



THE WATER'S EDGE

# We imagine

*we gather. we connect. we serve. we commit.*



# a note from pastor craig

“We imagine because we know God’s dream is that our best days are in front of us.”

Dear Water’s Edge Family,

On January 1st, we entered a new season of ministry as we became The Water’s Edge United Methodist Church. The possibilities in front of us are unlimited. God has already blessed us and has blessed others through us in our short history together.

We gather weekly at The Water’s Edge. Just like the crowd standing shoulder-to-shoulder at the water’s edge listening to Jesus, we crowd in a high school commons area to hear a word from God. Saints and sinners, broken and blessed, young and old. We gather. And we have a much bigger crowd today than we did a few years ago. We are one of the fastest growing United Methodist Churches in the country and we imagine greater things are still to come!

We connect with each other. More people are in small groups than ever before. More people are serving alongside each other than ever before. New friendships are being forged everyday.

We serve our city and the world. No church in Omaha collects as much food as we collect for hungry people right here in our city. In the last year we have sent teams and tens of thousands of dollars to places like Africa, Belize, rural South Dakota, and Joplin, Missouri.

We commit to raising children, developing youth and creating strong families. We commit to resourcing the vision God has given us. We commit to each other and to God that we will live as fully devoted followers.

And now we imagine. We will soon outgrow the high school where we worship God and develop children. We imagine out of necessity and we imagine because we know God’s dream is that our best days are in front of us.

This is our church. The time is now. I invite you today to begin praying for the WE Imagine campaign and ask for God’s guidance in how you might join the vision.

The best is yet to come . . .

Craig Finnestad

# February 12: WE Pray

*We believe WE members pray daily and consistently for the ministry and mission of The Water's Edge, the city and world we live in, and for our own personal relationship with God and the world.*

Prayer isn't about praying for our responsibilities to be less than our current abilities. Rather, we pray we will, by God's grace, continue to grow into our current duties and future dreams.

### **My commitment to prayer at The Water's Edge (Check all that apply)**

- Today, I am not ready to make a commitment to pray.
- Beginning today, I will pray on Sundays.
- Beginning today, I will try to pray daily.
- Beginning today, I will pray daily.
- Beginning today, I will set aside at least 15 minutes for daily prayer.
- I will commit to taking a class on prayer in the next 12 months.
- I will commit to participating on the prayer team.

#### **Prayer grows your relationship with God**

Discovering the most profound realities of life and then embracing the greatest depths of life has less to do with talking about God and more to do with talking to God.

*The LORD is close to all who call on him. —Psalm 145:18*

#### **Prayer develops your relationship with others**

Nothing tends more to cement the hearts of Christians than praying together. Never do they love one another so well as when they witness the outpouring of each other's hearts in prayer.

*—Charles Finney*

*I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God.*

*—Ephesians 1:16-17*

#### **Prayer changes and heals the one who prays**

The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.

*—Søren Kierkegaard*

*Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free. —Psalm 118:5*

Individual Study and Sermon Notes:

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# February 19: WE Connect

We believe WE members make worship the highest priority of the week; connect regularly with others in small groups and/or Christian community; and invest in the lives of those outside the church and invite others to worship, grow, and serve at The Water's Edge.

*They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved. —Acts 2:46-47*

## My commitment to connecting at The Water's Edge (Check all that apply)

### Connecting with God

- I will increase my worship attendance from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ times a month.
- I will make attending corporate worship the highest priority of my week.

### Connecting with people at The Water's Edge

- I will participate in a small group / Bible Study for at least one session in 2012.
- I will lead / host a small group / Bible Study in 2012.
- I will take a short-term class in 2012.
- I will find a friend with whom I can be accountable and share with in 2012.

### Connecting with people outside The Water's Edge

- I will pray for people not in a relationship with God and those outside the church.
- I will welcome guests who are different from myself & include them in our ministries.
- I will invest in others and invite them to worship, grow, or serve The Water's Edge.

### Life is about connecting with God

*Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. —John 15:5*

### Life is about connecting with others

*As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend. —Proverbs 27:17*

### Part of God's purpose for your life sharing with people outside the church

*I pray that the faith you share may make you understand every blessing we have in Christ. —Philemon 1:6*

## Individual Study and Sermon Notes:

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## February 26: WE Serve

*We believe WE members serve both inside and outside The Water's Edge on a regular basis.  
We believe we most look like Jesus when we serve.*

*For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life  
as a ransom for many. —Mark 10:45*

Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you  
can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can. —John Wesley

### **My commitment to serving at The Water's Edge (Check all that apply)**

- I am not ready yet, but I will be searching for ways that I can serve the Lord.
- I will participate on a Water's Edge serving team in 2012 (greeting, set-up, etc...).
- I will volunteer at least once in a Water's Edge mission activity in 2012.
- I will find a mission / agency where I can volunteer regularly.
- I will invite somebody to serve alongside me.
- I will look into participating in a short-term mission trip in 2012 or 2013.
- I will look for specific people in or near my life to serve with no strings attached.
- God is calling me to a risk-taking mission and service (something I would never consider doing  
but for my relationship with Christ) in the following area: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Serving Makes The World A Better Place**

The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" But the good Samaritan reversed the question: "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?" —Martin Luther King Jr.

*God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. — 1 Peter 4:10*

### **Serving Makes You a Better Person**

*Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me. —John 12:26*

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.  
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Individual Study and Sermon Notes:

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## March 4: WE Give

*We believe WE members uphold the biblical standard of giving ten percent of our income to the Lord to resource the vision of The Water's Edge and to love marginalized people in Omaha and throughout the world.*

*Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."—2 Corinthians 9:6-7*

*Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!"—Malachi 3:10*

### **My commitment to giving at The Water's Edge (Check all that apply)**

A journey is best begun by knowing where you are now. My current pledge to The Water's Edge is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year and that represents \_\_\_\_\_ percent of my income. (If you don't pledge yet, estimate your contributions for the current year, or use last year's giving.)

- I am satisfied with my current giving to God's work.
- The check to the church will be the first one I write each month.
- I believe a tithe is a worthy goal of Christian discipleship and I intend to begin stepping up toward that goal starting in 2011. This year I will step from \_\_\_\_\_ percent to \_\_\_\_\_ percent.
- I will move closer to tithing each year.
- I am currently giving a tithe and will continue that practice.
- I am currently giving a tithe and feel called to support additional ministries financially.

### **Giving uses the giver as a blessing to others and giving is a blessing to the giver**

Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.—Luke 6:38

Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can.—John Wesley

A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit.—Elton Trueblood

Individual Study and Sermon Notes:

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# March 11: WE Commit

We believe WE members commit to: 1) Developing children, youth, and families and 2) living as fully devoted followers of Jesus

*And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf is welcoming me. —Matthew 18:5*

*All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. —Acts 2:42*

## **My commitment to committing as a fully devoted disciple at The Water's Edge**

**(Check all that apply)**

- I commit to praying for children, students, and families at The Water's Edge.
- I commit to serving in the Frog Pond (kids Sunday School) once a month.
- I commit to serving at Vacation Bible School this summer.
- I commit to serving as a leader to our middle and high school students.
- I commit to taking a parenting class offered in 2012 – 2013.
- I commit to taking a marriage enrichment class offered in 2012 – 2013.
- I commit to being a marriage mentor.
- I commit to move toward thinking, speaking, acting, and loving like Christ.

### **Develop children, youth, and families**

*Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it. —Proverbs 22:6*

Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future.  
—John Kennedy

### **Live as a fully devoted follower of Jesus**

*You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father. —Matthew 5:14-16*

Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. —Dietrich Bonhoeffer

I know the power obedience has of making things easy which seem impossible.  
—Teresa of Avila

Individual Study and Sermon Notes:

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**THE WATER'S EDGE**

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