the Holy Spirit. And in all this we seek the joy of all people because God's glory in us is most clearly seen in our gladness in Him.

Our Ministry Values

This mission is pursued and finds expression in four interrelated ministry values: Upward, Inward, Outward, and Forward. These four values are designed to encompass the whole of our biblical responsibility and to shape the way we do life together. They define how we live as individual followers of Jesus and how we "do Church" as the body of Christ. None of these four values can be neglected if we hope to fulfill this mission.

UPWARD

By the word *upward* we point to the vertical dimension of our Christian experience. We look *upward* to God and our fundamental responsibility to know, love and honor Him.

- *Intimacy with the Father*

When true intimacy characterizes any relationship, both parties not only know the other but long to be known. They desire not only to love the other but to enjoy the love the other has for him/her. Our aim, therefore, is that this would be true in our relationship with our Heavenly Father, as we experience the liberating and life-changing joy of intimate fellowship with Him.

- *Christ-centered Worship*

Jesus is central and supreme in our affections and thus also in the praise and adoration that we express during times of both corporate and personal worship. We long to see and savor the supremacy of Christ in all things, a passion that gives shape to how we worship Him.

- *The Power of the Spirit*

We believe in the power of the Spirit today, not only in enabling us to grow in holiness and conformity to Christ but also in the miraculous work that is seen in the many spiritual gifts that He bestows. It is the Spirit, in fact, who enables intimacy with the Father and empowers worship of the Son.

- *Hearing God's Voice*

Central to growth in intimacy with God is hearing His voice, first and fundamentally in Scripture but also in the many ways He speaks to us as His children, whether in revelatory gifts or in personal communion and prayer.

- *Sacrificial Giving*

We celebrate the joy of giving in support of the Church and the expansion of God's kingdom, always quick to acknowledge that what we give we have first received from our Heavenly Father.

INWARD

By the word *inward* we point to the horizontal dimension of our Christian experience. We look *inward* (or around) to one another in the body of Christ and our fundamental responsibility is to encourage and edify one another.

- *Doing Life Together in Community*

Life was never meant to be lived in isolation from others, but in relationship with those who share with us a common faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Our House Churches and D-Groups are designed to facilitate this communal dimension in the life of Bridgeway Church.

- *Accountability and Encouragement*

We grow spiritually only to the extent that we are held accountable by others who love us and are encouraged by them to persevere and press into the heart of God. And they, in turn, are equally dependent on us for the same blessings. In a word, we must *entrust* ourselves to one another.

- *Exercise of Spiritual Gifts*

All spiritual gifts were bestowed for the “common good” (1 Cor. 12:7), to be used by all believers to strengthen, encourage, teach, and love one another as we grow up together in Christ. We believe that all the spiritual gifts described in the New Testament are valid for today and are essential for life and growth in the church.

- *Discipling one another*

Becoming committed and knowledgeable followers of Christ who reflect his image is a corporate affair, one that demands the personal involvement and input of each believer in the life of every other believer. We value any means by which devotion to Jesus can be deepened and intensified.

- *Training and Equipping*

God’s desire is that all His children serve in ministry, and not simply those who are paid for their services. To this end, we are each called not only to be trained and equipped but also to train and equip others for the work to which God has called us.

OUTWARD

By the word *outward* we have in view our responsibility to the world. We look *outward* to make Christ known through the gospel and to bring his Lordship to bear on every dimension of life.

- *Mission and Evangelism*

The church does not exist solely for its own sake, but in order to participate in the mission of God in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. Mission is not an optional program in the church but an essential element in the *identity* of the church. Mission is as much *who we are* as *what we do*.

- *Pursuit of biblical justice*

Essential to our mandate as the people of God is to strive, in the power of the Spirit, for peace, racial reconciliation, together with the alleviation of poverty, hunger, and homelessness. We do not confuse these endeavors with the *content* of the Gospel. They are, rather, the desired *consequence* of what God has accomplished for us in Christ.

- *Church planting*

As part of our calling to participate in the mission of God, we are committed to the training of leaders and the planting of local churches that reflect the mission and values of Bridgeway.

- *Service to the community*

Our aim is to extend the kingdom of God in our community not only by preaching the Gospel but also by expressing His love through concrete deeds of service and sacrifice for those who do not know Him.

- *Engaging and changing the culture*

We are called neither to retreat from our culture nor to conform to it but, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the truth of the Gospel, to speak prophetically to it as we seek its transformation and submission to the Lordship of Christ. We long to see the arts redeemed for the name of Christ and utilized in the promotion of His glory.

FORWARD

The Christian life is a journey *towards* ever-increasing conformity to the image of Christ himself. By the word *forward* we have in mind this progressive spiritual transformation of becoming more like Jesus in every way.

- *Informed and Transformed by the Scriptures*

Genuine spiritual maturity can only be attained as we are taught and informed by the revelation of God in Scripture and thereby transformed into a people passionate for His name and satisfied with all that He is for us in Jesus. We affirm not only the inspiration of the Scriptures but their life-changing, sin-killing power, and thus regard the Bible as central and foundational to all we believe and do as a church.

- *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit*

Christian maturity is largely defined by the degree to which our lives manifest the fruit of the Spirit. We strive, therefore, by the grace of God at work within us, to cultivate the virtues of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- *Spiritual Disciplines*

Spiritual growth is a struggle, and one that requires dedication, focus, and self-sacrifice. Through spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, solitude, silence, reading and meditation on the Word, worship, serving, journaling, and the stewardship of our time, we aim to deepen our relationship with the Lord.

- *Persevering Prayer*

Although it is itself one of the spiritual disciplines, we put a special emphasis on prayer in all its many expressions such as intercession, petition, and thanksgiving. We especially value prayer for healing, whether physical, spiritual, or emotional.

- *Celebration of the Sacraments*

God has commanded that His people regularly celebrate two sacraments or ordinances: believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Water baptism symbolizes our entrance into spiritual life and through the Lord's Supper we are nourished and sustained within it.

We believe that all four of these spiritual dynamics must be integrated into both our corporate worship services as well as our House Churches and D-groups.

***Our Four Ministry Values
and
The Centrality of the Scriptures***

Everything we do as Christians, whether ministering to the poor, evangelizing the lost, engaging with the culture with a view to influencing it with biblical values, praying for the sick, encouraging one another and holding one another accountable, exercising spiritual gifts, etc., must be grounded in and flow out of our relationship with God. Knowing our great Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and thereby growing in progressive conformity to the image of Christ, is the source and fountain and reservoir out of which all other ministry flows. And the *primary resource* made available to us by which we can experience this multi-faceted spiritual growth is the Scriptures, made known and applied to our hearts by the power and anointing of the Spirit. It is not the only resource, but it is the primary and foundational one (see especially Romans 10:17; 15:4; 15:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Peter 1:23,25; 2:2; Hebrews 4:12; Psalms 19 and 119).

Therefore, Bridgeway Church will focus energetically on building into the lives of God's people the understanding and joy of who God is as revealed in the face of Jesus Christ and what he has done in the Gospel for broken and rebellious sinners. We will focus energetically on "building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12ff.).

We embrace Paul's aim as our own: "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ" (Col. 1:28).

We take very seriously Paul's counsel to Timothy and make it our own: "Command and teach these things. . . . devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation,

to teaching. . . . Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers” (1 Tim. 4:11, 13, 16; also 1 Tim. 6:2b-3, 20; 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2:2; 4:2-3).

We must also never lose sight of the fact that it is in the context of relationship, accountability and mutual encouragement with other believers that we more clearly see the love of God in Christ and grow in our delight in him. As we are stretched to go outward and engage the world around us with the Gospel of Christ we discover the importance of doing it in community as well as for the purpose of bringing others into the experience of knowing and worshiping God. In other words, there is a dynamic interplay among the four values such that each feeds into and facilitates the other.

All this is simply to say that we view one’s personal relationship with God (as nurtured by the Scriptures, empowered by the Spirit, strengthened by the spiritual disciplines, and expressed in worship in its many forms) as *foundational* to a healthy, Christ-honoring life in community with other believers and a passionate and persevering missional commitment as we seek to bring others into the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus.