



# FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

General Council on Finance and Administration

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



# CROSS AND FLAME

# HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

The history and significance of the Cross and Flame emblem are as rich and diverse as The United Methodist Church. The insignia's birth quickly followed the union of The Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968. The traditional symbol of "the cross proclaims Jesus Christ as its foundation, and the two flames descending to one point reflects when two denominations became one, affirming its readiness to go forth to the ends of the earth to all people to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, as the anointing of the Holy Spirit with 'individual flames of fire' sent forth the apostles speaking the language of people wherever they went." The insignia was formally adopted by the General Conference in 1968 and registered in 1971 with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

# USE AND INTEGRITY

## **United Methodist Churches and Other Official United Methodist Organizations**

*The Book of Discipline* states that the Cross and Flame may be used by official United Methodist agencies, including local churches, "to identify United Methodist work, programs and materials." It may not be used by individuals for personal purposes. United Methodist local churches, districts, annual conferences, jurisdictions, general Church agencies, and other affiliated organizations such as, councils, boards, commissions, committees, divisions, or other units are authorized to use the Cross and Flame for purposes of identifying themselves and their official work (¶¶ 701.2, 807.10). They are not, however, required to use the insignia.

UMC organizations are not required to obtain permission to use the Cross and Flame insignia on products and designs that are intended to identify the organization's United Methodist works, programs, and materials as long as they adhere to the guidelines. For examples of acceptable designs and the list of guidelines, please see the "Integrity of Design" section below.

## Commercial Use

“Commercial use” of the United Methodist Cross and Flame insignia means any use of the insignia in connection with the sale of goods or services, with or without the expectation of profit, by organizations other than United Methodist churches and other United Methodist organizations defined above. This includes, but is not limited to, use of the logo on clothing, jewelry, decorations, and crafts. A commercial use of the insignia requires explicit written authorization by GCFA. All use of the insignia must maintain accuracy of its design, proportion, and style.

An application for permission to use the Cross and Flame insignia for commercial purposes must be submitted to GCFA’s Legal Department for approval. License agreements are for a one-year term and can be renewed annually as needed.

GCFA does not sell any products with the Cross and Flame. If you would like to purchase products for your church or organization, please visit [Cokesbury](#) online. Often, independent sellers/manufacturers may request written permission from a United Methodist entity with authority to use the insignia prior to using the trademark to process a product order. If your church or organization needs such written permission, please send a request to [legal@gcfa.org](mailto:legal@gcfa.org).

For the Commercial License Application and fees, see [HERE](#).

## Integrity of Design

In order to preserve the integrity of the Cross and Flame design, organizations using the insignia may not alter or modify the insignia per the Discipline. The trademark laws of the United States also require that the trademark not be modified or altered in any way. Users of the insignia must ensure that it stands independent from and is not covered by or layered over other designs or words (¶ 807.10). Doing so could endanger the Church’s trademark rights in the insignia. All reproductions of the insignia should be faithful to the original design. Below is a complete list of design reproduction guidelines:

- No other objects or designs shall touch or cover the Cross and Flame; it should appear to stand alone or apart from any other element of the overall design.
- The insignia should not be used to form part of a letter, another logo, or inscription. For example, the “cross” part of the insignia cannot be used in place of the letter “T.”
- The base of the flame should be lower than that of the cross.

- The tip of the left portion of the flame must align with the left arm of the cross.
- The space between the flame and the upright of the cross is slightly wider at the top of the design than it is at the bottom.
- If using one solid color to print the emblem, include a thin line of space around the arm of the cross that lies against the flame. The flame may be screened (shaded) to create a contrast between it and the cross.
- While the colors may be changed, all colors must be solid. For example, designs with polka-dots, camouflage, and stripes are prohibited.
- If using the traditional color scheme, the recommended shade of red is “Warm Red” on the Pantone Matching System (PMS) color scale or the refreshed shade of red offered in the [branding toolkit](#) published by United Methodist Communications.
- Whenever possible, the registration mark (®) shall be placed below the Cross and Flame, preferably to the right of the cross.

The following are examples of **acceptable** uses:



The following are examples of **improper** uses - overlapping or encircling the insignia with other words or designs - that are prohibited:



When possible, the registration mark (®) should be put below the Cross and Flame, preferably to the right of the cross. The following should also be printed as close as possible to the Cross and Flame:

“The Cross and Flame is a registered trademark, and the use is supervised by the General Council on Finance and Administration of The United Methodist Church (“GCFA”). Permission to use the Cross and Flame must be obtained from GCFA, Attn: Legal Department, Post Office Box 340029, Nashville, TN 37203-0029; phone: [615-369-2399](tel:615-369-2399); email: [legal@gcfa.org](mailto:legal@gcfa.org).”

**For downloadable images, please send an email to [legal@gcfa.org](mailto:legal@gcfa.org).**  
*Use “Cross & Flame Downloadable Images” in the subject line.*

## Unauthorized/Improper Use of the Cross and Flame

There are times when a non-United Methodist entity uses the Cross and Flame as its own, or an authorized United Methodist entity uses the insignia in an improper manner. While GCFA actively uses its resources to identify and remedy any instances of unauthorized and/or improper use of the insignia, your assistance in reporting possible infringement is greatly appreciated. If you encounter a use of the Cross and Flame you suspect may be unauthorized and/or improper, please contact our office.

Contact the GCFA Legal Services Department at [legal@gcfa.org](mailto:legal@gcfa.org) with any questions.