



STAFF HANDBOOK

WATERMARK COMMUNITY CHURCH HANDBOOK FOR NEW STAFF MEMBERS

HOW TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE IN THE 2ND BEST PLACE TO WORK IN DFW¹

¹ Why would we call this the “2nd Best Place to Work in DFW”? That’s because from 2011 – 2016, we were #2 on the list of top places to work in DFW, as awarded by The Dallas Morning News. Yes, we came in 2nd place five years in a row! Hopefully, now that we’ve hired you we can finally make it to #1!!!

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IMAGINE A CHURCH...

where every member is whole-heartedly pursuing full devotion to Christ. You find people whose lives demand belief in the existence and power of God. Every person can move forward in a relationship with Jesus. Hurting people can easily connect with life-changing community. Everyone has access to teaching that transforms. Members are discovering, developing and deploying their gifts and resources for the Lord.

IMAGINE A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS...

so authentic that it has favor with all people. So selfless that it creates a sense of awe. So empowered that creativity and excellence are seen everywhere. So obvious about the work of a sovereign God that others are drawn to a relationship with their Savior – a place where day-by-day the Lord adds to their number those who are being saved.

IMAGINE THIS BEING YOUR CHURCH.



» HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

The words on the previous page were penned by the families² who started this church back in November 1999, and they have served as a rallying cry ever since. Those words are what we believe this church *can* be, what this church *should* be and what God wants *all* churches to be. If Watermark has any hope of being that kind of church, then we who have the privilege of leading this church must lead in whole-heartedly pursuing Jesus and aiming to be the community of believers described by the those words. This is the awesome responsibility you now get to share in by being a part of the team. So, *welcome to the family!*

One of the aspects of being on staff we hope you'll appreciate is how hard we work hard to not view ourselves as merely employees, co-workers and bosses. We view ourselves as a family; a group of people who deeply love one another, who work hard at loving one another and who together are on a perfect mission, serving a perfect God.

Striving to be a strong and healthy family has a tremendous influence on the staff culture. Technically speaking, culture is *the accumulation of behaviors, motivated by core values, that characterize a group of people.*³ Our culture can really be summarized by one word: *love*. We want love to be the core value that drives all our collective behaviors which characterize us. Strong relationships are at the core of every strong culture and if we want to strengthen and preserve our culture, then we must simply do what Jesus has called us to do: love one another.⁴

The late management guru Peter Drucker has been famously quoted as saying “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.” We’re not exactly sure why culture eats any meals or even how it could eat a meal, however, we believe Mr. Drucker was communicating something that we believe to be true: *an organization’s culture is MORE IMPORTANT than their strategy*. We did not hire you because you are a “strategic fit,” we hired you because we believe you are a person of character, you are competent, you are a good chemistry fit and because we believe you are going to help preserve and improve our staff culture. Since we believe the culture is *more important* than the strategy, it is not a stretch to

² The founding families were: (1) Martin & Linda Massinger, (2) Scott & Stephanie Polk, (3) Kirk & Cathy McJunkin, (4) Kyle & Tresha Kaigler, (5) Kyle & Christy Fagin, (6) Burke & Charla Autrey, (7) Todd & Julie Anders, (8) Jeff & Laurie Richardson, and (9) Todd & Alex Wagner.

³ Props to George Barna for greatly influencing this technical definition. We read this definition in his book “Revolution: Finding Vibrant Faith Beyond the Walls of the Sanctuary” (Wheaton, ILL.: Tyndale House, 2005), 108.

⁴ John 13:34-35

say maintaining and strengthening the staff culture *is* our strategy. Everything we do as a local church flows from our staff culture.

With all that being said, the purpose of this handbook is to try and document what we believe makes the Watermark staff culture distinctive. If you are expecting a document full of Sunday-School Christian lingo, then you are going to be disappointed. We want to try and spell out what we think is *really* going on around here and what makes this place so special. We all know the answer is “Jesus” but let’s be honest, that answer isn’t very specific. We want this handbook to be specific.

The pages that follow are our best attempt to document *what* we do, and more importantly, *why* we do it. We believe this information will help you survive and thrive on staff. We suggest you read this entire handbook and keep it close by, especially during your first few months. However, in addition to reading this handbook, be a learner, be an observer, and ask plenty of questions because culture is one of those things that is best “caught, not taught.”⁵

Are you ready to learn what we believe makes us, *us*? Come and see...

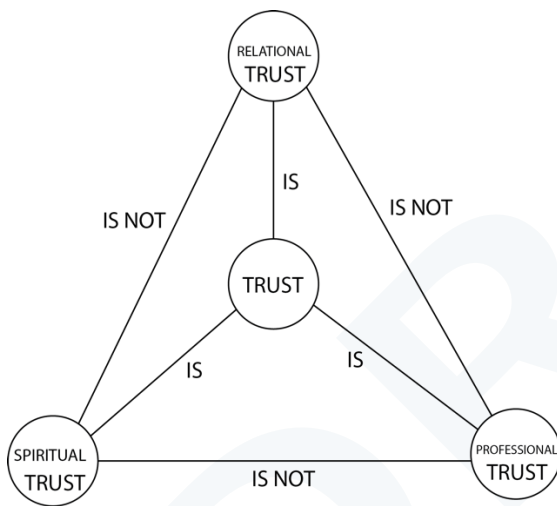
⁵ · This Handbook will soon become your Handbook, so if you have an idea on how we can improve this, please let us know by emailing handbook@watermark.org.

» THE TRINITY OF TRUST: A GREAT CULTURE'S FOUNDATION

"Random quote from a semi-famous person about trust being super important." -W. Ho Cares

Unless you've been living under a rock, have no friends, or are a complete and total narcissistic sociopath, then you know that trust is the single most important ingredient in a healthy relationship. At Watermark, trust is a really big deal. If we don't have trust, then this culture is sunk, because as we said, at the core of every strong culture are strong relationships.

When we talk about trust, we talk about it in three broad categories (which is why we call it the "The Trinity of Trust"⁶): (1) professional trust, (2) spiritual trust and (3) relational trust. Let's talk about each of these...



PROFESSIONAL TRUST

Professional trust means we believe everyone takes their job seriously, has the skills necessary to complete their job with excellence, can work with relatively low supervision, takes ownership of their responsibilities, take initiative and *gets stuff done*. When you have professional trust, you assume the following: all staff members are (1) working hard, (2) not cutting corners, (3) doing what's best

⁶ #Biblical, #TrinityIsNotInTheBiblePerSeButYouKnowWhatWeMean \\ speaking of The Trinity, if you don't know what it is, how to explain it, or why it matters to marriage and community or where to go in your Bible to explain it, then you have some room to grow in professional trust. This is a core doctrine that all followers of Jesus need to be able to discuss. If you need help brushing up on this or any other doctrine, let us know, we'd love to help! Also, check out the May 8, 2016 episode of Real Truth Real Quick on YouTube.

for the church, (4) completing their tasks on time, (5) communicating well, and (6) striving to makes things better.

What this means for you as a new staff member is this: we trust you. When you say you are going to complete a task, we believe you are going to complete the task. When you are not at your desk (or in your office), we don't suspect you are out back smoking an e-cigarette and playing *Doodle Jump* on your smart phone. When you work from home, we believe you are really working from home. Bottom line: unless professional trust is broken, we believe you are working hard and striving for excellence. How will you know if your boss doesn't think you are doing your job well or how will you know if professional trust has been broken? We're glad you ask, because this leads us to the next "person" in The Trinity of Trust...

RELATIONAL TRUST

Relational trust means we believe everyone will work hard to ensure all interpersonal relationships are strong, healthy and growing. We cannot be a healthy family if we don't trust one another. Relational trust means if someone hurts us, we tell them. Relational trust means if we have a conflict with someone, we seek to resolve it as soon as possible. Relational trust means we don't talk negatively behind someone's back, and if we hear someone doing so, we encourage them to share their thoughts directly with the appropriate person. Breaking relational trust is the quickest and easiest way to get in trouble around here. Why? Because we're not in high school anymore! We're adults, so we aim act like adults and communicate like adults. If you want to be passive aggressive, stuff your feelings and expect us to read your mind, then please know you are going to be miserable being a part of this family.

What this means for you as a new staff member is this: you never need to wonder if we are hiding information from you regarding your job performance. If we have positive or constructive information you need to know, we'll tell you and we'll do it in a way that is timely and helpful.⁷ In fact, you should expect to receive a lot of feedback and be asked to provide a lot of feedback.⁸ You never need to wonder if someone is mad at you or if what you said hurt or offended them. If they are, they will tell you. What this also means is we expect you to trust the leadership. We expect you to give leadership

⁷ Most of the time, the annual performance review process is very undramatic and some might even say, boring. Why? Because if you are receiving feedback in a timely manner, then the annual performance review will simply be a boring formality full of information you've already heard.

⁸ · Read more on this in the section *Eight Practical Ways to Become an All-Star*.

the benefit of the doubt, believe the best about them, ask questions if confused and pray for them regularly.

It can be hard to adjust to organizations with high relational trust, so if you are ever insecure about anything or confused, ask your boss or anyone else who has been on staff longer than you.

SPIRITUAL TRUST

Spiritual trust means we believe everyone keeps their relationship with Jesus as the number one priority in their life and continuously seeks to be growing as a fully devoted follower of Christ.⁹

Spiritual trust means we believe all staff members are daily in God's Word, are passionate about prayer, are consistently sharing their faith with those outside the church and regularly confessing their sin to other trusted family members.¹⁰ Spiritual trust means we believe every staff member understands they can do *nothing* of spiritual value apart from a vibrant, living and active relationship with God.¹¹

What this means for you as a new staff member is this: we assume you are pursuing Jesus. We assume you know yourself, you know your schedule, and you know your to-do list. Therefore, we don't feel the need to check up on you when it comes to some of the common spiritual disciplines (bible reading, prayer, solitude, etc). We assume you are doing these things and don't need us to hold you accountable or to create the time and space to do those things during the work day.

Spiritual trust means we believe that you are setting appropriate boundaries in your life and if you start to feel overwhelmed, then you will initiate a conversation with your boss and ask for help in setting priorities. One of the most common afflictions people in full-time ministry can suffer from is burnout. When someone is not pursuing Jesus, the results are often poor boundaries and poor communication. This means there is a connection between your relationship with Jesus and burnout. So, if you burnout, it's not our fault, it's your fault. Burnout hurts more than just you and we don't want you to burnout, so if you feel like you are starting to struggle, please let us help.

⁹ Proverbs 4:23, Matthew 6:23, Romans 12:11

¹⁰ By "family" we mean your spiritual family; trusted brothers and sisters in Christ.

¹¹ John 15:5

SUMMARY

If we don't have professional, relational and spiritual trust, then culture we seek to uphold cannot exist. So be encouraged, the fact we hired you means we trust you. If you follow Jesus, work hard and build relationships, then we are very hopeful this amazing culture will continue to thrive and be even better because of the vital role you now play.

» WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS AROUND HERE?

As a new staff member, there will be times when you take a step back and wonder, “who on earth makes all the decisions around here?” The answer to that question is God. He is the King and we serve at His pleasure.¹² However, we know that's not what you mean, so here is a summarized version of the organization chart:

{ GRAPHIC COMING SOON }

Elders → Campus Pastors / Campus Leadership Team → Ministry Directors → Ministry Coordinators
→ Ministry Administrative Assistants.

Watermark Community Church is elder led. The term “elder” is to be taken literally and biblically. By literally, we mean these men are old, like “one foot in the grave old” (i.e. most are over 50!¹³). By biblically, we mean these men assume the office of leadership as described by the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The elders make or approve all the big-picture directional decisions at Watermark.

The Campus Pastor and the Campus Leadership Teams make all day-to-day decisions for each campus and the Ministry Directors make all day-to-day ministry specific decisions.

However, information regarding decisions made here can sometimes be murky and complicated, so if you ever have a question about how a decision was made or why a decision was made or anything like that, simply ask your boss or someone who's been on staff longer than you. We don't try to hide

¹² ° #JesusJuke

¹³ “One foot in the grave” old is not to be confused with “He has won a Lifetime Achievement Wascar two years in a row because we didn't know if he would make it another year” old. That lucky guy is America's favorite pastor: Jim Wimberly.

any information, but sometimes disseminating information across the organization can be challenging and is not something we always do super well.¹⁴

DRAFT

¹⁴ See the section *Stuff We Could Do Better for a few other things we know we don't do super well.*

» SEVEN COMMON PHRASES

Hopefully by now you are starting to get a flavor as to what makes us, *us*. As we mentioned earlier, we believe culture is *the accumulation of behaviors, motivated by core values, that characterize a group of people*. In this section, we want to try and describe some of our most common behaviors. To do so, we'll put them in the format of seven common phrases you'll often hear; each of these phrases describe some of our common behaviors.

“WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THAT?”

This phrase summarizes the priority we place on God's Word. The Bible is our authority, conscience and guide in everything. We stand firm where it stands firm and remain flexible where it is flexible.¹⁵ We make it a priority to know God's Word, teach God's Word and counsel from God's Word. We don't do this so we can be smarter sinners, we do this because we believe this is one of the most practical and tangible ways to grow in our relationship with God.¹⁶ It's about intimacy *with* Him, not information *about* Him.

You will hear this phrase spoken most often in team meetings, pastoral care situations, and during our all-staff meetings called staff prayer (“Staff Prayer”) (described in more detail below). We want to think biblically about everything we do around here and therefore are constantly trying to answer the question, “What does the Bible say about that?”

“GET INSIDE THE CIRCLE!”

This phrase summarizes the priority we place on our relationships. We're going to say it again because we believe it is so important: you don't have culture without relationships and therefore, we work hard to keep our relationships healthy. We love to be together and because we want our relationships to remain healthy, we believe it is always a good idea to meet together on a regular basis.¹⁷ Absence may make the heart grow fonder, but it doesn't make relationships healthier.

The most common way we spend time together as a family is during Staff Prayer, which happens every Tuesday morning from 8:30am – 10:30am and all staff must attend. When we are together, we sit in a circle and NO ONE can sit outside the circle. You may be thinking, “wow, that must be a

¹⁵ 2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁶ Psalm 119:9-16

¹⁷ Hebrews 10:24-25

big circle!” and if that is what you are thinking, you’d be wrong. The circle is relatively small and therefore most people sit inside the circle, which often looks like a New York City subway during rush hour. For some of you,¹⁸ Staff Prayer (and certain aspects of the annual retreat all staff attends, “Staff Retreat”), will be a complete and total violation of personal space. However, please know, there are some important reasons we set it up this way. First, practically speaking, this allows us to hear each other without the use of microphones and / or yelling. Staff Prayer and Staff Retreat are participatory events and we believe if we add a microphone to the mix or if people must yell, it will kill the communal and participatory vibe. Second, relationally speaking, if we are physically close together, it produces an energy that makes the meetings more engaging and more fun. So, get used to being packed in tight and bless your neighbors by showering before you arrive and not eating beans for dinner the night before.

We are a team, we are a family, we love each other, we want to be around each other, *everyone* is included, and we work hard to make sure *no one* is left out. Therefore, if you show up late to Staff Prayer, **do not** attempt to grab a chair and sit outside the circle. If you do this, you’ll be called out. Whoever is leading Staff Prayer will look you in the eyes and kindly, but firmly say, “Hey Ann Piper,¹⁹ let’s get inside the circle!” When this happens, you’re going to have to stand up in front of everyone and awkwardly look for a place to sit inside the subway-car circle. Once you find a spot and start tiptoeing over to it, you’ll probably end up knocking over someone’s coffee. When this happens, you’ll have to clean it up which means everyone will watch you run to the bathroom for paper towels and then once you are done cleaning up your mess, you’ll have to get that person a new coffee and everyone will, once again, watch you get up and get a new coffee. By the time all of this is done, you’ll be in conflict with whoever is leading the meeting because no one has been paying attention to them for the past four minutes because everyone has been paying attention to you. So, a word to the wise: just sit inside the dang circle! Okay? Great.

There are many ways to “get inside the circle!” Staff Prayer is the most consistent outlet for deepening our relationships with one another and being together, but it’s not the only way you’ll “get inside the circle!” while on staff. Every January we go away on Staff Retreat. The primary purpose for this retreat is to have fun and deepen our love for another. Although there is some work that

¹⁸ By “some of you” we mean you introverts. Please be sure to read *From One Introvert to Another: An Open Letter*.

¹⁹ Name has not been changed to protect the guilty.

happens while there, Staff Retreat is not intended to be a “work retreat” or a “planning retreat;” it’s for having fun, laughing, making memories and deepening our love for one another.

At the end of each summer we also try to have a day away doing something fun, making memories and growing our relationships. However, the most common way you’ll “Get inside the circle!” is with your individual ministry team. Time spent together praying for one another, talking about life, studying God’s Word together, laughing and sharing meals might sound inefficient and “not work” and in many ways, you’re right. As we’ve said, the core of every strong culture is relationships and because relational trust is so important, we know these activities are *never* a waste of time. Inefficient? Maybe. Ineffective? No. We believe we are better pastors and shepherds when we are doing God’s bidding with people we love and care about.

So, as a family, we strive to “get inside the circle” physically and metaphorically. You are a vital part of this family, therefore, don’t be aloof, don’t be anti-social, don’t simply come to work and ignore your other family members. Engage with others, build relationships and be an active part of this family.

“IF YOU SEE TRASH, PICK IT UP.”

This phrase summarizes the priority we place on taking initiative. We say this phrase often and it’s not because our campuses are dirty and messy but rather because it communicates a “host mentality.” We expect everyone, no matter where you fall on the organization chart, to treat Watermark like you own it. Everyone on staff is expected to take initiative in relationships, make guests feel welcome, pick up trash, help out where help is needed and make this place as welcoming as it can be. No one on staff is above any task. We never want visitors and members to only be impressed with our stuff (i.e. our buildings, our creativity, our teaching, our classes, our printed materials, our use of technology, etc.), but rather we want them to be impressed with the way we take initiative, engage them and love them. *Stuff* doesn’t make Watermark amazing, Jesus working in and through our *staff* (and our members) is hopefully what makes Watermark amazing. For any event we host on one of our campuses, we consider the event a “win” if people leave feeling loved and served and that only happens if we have a host mentality, we act like owners, and we take initiative. One of the reasons you were hired is to lead and take initiative. If we needed someone to do mindless and repetitive tasks we would not have hired you, we would have simply outsourced your role overseas and saved a bunch of money. Leaders initiate with tasks and with ideas; so if you ever wonder whose job it is to do something, it’s yours!

“THE LAST 2%.”

This phrase summarizes one of the approaches we take when having difficult conversations. All healthy families have difficult conversations and this family is no exception. During these difficult conversations, we strive to listen well and communicate clearly, but we also strive to be very candid. We do this because we believe if are not candid with one another, everyone suffers because no one gets better and relationships never end up being all God desires for them to be. We don't believe this is God's best and so we aim to be 100% honest, not 98% honest; hence, the phrase “the last 2%”.

The two most common opportunities to share “the last 2%” are when resolving conflict and when providing feedback. Everyone knows what it is like to hold back the last 2%. The last 2% represents those lingering thoughts in the back of your mind you wish you would have shared thirty minutes after a difficult conversation ended and you are in your car, driving home. The last 2% represents those little observations that you want to share with someone, but don't because you are afraid of hurting their feelings. The last 2% represents those things you say to your roommate or spouse about your boss or teammate when you get home from work, but you never tell your boss or teammate. The unspoken last 2% isn't just annoying, we believe it can be deadly; meaning it will slowly erode trust, destroy the relationship and ultimately have a negative impact our staff culture. How does any organization become 100% dysfunctional? 2% at a time.

Therefore, because we care about one another, because we want (and God wants) our working relationships to be as healthy as they can be, we strive to always share the last 2%. We'd rather share the last 2% and be wrong, then not share it and be right. It will feel weird at first, but trust us, after a while, you'll see how much better it is to live this way and you'll never keep in the last 2%.

“FAITHFULNESS OF THE LEADER, FAITHFULNESS OF THE TEAM.”

This phrase summarizes the priority we place on faithful obedience. Back before any of our elders turned 50 years old, this phrase used to be “speed of the leader, speed of the team.” However, after the elders turned 50 and realized they were no longer the fastest people on staff, they changed the phrase. Regardless, the heart of the message is still the same and this phrase represents a significant aspect of our culture.

Everyone on staff and every member of this body has the same job: to be faithful. However, as leaders and servants of this local church, we believe as staff it is our job to go first and model a life of faithfulness.²⁰ If we are not faithful, then we cannot expect our body to be faithful.

Therefore, as a staff, it is your job to wake up each day, pursue God, be faithful and trust God with the results. We do not consider you or something you work on a success simply because people showed up and were impressed. We consider something a success when you were faithful, regardless of the result.

The most significant way this phrase impacts our culture is in *what* and *who* we celebrate. Very rarely do we talk about or celebrate numbers. Numbers help provide context, but they can be misleading and are not always the best evidence of success. In fact, most of us on staff have no idea how big our church is and no one really cares. We care about faithfulness. If there were a contest awarding the most faithful church staff, that would be a contest we'd want to win.

We don't often celebrate numbers, but we do often celebrate stories of faithfulness and life change. We love to celebrate stories of people sharing the gospel with others who are far from God. We love to celebrate the faithful servants who work hard behind the scenes and do things that very few people will ever see. We love to celebrate acts of selflessness, and all the small, but powerful ways God is showing us His kindness. Please note, it is your job to tell stories about how God is moving at this church. Stories are how we know God is at work. Tell stories to your bosses, tell stories to your peers, tell stories to your volunteers and your community group. If you don't have stories to tell, people will start to wonder why; so celebrate what God is doing and don't give people any reason to wonder.

In the end, we believe God wants to use people to make His name great and we wonder, "why not use us?"²¹ That is what God is looking for - faithful followers who pursue Him, love people and trust Him with the results.

²⁰ 1 Corinthians 11:1

²¹ 2 Chronicles 16:9

“PEOPLE OVER PAPER.”

This phrase summarizes the priority we place on loving people. Jesus made it clear, that one of the best evidences of our faithfulness will be seen in the way we love.²² At Watermark, people are *always* more important than tasks. People are not interruptions; they are amazing opportunities. If God brings someone to our church, we want to love them the best we possibly can. If God allows someone to call us on the phone, we want to love them the best we possibly can. If God allows someone to email us, we want to love them the best we possibly can. It is an enormous privilege to minister to and love people and we want to steward each opportunity the best we can.

After every weekend service, a team of faithful leaders and volunteers stand in the front of the auditorium to talk to and pray with anyone who shows up. We will not leave until anyone who wants to talk has been served. We invest these hours because we want to love people.

Every week staff members personally reach out to all guests who attended our weekend service and gave us their name and contact information or asked us to pray for them. We invest these hours because we want to love people.

If someone randomly shows up on one of our campuses because they want to talk to a pastor, we will meet with that person face-to-face and give them our time and attention. We invest these hours because we want to love people and we don't believe their showing up was in any way random.

If a member's life suddenly gets difficult or messy, we don't look for ways to outsource the hard work to another ministry or some other professional. We get into the details and do whatever we can to help. We invest these hours because we want to love people.

We do not believe the church exists to build buildings, host events, provide child care and ask for money so we can continue to build buildings, host events and provide child care. We believe the church exists to love people and we take that privilege very seriously. People are always more important than tasks.

“NOW, THAT'S THE WAY TO LOSE!”

This final phrase summarizes the priority we place on having fun.²³ At Watermark, like plenty of other organizations, we like to have fun and play games. This desire is not unique. What makes us

²² John 13:34-35

²³ Proverbs 17:22

unique is we want to have fun both during the game *and* after the game. How do you have a fun after a game? Easy, ridicule the losers. We rarely celebrate and honor the game winner(s) because it's way more fun to watch people lose and suffer consequences than it is to watch people win and gloat.

We call this type of game a “Farkle”²⁴ and we like to Farkle, a lot. In fact, we Farkle so often, that it is nearly impossible for the odds to be ever in your favor. Sooner or later, you are going to lose a Farkle and you are going to have to pay up. Here is our advice: when (not if) this happens, go all in. The reason we like to Farkle is because in past years, faithful men and women of God have held nothing back and lost in the most glorious of ways. People care deeply about the way you lose.²⁵ Over the years, we have witnessed some epic losses. Whether it be swimming in the pond for fifty-one weeks straight, taking the S.A.T. as an adult or allowing themselves to be made into a human gingerbread cookie, our staff is known for leaving it all on the field (and occasionally for heading to the emergency room after playing).

The world rejects losers; at Watermark, we embrace them. The world is disgusted by losers; at Watermark, we are blessed by them. The world strives hard to not be a loser; actually, you would do well to follow the world on that one. Losing can be painful.

SUMMARY

These phrases summarize some of the essential behaviors that make us, *us*. We aim to be saturated in God's Word, take our relationships with one another very seriously, we all assume the role of host, we are honest with our thoughts and our feedback, we seek to go first and model a life of faithfulness, we pray that we'll love well and we try to do all that while having fun and laughing. Life truly is better when you do God's bidding with people you love.

²⁴ FARKLE: any game that results in the celebration of a loser(s) with said loser(s) performing a consequence that will bless just about everyone, except the loser(s).

²⁵ If you don't believe us, just ask Blake Holmes what it means to be “fully submerged.”

CHURCH TIMELINE (WILL BE CREATIVELY PRESENTED IN FINAL DOCUMENT)

DATE	EVENT	CATEGORY
Nov-99	First corporate worship service at Watermark	GENERAL
Jan-00	Young Adult Ministry starts, called "Landmark"	MINISTRY
Aug-01	Todd Wagner, Dean McFarlan, Kyle Thompson and Brett Johnston appointed as elders	ELDERS
Jan-02	Launch of Celebrate Recovery	MINISTRY
Jan-02	Staff retreat expands to two houses at Possum Kingdom	STAFF
Aug-02	First Watermark leadership conference	GENERAL
Sep-02	First pre-married class offered	MINISTRY
Sep-02	Young Adult Ministry changes name to The Exchange	MINISTRY
Oct-02	Scott Coy appointed as an Elder	ELDERS
Sep-03	First Marriage Conference	MINISTRY
Nov-03	purchased LBJ property	GENERAL
May-04	moved offices to Tower	GENERAL
Mar-05	First Foundation Group	MINISTRY
Sep-05	Young Adult Ministry changes name to The Porch	MINISTRY
Sep-05	First Porch in the Watermark Tower	MINISTRY
Apr-06	Member celebration: Shoreleave	MEMBER CELEBRATION
May-06	John Doe lawsuit filed	GENERAL
Sep-06	re engage starts	MINISTRY
Sep-06	The first Launch retreat	MINISTRY
Jan-07	Shooting Kuby with paintballs incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Sep-07	moved into 1st worship center at Dallas campus	GENERAL
May-08	Member celebration: Tim Hawkins	MEMBER CELEBRATION
Aug-08	Started our Sunday evening service	GENERAL
Sep-08	The Porch moves to Auditorium	MINISTRY
Dec-08	The Tabasco shot, eggnog & dunking booth incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
May-10	The KISS Carwash incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Dec-10	Oceans 11	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
May-11	Official name change to re:generation	MINISTRY
Sep-11	moved into 2nd worship center at Dallas campus	GENERAL
Sep-11	Member celebration: "I like that!" video	MEMBER CELEBRATION
Jan-12	Launch of re engage outside of Watermark	MINISTRY
Jan-12	Staff retreat moves from Possum Kingdom to Sky Ranch	STAFF
Jun-12	First MMTc	MINISTRY
Sep-12	The Justin Bieber look alike incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Jan-13	moved into kids building on Dallas campus	GENERAL
Feb-13	UNCOMMON Marriage Conference	MINISTRY
Mar-13	first service in Ft Worth	GENERAL
May-13	Scott Coy & Brett Johnston step down as Elders	ELDERS
Jun-13	Beau appointed as an Elder	ELDERS
Aug-13	Member celebration: Memory expert guy	MEMBER CELEBRATION
Sep-13	Launch of Merge outside of Watermark	MINISTRY
Oct-13	Launch of Foundation Groups outside of Watermark	MINISTRY
Dec-13	The Gingerbread Man incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Mar-14	The Wrecking Ball video incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Jan-15	The Greg Barnes chicken incident	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Jan-15	first service at Plano campus	GENERAL
Jun-15	Sloppy slam dunk	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
Sep-15	re:generation launched in first church outside of Watermark	MINISTRY
Oct-15	purchased land in Plano	GENERAL
Apr-16	Adults taking the S.A.T.	FAMOUS FARKLE LOSS
May-16	Hosted first Church Leader's Conference	GENERAL
Aug-16	Started our Saturday night service	GENERAL
Nov-16	voted 2nd best place to work in DFW (5 years in a ROW)!!!	STAFF
Jan-17	Member celebration: Oscar-themed	MEMBER CELEBRATION

» STUFF WE COULD DO BETTER

Every organization has its flaws and Watermark is no different. We serve a perfect God, but unfortunately this staff is made up of imperfect people. As a new staff member, we think it's helpful to be fully aware of areas where we could improve. Here is a list, in no specific order:

PLANNING MORE THAN SIX WEEKS OUT

We are fantastic at pulling stuff off last minute. Things change around here all the time and when they change it's often at the last minute. Sometimes, they change because we believe we heard from God and need to make a change, and sometimes they change because our church personality is one that often does better reacting to the moment rather than planning the moment. If you are an extreme planner, please know you can help us, but also please know you're going to get frustrated. When that happens, don't be surprised and remember what you read in *Relational Trust* and *The Last 2%*. Watermark is a place that values flexibility and embodies the entrepreneurial ethic that says, "planning is priceless, but plans are useless."²⁶

DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ACROSS THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION

Sometimes we struggle with internal communication. One of the biggest reasons we can struggle in this area is because the organization is growing so quickly. However, this does not make it any less frustrating, or at times, counter-productive. What this means is sometimes you might not hear about someone's role on staff changing until after the fact. This means you might not know that a new ministry started or that one was shut down. Sometimes this means you will have to change ministry plans because of scheduling conflicts that take precedence. This means that you might not know that your 4B was due *before* the Staff Christmas Party and now you must swim in the pool at Sky Ranch...in January (oh wait, never mind, we did a good job of communicating that one, some people just didn't read their email!). Despite our shortcomings, it is possible to get information and the best way to do that is to simply talk to people. Ask questions, be curious, be social and don't take it personally if you seem to be the "last to know" on certain things. It's not done on purpose.²⁷

²⁶ Collins, James C. 2001. *Good to great: why some companies make the leap ... and others don't*. New York, NY: HarperBusiness. & Proverbs 16:9, 19:21

²⁷ Unless the most loving thing to do is tell you last.

BEING POLITICALLY CORRECT

We do something crazy around here: we believe God’s Word is true. We read it daily, we seek to know it, memorize it, and teach and counsel from it. Because we have such a high view of God’s Word, sometimes we say things that don’t sound “politically correct.” Our heart is never to be abrasive or hurtful or purposefully “politically incorrect.” Our heart is to love people and we believe God’s Word equips us to do just that.²⁸ We know that when people don’t love truth, then truth sounds unloving.²⁹ We believe it is our responsibility to say things as graciously and winsomely as possible,³⁰ but unfortunately, sometimes we fail. As a new staff member, please know that we seek to be full of grace *and* truth,³¹ meaning we want to say what’s true and we want to say it lovingly. If you (or someone you know) are ever hurt or offended by something said from the stage, something said during Staff Prayer, something said during Staff Retreat, or something said *anywhere*, let your boss or someone who’s been on staff longer than you know, and they’ll guide you to the appropriate next steps.

EXPLAINING WHY TODD WAGNER GETS TO PARK IN THE TWO-HOUR PARKING LOT

It has something to do with trying to minimize interruptions for him on the way to meetings and his desire to love people well (see *People Over Paper*). It’s confusing, so if you see him, just ask him to explain (or ask Scott Coy or Joey Tisdale, they believe this privilege is extended to them too, so they may have some valuable insight).

²⁸ 2 Timothy 3:16

²⁹ 2 Timothy 4:3-4

³⁰ Colossians 4:6

³¹ John 1:17

» EIGHT PRACTICAL WAYS TO BECOME AN ALL-STAR

1. FOLLOW JESUS

Following Him is your number one priority. Everything you do flows out of your relationship with Him. Following Him helps you better *understand* life and makes you better *at* life. Read His Word, know it, memorize it, and teach and counsel from it.

2. LIVE IN THE LIGHT

Don't have any secrets. If you sin, confess it.³² If you messed up, own it. If you hurt someone, own it and ask forgiveness. If you're tired, rest. If your heart is not in it, tell someone. If you feel worn out, don't stuff it. Honesty builds trust. The best way to live is in the light.

3. LEARN HOW TO GIVE FEEDBACK³³

Our strategy for continuous improvement is candid feedback. In fact, one of the best ways to add value to any organization is learning how to give good, honest, and helpful feedback. You need to learn this skill and grow in this skill. Some of the most valuable people on staff are those who know how to give helpful feedback. Feedback happens at all levels of the organization and anyone on staff can provide feedback to anyone else on staff, provided the feedback is helpful. What is helpful feedback? Helpful feedback is always specific and actionable. For example, if you are providing someone feedback on a lesson they recently taught, unhelpful feedback would be something like, "I liked it, but it could have been a little better." Helpful feedback would be something like, "I really liked your tone and your illustrations and I think it would have been a little bit better if you would have talked slower and not read from your notes as much as you did."

Our feedback culture doesn't only impact the staff, it impacts the entire church. We often provide feedback to our members as part of shepherding them, caring for them and at times correcting them. We do this because we love them and we believe this is part of our role as pastors and

³² -If you have something to confess and your boss is someone of the opposite gender, please know you can first talk to any other same gender Director. We know the mixed gender thing can be a little tricky when it comes to confession, so let someone of your own gender help you navigate that situation.

³³ We especially want you to do this during your first 90 days on staff. This is when you have the most unique perspective and can provide some very valuable feedback.

shepherds.³⁴ Giving feedback is a skill, so work hard at it and observe and learn from those who do this well.

4. DO YOUR JOB INCREDIBLY WELL

The world (or maybe your parents or your friends) might believe you joined a church staff because you don't want to work hard. They think all we do is sit around, drink coffee, talk about the Bible and color pictures of Jesus with a lamb around his shoulders. We have the privilege of getting paid to work at an amazing place on the most perfect mission ever known. When compared to other churches our size, our staff is smaller than it could be. One reason we're able to maintain a smaller staff is because we have so many amazing volunteers who do quite a bit of heavy lifting and another reason is because we have such a gifted staff who work incredibly hard and are able to accomplish so much. We don't necessarily hire staff to do the work of the ministry. We hire staff to do ministry through others.³⁵ That is hard work. If you want to take it easy, then you probably need to go work somewhere else. People's eternities are at stake, so bring your best every single day!

5. DON'T SURPRISE YOUR BOSS

You are responsible for the quality of your relationship with your boss. It's a universal truth that bosses hate surprises. Therefore, if you want to love your boss well, do whatever you can to eliminate surprises. The most effective way to avoid surprising your boss is to share information with him/her in a timely manner *and* in a way they prefer (i.e. face-to-face, email, text message, handwritten notes, notes on their white board, cut out letters from a newspaper to make it look like a creepy ransom note, etc.). For example: If you are going to be away from your desk or office for an extended period, tell him or her where you are and what you are doing. If you cannot meet a previously agreed upon deadline, communicate as early as possible and give the reasons the deadline cannot be met. If you need to get out of a meeting you have scheduled, be up front and communicate the reasons you need to be released from that commitment. If you are feeling overwhelmed, have something going on in your personal life, or are struggling in some other way, communicate, communicate, communicate. The task of eliminating surprises is *your* responsibility.

³⁴ 1 Thessalonians 5:14

³⁵ Ephesians 4:12

A great question to ask your boss is this, “What information would you like to hear from me on a regular basis and how would you prefer to hear it?” Listen to their answer, write it down and then execute on what they tell you.

6. SAY “THANK YOU” AFTER RECEIVING FEEDBACK

When someone shares feedback with you (or shares some uncomfortable last 2%) the appropriate response is *always* “thank you”. Feedback is a gift and should be treated as such.³⁶ Feedback makes you better and feedback helps you stay humble; both of those results are awesome. So, when someone says, “May I share a few observations with you?” say, “YES!” and thank them for caring enough about you to engage in that conversation.

However, there is one qualifier worth mentioning. Just because someone is providing you with feedback doesn’t necessarily mean you must absorb everything they are telling you. There can be a difference between *honesty* and *truth*. We value candor, but just because we are open and sincere in our feedback doesn’t mean we are always right and speaking truth. When someone provides feedback, imagine they just gave you the gift of a new shirt. You can take it home, examine it closer, try it on, ask others if they like the shirt and then decide whether you are going to keep the shirt. Same with feedback, you can think about it, compare it to God’s Word, ask others if they agree or disagree and then decide if you are going to “wear it” or not.

7. TAKE INITIATIVE

As previously mentioned, now that you are on staff, you are a host. If you see trash, pick it up. If someone is walking around looking lost, initiate a conversation and ask them how you can help. If the line at the Welcome Center is four people deep, jump back there and help answer some questions. If the coffee seems to have run out, go make some more. All staff members are expected to take initiative. You don’t need to wait for someone to tell you what to do.

8. BE LEGENDARY

When you lose a Farkle, *just remember, heroes get remembered, but legends never die.*³⁷ Now, to be clear, legends sometimes do go to the hospital, but they never die. Be legendary.

³⁶ Proverbs 12:15 & 19:20

³⁷ Babe Ruth in The Sandlot, ©1993, Twentieth Century Fox

» SIX EASY WAYS TO RUIN THIS OPPORTUNITY

1. NEGLECT LEADING YOURSELF

Miss a time with the Lord here, miss a time with Him there. Pray a little less on this day, pray a little less on that day. Stay up a little later. Skip that one workout. Miss community group a few times. Eventually this all adds up. If you neglect keeping yourself spiritually, physically and emotionally healthy, you are going to crash and burn.

2. NEGLECT YOUR VITAL RELATIONSHIPS

We all have vital relationships (family and friends) and those relationships cannot and should not be neglected because of your job. If you have a family, they are your number one ministry. If you are not doing well leading and serving at home, then it does not matter how well you are leading and serving at work. Your family sees the real you and that is your purest form of leadership and service.

If your friends or family are embittered towards Watermark, that is probably your fault, not our fault. Remember, we have spiritual trust, so we believe you are monitoring your work load and will establish boundaries that are healthy for you and your vital relationships. If life seems to be getting out of balance, simply communicate with your boss and ask for help in establishing priorities and healthy boundaries.

3. GET CAUGHT HIDING A DESTRUCTIVE SIN PATTERN

You are a sinner and will continue to be one until you are home with Jesus. We don't expect you to be sinless, but we do expect you will not hide your sin. **There is a difference between confessing and getting.** Getting caught communicates a heart issue that is often a bigger deal than the sin or sin pattern itself. Confessing communicates a heart that is soft and wants to be pure.³⁸ Don't ever let fear of losing your job be a reason to not live in the light. It is simply not worth it to hide for the sake of your employment.

4. HAVE NO BOUNDARIES

Here is the sobering reality: God doesn't need you to further His kingdom. What this means is that you don't have to answer your phone every time it rings on the weekend or at night. This means that you don't have to immediately answer every email that hits your inbox after 5pm. This also means that you don't have to make someone's lack of planning your emergency. Boundaries in ministry are

³⁸ James 5:16

vital and if you don't implement them, you'll crash. Are there times we put in extra hours? Of course. Are these times we give up a weekend to minister to people? You better believe it. Are there times you drop what you are doing to help someone? Absolutely. Boundaries are an art, not a science and we trust that you will implement the boundaries that work best for you and your vital relationships.

5. DON'T RESOLVE YOUR CONFLICTS

Nothing tears apart relationships quite like unresolved conflict. As we have said, healthy relationships are at the core of our staff culture, so if someone hurts you (or you hurt someone else), we expect you will do whatever it takes to resolve that conflict as soon as possible.³⁹ As you can imagine, because we value candid feedback and often share the last 2%, conflict can arise on a fairly regular basis. If you stuff, hide, ignore or refuse to address conflict with another staff member, that is your problem, not the other person's problem. Conflict is not the sign of an unhealthy relationship. Conflict is normal when people get around one another. Unresolved conflict is a sign of an unhealthy relationship and cannot be tolerated if we want to maintain this amazing staff culture.

6. MAKE THIS ABOUT YOU

As Rick Warren famously wrote in 2002, "It's not about you."⁴⁰ Watermark does not exist to make you famous or to build your platform. Watermark exists to call all people to be fully devoted followers of Christ. Together, as a family we are trying to faithfully accomplish this goal. Ministries are not competing with one another and therefore staff members are not competing with one another. As a family, we "rejoice with those who rejoice, and mourn with those who mourn"⁴¹ which means at times we celebrate individuals or ministries, but that's what families do - celebrate each other. If you make your job all about you, you are going to struggle. If you seek the spotlight, you are going to struggle. If you are looking for notoriety and popularity, you are going to struggle. If you make decisions with no regard for the greater mission at Watermark, you are going to struggle.

³⁹ Matthew 5:23-24, Romans 12:18, Hebrews 12:14

⁴⁰ Warren, Richard, 1954-. *The Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here for?* Grand Rapids, Mich.:Zondervan, 2002.

⁴¹ Romans 12:15

» FROM ONE INTROVERT TO ANOTHER: AN OPEN LETTER

If God made you one of those people who enjoy being alone rather than being with people, then this letter is for you. If you are one of those people who worked at Kanakuk, loves to be the center of attention and would much rather be around people than sit at your desk and work on your computer, then feel free to skip over this letter (or keep reading to gain insight on people that are different than you).

If you are an introvert and a new staff member, then your first few months are going to be a little overwhelming; so, *don't freak out*. I thought being an introvert on Watermark's staff would be a huge challenge, but it wasn't and I was even surprised to learn there are more of us than I thought there would be. However, during my time on staff, I have learned something I hope will benefit you:

We are valued, but we are outnumbered.

Introverts are needed and no one will ever ask you to try and change the way God made you and become an extrovert. However, because introverts are outnumbered, one of the ways we can serve our family⁴² is to go with the flow, have fun, be silly, act a little obnoxious every once in a while and rest well knowing you will never be asked to do anything that will permanently hurt you or cause you to have to go back through *re:generation*.

As members of this family, there are a few times a year when all the introverts gladly suck it up and with a great attitude choose to be around other people for an extended period. You can do this; it will not kill you and you might even secretly have a lot of fun.

Simply put, the best way to survive staff as an introvert is to know who you are, be who you are and like who you are. In addition, it's wise to plan and get your alone time when you can and when you need it. Don't forget, there is spiritual trust here which means leadership trusts you know yourself and you will lead yourself appropriately.



Adam D. Tarnow

⁴² Philippians 2:3-4, Mark 10:45, Matthew 20:28

» FAQs

We know you probably have some more specific questions, so here is an attempt to provide some clarity and direction on a few “hot topics”:

HOW MANY HOURS AM I EXPECTED TO WORK?

If you are a Coordinator or Director, we expect you to work 45-50 hours a week.⁴³ Sometimes there will be more, very infrequently there will be less. If you are consistently working more than 45-50 hours a week, communicate with your boss or someone who has been on staff longer; we can probably help you.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH CONCUR?

This is how we submit our ministry expenses and bless the accounting department. The accounting department makes our life SO MUCH EASIER. They work so hard to make sure Watermark manages the resources God has entrusted to us. It is expected that every single staff member will complete their expense report on time (typically by the 5th of the month) and will do it without complaining.

DO I HAVE TO USE MY VACATION?

No, but something is wrong if you do not. Think about this for a moment: you get paid to NOT come to work. THAT'S AMAZING! Part of leading yourself well is taking some time off, so use your vacation hours by the end of each calendar year (if you don't use it, you lose it!). There are a few “black-out dates” where you're asked to not take time off: Easter, Baptism Weekend, Christmas Eve.⁴⁴ Other than that, communicate with your boss and use this gift!

WHAT'S A 403(B)?

It's just like a 401(K), but for non-profit institutions. It refers to a section of the U.S. Tax code that allows churches to set up these investment plans for their staff members. The Watermark elders have graciously set up this plan for all eligible staff members and we highly recommend taking advantage of it if you can. It's free money.

⁴³ Admins are required to only work 40 hours a week and must get permission if they are going to exceed that limit. Be sure to discuss in detail the way your boss “counts hours”. Not all bosses view this topic the same way, so it will be good for you to seek clarity from your boss.

⁴⁴ This is not an exhaustive list. Again, good communication with your boss and others on your team will help you navigate vacation requests well.

DO I HAVE TO ATTEND STAFF PRAYER AND STAFF RETREAT AND THE STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY?

Yes. Sometimes you'll love it, sometimes you'll hate it, but these should only be missed on the *rarest* of occasions (i.e. if you are sick or you are out of town). Therefore, please block out every Tuesday morning from 8:30am to 10:30am on your calendar. This is not the time to have the *DirectTV* guy come to your house, get the oil changed on your vehicle or schedule a dentist appointment. In addition, block out the second Tuesday through Thursday each January for Staff Retreat (leave early Tuesday morning, return Thursday afternoon). These three days are not the days to schedule an epic wedding anniversary trip, or go skiing with your kids or schedule to get that sleeve tattoo. Finally, schedule the evening of the second or third Friday in December for the Staff Christmas Party. This is not the time to Christmas shop for your friends and family, this is the time to watch normally wise and mature adults act like crazed Bieber fans. If for some reason, you believe you need to miss a Staff Prayer, the Staff Retreat, or the Christmas Party, communicate with your boss and the sooner the better.

DRAFT

» GLOSSARY {TO BE PRESENTED ALPHABETICALLY}

RULE 14 –

A reminder that Watermark, at times, resembles a dictatorship. This is a reference to an email Todd sent to the staff prior to the 2010 Staff Christmas Party in which he stated “*All rules are subject to later clarification, modification, unjust amendment, cruel interpretation and mockery at party designer's whim. The law office of Howard, Crotty and Ward are not available for representation for you b/c they will be tainted by participation in the process.*” Bottom line: The third-grader in you will want to scream “not fair!” when Rule 14 is enforced. A word to the wise: just go with the flow and do what the Führer gracious leader says.

FARKLE –

Already defined. See *Seven Common Phrases “Now that’s the way to lose!”*

PORCHIES –

Any regular who attends The Porch on a Tuesday night. A term popularized by the great Shane Barnard, “*HOW WE DOIN’ PORCHIES!!!!*” They are a little over-the-top excited, but we should all probably be a little more like them. They are the future of the church, so be nice to them; if they go away, most likely so will your job. Just sayin’.

HEALTHIEST PEOPLE –

This phrase refers to anyone who has been through or is currently attending *re:generation*. These folks are often referred to as the “healthiest people” at Watermark.

LONE STAR COMMUNITY CHURCH –

What this church would have been named if *Rule 14* had been in effect when the church started. Ask any long-time staff member, elder or trustee family (one of the families that helped start Watermark) to tell you the rest of the story.

OCEANS 11 –

Refers to 11 staff members, who unwisely agreed to swim in the pond for 51 consecutive weeks because they believed by doing so they were going to receive a free trip to Costa Rica. They did not receive a free trip. They only swam.

WHOLE MILK CHALLENGE –

AKA *The White Dragon*. This is when someone attempts to drink an entire gallon of whole milk in sixty-minutes without throwing up. Often there is the promise of winning cash if one can complete

the challenge and often the promised cash never changes hands. Why? Well, because everyone pukes. However, one of the reasons we hired you is because we believe you can tame *The White Dragon*! If you want to win \$100 today, then email handbook@watermark.org and we'll see if you can pull it off! Come on, email us, we know you can do it. Everyone else we've ever hired is worthless and weak, YOU are not like everyone else. YOU ARE DIFFERENT. YOU ARE WORTHY. YOU ARE STRONG. YOU CAN DO IT. EMAIL US!!!!

ALL HANDS-ON DECK –

Any event where every staff member is required to attend and serve. Examples: Easter weekend, certain conferences being run by Watermark, Christmas Eve, Member Celebration events. You will always be given plenty of advanced notice when these events are put on the calendar. For these events, show up and work like the entire event was your idea.

PREACH, PRAY OR DIE AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE! –

A saying, popularized by the legendary Blake Holmes, which has served as a mindset and attitude for staff members over the years. At a moment's notice, we should be ready to do any of those activities for the name of Jesus, or for the sake of not embarrassing yourself at Staff Prayer.

WATERWEAR –

Cool gifts that are graciously given to the staff at various times throughout the year (most common: Christmas and Staff Retreat). Waterwear is one of the amazing perks of being on staff. You are now a part of the exclusive club, so wear your gear proudly and do not ask if you can get a piece of Waterwear for anyone not on staff because the answer will always be “no.”

FIVE-YEAR BRAND –

One of the coolest ways we celebrate our staff family is with a custom made branding iron affixed with the Watermark “W” logo. These brands are given to staff members after their fifth anniversary during our annual Staff Retreat. In addition, all staff members write on the display board a word or phrase that describes the person receiving the branding iron. Each person receiving the branding iron is individually encouraged and celebrated and handing out these branding irons is always one of the highlights of Staff Retreat.

LOVE-ON –

A phrase we use often to describe our desire to live out the “one another’s” of Scripture. Although it sounds like a violation of personal space, it is not. In fact, you don’t need permission to “love-on” people – you can just do it and it usually blesses them.

PIGGY-BACK –

If someone is talking about a specific topic during Staff Prayer and you have something else you'd like to add to the conversation, you are all but required to start your comments off by saying, "To piggy-back off that, I too was loving on someone this weekend and..." The Children's Team will haze you like crazy for saying this phrase, but that's okay, it's fun to occasionally mess with them.

AUTO-FILL PERSECUTION –

Every spring the entire staff family participates in a NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Challenge. You will be required to fill out a bracket and if you choose to use one of the auto-fill options, you will be persecuted and shamed. This doesn't mean you cannot use one of the auto-fill options, it simply means you better honestly assess how strongly you believe Galatians 1:10, because it can get a little ugly.

8TH FLOOR LOBBY –

Where Staff Prayer used to be held, back when one of our *Seven Common Phrases* was "speed of the leader, speed of the team." This location is referenced often.

SHORT-TERM DISCIPLESHIP TRIPS –

Matthew 28:18-20 makes it clear that as followers of Jesus, every day is a "mission trip," no matter where you are in the world. Therefore, since your life is a mission trip, you don't go on mission trips, you go on short-term discipleship trips. Our suggestion is to remove the phrase "mission trip" from your vocabulary, otherwise, like *Auto-Fill Persecution*, there will probably be some consequences.

TERMINAL UNIQUENESS –

This is a "disease" which impacts hundreds, if not thousands of people. The symptoms of someone suffering from Terminal Uniqueness can be as follows:

- this person believes their life story is *the worst*,
- their struggles are *worse* than anyone else's struggles,
- their problems are *bigger* and *more dramatic* than anyone else's problems,
- their circumstances in life are *unique* and *uncommon*, and / or
- because of this perceived uniqueness, no one really understands them

Yes, no two stories are the same and yes, every person is a unique creation of God, however, as Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:31, no one's life is nearly as unique as they may believe. You will encounter this disease often during your time here on staff. It's great to be aware of the symptoms and be prepared to remind people of what is true.

