

New Name for a New Day!

Pastor Jeff Meyer



"God is leading us to see a multi-location church emerge that will transform the spiritual landscape of Madison. This church will convene in hundreds of *life*Groups with *life*Worship Centers strategically located in geographical regions throughout Greater Madison." We have referred to this vision as "One Church, Regional Impact." With the adoption of this vision in the spring of 2008, Christ Memorial became part of a movement of God that has catapulted us into a new day of mission. This movement necessitates a new name. The name "Christ Memorial" was selected back in 1953 and has served the church well ever since. Nevertheless, there are three "Why's" that make the leadership team believe that a new name will help propel us towards a new day:

1. *God changed names to signify a New Day.* The bible gives examples of God changing people's names when changing the focus of their mission: Abram became Abraham at the age of 99 years (Genesis 17). Jacob became Israel when he became the father of the great nation (Genesis 32:26-30). Simon became Peter when his mission was changed from being a fisherman to becoming the rock of the church (John 1:42). Saul became Paul, when Jesus transformed him to be His chosen instrument to carry His name to the Gentiles (Acts 10 and Acts 13:9). In fact, as described in Revelation 2:17, it may even be possible that our name gets changed when eternity begins.
2. *We believe God is changing the scope of our mission* Pursuing our God-given vision "One Church, Regional Impact," Christ Memorial is moving from being a church located at 2833 Raritan Road in Fitchburg, to one that is *distributed* into the neighborhoods, communities and regions throughout Greater Madison. Indeed, God has already distributed us! Check out the map in the welcome area. The name change is an acknowledgement that God has been leading us to greater intentionality and individual ownership in "connecting people to life in Jesus" right where we live!
3. *We desire to bring our name into alignment with our distinctive identity.* Over the past few years, Christ

Memorial has worked hard to clarify our uniqueness. Our "vision frame" is powerfully aligning us for mission! We can now answer with great specificity what we do (mission), why we do it (values), and how we do it (strategy). We can also recognize with increasing clarity when we are successful (lifeMarks) and where God is leading us (vision). And while "Christ Memorial" is a name that connects some of us with tremendous memories and blessings, a new name will more accurately reflect our distinctive identity in Christ.

On July 26th you will have the opportunity to hear the new name that the Christ Memorial Leadership Board is proposing. Two weeks after that on Sunday, August 9th you will have the privilege to vote. It will be an historic day!

Since last September God has so clearly been with us as we have:

- Identified the Need for a Name Change
- Communicated With the Congregation
- Brainstormed and Solicited Suggestions
- Filtered Suggestions
- Formed a Naming Committee
- Identified the Preferred Name
- Attained Leadership Board Approval

We have prayed for enthusiasm and unity around a new name. At every step along this almost year-long process God has granted us our requests. We are excited to have everyone who has called Christ Memorial "home" join us in celebrating God's gift of a new day!

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