

Why "Cross of Hope Church"?



New identity tied to a rich historic past and identity in Christ as our hope



Allows us to continue to focus on our mission statement



Emphasis on our desire to fulfill the tasks of the Great Commission



Emphasis on involvement in our community and region rather than a geographical location



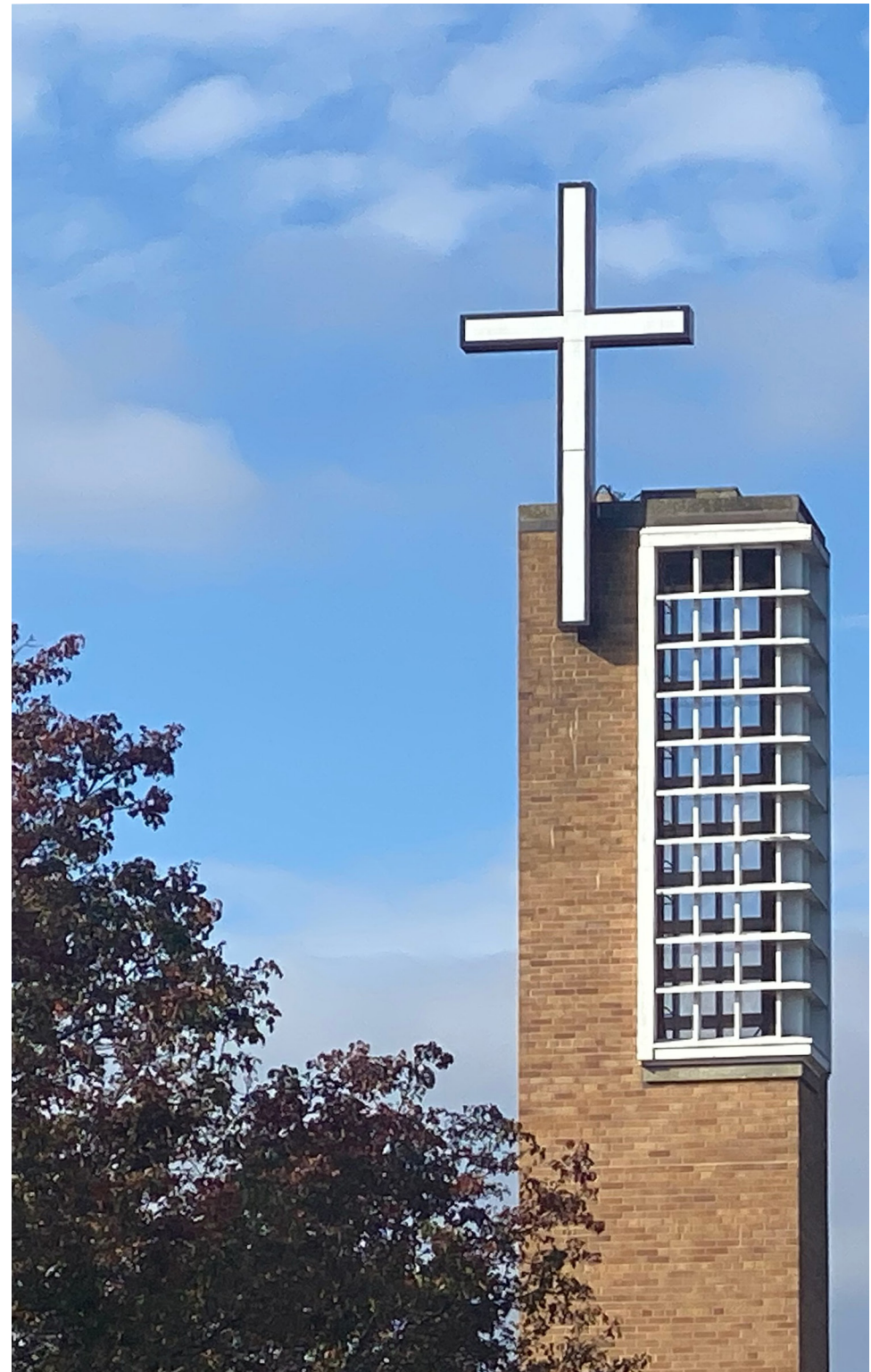
Calls upon the commitment to support the global mission efforts - local and global

UPCOMING DATES

1. Town Hall Meetings for Congregation
Tuesday, January 30th at 7:00 pm in Gathering Place
Thursday, February 8th at 7:00 pm in Gathering Place
2. Special Business Meeting on Sunday, February 25th after 10:45 am service
3. Proposed Launch Date of New Name on Sunday, September 8th, 2024

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

If you have any additional questions or concerns that were shared today about changing the name of our church, please reach out to Pastor Shane Prewitt by contacting the church office or emailing him at sprewitt@phbaptist.org.



WHY CHANGE OUR NAME?

1. To create a clear emphasis on our priority

The most common church name in the U.S is "First Baptist." When church members originally chose that name, they had two priorities. First, the name communicated that the church was doctrinally or denominationally connected to "Baptist." Secondly, "First" emphasized that the church was the first church with the name "Baptist" in its community.

While we are not changing our "Baptist" distinctives, our main objective is to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ and not a denominational title. "Cross of Hope" allows us to clearly communicate what our essential beliefs are regarding our salvation in Christ. When people in the community hear or see our name, our core message would be the first thing that would stand out rather than our geographic location or denomination.

2. To emphasize our mission and vision rather than our geographic location.

While we are located in Parma Heights, we are a block away from Parma. And while we love Parma Heights and Parma and desire to deeply impact our neighbors and friends with the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have always been and foresee always being a regional church. Many of our people drive from other cities to participate in our church. A missional name over a geographic name gives more focus to our purpose as a church.

WOULD WE STILL BE BAPTIST?

While we would be changing the name of our church, we would not be changing our doctrines or core beliefs. Being "Baptist" has to do with our doctrinal and philosophical alignment. However, our priority is to "make disciples" (Matt. 28:19) not to "make Baptist." We would continue to teach church distinctives in our Membership Class which highlights our distinctives as related to a Baptist history versus other denomination distinctives.

We would also continue to be a part of the NAB (North American Baptist) Conference and will continue to have strategic partnerships with groups such as ABWE (Association of Baptist for World Evangelism) and Converge (Baptist General Conference).

WOULD PEOPLE LOOKING FOR "BAPTIST" CHURCHES STILL BE ABLE TO FIND US?

Our website (both current and future) will have clear access to our statement of beliefs. With proper use of SEO (Search Engine Optimization), our name will appear if a person searches for a "Baptist" church.

WHY NOW?

Many other denominational churches around the country and in our area have settled this question, in many cases, quite some time ago. While this is not the strongest argument for why we should consider doing it, it should cause us to ask the question, *"Why have others made this change?"*

We now live in a post Christian culture where denominational titles have become increasingly irrelevant. As a result, many churches have moved away from adherence to denominational titles to better communicate their mission and vision with their community.

We live in a religiously diverse community in Greater Cleveland and while there are many "religious" people, increasingly people are becoming more nominal in their involvement. This means our community has a religious upbringing that does not necessarily equate to them fully understanding the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our desire is to point people to the gospel of Jesus Christ as the sole source of their salvation. At the heart of the gospel message is the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. We believe "Cross of Hope" will allow us to remove some unnecessary roadblocks and potential baggage that might keep some from potentially visiting our church simply because of our denominational affiliation.