

Church Name Changes

Names play a vital role and leave “first impressions”. Some discoveries on names:

- Avoid names that were contemporary yesterday.
- Avoid names that are street specific. (Cities can change street names)
- Don't avoid using “church” as it is strongly related to the Christian faith. C. Peter Wagner says the name “church” attracts rather than repels.
- Avoid identifying your church with a smaller community in the name.
- It should be short, memorable, as well as easy to spell and pronounce.

Essentials of Great Church Names

(Adapted from article in Chief Marketer by Jonathon Paisner of CoreBrand)

1. STRATEGIC Criteria-
 - Does the name reflect the personality of your church?
 - Is the name relevant to the key audiences you are called to reach?
 - Does the name stand out from the names of other churches in your city?
2. FUNCTIONAL Criteria-
 - Does the name work within the context of what is being communicated?
 - Is it appropriately descriptive or suggestive or evocative?
 - Are there any available web domains that could be used with the name?
3. LINGUISTIC Criteria-
 - Is the name easy to understand, explain and pronounce?
 - Is it free from inappropriate connotations to those you are trying to reach?

When an established church decides to make a name change, the following steps should be included on your checklist:

- ✓ Board minutes or Membership Meeting minutes- record the official action and name you have chosen for the church. These minutes will be included in the next step.
- ✓ Secretary of State- file an amendment for a name change with your state's Secretary of State. You can then print the filed amendment and certificate for proof of this action.
- ✓ IRS- notify them that the name has changed for your current EIN# so all tax documentation will connect your new name with your existing EIN number. Send them a letter and include your filed amendment and certificate from your Secretary of State.
- ✓ Bank- change the name on all of your accounts.
- ✓ Order new checks, deposit slips, and *FOR DEPOSIT ONLY* stamp.
- ✓ Notify Open Bible Churches' national and regional offices with a copy of your filed amendment and certificate from the Secretary of State.
- ✓ Request your Regional Director to have your bylaws updated with your new name.
- ✓ Notify the following vendors and corporations of the name change:
 - Credit Cards
 - Insurance carrier
 - Investments
 - Mortgage or loans
 - Utilities
- ✓ Change your website, domain name, and email addresses for church and staff.
- ✓ Web search engines - update Google maps, Bing, etc.
- ✓ Change your church stationary and business cards.
- ✓ Change your signage on and in your facility.