




*Briarwood*  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PASTORAL  
SEARCH





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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- 1 Mission, Vision & Strategy
- 2 History
- 4 Governance, Staff & Ministries
- 7 Finances
- 8 Missions
- 9 Core Convictions
- 10 Pastor Profile
- 11 Application Process

## MISSION

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*What has God called us to DO?*

For God's glory, we are committed to equipping Christians to worship God and to reach Birmingham to reach the world for Christ.

## VISION

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*What has God called us to BE?*

For coming generations Briarwood desires to be a Christ-centered, Gospel-driven, Spirit-filled equipping church where every member is a minister and a missionary.

## STRATEGY

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*HOW do we fulfill our mission?*

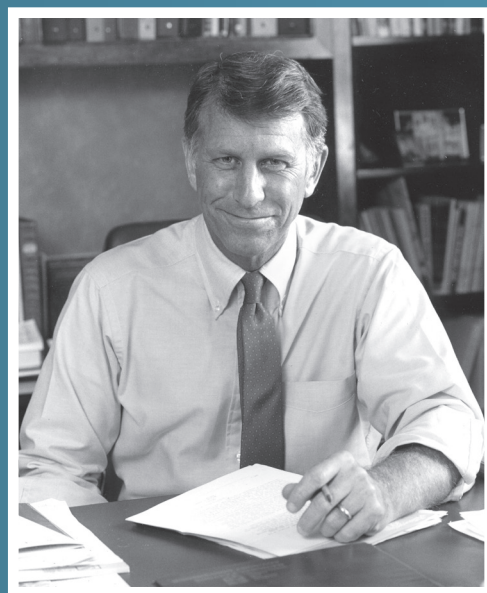
Gospel Evangelism and Discipleship  
Gospel Church Planting and Revitalization  
Gospel Deeds of Love, Mercy and Justice  
Gospel Leaders Developed and Deployed



# OUR HISTORY

## Church Beginnings and Founding Pastor Dr. Frank Barker 1960-1999

In 1960 a new church in a Cahaba Heights storefront was started with 70 people attending and a young Frank Barker as the founding pastor. In Dr. Barker's own words, he recalls, "As a young pastor, I prayed for revival – a mighty work of God's Spirit in my own life, in Briarwood Church, and throughout our country and the world. I especially asked Him to allow our church to make a real impact on this world for His sake. God directed me to John 15:5, where Jesus says "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." As I read John 15 over and over, I believed he showed me that continuous revival is available for those who abide in Him... I resolved to approach my work with this perspective. I would teach the Scriptures until everyone knew how to abide in Christ. My main job was to help the people become grounded in the Word, develop and use their gifts, and learn to share their faith."



Dr. Barker preached directly from the Bible, expositing passages verse by verse, and applying the Scriptures to everyday life. In a straightforward conversational manner, he encouraged his listeners to "do business with God." Many people, assuming they were Christians because they were good, heard Frank's teaching of the Word, recognized their need of Christ, and were converted. Word spread that there was an excitement at the new church in Cahaba Heights. People came and returned, bringing their friends.

The 1960s were a time of growth for the church. Men's prayer breakfasts met every Saturday morning at the Barker and Thomas homes. Teams visited newcomers on Wednesday nights, explaining the gospel and winning many to Christ. Weekly home Bible classes across Birmingham met for men, women, couples and students.

The growing church needed more space and moved to a new building on Highway 280 in 1963. The years on Highway 280 saw many firsts. Among these were the founding of the Presbyterian Church in America, the first missions conference, the first Lay Institute for Evangelism, the founding of Briarwood Christian School, the organizing of Camp Briarwood, the growth of the youth ministry and the opening of Birmingham Theological Seminary.

Growth continued in the 1970s and the need for additional space became critical. Briarwood "South" was created on Highway 119. Morning services were held at 8 am and 11 am at Briarwood North and a 10 am service was held at Briarwood South. Frank preached at all three services. By 1982 membership reached over 2,800 and Briarwood was again bursting at the seams. In 1988 the church moved to the new location on Altadena Road and membership rose to over 4,000 in the late 1980s.

In 1998 Frank announced his plans to step down at the end of 1999, giving the church almost 18 months to find a new senior pastor. In May 1999, Briarwood called Harry Reeder to be its next pastor.

# OUR HISTORY

## Dr. Harry Reeder 1999-2023

Dr. Harry Reeder became Briarwood's second pastor in 1999. Dr. Reeder and Dr. Barker, compatible in theology and perspective and uniquely gifted, were close friends who successfully worked together on Briarwood's transition from retiring pastor to new pastor and for many years thereafter.

Dr. Reeder served as Briarwood's Senior Pastor for twenty-four years. He modeled his life after Matthew 6:33, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Under his leadership, Briarwood maintained its emphasis on global missions, evangelism and church planting, and added church revitalization and leadership training to its essential ministries list. Briarwood helped plant multiple churches in Birmingham, in America, and around the world and provided countless church revitalization projects. Briarwood also expanded its campus with the additions of The Barn for Youth Ministries in 2012 and the Children's Auditorium in 2013. Pastor Reeder led Briarwood through an economic recession and a global pandemic, turning each into an opportunity for Christians to think about, "For what purpose has God called me to this time and for this season?"

His profound expositional sermons, filled with Biblical truth and practical application, inspired and transformed the lives of many, guiding them on their spiritual journeys. He was known for his ability to take complex theological topics and make them understandable and applicable for everyone. He believed in the power of the Gospel to bring about societal change and actively worked to see the Gospel impact the culture around him. He was steadfast in his work for the sanctity of life, theological education, church revitalization, and leadership training. Over the years, he launched several podcasts ("Today in Perspective" and "Conversations with Harry"), a daily devotional guide ("Fresh Bread") and authored two books (*Embers to a Flame* and *3D Leadership*), which continue to inspire individuals worldwide.

He was dedicated to the Briarwood congregation, seeking out prayer needs, teaching Bible studies, hosting monthly visitor dinners at his home, and spending time with members and visitors. With his genuine love for others and unwavering commitment to God's Word, Pastor Reeder had a remarkable ability to connect with people from all walks of life, offering comfort, guidance, and hope during their darkest moments.

Pastor Reeder lived out his ministry philosophy of "On Mission, On Message and In Ministry" until he unexpectedly was called home by the Lord on May 18, 2023. He was a man of unwavering faith, unyielding dedication, and unparalleled compassion.

In November 2023, the Briarwood Session called Dr. Dan Doriani to serve as the Intentional Interim Senior Pastor beginning December 1, 2023.





# GOVERNANCE, STAFF AND MINISTRIES

## Session

Briarwood's Session includes the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors and 75 Ruling Elders. The Sessional Ruling Elders serve on a rotational basis and are divided into three classes of 25 each serving a three-year term. Each year the Congregation elects a new class of 25 Ruling Elders for Sessional service.

Briarwood's Session adopted a Delegated Session Governance Model in late 2024 and this model's implementation started in January 2025. This Delegated Session Governance Model prioritizes a shepherding-first culture and is designed to support Briarwood's mission by ensuring that church leadership is structured to foster spiritual growth, pastoral care and organizational effectiveness.

The Delegated Session Team (DST) is composed of the Senior Pastor and 9 Sessional Ruling Elders which are selected from the Session. The DST oversees the governance, financial and strategic direction of the church. This model focuses on balancing church leadership's pastoral and administrative responsibilities while prioritizing a shepherding-first culture of the larger Session.

## Diaconate

Briarwood's Diaconate is very active in the life of the church and is responsible for ministering and managing the resources and mercy needs of the Church. Briarwood's Diaconate includes 126 Deacons that serve on a rotational basis. The Diaconate is divided into three classes of 42 Deacons each serving a three-year term. Each year, the Congregation elects a new class of 42 Deacons for Diaconal service.

## Staff

Briarwood's church staff includes over 100 members, 20 of whom are Teaching Elders. This staff is led by the Senior Pastor through a Leadership Team. Approximately 280 additional staff members work directly with Briarwood Christian School and Campus Outreach Birmingham.

## Ministries

Briarwood church has various ministries that are guided by and flow through the following teams:

**Shepherding Team:** consists of 30+ Sunday School Communities and the following ministries: Christian Education, Counseling, Pastoral Care, Prayer, Special Connections, Mercy, Membership and Assimilation and Discipline

**Ministries Team:** consists of Children and Youth, Discipleship and Evangelism, Midweek programs, College, Women, Worship and Singles

**Missions Team:** consists of Local, National and Global Missions, Church Revitalization, Community Ministry Mobilization, and the Japanese, Korean and Hispanic ethnic community ministries

**Diaconate & Administrative Team:** consists of eight Diaconal teams, Communications, Facilities and Grounds, A/V and Media, Accounting, Food Services and the Briarwood Bookstore

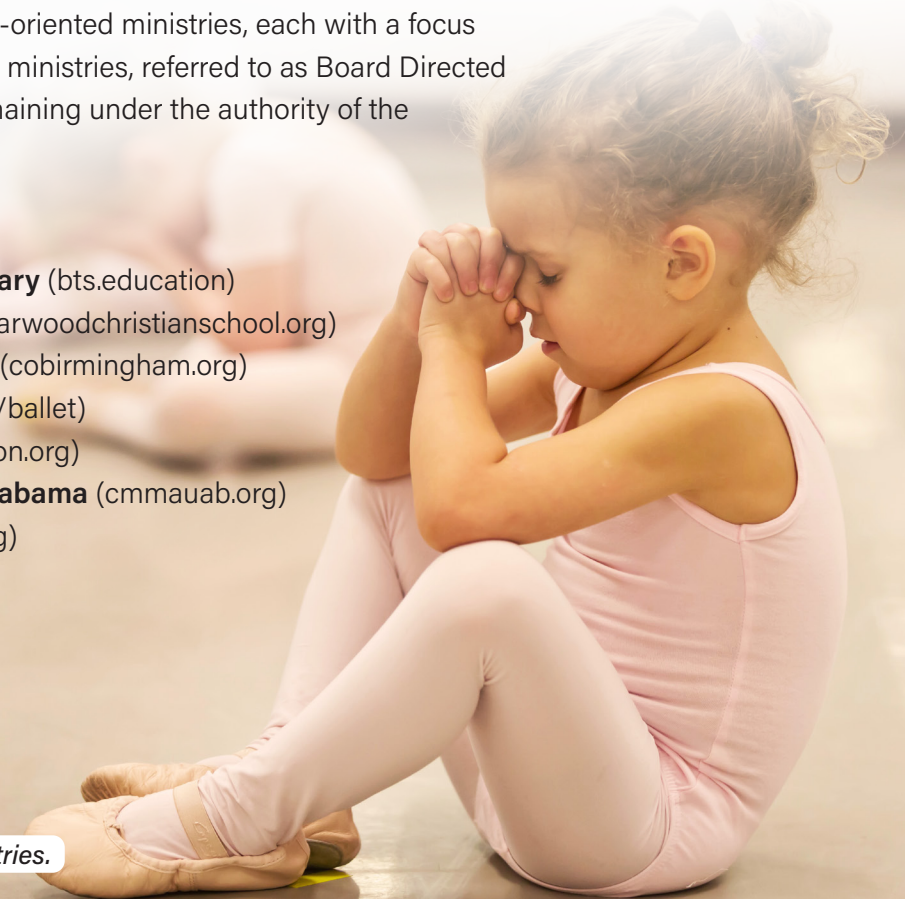
More information on all of these ministry areas can be found at [briarwood.org](http://briarwood.org).

### Board Directed Ministries Team:

Briarwood also includes several outreach-oriented ministries, each with a focus on a specific demographic. Each of these ministries, referred to as Board Directed Ministries, is guided by a board while remaining under the authority of the Briarwood Session.

These ministries include:

- **Birmingham Theological Seminary** ([bts.education](http://bts.education))
- **Briarwood Christian School** ([briarwoodchristianschool.org](http://briarwoodchristianschool.org))
- **Campus Outreach Birmingham** ([cobirmingham.org](http://cobirmingham.org))
- **Briarwood Ballet** ([briarwood.org/ballet](http://briarwood.org/ballet))
- **Quest Recreation** ([questrecreation.org](http://questrecreation.org))
- **Christian Medical Ministry of Alabama** ([cmmauab.org](http://cmmauab.org))
- **Young Business Leaders** ([ybl.org](http://ybl.org))
- **Briarwood Fellows**



[Learn more about Briarwood's Ministries.](#)

# Briarwood Christian School

Briarwood Christian School exists to provide a Christ-centered, transformational education that equips and inspires each student to glorify God by maximizing their God-given abilities. Briarwood Christian School seeks to develop leaders who impact the world by glorifying Christ in every sphere of life.

## BCS at a Glance

Founded: 1964 as a ministry of Briarwood Presbyterian Church  
 Enrollment: 1,740 Preschool through 12th grade

Alumni: over 5,000  
 Employees: 242  
 2 campuses



**A Growing Disciple of Christ**  
 Follows Jesus Christ faithfully. Grows in knowledge, maturity and the pursuit of Biblical truth. Embraces and responds in humility to Biblical convictions. Engages in joyful worship and authentic fellowship with a body of believers. Lives a lifestyle of evangelism and discipleship of others. Leads with humility and grace.

**A Responsible Steward**  
 Discovers and cultivates God-given abilities. Applies Biblical principles to relationships, decision-making, finances and daily work. Pursues personal, spiritual, emotional, mental and physical health. Delights in and cares for God's creation. Creates and crafts with beauty, generosity and excellence for God's glory. Serves in joyful obedience in one's area of gifting and calling.

**A Compassionate Neighbor**  
 Values and delights in the inherent dignity of all persons. Seeks to understand perspectives that differ from his/her own. Recognizes that true greatness lies in service to others. Loves and prays for others as a response to God's love for us. Serves selflessly as an ambassador of Christ. Initiates restoration for a broken world.

**A Courageous Learner**  
 Humbly receives their solid foundation from Scripture. Discovers joy in learning. Perseveres through the learning process. Demonstrates resilience in the learning process. Engages cultural challenges with power, grace and love. Cultivates a community of other courageous learners.



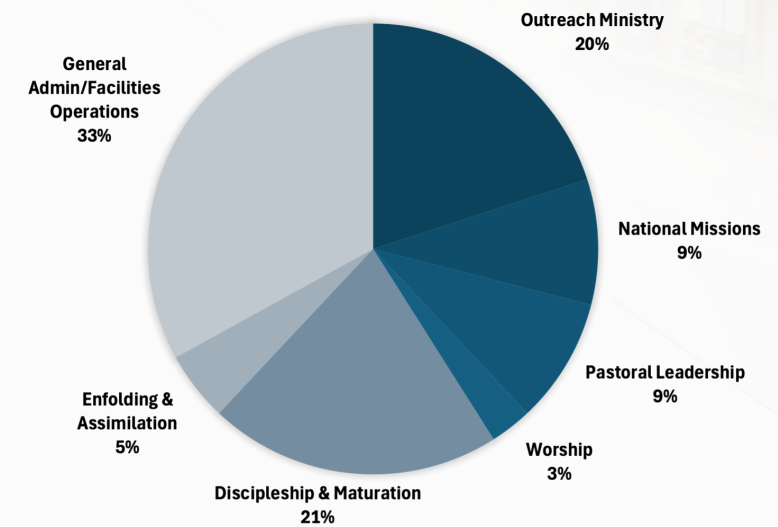
[Learn more about Briarwood's Christian School.](#)

# FINANCES

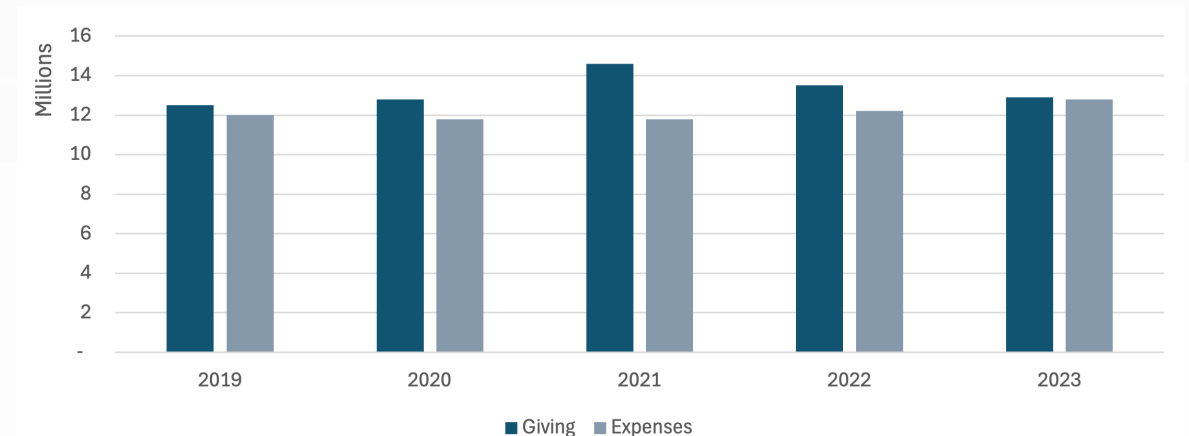
## Giving / Financials

The General Fund supports the church's day-to-day ministries such as worship, community outreach, operations, meeting our members' spiritual needs and equipping us to be salt and light in this world. Our General Fund Budget is funded from the tithe which our members have a legacy of bringing out of obedience and as an element of corporate worship. Briarwood operates debt-free. Additionally, members contribute to the Faith Promise which funds Briarwood's Global Missions.

## 2024 BUDGET



## GENERAL FUND



# MISSIONS

## *Commitment to the Great Commission*

Briarwood is committed to taking the gospel to our community, our nation and our world. Our Missions Ministry keeps our congregation informed about the movement of the Spirit of God around the world and equips those called to personal participation in missions.

Roughly 2,000 missionaries have been sent out from Briarwood and approximately \$80 million has been given to global missions. Briarwood currently supports over 400 ministry partners (more than half of whom are serving globally). The annual "Faith Promise" pledge is a key way for members to engage both prayerfully and financially in the global missions ministry of the church. The first pledge totaled \$300 in 1965. By God's grace, that annual number is now roughly \$2.7 million!



# CORE CONVICTIONS

***For God's glory, Briarwood is committed to equipping Christians to worship God and to reach Birmingham to reach the world for Christ.***

***For coming generations Briarwood desires to be a Christ-centered, Gospel-driven, Spirit-filled equipping church where every member is a minister and a missionary.***

Briarwood's mission and vision, grounded in Scripture, emphasize evangelistic zeal, relational discipleship, unwavering prayer, vibrant worship, and genuine love. While honoring the past and looking to where God leads us in the future, Briarwood desires to be faithful to Scripture and glorify God as we seek to reach Birmingham, to reach the world for Christ. Our Congregation embraces these core convictions in our hope for the future of Briarwood:

### ***Faithful to the Scriptures***

The Biblical vision of the church aims to embody Scriptural truths, fostering a dynamic community focused on worship, evangelism, discipleship, mission, prayer and spiritual love. Scripture alone is our authoritative rule in faith and practice. The Westminster Confession of Faith serves as a guiding framework by which we seek to live out our calling for God's glory.

### ***Evangelistic Mission***

Over the decades, Briarwood has steadfastly upheld its commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission on global and local scales. This central mission serves as the foundation for the aspirations of the congregation. As stated in Matthew 28:19-20, the Great Commission calls believers to make disciples of all nations.

### ***Discipleship as a Community***

While evangelism seeks to bring individuals to faith, discipleship nurtures that faith into maturity. In alignment with the teachings of Scripture, Briarwood seeks to equip a community of believers who actively engage in lifelong learning and transformation.

### ***The Prayerful Church***

A prayerful spirit undergirds our worship, evangelism and discipleship. The power of prayer is emphasized in Scripture where believers are called to seek God's guidance and strength. Briarwood is a congregation committed to God's Word and seeks to prioritize prayer as a foundational practice.

### ***Joyful Worship***

Worship is a fundamental pillar of a vibrant church culture and a critical expression of our vision. The Scripture and Westminster Confession articulate the importance of worship in acknowledging the sovereign nature of God and the redeeming work of Christ. Our church desires a worship environment that fosters reverence and joy, where congregants can encounter God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### ***Authentic in Love***

Central to the aspirational view of our church is the call to authentic Biblical love. The Scripture articulates the requirement of love as a response to God's unconditional grace. Our church desires to be a community of believers where love is not merely an abstraction but is manifested in the way we shepherd one another through genuine spiritual relationships (John 17).



# PASTOR PROFILE

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## *Qualifications:*

**Strong Biblical character** consistently exhibiting spiritual maturity, integrity, purity, humility, and life above reproach with a prayerful dependence on God.

**Expository preaching of the Scriptures** that is committed to reformed and confessional theology.

**Ordained** (or eligible for ordination) in the PCA with significant pastoral and sessional leadership experience.

## *Desired Attributes:*

- A preacher bestowed with the spiritual gift of faithfully exegeting and expounding the Scriptures to touch the hearts and minds of both believers and non-believers.
- Visionary servant leader who is empowered with the spiritual capacity to inspire, motivate, and align ministries for the glory of God.
- Humble shepherd who is intentionally relatable, equipped with the spiritual and emotional awareness to love and cherish the people of God, offering encouragement and praying for them faithfully.
- Aims to honor and celebrate the ways the Lord has worked through Briarwood Presbyterian Church—both in the past and present—while embracing His sovereignty and moving forward into the future with faith.
- Focused on multi-generational Evangelism and Discipleship, locally and globally.
- Loving and bold in sharing Biblical truths and providing honest answers to sincere questions about today's key cultural issues.
- Large church or multifaceted ministry experience with a collaborative style of working with the Session and staff.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

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*To apply or recommend a candidate, please contact one of the following:*

Rev. J. Edward (Ed) Norton of McGowan Global Institute (MGI):  
ed@mcgowanglobal.com or (901) 461-8206

The Pastoral Search Committee of BPC:  
pulpitcommittee@briarwood.org

To learn more, visit [briarwood.org/pulpit-committee](http://briarwood.org/pulpit-committee) and contact [pulpitcommittee@briarwood.org](mailto:pulpitcommittee@briarwood.org) for questions or comments.

Contact us.





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BRIARWOOD.ORG