

What is a Spirit-filled Church

- 1. A Spirit-filled Church is a Christ-centered Church** What is our church's greatest asset or any church's asset?
Its programs?
Its worship services?
Its music?
Its finances?
Its wonderful people?
Truly, it is none of these. For these are only the temporal building blocks. The eternal foundation of the Church is the will of God revealed in the person of Jesus, the teaching of Scripture, and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.
- 2. A Spirit-filled Church is a Worshipping Church** A church is a sanctuary, a place of refuge, a place to celebrate, to rejoice, to praise God. Worship is the central act of the believing community. It is the single act that constitutes and maintains the community. Coming to church is coming to a sacred place at a sacred time to bind ourselves deliberately to God and to one another. Let anything take the place of the Worship of God in our lives, and the church degenerates into a mailing list. Worship is the intentional, God-directed, Christ-centered, Spirit-charged act of the total personality within the fellowship of believers. Accept no substitute.
- 3. A Spirit-filled Church is a Biblically Literate Church** The story is told of the time when Leopold Stokowski was conducting a dress rehearsal of Bach's St. Matthew's Passion: Stokowski went through the work once with several hundred singers and orchestra, tapped for silence, and said, "Well, I guess you know the notes well enough. But the Spirit is lacking. I want each of you to sit down tonight with your Bible and read St. Matthew's account of the life of Christ. Try to grasp it all. Who knows – perhaps that message is just what our listeners need in a time of doubt and despair. Then let's come back to our performance and try to convey to our audience the meaning and inspiration of these sacred words." The singers were startled to hear this advice from the worldly, debonair Stokowski. But they did as they were told. At the performance the next night, they sang their hearts out. The secrets of life and death are there – in the sacred text. The message that each of us needs in a time of doubt and despair is there. But we resist and ignore that message. We fear most what we understand least.
- 4. A Spirit-filled Church is a Tithing Church** Worship is our way of telling God that we love him; stewardship is our way of showing him. All that we have comes from God. He is the source of our lives and the landlord of the universe. Tithing is merely paying

the rent due to our Creator. The tithe, or 10% of one's income, has been the standard since Old Testament times. Moreover, people who are generous with their money are generous in the appreciation of one another. They see life as a gift and live it with gratitude and zest. Nothing cures depression and low self-esteem like generosity.

5. **A Spirit-filled Church is a Love-Centered and Caring-Through-Sharing Church**
6. **A Spirit-filled Church is a Praying Church** Praying is stretching out the divine within each of us to the God who made us in his own image. As Henri Nouwen writes, "It is the eternity amid mortality, it is life among death, hope in the midst of despair, true promise surrounded by lies. Prayer brings love alive among us. Prayer lies at the heart of all personal godliness. Prayer throws us onto the frontier of the spiritual life." As Richard Foster states, "Of the Spiritual Disciplines, prayer is the most central ... it is the discipline of prayer that brings us into the deepest and highest work of the human spirit. Real prayer is life-creating and life-changing. I am convinced that every activity of a Christian Church and every day of every individual Christian life should begin and end with prayer."
7. **A Spirit-filled Church is a Culturally Aware and Socially Active Church**
8. **A Spirit-filled Church is a Progressive Church** Phillips Brooks has written a book and says, "We never become truly spiritual by sitting down and wishing to become so. You must undertake something so great that you cannot accomplish it unaided."
9. **A Spirit-filled Church is an Evangelism-Intensive and Evangelism-Affirming Church**

Conclusion: A Christ-centered, worshipping, biblically literate, and generous church cannot help but attract people. A caring, praying, aware, and progressive church will always draw like-minded and like-spirited people as surely as a magnet draws iron filings. A spirit-filled church is a secret that cannot be kept. A spirit-filled church cannot keep itself from reaching out to others.