



OPEN BIBLE
CHURCHES

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.