

Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
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MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

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A Spirit Filled Church

I stumbled upon a church advertisement that promoted the ministry as a “Spirit-filled” church. I take it to mean that the Holy Spirit’s power and presence are observable in the ministry. There is no scholarly consensus on what it means to be a Spirit-filled church and not everyone will agree on what it means. So, I decided to write about some of my ideas about what a Spirit filled church might look like. Several ideas come to mind and I am pretty sure I have written on this topic in the past.

I think the first thing is to focus on the life, teachings, and ministry of Christ. The congregation has to be converted to Christ with the people living a life of Christian virtues, praising God, and caring for those on the fringes of society. Another important factor is having a love for God’s word. In a Spirit-filled church the people hunger for the word. They love hearing and reading the word and desire to discuss the word, not only among themselves but with the community around them. When governance is a concern they first seek wisdom from the word. When problems arise in life, as they always have and always will, they seek guidance from the scriptures.

A Spirit-filled church also has a love for biblical preaching. All preaching should be grounded in the Scripture. The Spirit is at work when the people crave the Bible. When preaching is not centered on Christ or the Bible then theological uncertainties arise. A Spirit-filled church has a love for the explanation, illustration, and application of scriptures.

A Spirit-filled church has a lot of people serving. The 80/20 rule is often seen in churches today. That is 80% of the work is being done by 20% of the people. Sometimes it is skewed even further than that. The rule is also applicable in the realm of finances. This should never be the case as everyone is expected to give out of a joyous response to the Lord's blessings, both physically and financially. A Spirit-filled ministry is one that will have a very strong outreach mission. There will be a high ratio of per-capita giving to outreach and missions. We give of ourselves and contribute our offerings out of love and appreciation to God for the wonderful things God has done. The Good News by itself is reason enough to celebrate. So, the power and presence of the Spirit in a local church has everyone pitching in to enhance the ministry in the love of Christ.

A Spirit-filled church is a congregation that prioritizes unity in the name of Christ and unity in the likeness of Christ. True biblical unity will be visible through humility, acceptance, common ground, service, and sharing. The Spirit-filled congregation has an instinct to actively unite with others a refreshing desire for unity in Christ. I could add many things to this list and use several scripture based references. Perhaps the most noticeable aspect of a Spirit-filled ministry for a first time visitor is the refreshing atmosphere of feeling welcomed and loved. Something that is obvious within the life of a Spirit-filled ministry is that the people are happy to serve the Lord. We delight in the wonderful things that God has done for us and we love to express our thanks to God in a joyous manner. We let the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us in our ministry together and in our own individual lives. The Holy Spirit's guidance is grounded in the life, teaching, and mission of Jesus. Finally

George