Dec 2025 American Flag at the McKnight Church Building

From: M Bret Blackford (bret_blackford@yahoo.com)

To: bret blackford@yahoo.com

Date: Saturday, December 20, 2025 at 04:35 PM CST

MEMO to FILE

Brad Stevens

To: dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com, Cc: me, and 4 others · Sat, Dec 20 at 8:50 AM

Rick Sally's father was one of the chief proponents who wanted to maintain the American flag at the church building. Years ago we had a number of veterans to whom thi individuals have now passed on. I am personally ambivalent on whether we have a flag or not. I have sworn allegiance to the flag as a child. And I've taken an oath to sur constitution of the United States as an attorney. I was very thankful that in 1954 when Dwight D Eisenhower was president, that we inserted into the pledge of allegiance. To the extent that we are going to put money into this project, I would prefer to rid ourselves of using money from the treasury to maintain the pole and the flag.

A number of years ago, I was in Michigan visiting my daughter's family. At the church there one Sunday, the person who presided over the Lord's supper, gave a rather lethe United States was better than all other nations of the world. After the services concluded, there was a couple sitting behind us to whom i turned to introduce myself. I words. He made reference to the gentleman who had presided over the Lord's Supper and said "that was very interesting. We are from Canada." He then smiled at me ,tur walked out. Nationalism has no business in the kingdom of God. We are all children of the Lord. That is what I want to proclaim.

---- Forwarded Message -----

From: Elizabeth McPherson <emcpherson@mcknightcrossings.org>

To: Steve Awtrey <steve.awtrey@gmail.com>

Cc: Stephen Walker <srainey6@yahoo.com>; M Bret Blackford
blackford@yahoo.com>; MXElders MX <mxelders@mcknightcrossings.org>

Sent: Friday, December 19, 2025 at 04:40:40 PM CST

Subject: Re: American Flag at the McKnight Church Building

Yes, Steve.

When the Ladue Fire Department came to do an inspection of the building back in November, Tom asked them whether they could help us with the flagpole.

They said they could not. I'm not sure what their reasoning was.

There are companies in the area that do flagpole service repairs

Additionally, Chris from Vital Signs is the person we have used for projects that involve lifts.

He has worked on our parking lot light fixtures, canopy lights, put up our banners in the S.Lot, and painted the cross.

--Eliz

On Fri, Dec 19, 2025 at 4:26 PM Steve Awtrey <steve.awtrey@gmail.com> wrote:

I'm for keeping a flag as support for the country we live in. I would not want a flag in our building or auditorium. I would not want us to spend money erecting a flagpole. We have one I'm supportive of using it. I think a couple of us talked about calling the fire department to see if they could come over with their ladder truck to take the other one down and put another one up. Did we ever call them?

Those are my thoughts.

Steve A.

On Fri, Dec 19, 2025 at 4:12 PM Stephen Walker <srainey6@yahoo.com> wrote:

Unfortunately, the flag has become a political lightning rod for some. There's a risk of guilt by association. The association is whatever story a person associates with the flag. I think we need to understand why we are flying the flag. Those reasons should help us decide if we want to continue to raise the flag.

My reasons are to honor the sacrifices made by veterans. And remind us of the freedoms we have including the freedom to worship publicly. Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 19, 2025, at 3:33 PM, M Bret Blackford bret_blackford@yahoo.com wrote:

American Flag at the McKnight Church Building

You may have noticed the American flag at the McKnight building is tattered and worn. We already have a replacement flag but the issue is the halyard/rope mechanism. It appears the rope is hung up at the top pulley (possibly jumped the track), and we cannot lower the flag.

Today (Dec. 19, 2025) Tom Hunsaker held a ladder while I attempted to cut the flag down. I was only able to cut the weighted line at the bottom. The flag now hangs free, but it still cannot be lowered from the pole.

Regardless of whether we ultimately continue flying a flag, I feel strongly that it is undignified to leave it in this condition. We have also received calls from non-members expressing concern about the state of the flag.

Separate from the mechanical issue, I'll also share that I've had some hesitation about a church having such a prominent display of a national symbol. I don't say that to be argumentative—just to acknowledge that there may be different convictions here, and I want us to be thoughtful about what we choose to emphasize at a building identified with Christ.

My recommendation is that we get the current flag taken down as soon as possible. Doing this safely will likely require a lift rather than an extension ladder (I can tell you from my experience today that climbing an extension ladder propped against a circular flagpole is a little sketchy). If we decide it's worth repairing the internal mechanism, we could potentially coordinate that work with other items that may also require a lift (e.g., the circle canopy lights and the banners in the south parking lot) – and kill three birds with one stone. As stated earlier, I would be fine taking down the current flag and leaving the pole bare.

This email is FYI so everyone can weigh in on how important it is to keep a flag on the pole versus simply removing the current one and leaving the pole bare until/unless repairs are made.

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Office Administrator

McKnight Crossings Church of Christ



12.19.2025-MXFlag-Combined.pdf PDF 236.1 KB



MX-FlagPole.pdf 87.8 KB

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06.21.2023: MX flag pole

From: M Bret Blackford (bret_blackford@yahoo.com)

To: dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com

Cc: mxelders@mcknightcrossings.org; jkryder@mcknightcrossings.org; keaton.jones@sbcglobal.net

Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 05:41 PM CDT

Dave,

That is a good response and I can put this issue to bed now.

---- Bret

On Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 05:09:23 PM CDT, dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com <dave-n-amy-weiler@juno.com> wrote:

Hello Bret and All:

Yes, I like flying the flag at the building.

I also like the MX building being a poling place, and I like that the local police tend to hang out in our parking lot.

The church is "bigger" than the country and will exist without it. However, supporting/promoting the governmental structures that help us to worship freely makes sense to me. These three items above are examples of that support which seem very appropriate to me. I see them as neutral, not promoting a political position.

My thoughts,

Dave

Gents,

I'd like to revisit the question -- "Why does McKnight have a flagpole?"

This was in no way the main topic of any of our discussions but it obviously struck with me. It has been something I've wondered for several years and perhaps now is a good time to bring it up to discuss. There are many more important topics for us to address but this seems one that should not take a lot of time/discussion.

I am patriotic and love America and our troops but just feel uncomfortable having a flagpole. It is not behind the pulpit or in the auditorium, which is good, but I would prefer we did not have a flagpole.

So, my questions is this - are there any of the Elders (or Mr. Kryder) who like flying the flag at the building?

Note: I am not asking if you are worried if people will be upset. I'm not asking if we should take down the flag. I just want your personal opinion on flags at church.

If we are in agreement the next issue is how do we change?

My suggestion (again, if we all prefer *NOT* to fly a flag) is that we take the flag down for a month and wait to hear back from any members complaining or even noticing. If no one even notices or brings it up I'd wait another month and then consider taking down the flagpole. No announcement.

Again, I'm hoping we can get the question answered quickly. We can then discuss what to do once we know everyone's position. We may even decide - Yes, we'd like to take down the flag but we don't want to deal with that for the near-term.

---- Bret