

“But you will receive power
when the Holy Spirit comes on you;
and you will be my witnesses
in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth.”
ACTS 1:8



WATEMARK COMMUNITY CHURCH

GLOBAL MISSIONS **TRAC**

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. **2 TIMOTHY 2:2**



GREETINGS

Are you considering a long-term overseas ministry “deployment”? Then this packet is for you.

Inside, you'll find an outline describing how Watermark Church equips, evaluates, and supports its members who are considering this exciting opportunity. Whether you are considering international service for the first time or you are well into the process, we would love to walk alongside you on this journey.

The leadership of Watermark shares your belief in the significance of overseas service. Likewise, we take very seriously our potential role as a your church partner in this ministry opportunity. Many sending organizations require only a church endorsement or sponsorship, however, we see Watermark's role as much more than simply checking a box or providing a signature. We desire to help you process this life altering decision, to help prepare you for the long journey ahead, and to assist you and the community of believers you share life with in connecting with people who will partner with you now and long after you've left the United States.

Watermark's TRAC: A Unique Approach

We recognize that everyone will come into this process at a different point. You may simply have a sense that God's plan for you might include serving in ministry internationally but, you've not explored what that might look like at all. Or, you may have already studied, trained, and prepared significantly for overseas ministry or just be somewhere in between.

Because of this perspective our approach focuses on assessing your level of preparedness for serving overseas and suggesting opportunities for advancing your preparation rather than requiring the same steps, whether needed or not, for everyone regardless of their background.

We will work with you through the **TRAC** process to help all involved in your decision to determine if you are:

- **Trained** - theologically prepared for your role(s) overseas
- **Ready** - emotionally and spiritually prepared for your adventure
- **Able** - partnered, disciplined, and led in your mission
- **Confirmed** - approved by the community of believers who know you best and by Watermark leadership

The main body of this packet outlines the key characteristics of each category listed above. As you read these in-depth descriptions, the length may seem a bit daunting. But please note two things.

First, it is likely that you are already prepared in some of the ways described in the **TRAC**. Our desire through this process is simply to be detailed throughout covering all the things successful preparation for overseas ministry involves. But between your own spiritual growth, your personal preparation for international ministry, and the (often rigorous) preparation provided by your sending organization, many of these elements may already be in place for you. Hopefully this is a chance to celebrate all the ways God has already prepared you! Remember, this TRAC is about identifying where someone is in their preparation, *not* requiring unnecessary steps.

GREETINGS

Second, it is our deep conviction that we are spiritually responsible for anyone we endorse to serve on mission overseas. Because of that after discussing overseas ministry with countless individuals, we have come to believe that what some might see as “overprepared” is actually necessary for successful overseas ministry. We want to ensure, to the best of our ability, that each person we endorse is ready to produce as much fruit as possible, while also having the best possible experience overseas.

Thank you in advance for letting us get to know you and hear about your heart for overseas ministry. Please review this entire packet and then fill out the accompanying application. After that, we look forward to walking this road with you!

Praying for you as you begin this journey,

Rick Howard

Director of International External Focus

EXPECTATIONS

BASIC EXPECTATIONS FOR WATERMARK ENDORSEMENT

Endorsing someone for overseas ministry will require that members of our body have gotten to know an applicant well and that the applicant has shown faithfulness at Watermark for a period of time. While every applicant will be evaluated individually, generally we would expect that they are:

Connected: a full Member of Watermark Community Church for at least six months before applying

In Community: actively participating in a recognized Watermark Community Group

Serving: consistently serving either within Watermark or with a recognized external ministry

Committed to Watermark: completed the 4B survey and renewed your membership covenant each year of membership

WHAT STEPS DOES THE TRAC PROCESS REQUIRE?

The TRAC expectations (described later in this packet) will take varying lengths of time to measure and/or complete for each applicant. However, the specific steps listed will be common to all TRAC participants:

Apply: Complete the original application, allowing us to get to know you and hear about your heart for overseas service.

Meet with us: Meet with members of External Focus International team for an initial discussion of the process of deployment.

Receive affirmation from your Community Group: Provide your Community Group with our CG Questionnaire. The members should affirm your desire to apply for long-term international deployment.

Prepare: Begin or further develop any elements that seem to be lacking in your preparation. These steps will vary and could include anything from taking equipping classes to participating in a recovery ministry to identifying a sending organization to raising financial support.

Develop a Care & Connect Team: Throughout this document we reference the "Care & Connect Team." In its most basic sense, this is an recognized group of individuals who have committed to remaining connected to an applicant before going overseas and throughout the time they serve abroad.

Interview: Complete required interviews with the Mission Advisory Team and External Focus International team.

Get Endorsed: Ultimately, we will determine that you are indeed trained, ready, able, and confirmed for overseas ministry.

Celebrate: We look forward to celebrating with you as God calls you to this exciting journey!

EXPECTATIONS

WHY PARTICIPATE IN WATERMARK'S TRAC?

We recognize that for some folks considering overseas service, any additional steps beyond what your chosen sending organization requires may seem unnecessary. Others, however, will come to us looking and hoping for as much help as possible. For both groups, and everyone in between, the following explains some of the benefits of walking through this process with Watermark.

Endorsement: Most well respected sending organizations will require an official church endorsement before partnering formally with someone in overseas ministry. The TRAC process is the only opportunity to receive this endorsement from Watermark for long-term international service.

Experience: Over the years, Watermark staff and members have traveled overseas for all sorts of ministry opportunities, both short-term and long-term. Our leadership has also studied the international ministry work of many other churches and sending organizations. We will use everything we have learned to help you prepare well.

Shepherding: Since you have chosen to come under the authority of Watermark Church, we have a God-given opportunity to shepherd you as you prepare for your journey.

Relationships: We look forward to connecting you with members of our body who may want to partner with you in a variety of ways including providing community back home, praying for you, and/or providing financially for your work.

Support: We recognize that most overseas ministry requires significant financial support. Not only will we try to help you widen your relational network, but upon completion of the TRAC Watermark will consider providing financially for those we get to know through the TRAC process.

COMPONENTS

COMPONENTS OF THE TRAC

Below you'll find an in-depth explanation of what we believe are essential elements of preparedness for overseas missions. It is likely that in each category you'll find you have areas of strength and areas of weakness. Our goal in this process is to help you grow in any way we can in both areas. You will also find under each element examples of practical ways your preparation can be enhanced and completed.

TRAINED

The trained applicant must be equipped biblically and culturally, disciplined by mature believers, and prepared for their very specific role overseas.

Equipped: A fully equipped applicant is someone who knows and understands Scripture. They must also consistently demonstrate application of Scripture in their personal life, community, parenting, marriage (if married), and stewardship of resources. Equipping can come from a variety of sources: university or seminary classes, equipping classes at Watermark, the Perspectives on the World Christian Movement course, training at another doctrinally sound church, and so on. Ultimately, an applicant should be fully equipped (2 Timothy 3:16-17) to provide sound theological responses to basic questions of the faith, on topics essential to international ministry and on topics that may arise within the applicant's particular mission context.

Disciplined: The twelve men Christ chose to be his ambassadors prepared for their role by spending three years being shepherded, taught, and disciplined by Christ as preparation for the time he would not be present to help them build, lead, and serve the Church. An individual should be prepared for serving internationally through discipleship by mature and equipped believers. Ideally, discipleship should have been ongoing already, will continue through the evaluation period, and will be a part of the applicant's continued spiritual development once they are overseas. Discipleship may be provided by spiritually mature individual believers, community group members, Care & Connect Team members, pastoral staff who have a personal relationship with the applicant, or other Christ-following individuals in the applicant's life.

Well-Prepared: A "Sending Organization" is an integral part of successful long-term international deployment. In addition to providing support and shepherding on the ground, that organization should also be excellent in its pre-deployment efforts as it evaluates, trains, and prepares applicants. A large part of an applicant's preparation for international mission will or should come from the sending organization. Thus it will be important to choose an excellent organization that will provide rigorous and quality training for the ministry ahead. We have a growing list of organizations that we feel are trustworthy and have a strong track record of preparing, deploying, and shepherding folks serving overseas. We will assist you in evaluating and selecting a sending organization that best fits your plan for serving overseas.

COMPONENTS

READY

While we expect everyone we endorse to possess an overall spiritual maturity, there are some aspects of spiritual maturity we believe are especially important for those ministering overseas to possess in order ready to effectively serve.

Stewarding Biblically: In Luke 16:10, Christ tells us that those who are faithful with very little will be trusted with much. An applicant should have a history of faithfully stewarding the time, talents, and treasures that God has provided them. Faithful stewardship of “treasures” (finances and material things) is exemplified by sacrificial and generous giving, as well as avoiding debt and transparently sharing financial information with their Watermark Community Group. Meanwhile, a faithful steward of time and talents consistently uses their spiritual gifts and personal passions to serve the church and community around them in a way that shows they prioritize the Lord. Watermark has a variety of past sermons on stewardship as well as the Moneywise class or small group study to help you examine this area.

Living Missionally: Life as a “missionary” does not begin when a believer moves overseas to serve in full-time vocational ministry. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) was Christ’s call to the Church to be “His witnesses,” both close to home and on the other side of the globe. Because of this, we believe living missionally begins at home, school, work, etc. An applicant’s life should be marked by living on mission locally, even while preparing to serve internationally. Missional living means consistently loving and serving the people God has placed closest to the applicant, and consistently sharing the gospel with folks they are loving and serving along with other non-believers.

Engaged Locally: One of the keys to serving internationally is to first engage locally with the same people group or a similar group that the applicant is planning to serve among overseas. Through this experience, you can gain a greater understanding of the unique qualities and challenges that a culture or people group possess well before you travel overseas. Further, as you build relationships with people groups, ideas on how best to serve this culture or group can be developed, evaluated, and modified. This effort should be undertaken early in the process in order to maximize the time available to complete this requirement. Watermark has a growing number of ministry opportunities for engaging with the people from the “ends of the earth” who are arriving daily in our own backyard.

Conscientious: Relationships and trust develop and deepen over time. To serve overseas in a different culture will take patience and perseverance, since cultivating new relationships in a foreign country, often through a new language, takes extended time. An applicant must demonstrate a history of follow-through and completion of projects in all areas of life, including education, employment, and ministry.

Conflict-Resolving: An applicant should understand and consistently demonstrate the principles of Matthew 7 and 18, applying them to conflicts at home, at work, and in other personal relationships. As much as possible, the applicant should have resolved or sought to resolve any past or lingering conflicts here at home before being deployed. Watermark has consistently trained on these principles since its inception. The “Conflict: A Constant Opportunity” sermon series provides a great start, and the printed “Conflict Field Guide” is an excellent resource as well.

COMPONENTS

Discipling and Teaching locally: Since the purpose of serving internationally is to evangelize, disciple and help new believers grow in their faith, it is imperative that an applicant establish a fruitful ministry and track record of doing this at home. Even before beginning this process, there should be active engagement in evangelism, teaching, and discipling others and growing in the ability to answer questions apologetically. We can connect you to Watermark ministries that can help you to grow in this and would strongly suggest that you participate in Watermark's Unashamed Evangelism training weekend, Equipped Disciple classes, and Great Questions (and other the theology classes/training days offered by our Equipping Team).

Planning for Communication: An essential element when serving internationally is communicating well with partners and supporters back home. Doing so will give you the chance not only to disciple people in your new culture and location, but also to disciple those folks back home who are praying and providing support for the overseas ministry. Communication is also important for continuing to connect your partners at home with your ministry overseas which should result in partners praying more consistently for you, continuing their financial support, and maintaining the relationship in the future. Your Care and Connect Team (details below) along with Watermark staff and volunteers can play a key role in helping you develop and execute a communication plan before you leave to serve overseas.

ABLE

We want to ensure that anyone serving overseas has the essential relationships needed for this adventure, as well as a strong plan for making an impact.

Committed: Given the challenges of learning a new culture and more often than not, a new language, in most instances effective overseas service requires a significant commitment of time before deep, tangible impact in an international context can be expected. In order to insure that an applicant is fully committed to serving internationally, we will generally ask for a minimum 3-year service covenant (when this aligns with the plans of the sending organization). It is our belief, based on multiple discussions with ministry organizations and experienced overseas missionaries that someone serving for a shorter amount of time generally brings significantly less value and impact to the ministry team and overseas culture being served.

Partnered "on the Ground" Well: Serving on mission internationally requires various types of support. The sending church, the Care and Connect Team, and the sending organization all play integral roles in assisting members serving overseas. The final partner needed for successful deployment overseas is the in-country ministry organization, including the ministry team the member will serve with directly. The most common challenges encountered when serving internationally (as when serving locally) are team and partner problems. Those often show up in a lack of unity among the team that results in unresolved conflict, a lack of solid servant leadership on the ground, and/or a lack of clarity around the "mission" itself. An applicant should seek to learn and discern as much as can reasonably be known about the on-the-ground organization they will be serving with, as well as the team they would be joining.

Approved by a Strong Sending Organization: There are hundreds of sending organizations that are willing to approve, endorse, and deploy individuals who desire to serve in ministry internationally. Some are strong; many are not. It is important that you find a sending organization that is known to be faithful, trustworthy, and gospel-centered. It must also have a proven record of providing excellent care and support for its missionaries. As noted earlier, a Watermark member desiring to serve overseas must be prepared well by their sending organization. But they must be *approved* by their sending organization as well. Until the sending organization approves the applicant, an endorsement by Watermark cannot be provided.

COMPONENTS

Strategic: An essential element of overseas service is a strategic, Kingdom-focused mission. And it is also vital that each person serving overseas be used in the most strategic way(s) possible. The importance of developing a strong plan for ministry cannot be understated. Raising support, being effective in ministry, and the long-term sustainability of the mission will be directly impacted by this choice. The applicant should consult with their sending organization, the team overseas, their community group, and Watermark leadership to determine how their personal gifts and skills can be used best while on mission overseas. Ultimately, this will lead to a detailed Ministry Plan. In some cases, this Ministry Plan will also include an occupation the applicant will have in the foreign country. A non-ministry job is often required for international visas, it also may allow a person to enter “closed” countries, provides an excellent entrance into the local culture, offers opportunities to build relationships in a natural context, and can help with the mission’s funding.

Cared for & Connected: Loneliness, isolation, and a constant need to raise financial support are three major challenges that members serving overseas face. In light of these challenges, Watermark has developed a plan for what we call “Care & Connect Teams” (CCT). The CCT is a group of committed people who come together to support this individual in a unique and committed way. They desire to know and partner in the unique joys, challenges, and transitions involved in leaving the local body to serve internationally. These people will commit to remain in close touch with the members serving abroad allowing the person overseas to be open and honest, reveal his/her needs, and share successes and failures. The Care & Connect Team is the bridge between the individual serving overseas and the larger Watermark church body. Watermark leadership will look to the team to provide updates. And the team will also help think through how various needs can be met by the Watermark body, whether before leaving, while living internationally, when on “furlough” in the United States, or when their international ministry ends. The CCT should start with an applicant’s Community Group, but can also include other personal relationships outside the CG, as well as other believers who desire to come alongside members serving overseas.

Supported: Those serving overseas will need to develop a network of partners to support their effort through both prayer and financial provision. This is an integral part of the reciprocal impact on supporters back home. Prayer support is important in the spiritual battle that all of us face, but those serving internationally often face isolation from other believers, heightening the impact of “prayer partners” back home. Financial support is essential to most people serving abroad. But the need for consistent fundraising can put tremendous pressure on folks serving overseas. The best solution to this issue, outside of being a “tentmaker” missionary (supporting oneself primarily through a job), is to have a broad base of partners. These many partners (i.e. 50-plus) should enter a covenant agreement to partner financially and through prayer. Ideally, they will agree to partner for the same three years the individual has committed to serving. By doing this, the impact of losing a few partners at various points is lessened, and major efforts to develop new partners should only be required every three years.

COMPONENTS

CONFIRMED

Ultimately, the applicant and other appropriate Watermark members and leadership should affirm that this person is ready for overseas ministry.

Confirmed: The member's application will be reviewed for endorsement by the Watermark staff, Missions Advisory Team, Watermark Elders, and the applicant's Community Group. The expectation is that any areas of concern for an applicant will have been identified and resolved before this step. In this final review, any person or group that has reservations about an applicant is expected to voice those concerns. Then others can assist in evaluating the merits of the concern through prayer, discussion, and additional interviews if needed. Once there is unanimous confirmation, the application will be approved.

Covenanted: An individual who has been confirmed by Watermark leadership to serve internationally must enter into a covenant relationship with Watermark to maintain a biblical community relationship with other Watermark members by covenanting with a Care & Connect team (CCT) comprised of a majority Watermark members and committing to serve overseas for a minimum of (3) years from date of departure to date of return. It is not anticipated that individuals serving overseas will maintain membership at Watermark, but rather it is anticipated that they will become members of a local body of believers in the area they will be living and serving internationally who will be primarily responsible for shepherding those serving internationally. In return, Watermark covenants to provide prayer and encouragement during the 3 year international service period. Watermark leadership will evaluate on an annual basis as is done with all ministry partners contributing corporate financial support. Watermark staff will also work with the members CCT to assist with any specific needs that arise while the individual is serving overseas or on furlough in the Dallas area. The Covenant relationship will be re-evaluated each year by Watermark to ensure that those serving internationally continue to meet all the requirements of the TRAC, the sending organization, and any other individuals or organizations connected to the member's service overseas.

APPLICATION

MARRIED APPLICANTS SHOULD EACH COMPLETE AN APPLICATION

HELLO,

The leadership of Watermark Church is very encouraged by your heart to learn what the Lord might have next for you, including potentially serving him overseas. This application is designed to help us to get to know you better so that we can assess your readiness to serve overseas so please answer each question thoroughly and honestly. Once you have completed the application email it along with a picture of you and your family to Karen Bundren in Watermark's International External Focus office at kbundren@watermark.org. If you have any questions please feel free to email Rick Howard at rhoward@watermark.org or call him at 214-393-3061. (Please type your answers)

PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Full Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Spouses Full Name: _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Child (1): _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

(2): _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

(3): _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

(4): _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

(5): _____ **Date of Birth:** _____

Addresses for Past 5 Years:

Phone #'s:

Cell: _____ Home: _____ Work: _____

APPLICATION

Email(s):

Social Security and DL#'s:

Educational History:

Employment History:

Watermark Attendance & Membership:

When did you start regularly attending Watermark?

What led you to connect with Watermark?

Are you a Watermark member? Yes | No

When did you complete the membership process?

If you are not a member, why not?

**List the churches you have been a part of either as an attender or member in the past ten years?
Explain why you left those churches:**

APPLICATION

FAMILY ASSESSMENT

Marital Status (if divorced please explain circumstances in detail):

Date of Marriage:

Officiant of Wedding:

Describe your pre-marriage counseling (Who led it?, How often and long did you meet?, Content/source of the counseling?)

What is condition of your marriage? What are the greatest areas of strength and weakness? On a 1-10 scale how would you rate it? Why?

Is there any unresolved conflict in your marriage? Describe how you and your spouse each deal with conflict:

How does your spouse (and children) feel about your family possibly serving abroad long term in the mission field? What steps have you taken to process this decision, address concerns, and educate yourself and your family on overseas service?

Unmarried Applicants – Describe your standard for purity in dating and your plan for living up to that standard:

APPLICATION

Please list all assets and debts you currently have:

Assets: Description Amount

Debts: Description Amount

APPLICATION

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

If you were to die tonight, on a scale of 0-10, how sure are you that you would be in heaven with God?

If God were to ask you why He should let you into heaven, what would you say?

Describe how and at what age you came to faith in Jesus Christ:

Describe the impact of the gospel on your life? (ie.before Christ/after Christ)

Describe the last time you shared the gospel with someone far from Christ? How often does do you share the gospel with others? How do you direct casual everyday conversations to the gospel?

What are your spiritual gifts? How do you exercise them?

What has discipleship looks like in your life? Who has discipled you? (Describe the process and impact) Who are you discipling? Describe it? (Please include contact information for both)

Do you agree with the Doctrinal Statement <http://www.watermark.org/about-us/what-we-believe/> of Watermark Community Church and agree to lead/serve in accordance with the Doctrinal Statement? Yes | No

How do you practice the spiritual disciplines? Which ones are most challenging for you? Do you have a regular personal Bible study or devotional program? If so, please describe:

APPLICATION

Do you have any current or previous sin struggles, either confessed or unconfessed, that might impact Watermark's endorsement of your application to serve overseas or might limit the effectiveness of your ministry? (Struggles that we should know about and process with you for example would be pornography, alcohol/drug addictions, premarital sex, eating disorders, anger, overspending, or any sin struggle not listed that we should be aware of. These aren't automatic disqualifiers, but we do need to know about them in order to include that information in the evaluation process) **Please provide a thorough explanation and be honest:**

If you responded to question #9 with information about past or current sin struggles, please provide a summary of the people/recovery process/program that you participated in to shepherd you through that sin struggle:

What is your approach to addressing sin when you or others see it in your life? (Note: this isn't a question about specific sins necessarily, but more about how you address sin when it happens in general.):

Do you have any unresolved conflict in your life with anyone? Yes | No **If the response is yes, what is the process you would follow in order to resolve that conflict in a manner that God is honored and reconciliation is the ultimate goal?**

Do you need to seek forgiveness or offer forgiveness to anyone because of past conflict or sin you were involved in or a victim of? Yes | No **If the response is yes, what steps do you intend to take?**

Have you watched/listened to Watermark's sermon series on Biblical Conflict Resolution...."Conflict: A Constant Opportunity"? Yes | No

Describe the level of depth/sharing/accountability in your community group?

What does your community think about you applying to serve in a long term international missions role? Do they have any reservations? Explain:

APPLICATION

MISSIONS PREPARATION ASSESSMENT

Where are you actively serving at Watermark or with Watermark partners? How long have you served and describe your roles and responsibilities:

What other local ministries or Christian organizations have you served with in the past ten years? Describe you activities, frequency, and length of service with each:

What International ministries or organizations have you served with in the past ten years? Describe where you served, your activities, frequency, and length of service:

Are you involved locally with any ministry or organization that serves local residents who are from other cultures or countries? Describe you activities, frequency, and length of service with each:

Describe the process that led you to apply to serve overseas on a long term ministry assignment:

Where, with whom, and for how long are you considering serving internationally (if you know) and why?

Have you participated in Watermark's in town discipleship evangelism weekend UNASHAMED?
Yes | No If the response is no, please sign up to participate.

Equipping - describe any college, seminary or other classes, church or para-church sponsored training opportunities, or other training have you participated in to prepare for serving internationally:

APPLICATION

Describe your plan for supporting yourself while serving internationally:

What information should we know about you that we might not have asked about? We are looking for anything that might shed light positively or negatively on your application?

APPLICATION

WATERMARK CHURCH COMMUNITY GROUP INFORMATION

Community Group Leader(s):

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

Community Group Member(s):

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

APPLICATION

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Length of time in community together:

APPLICATION

SPIRITUAL AND PERSONAL REFERENCES

(Please list at least four – CG members can be references as well)

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Nature/Length of Association:

APPLICATION

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Nature/Length of Association:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Nature/Length of Association:

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Nature/Length of Association:

CARE & CONNECT

CARE & CONNECT TEAMS

HOW TO CARE FOR AND CONNECT WITH WATERMARK MEMBERS SERVING INTERNATIONALLY

We are excited when God calls individuals at Watermark to participate in His mission of making disciples throughout the world. As members from our body go out to serve and lead in ministries outside of Dallas, we want to partner and stay connected with these folks, who although are not physically present, are a valuable part and extension of our church family. To do this, we have created a simple structure to “bridge” the distance between the member serving outside of Dallas and Watermark’s staff and body.

Because it is naturally challenging to remain connected while serving outside of the United States, we require Watermark members who will be serving away from Watermark with an international ministry to have a **Primary Care Contact** and a **Care and Connect Team**.

WHAT IS A “PRIMARY CARE CONTACT”?

The Primary Care Contact (PCC) is the main liaison between the Watermark member serving internationally and the Watermark International External Focus team. The PCC also serves as the point person for the Care and Connect team (CCT) that comes alongside the member serving internationally.

The serving member is responsible for selecting a person or couple for the role of PCC.

The member serving internationally should choose Watermark member(s) for the role of PCC.

The PCC should be a person/couple with whom the serving member has an established level of trust and who is committed to this position for an extended period of time.

The PCC should be a person who has time and a desire to serve as the point person. The PCC may not be “your best friend”, but is someone who is a responsible and proactive person, desiring to serve, and with the margin to play the role of a connector/facilitator.

The PCC will be responsible for keeping Watermark’s International External Focus Team informed of the status and needs of the member serving internationally.

WHAT IS A “CARE AND CONNECT TEAM”?

The Care and Connect Team (CCT) is a group of committed people (this can be the serving member’s CG or a collection of personal relationships outside the CG) who come together, desiring to know and seeking to partner with the member serving internationally in the unique joys, challenges, and transitions involved in leaving the local body to serve internationally.

It should be comprised of individuals/community groups who commit to remaining in close touch with member(s) serving away from their Watermark home.

CARE & CONNECT

This is a group of people with whom the person can be open and honest, allowing them to see his/her needs, and share his/her successes and defeats.

This is also a group of people willing to stay engaged and be a part of thinking through how various needs in leaving, living internationally, and returning can be met through the body.

Along with the PCC, this team is the bridge between the member serving and the larger Watermark church body.

THE PCC AND TEAM SEEK TO FACILITATE THESE NEEDS:

Communication: staying in touch throughout the time abroad.

Prayer/Care: knowing about and praying for needs on a consistent basis and relaying those needs to Watermark staff and body.

Accountability: inquiring regularly as to the member's spiritual condition, marital condition, and ministry condition.

Advocacy/Networking/Raising Support: helping link the member and his/her needs to the greater body of Watermark and other believers who might want to partner in the effort; acting as the advocate for their international efforts and for the member individually; and providing consistent financial support for this international effort directly and through encouraging others to join the support.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT FOR THE PCC/CCT?

We ask the PCC and CCT to commit to remaining in these roles while the member is serving internationally. Should a PCC or CCT member need to step out of the role, they would commit to working with the member serving internationally to find a replacement to step into that role.

We encourage longer-term relationships because the reality is that the member serving may not be home frequently given their ministry/location and finding replacements will be difficult for them in some instances.

In both instances, a team approach through the member's community group is an acceptable way of dividing up responsibility for these roles. However, the commitment to these roles should outlast the life of the CG should the group at some point dissolve or change in structure.

HOW WILL WATERMARK LEADERSHIP BE INVOLVED?

The External Focus Director and/or Team will communicate with the PCC and CCT to stay aware of how the member is doing, as well as facilitate the use of our church's resources to assist the member serving and their ministry in the field.

Examples of ways that the External Focus staff will help include: connecting the serving member to other ministry areas to share/speak; regularly putting prayer needs on "Click and Pray" and/or in the Raise the Mark prayer guide; helping secure a room when the PCC/CCT want to host a coffee or gathering for the member; and facilitating communication and engagement with the body via email, social media, etc.

CARE & CONNECT

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

Maintaining a relationship with members serving internationally can be challenging, which is why it's so important to have a team of committed CCT members who are intentional about caring and connecting in a variety of ways. Below are some suggestions to sustain communication and a relationship between the member(s) serving and the team:

For the member(s) serving outside of Dallas:

Communicate consistently. One suggestion is to send a monthly/every other month email to the PCC and your CCT. This is not something that will be published or is meant to be legalistic. The intent would be for the team in Dallas to feel deeply connected to you and what is happening so they will know how to pray for and come alongside you for support. Below are some categories you may want to share briefly about (both highs and lows):

Personal spiritual life

Community/accountability

Ministry and team updates

Other (financial, physical, emotional, marital, etc.)

Be specific about your needs for help and also realistic about what others can provide

Copy the team on your annual Watermark 4B form evaluation

Periodically enter prayer requests on Click and Pray

Communicate with the PCC/CCT on any changes in ministry or timing of your travel back to Dallas

Provide the PCC with the names and e-mail addresses of several of your local team members in case of an emergency (Also provide your team leader with the name/email of the PCC in case of emergency)

Use Skype or other technology to communicate regularly with your PCC and CCT

FOR THE PRIMARY CARE CONTACT/CARE AND CONNECT TEAM:

As mentioned previously, the PCC and CCT are the bridge between the member(s) serving and the larger Watermark church body. The team helps make our member serving feel loved and cared for by showing them love in practical ways; keeping them visible before the rest of the Watermark family; and strengthening them in their ministry assignment through prayer and encouragement. The PCC keeps the External Focus Team aware of dates the person will be in Dallas, as well as the needs. The specific ways in which a Care and Connect Team goes about helping meet the member's needs will vary depending on the specific personality and needs of the member(s), as well as the personality and creativity of the team.

CARE & CONNECT

BELOW ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED:

Communication

Send regular e-mails letting them know what is happening at Watermark, as well as things happening in your own ministry and life

Plan a regular Skype or Vonage call to connect voice-to-voice or face-to-face

Follow their blog and social media posts and respond with personal anecdotes or encouragement

Use social media to stay connected and share their journey with your friends and family

Prayer/Care

Pray consistently

Send an e-mail to let them know you are praying, including an encouraging scripture

Send a care package, birthday card, or supplies the person might need but cannot get in the states

Ask the External Focus Team to include prayer requests in the Raise the Mark prayer guide

When needed, enter prayer requests on Click and Pray

Advocacy/Networking

Before the member returns to Dallas:

E-mail or call them and ask specific questions about their needs while in Dallas.

When will you be arriving and then leaving? (find this out as soon as possible to let the External Focus Team know)

What do you need? (place to stay, car, cell phone)

What are your goals while you will be in Dallas and how can we help? (raise additional financial support, meet new people, speaking engagements, etc.)

Among the CCT and their network of friends, see how you can help meet the practical needs while the person is here

While the member is here:

Meet them at the worship service, Raise the Mark, and other events

Invite them to be a part of your small group while they are in town

Plan some "down time" to just interact informally and socially

Help the "faith supported" member raise support within the church

Note: While there is no substitute for personal support raised by the member who is going, the PCC will partner with them to assist in the process so that the person is not alone. The PCC will not raise support for the member but will assist in the process (host dinners/coffees, offer encouragement, etc.).

CARE & CONNECT

Other:

Help the person think about how Watermark might partner with their work.

What existing ministries, leadership, or resources from Watermark could impact and strengthen the ministry? Let the External Focus Team know of any ideas.

If financially possible, plan for a few of the team members to take a trip to visit the member serving outside of Dallas every few years.

If there are team and ministry changes and decisions, help the person process these, and as needed link them to the External Focus Team and others for strategic discussions.

Thank you for loving and caring for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are serving internationally. If you have any questions, please contact the External Focus Team.

Watermark External Focus Team Contacts:

Rick Howard | International Director of External Focus at rhoward@watermark.org

Carisa Knight | Partner Relations Coordinator at cknight@watermark.org

SENDING ORG.

CHOOSING A SENDING ORGANIZATION

There are many factors involved in choosing a mission organization as knowledge about a mission agency is vital in making a good decision. To assist you in the process, here are some questions you should ask as you evaluate various sending organizations to and determine if they fit with God's leading in your life.

Questions to ask a mission sending organization:

WHO, WHAT AND WHERE?

An important thing to consider in choosing a mission board is finding an organization that will give you the opportunity to minister as God is leading you. If you have a specific who, what and where in mind, look for an organization whose areas of ministry fit with those areas of interest as you evaluate potential sending organizations.

What are their core beliefs about basic doctrinal issues?

Missionaries work in teams, and teams that are in agreement theologically can function more effectively, with fewer conflicts. Find out how the mission's doctrinal position lines up with your own. Examine it closely to determine if it is biblical and clear. Make sure you understand the mission's position on sensitive issues such as prosperity gospel, the ecumenical or charismatic movements. Knowing and being in agreement with the mission's doctrinal statement from the beginning can prevent tension on the field in the years to come.

WHAT ARE THEIR OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES IN SENDING OUT MISSIONARIES?

Mission organizations vary greatly in their goals and scope of focus – from medicine, theological education, communication or relief to more of a general focus on church-planting, evangelism and/or discipleship. Look for an organization whose focus is similar to the focus you feel led to be a part of. Learn about their history and find out if they are open to new ideas and sensitive to trends in missions.

HOW DOES THE ORGANIZATION HANDLE FINANCES?

Most independent mission organizations require missionaries to raise financial support in partnership with supporting churches and individuals or fund the ministry through resources provided by work overseas. You should speak with the sending organization's treasurer or accountant about that agency's specific model. You should also examine the organization's most recent audited financial statement for an understanding of how they are stewarding overall the resources provided them.

Questions to ask related to finances should include:

What kind of financial model do you follow?

How are support levels reached?

SENDING ORGANIZATION

Are salary, housing and other expenses adjusted according to family size and the local economy of the field?

Are living allowances reasonable? Both excessive and inadequate allowances can be a hindrance to effective, God-honoring ministry.

How are mission-wide expenses raised?

What percentage of each missionary's support is used to finance headquarters personnel and expenses?

Do you belong to an organization, such as the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), for financial accountability?

WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY OF THE ORGANIZATION CORPORATELY AND IN THE FIELD?

Every organization approaches leadership differently. Find out how they make decisions and how they handle accountability. Questions to ask include:

Are you directed by a board of trustees or by the mission administration?

How much autonomy do missionaries on the field have?

To whom are missionaries accountable?

To whom are leaders accountable?

How do you make policies and decisions?

Is there a shepherding and discipling structure in place between experienced missionaries and new ones? Explain what it looks like.

Who decides on issues such as schooling for children and the balance between field ministry and ministry in the home for spouses/moms?

HOW DOES THE SENDING AGENCY PREPARE NEW OVERSEAS MISSIONARIES FOR DEPLOYMENT IN THE FIELD?

Arriving on the field prepared is important to being effective in ministry whether at home or abroad. Learn how the organization will train and prepare you for a life of long-term service in a different culture. Do they offer and/or require:

Hands-on experience before arriving in the field, long-term?

Adequate knowledge about cultures and people groups?

Training in raising support?

Guidance concerning financial requirements?

Language training?

Marital and family preparation for serving overseas?

Does the agency provide an orientation and training period?

SENDING ORGANIZATION

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF MISSIONARY CANDIDATES?

Find out what the organization looks for in mission candidates as this will tell you a lot about their priorities and focus. In addition to requiring various types of training or experience, including formal biblical training, technical training and experience in the local church good organizations will require qualifications that run much deeper. It's also important to learn how much an organization stresses the value of individual prayer, Bible study, personal evangelism, and serving.

WHAT ARE WITH THIS ORGANIZATION MISSIONARIES LIKE?

Learn about the people who minister with organizations that you're considering; they will provide the most accurate glimpse into what life within an organization is like. Find out why they chose their particular missions agency, and why they are still serving with them. Ask them about their goals and find out what makes them tick. Are they in agreement with the mission as a whole? Are they in agreement with one another? Learning about the people behind the policies is vital to understanding what an organization is really all about.

HOW DO THIS AGENCY WORK WITH OTHER MISSIONS AGENCIES?

Find out how the organization relates to other like-minded agencies. Are they willing to cooperate and share efforts with other organizations to further the spread of the gospel? Is there a spirit of teamwork or competition toward other agencies?

What kind of relationship does the agency have with churches?

Mission organizations relate differently to churches. Your local sending church will likely be your strongest supporter in prayer and financial support, and a good relationship between them and your sending organization is essential. Ask, does the agency see the local church as the key to impacting the world for the kingdom both back home and in the field?

HOW ARE MISSIONARIES PLACED ON THE FIELD?

Find out who would be involved in deciding where and how you will serve. Would the gifts and abilities God has given you be assessed and taken into consideration? What assistance and information would they give to help you in making decisions about where and how to serve? How would you be placed on a team?

RESOURCES

BOOKS:

The Journal of Jim Elliott by Elisabeth Elliot

From Jerusalem to Iran Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions by Ruth Tucker

Spiritual Secret by Hudson Taylor

Let the Nations Be Glad: the Supremacy of God in Missions Serving with Eyes Wide Open by John Piper

The Missionary Call: Find Your Place in God's Plan for the World by M. David Sills

Introduction to Global Missions by Zane Pratt & M. David Sills

Spiritual Multiplication in the Real World by Bob McNab w/ David Platt

3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame, and Fear Cultures, Jayson Georges

The Mission of God by Christopher Wright

Toxic Charity by Robert Lupton

Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christ Like Humility by Duane Elmer

Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World by Tom Doyle

The Peacemaker by Ken Sand

The Spirituality of Fundraising by Henri Nourwen

BLOGS/ARTICLES/SITES:

leadnet.org/docs/Nine_Game_Changers.pdf Eric Swanson

DesiringGod.org/articles.....what-s-wrong-with-western-missionaries

Alifeoverseas.com A Life Overseas: A collective blog

DesiringGod.org/messages/live-to-die

Supportaworker.org website guide for caring and connecting with missionaries