



CHURCH NAME DISCUSSION & BYLAWS REVISION FAQs

Why are we proposing to consolidate our church's name?

We believe our church's name should be consolidated to one name to avoid confusion. As far as we can tell, we are one of the only churches with multiple locations that is known by two names. Outsiders are confused by this and are not aware that the two locations are actually one church body that intends to remain one church in two locations for years to come. One name makes communication easier. Whether in print or online, two names can be difficult and cumbersome for people to remember, while a unified name is succinct. We also believe this change will enhance unity. **We want our name to reflect that we are one body under Jesus Christ.** We are one body of believers. One unified name will help to eliminate the perception of an "us" and "them" mentality, and build a stronger opportunity for community outreach.

What revisions to the church bylaws are we proposing?

A bylaws review team is currently examining our bylaws in order to ensure we are in accordance with Texas business laws. The bylaws revision will include the name Cross Church, it will also include necessary revisions to keep our church in current legal practice with Texas law. We will also reaffirm our beliefs with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. A draft of the bylaws will be made available on April 10 for our church family to review.

Why are we proposing the name Cross Church?

The Cross is the sum of the message of the gospel all over the world. Our message is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Bible says the cross is the power of God to save us: For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18). The cross is Christianity's most recognizable symbol for generations. We have chosen the name Cross Church because of its simplicity and its strong unifying theme of the gospel message.

The cross also connects well with our "fish fountain" and the original logo created under the leadership of Pastor Hal Brooks. The church chose the ichthus symbol for its logo and you can still see this ichthus in the fountain to the east of NRHBC. In the heart of the ichthus is the cross. From our church's beginning, we have been centered on the cross of Jesus.

In addition, our church has put seven years of effort into communicating the name Cross Church to the Fort Worth community. The Tomorrow Team did not feel like we should start over with a new name when so much money, time, and effort was put into inviting people to Cross Church.



CROSS
CHURCH

Why would we not simply retain the name North Richland Hills Baptist Church?

We are proposing a new name for our church because we have a permanent second location that is outside of the city of North Richland Hills. Given the location of Cross Church in North Fort Worth, the geographically specific name North Richland Hills Baptist Church does not serve both locations.

It is difficult to communicate how NRHBC began Cross Church and our connection due to the different names. Because we want Cross Church and NRHBC to continue to support one another for years to come, the name North Richland Hills Baptist Church will not work for us long term. We cannot call our second location by the name North Richland Hills since our second location is in North Fort Worth.

Yes, it is really emotional to even consider changing our beloved church's name. North Richland Hills Baptist Church has a rich history along with having a strong name recognition in our community for the past 65 years. As much as we love this name and all it signifies, we need one name for our church's website. We need one name for our church's worship guides. We need one name for our church signs.

One name needs to unite us so that everyone immediately knows we are one church meeting in two locations. No matter how many times we say one church in two locations, we are introducing unnecessary confusion to guests and future members by having two church names.

Why have we not included Baptist in the proposed name?

This decision has been a matter of tremendous prayer and discussion for the Tomorrow Team, the Long Range Planning Committee, the Deacon Body, and our staff. By having the name Baptist in our church's name, we will be grouped together with other Baptists no matter what they do, say, or act in future days. An outside community with little to no theological discernment will not make the necessary distinctions.

We should all keep in mind that not every Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entity includes the name Baptist in its respective title. The International Mission Board, the North American Mission Board, Lifeway Christian Resources, GuideStone Financial Resources, and the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission are all SBC entities but do not have the name Baptist in their given name.

We will continue to communicate that we are a Southern Baptist church on the internet, in many print publications, and in our church's new membership class. We will require all of our pastors, Bible-study teachers, and members to read and teach in concert with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. We will continue to go on mission trips with our partners with the International Mission Board. We will continue to plant churches with the North American Mission Board. We will continue to operate as a Southern Baptist Church.

Does this change mean we are ashamed of our Christian beliefs?

In no way is our church changing our beliefs about the inerrancy of the Bible, the exclusive nature of salvation in Christ, the eternal destiny of those without Christ, or any other major Baptist belief. We will continue to be a Bible-saturated, Christ-exalting, faith-affirming congregation until Christ returns by the grace of God.

As part of our bylaws revision effort, we are proposing that our church affirm the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 and possibly The Nashville Statement 2017 as well. A possible name change does not signal a change in beliefs nor that we will loosen our ties with the Southern Baptist Convention. By the grace of God, our church will never be ashamed of the gospel.

If our church's name is consolidated to Cross Church, can I still call our church North Richland Hills Baptist Church?

If members want to continue to call us by the name North Richland Hills Baptist Church, no one should object. I will probably do this as well on occasion. Yet, the name on the worship guides, signs, and from the pulpit will be Cross Church for consistency. There will be an overlap period where NRHBC goes by both names and we educate the community on the new name.

How is this decision being made?

As with all major decisions, our desire is to seek consensus of the body as we seek to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit. Three groups have already met to consider this proposal.

Our church leadership asked the Tomorrow Team to begin discussing, thinking, and praying through this decision in late 2020. After approximately one year's time, they agreed unanimously to consolidate our church's name to Cross Church.

Tomorrow Team

Mike Doyle (chairman)
Ben Trantham
Dan Eskelsen
Daryl King
Dottie Kearney
Maggie Junior
Mark Vaughn
Ralph Kunkel

Next, our church's Long Range Planning Committee discussed the name for several months. After much discussion, prayer, and study, they voted to consolidate our church's name to Cross Church in a six to one decision.

Long Range Planning Committee

Mark Vaughn (chairman)
Connie Bushor
Marvin Myers
Greg Williams
Bill Mapston
Amy Degollado
Shirley Ramsey

Cheryl Graves
Rick Brown

Lastly, our church's deacon body discussed the name change in two meetings spread out over a month's time. After much discussion, prayer, and study, they voted to consolidate our church's name to Cross Church in a 39 to 0 decision with four people abstaining.

Our next step is to allow the church body to think and pray about this proposal as well. During the intervening months before our church vote, we will host several "listening sessions" where the pastor and the staff leadership will be present to address questions and concerns. We have listed these times in this brochure for your convenience. We will announce a date for a church vote soon. Please join us for discussion and be praying for our church to listen to the Holy Spirit in the coming days.

Should we simply release Cross Church to become their own church?

We have long held that our two campuses are to function as "one church in two locations," and we intend to maintain that goal. It should be noted that Cross Church would not exist nor could it maintain its current ministry without the financial and ministry support of NRHBC. Cross Church attendance and giving is on the rise but it cannot yet meet the annual budget or pay toward the remaining debt on the building. Each week, Cross Church must scan documents for attendance, finance, and guest information. The business office at NRHBC processes our tithe and tracks all financial expenditures. Cross Church depends on IT support from NRHBC for maintenance and repair of computers, copiers, phone and security systems. Our facilities team spans both campuses, cleaning, landscaping and maintaining our buildings and grounds. NRHBC helps Cross Church set up events and share resources far beyond what Cross Church could afford on its own. Renting tables, chairs, and games for each event would sink the Cross Church ministry budget. If Cross Church were to be cut loose, it would quickly have to cut staff and ministry budgets to remain solvent. The synergy that both campuses have together right now is just a continuation of the investment we have made over the last eight years in this community.

Why did we not consolidate the name when Cross Church began?

While the church knew that a possible name change was coming when we began Cross Church, we felt we should push back the decision for a future time. The work of constructing a building, raising necessary funds, and launching the second campus occupied our church's attention. Leadership felt that a possible name change in 2013 would be an unnecessary distraction at that time.

How can I ask additional questions or make suggestions concerning this proposal?

Our pastor and church leadership are hosting five Listening Sessions throughout the month of April to allow you to ask questions. Bible Fellowship Groups are being encouraged to attend together but anyone is welcome to attend any of these dates:

Tuesday, April 12 at 7:00 PM
Wednesday, April 20 at 6:30 PM
Thursday, April 21 at 7:00 PM
Saturday, April 23 at 9:00 AM
Sunday, April 24 at 5:00 PM

The only session we will not offer child care is Saturday, April 23.

How will we tell the community about this proposed name change?

Our church's finance team has set aside monies in order to change the church signs around the NRH campus. In addition, we are making plans to invite people to join us for worship through direct mail throughout the local community. Our social media pages and both campus websites will display the new name and will be located under the domain name, crosschurchdfw.org (although the existing domain name, nrhbc.org, will still direct users to our website).

The following recommendations were made by the Long Range Planning Committee:

Recommendation #1

In order to clarify our identity as one church in two locations, and in agreement with recommendations from both the deacon body and the Tomorrow Team, the Long Range Planning Committee recommends that the name of the church be changed to Cross Church and recommend that the church body consider this for adoption.

Recommendation #2

LRP recommends that if the church approves a change of the name of the church to Cross Church, then the church authorizes the corporate officers of North Richland Hills Baptist Church to file an amendment to the articles of incorporation to change the legal name to Cross Church DFW and to execute any and all legal and financial documents and filings to effect the name change such as but not limited to deeds, bank accounts, titles of ownership, etc.

Recommendation #3

LRP recommends that the pastor and deacon officers appoint a committee to study and recommend to the church a revised bylaws of the church to reflect the name change, update for operational changes, reflect the needs of multiple campuses, and strengthen the important values of our Baptist beliefs.

