



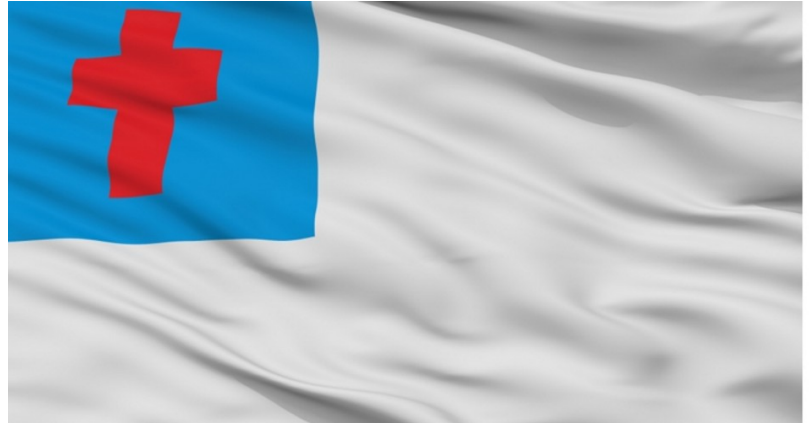
Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 16, 2019

## Banned in Boston — the Christian Flag

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At one time, the phrase “banned in Boston” was a popular American phrase, which conjured up memories of the city’s strict Puritan heritage, and generally referred to a movie, play, or even a written work that had been banned in the city. At one time, Boston officials often banned works which they found to have sexual content or foul language. Eventually, the phrase came to be almost a synonym for anything considered naughty.

With its move to the Left over the decades, it is apparently now the Christian flag that has been “banned in Boston.”

After Hal Shurtleff, the director and the co-founder of Camp Constitution, requested the city to fly the Christian flag as part of the city’s annual Constitution Day festivities on September 17, 2017, the city refused to allow it. Camp Constitution holds an annual summer camp now located in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, that teaches kids about the nation’s Godly heritage and also sponsors other year-round events.

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After the city rejected the request, Shurtleff asked for a written reason, and was told that to fly a religious flag on city property would be a violation of the First Amendment, arguing that the First Amendment required a strict separation between church and state.

“There’s no question that it is an unconstitutional act and [the city] originally said it was a violation of the First Amendment, which I find ironic,” Shurtleff told Fox News. “I’m optimistic the lawsuit will go our way.”

The city offered to allow the flag if it was called the Camp Constitution flag, rather than the Christian flag, a compromise the group rejected. Shurtleff, in an interview with *The New American*, said it was clear that “nomenclature was the issue,” that the city government did not want to allow something in the celebration if it were called Christian. Camp Constitution had desired to hold an event in which pastors would encourage racial reconciliation, freedom in the United States, and celebration of the link between the United States and the Christian faith. They planned to conclude the event with the presentation of the Christian flag.

“Censoring religious viewpoints in a public forum where secular viewpoints are permitted violates the First Amendment,” argued Matthew Staver, the founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel. Liberty Counsel is a religious freedom law firm. “Boston city officials may not ban the Christian flag as part of a



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privately-sponsored event when they allow any other flag by numerous private organizations. It's time for the court to stop the city's unconstitutional censorship."

While a federal court and an appellate court initially ruled for the city against Shurtleff, a new lawsuit appears more promising because of some new "key facts." Among those key facts are that the city has allowed a flag — the Turkish flag — which includes an Islamic star and crescent moon, not once, but 13 times since 2005. Shurtleff also told *The New American* that he found it ironic that the city seal of Boston includes the wording, SICIT PATRIBUS, SIT DEUS, which translated means, "God be with us as he was with our fathers."

The city has also flown the Chinese Communist flag, Shurtleff told *The New American*, recalling that the city did that to commemorate the anniversary of the Chinese Communist revolution! Other flags that Boston allows include the transgender and LGBTQ flags (although those flags are not mentioned in the lawsuit). In all, the city of Boston allows 284 other flags to fly, but has banned the Christian flag.

The lawsuit filing takes note of this blatant anti-Christian discrimination. "Despite all of these many flag raisings containing religious symbols and imagery, and the City's allowing the official flag of the Catholic Church, Camp Constitution's proposed flag was denied because it was religious. There can be no dispute that the City's denial impermissibly discriminated between religion and non-religion, and discriminated between religious sects. Both violate the Establishment Clause," the suit asserts.

Shurtleff told *The New American* that the Christian flag is a non-sectarian symbol, not representing any particular Christian sect or denomination, but only representing the Christian faith in general. Shurtleff is clearly correct. For the city of Boston to select one flag out of hundreds to ban is the very definition of religious discrimination. While some will argue that Christians should not challenge the government's dictates, others might offer as a counter-argument that the Apostle Paul asserted his rights as a Roman citizen, as recorded in the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Acts.

Boston's city government might also consider that the words "separation of church and state" do not actually appear in the First Amendment, but rather come from a letter that President Thomas Jefferson wrote to the Danbury Baptist Association of Connecticut, which feared the creation of a national established church — the Congregationalists, whom the Baptists felt had persecuted them in Connecticut as that state's established religion. Jefferson told the Danbury Baptists that they had no fear, for the First Amendment had erected a wall of separation between church and state, and thus prohibiting the creation of a national religion.

Whatever Jefferson meant by the expression, he clearly did not view it as creating hostility by government toward Christianity, because only two days later, Jefferson attended church services — *in the meeting room of the House of Representatives!* With that in mind, it is difficult to imagine that Jefferson would have opposed a Christian flag at a public event in Boston, when 284 flags, including the LGBTQ flag and the Turkish flag, were allowed to fly.

*Photo showing closeup of Christian flag: fcknimages/iStock/Getty Images Plus*

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