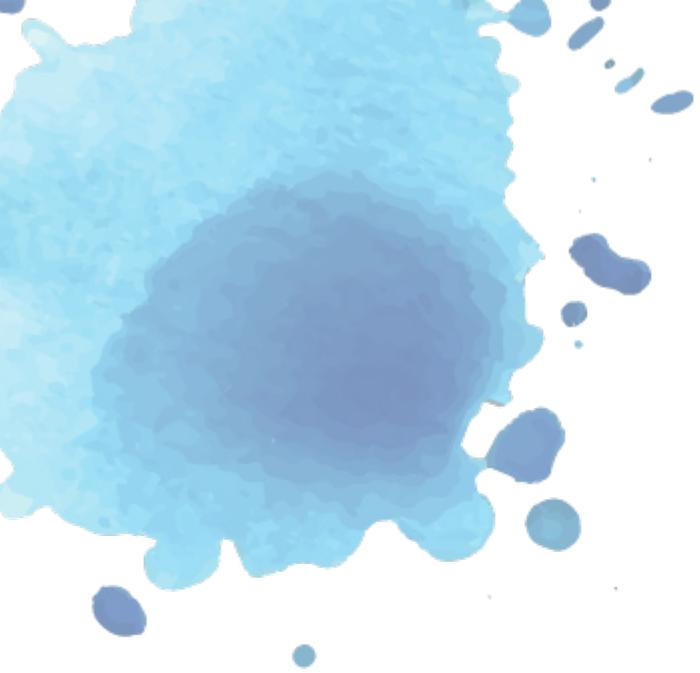




THE WATER'S EDGE CHURCH  
2021 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN





Father,  
Help me to welcome others home the way you welcome  
each of your children.  
Help me to welcome...  
the young  
the old  
the lost  
the hurting  
the joyful  
the grateful  
those different than me  
those like me.  
Help me live joyfully through you while being generous  
with my time, talents and resources.  
Let me be a blessing to many.  
Amen.

## A Note From Our Pastor



*Craig Finnestad  
Senior Pastor*

I remember the night well. It was in February of this year. A Wednesday night. I dropped David off at the front door of the church and took a phone call on the way to my usual parking spot. I entered the church building a few minutes later and I saw a bunch of third-grade students on the floor in the lobby, excited to learn. I chatted with them for a bit. As I walked to my office, I peeked into the conference room and greeted some high school boys and their leaders. A big group of middle school girls was in the kids' large group area. I walked up to the office and logged onto a Zoom meeting with a young couple I was getting ready to marry. It got really loud downstairs, so I moved to the far corner of the office. Still too loud. So I went into the closet. That worked.

David and I went home. I took the dogs for a walk and was troubled by something. The third graders were in the lobby on the floor. The kindergarteners, first graders, second graders, fourth graders, and fifth graders were at home because WE didn't have room. Jesus is clear when it comes to welcoming children:

*Jesus put a child in the middle of the room.*

*Then, cradling the little one in his arms,  
he said, "Whoever embraces one of these children as  
I do embraces me, and far more than me —  
God who sent me."*

*— Mark 9:36-37*

I have two sons, Benjamin and David. I couldn't have imagined and I can't imagine a better church for them to grow up in. The opportunities. The people. The culture. The investment. They have witnessed the Gospel being lived out by so many. They have seen a few dozen people gathering in a middle school become a large congregation situated on 25 acres that will serve the community and love people into a relationship with Jesus Christ for generations to come. My dream is that hundreds of families in our area will say the exact same thing about The Water's Edge over the next decade. But WE have some work to do. A building expansion needs to happen. A driveway needs to be built. And our remaining debt needs to be paid off so WE can spend less on interest and invest more in people.

Welcome Home is the name of our capital campaign. Our spiritual work over the next few months is going to help us say "welcome home" to children, youth, and their families. It will allow us to say "welcome home" to people who haven't been physically present with us over the last year and a half. It will allow us to say "welcome home" to people who are new to our area and are looking for a church community. It will allow us to say "welcome home" to the lonely, the addict, the person in transition, the grieving, the skeptic, the house church, the Bible study, the party, the outside group, and anybody else.

Here's the vision: By the fall of 2023, The Water's Edge will have expanded our facility to meet the growing demands and opportunities right in front of us and WE will have a driveway and entrance on the west side of our property, and in five years WE will be debt free! Because of these three things—WE will be equipped to "welcome home" whoever comes our way.

The Best Is Yet To Come,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a large loop for the 'C' and a long tail for the 'g'.

# A Home For Kids & Youth



Chad Schuchmann, WE Youth Director  
Michele Bonewell, WE Kids Director

In 2020, WE Kids and WE Youth experienced something that WE hadn't experienced before – silence. Wednesday nights were not filled with the sounds of middle and high schoolers. Sunday mornings were void of the giggles and voices of our babies through elementary school kids. For months, the building was silent and, it just wasn't the same. Because, without our kids and youth, The Water's Edge is not the same.

While 2021 brought a return to the sounds of kids and youth, and their families, throughout our building, it also brought a new challenge – where do we put everyone? WE Youth LIFEgroups filled up every classroom, the kids large group room, and the sanctuary. With only the lobby and outdoor areas remaining, WE Kids was limited to programming for just a few grades every other week. The space limitations also meant little room for either WE Kids or WE Youth to grow.

In Matthew 19:14, Jesus says:

*“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,  
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”*

The Water's Edge has always been a church that welcomed children with open arms. A church committed to providing a fun, safe environment where kids and youth can grow in their relationships with Jesus Christ and others. In 2018, when WE opened the doors to 19600 Harrison Street, The Water's Edge continued that commitment. This building has allowed us to not only reach kids and youth through Wednesday night and Sunday morning activities, but through other outreach events such as VBS, Easter Egg Hunts, Youth Retreats and more. Through the Welcome Home campaign, WE look forward to being able to continue to welcome our kids and youth with open arms. WE look forward to hearing the sounds of their laughs, questions, and conversations grow exponentially in years to come.

As parents, WE could not ask for a better community for our children to grow up in. The love, support, guidance and nurturing they receive are things WE want to be able to continue to share with kids of all ages, from all backgrounds and from all areas of Omaha. Your support of this year's capital campaign will allow WE Kids and WE Youth to do just that. To greet them with open hearts and say WELCOME HOME.

With Joy,  
Michele and Chad

## Join Us As WE Say "Welcome Home"

Matthew 13 begins with Jesus meeting with a crowd at the edge of a lake. The crowd had grown so large that he got into a boat at the water's edge. Matthew goes on to tell of Jesus preaching to the people - the broken, the lonely, the families, the young, and the old - in parables. On any given Sunday those same souls gather at The Water's Edge - the families, the broken, the lost, the young and the old - seeking the same Jesus to heal them, help them grow in faith and closer to him. We gather in the sanctuary and in WE Kids - we are fed and we worship - WE are blessed!

In Matthew 14, Jesus again gathers at the water's edge to speak to another group. It's so late in the day that Jesus wants to feed them. The disciples push back - we don't have enough to feed the 5,000. Even though they have walked with and served next to Jesus they can't see the possibilities, but Jesus does. He shows them what is possible when we step out in faith, when we use the gifts God has blessed us with, and when we invest in his kingdom.

Welcome Home - that's the name of our capital campaign for this next season. As Campaign Chairs, we have seen first-hand the incredible impact that The Water's Edge has had upon our children, our families, our friends, and for so many others we have served outside the walls of our building. Through God's grace and love we have grown as a church - but have so much more to do! This campaign will allow us to expand our ministries, provide additional space to gather for youth and adults, to eliminate our debt, and most importantly to invest in God's kingdom.

### *Our Vision*

*To be a church who relentlessly pursues a transforming relationship with God, generously extends hope to the hurting, sacrificially serves our families, and radically invests in the next generation.*

As a church, we have stepped out in faith - and look at what he has done! Look around at all the souls we feed. Like the disciples in Matthew 14, we need to continue to lean into Christ as we dig deeper to understand Him, to welcome those who are seeking His truth, and most importantly to help His kingdom grow. It is our hope that you will prayerfully consider the possibilities and how you will invest in The Water's Edge during this season.

In His service,  
Tim and Nan Carmody  
Darrin and Julie Dukart  
*Campaign Co-Chairs*



*Nan and Tim Carmody*



*Julie and Darrin Dukart*

# Where WE Have Been

2005

Our first House Church (small group) was started in a basement near 173rd and Harrison Streets



2006

Worship was launched at Russell Middle School

2007

Because of crowding, worship moved to Millard West High

2010

Because of crowding, WE added a second Sunday morning worship experience at Millard West High School

2012

Our WE Imagine campaign raised \$1.25 million



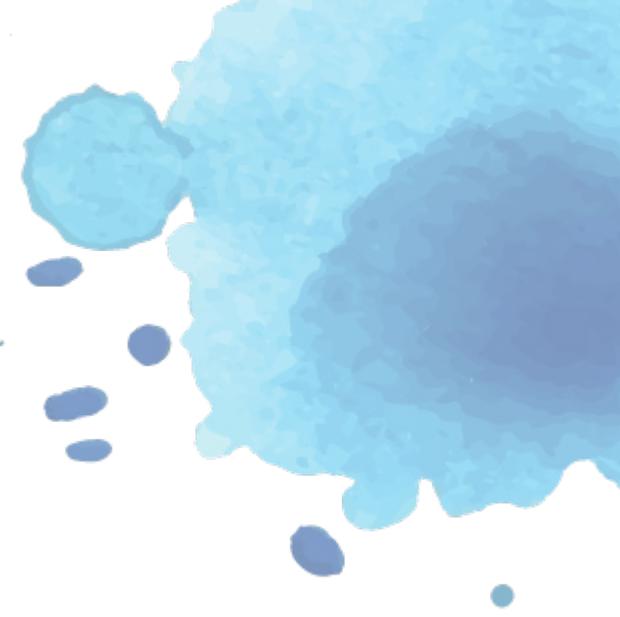


2015

Our From The Ground Up campaign raised \$2.4 million so that WE could move forward with constructing our first building

2017

WE began livestreaming our worship experiences



2018

WE opened our building at 19600 Harrison Street, more than 1,300 people attended our first worship experience in the building



2020

COVID-19 pandemic resulted in fully online worship for 3 months, Saturday evening services began in June, Wednesday evening kids and youth activities utilized every room in the building, including the lobby



### ***Debt Reduction***

- The first \$200,000 of the campaign will go to debt reduction
- Coupled with five years of payments from our budget, the church will be debt-free in five years

### ***New West Entrance and Driveway***

- Offers easier access for those arriving from the west
- Improve flow of traffic before and after services
- Increase safety
- Provide a connection to our surrounding neighborhoods

## *Projects*

### ***Building Expansion***

- 10,000 sq. ft. multi-use space to the west of the current building
- Seats up to 275 people in the large group area
- Seats up to 225 around tables for events
- Additional space for our children and youth so that we can include all grade levels on Wednesday evenings
- Expanded gathering area for Sunday morning
- Additional restrooms
- Expanded serving area with increased counter space, additional refrigeration, more storage, and new warming ovens

## *Cost*

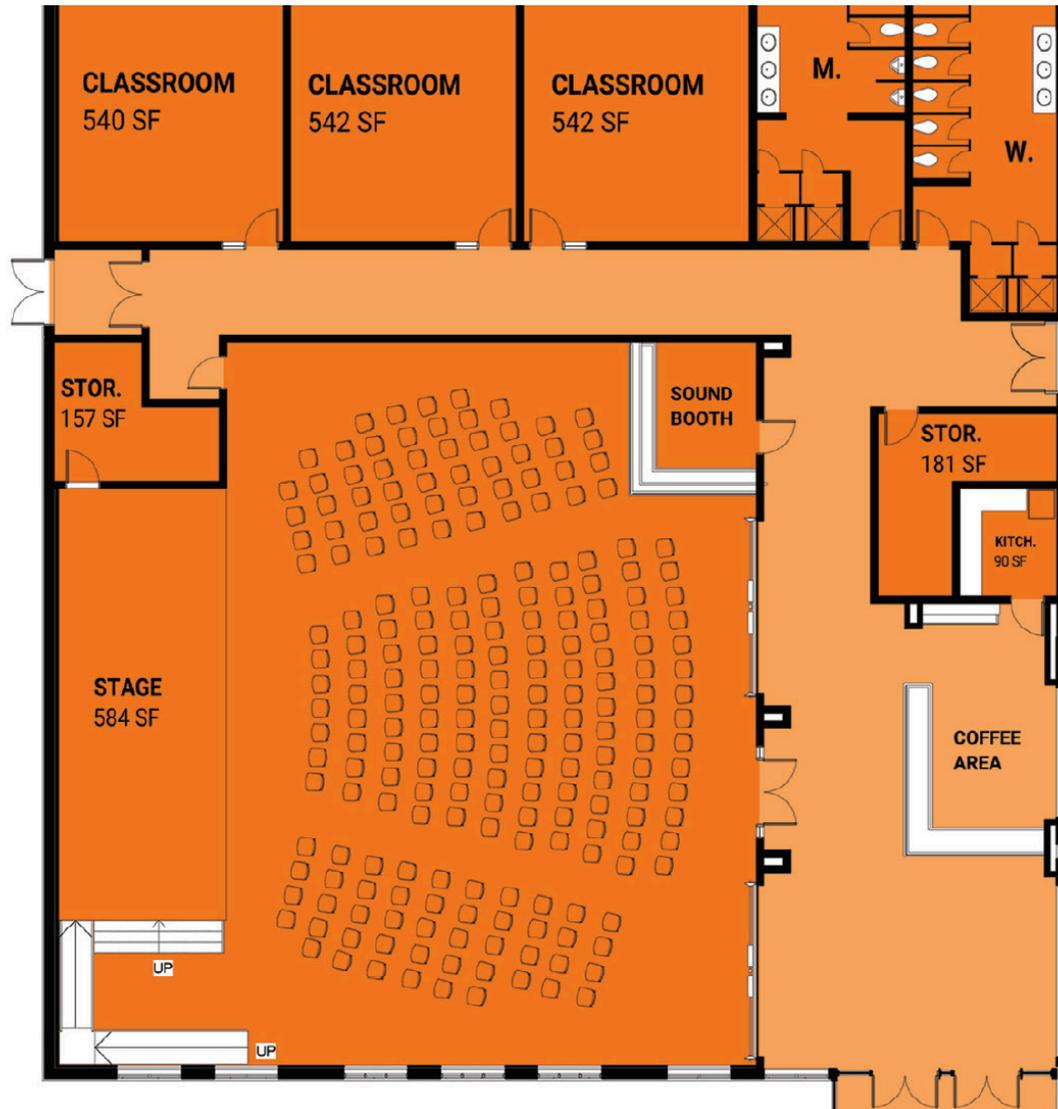

 \$2,400,000 Building Expansion  
 \$ 200,000 Debt Reduction  
 \$ 100,000 West Driveway / Entrance

  
 \$2,700,000 Total

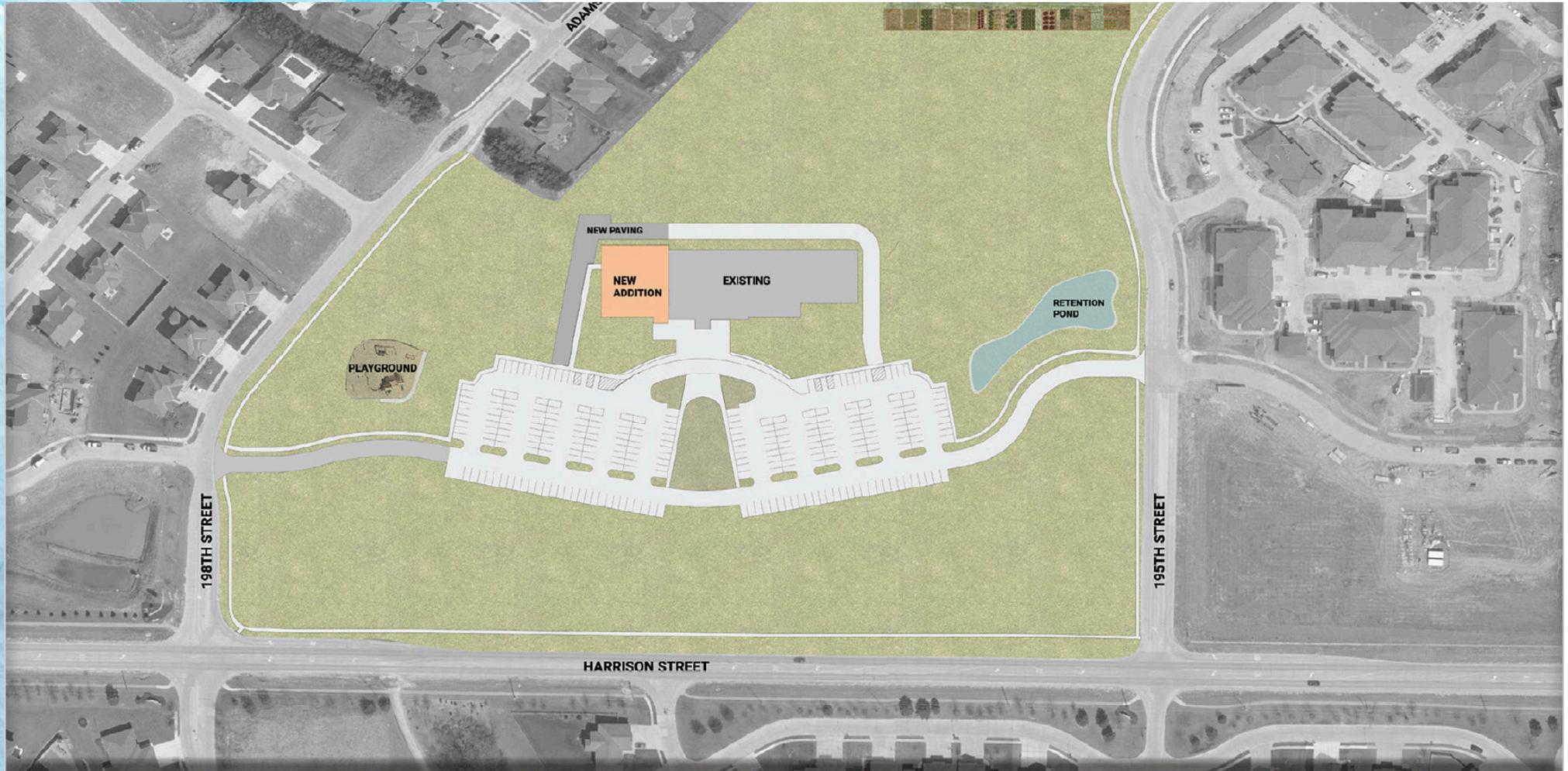


Welcome Home

# Expansion Floor Plan



# Site Plan With New Drive



## Project & Debt Reduction Impact

**These projects will allow us to better fulfill our mission to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and each other by growing existing ministries, introducing new ministries, and serving our community better.**

### ***The Multipurpose Room will:***

- Provide a much-needed space for our youth group to gather and grow.
- Create additional space to expand our evening children's programs.
- Provide suitable space for youth group and kids' programs to meet at the same time on Wednesday evenings, creating efficiency and sustainability for our staff, leaders, and families.
- Allow us to offer better hospitality for funerals and weddings.
- Offer a more welcoming space for overflow worship seating on busy Sundays and holidays.
- Provide space for a new worship experience, should the opportunity or need arise—Sunday morning or another time during the week.
- Create a community space open for groups to use for gatherings, retreats, meetings, recovery groups, and more.
- Allow us to host larger mission projects, such as Project Wee Care, blood drives, and visiting mission trip groups.

***The new Classrooms will:***

- Give us more room for adult discipleship classes with adult-sized furniture instead of using WE Kids classrooms.
- Offer a space for Sunday morning adult classes to meet.
- Provide rooms for youth small groups to meet for discussion and sharing.
- Provide more space for support groups, caring ministries, and affinity groups to meet.

***The new Coffee Bar and Kitchen Space will:***

- Create more space for people to connect with each other on Sunday mornings.
- Allow us to offer better hospitality to guests on Sunday mornings, at funerals, weddings, and other events.
- Increase our ability to serve food with warming ovens, a larger sink, and more space.
- Improve flow of people getting coffee and food before and after worship.



***The West Driveway will:***

- Offer easier access for people arriving from the west.
- Improve flow of traffic before and after services.
- Increase safety.
- Provide a connection to our surrounding neighborhoods.

***Debt Reduction / Elimination will:***

- Allow us to pay less (or stop paying) interest and principal reduction out of the annual budget.
- Devote more resources in ministries to children, youth, and adults.
- Fund much needed additional staffing.
- Expand local missions and investment in our community.

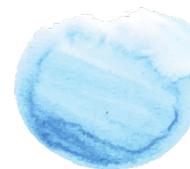
## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What will be the priority for how campaign funds are utilized?***

The first \$200,000 received will reduce the debt. The remaining proceeds will be used for the driveway and building expansion. Any remaining balance will be used for additional debt reduction.

### ***Why don't WE eliminate our debt first and then build?***

The leadership team considered the results from the feasibility study that indicated many would like to begin construction as soon as possible. Reasons given include: 1) Increases in future construction costs and 2) WE need the space now. Delaying construction will delay ministry impact. WE have reduced our total debt to a level that can be paid through our annual ministry operation budget and still adequately fund our ministries and operating costs. Our proposal does provide for debt reduction that will result in our debt being paid off completely in five years. This debt elimination is sooner than WE originally planned and is a huge accomplishment for a church our age and size.



### ***When will construction of the access to 198th Street begin?***

Construction could happen as soon as spring 2022.

### ***Will there be any new long-term debt?***

No. Church leadership is committed to eliminating our remaining debt in the next five years.

### ***In light of the United Methodist General Conference in 2022, is this the right time to conduct a capital campaign?***

The United Methodist General Conference and the issue of human sexuality were present during our campaigns in 2012 to buy land, in 2015 to raise funds for the building, and in 2018 to reduce our debt. If WE had waited for denominational issues to be resolved to launch capital campaigns, WE would still be worshipping at Millard West High School. During this last decade, The Water's Edge has grown considerably in size and influence because WE have focused on things WE can control. The Water's Edge leadership team and clergy continue to monitor denominational issues and believe that living into our mission as a church will have greater impact on our future than whatever decision is made by the denomination.

***Is this new space just for the kids and youth?***

Absolutely not. Adults will use our expansion, too! WE will be able to have adult Sunday morning classes, house churches, Bible studies, small groups, and community events. The large room will allow us to have a great space for funeral lunches. It will also provide overflow seating for worship. It will be a great space for a worship service, should the opportunity or need arise.

***Can WE have children and youth programming on other nights, in addition to Wednesday, to relieve crowding?***

Schools and sports still hold Wednesday evenings as pretty sacred. Wednesday is the best night for youth and children's ministries. Until the facilities are expanded, WE will certainly explore age-level programming on other nights. Friday and Saturday nights don't work for most families. On Thursday the building is typically full with band practice and WE University. On Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday WE will have house churches, meetings, and other adult ministries. Other limiting factors are how many nights per week we want our staff to work (most of them have kids) and the availability of volunteers. Also, families with multiple children are also challenged to bring different children to the church building on different nights.



***If actual construction costs are higher than projected, how will this impact the goals of the campaign?***

The first \$200,000 received will go to debt reduction regardless of construction costs. The building and leadership teams will consider options that may include adjusting the scope of the project or leaving part of the project unfinished to be completed at another time.

***What is the approval process to begin new construction of the addition?***

The building team will be recruited and formed by January 1, 2022. Their purpose will be the same as the building team for our first construction project: They will work with the architect and general contractor to design the proposed addition and to develop the total budget. The building team proposal will be presented to the leadership team for approval. Upon leadership team approval, a special church conference will be called to present the proposed project design, scope, and budget. The church membership will vote on this proposal.

## More Frequently Asked Questions

Find out more at  
[www.weomaha.com/  
welcomehomecampaign](http://www.weomaha.com/welcomehomecampaign)

### ***When will construction of the addition begin?***

We anticipate the design phase will begin in January 2022, with construction beginning the summer of 2022. The addition should be completed by August 2023 when our age-level ministries begin their fall programming.

### ***Will the new addition have a kitchen?***

Due to budget constraints and significant city zoning regulations, it is unlikely the project will include a fully equipped kitchen that can be used for cooking and meal preparation. The leadership team has listened to feedback from the First Impression Gatherings, the town hall meeting, and the feasibility study. Much feedback was received about increased kitchen facilities. Virtually all the meals served at our church events are catered. The current plan, based on the above-mentioned congregational feedback, expands our kitchen/serving area to include more refrigeration capacity, warming ovens, storage, and a larger sink.

***In light of the pandemic, is this the right time to conduct a capital campaign?***

The pandemic is one of the primary reasons The Water's Edge is launching a capital campaign:

1. During the 2020-2021 school year, our building was beyond capacity on Wednesday evenings. Our youth (sixth to twelfth grade) used all the classrooms, the conference room, and the kids' large group area. Our children's ministry (kindergarten to fifth grade) was limited to third grade every other week and fourth and fifth grade every other week. And they had to use the church lobby. No space was available for adults to meet during this time. This is during a pandemic. With schools getting back to closer to normal and anticipated growth in our congregation, this crowding will only get worse, and WE will miss a vital opportunity to share the Gospel with the next generation.

2. During the pandemic, many of our house churches began using the church facility for their groups. This was not the original vision for our small groups, but WE found the church facility works well for a number of our groups.

3. During the pandemic, The Water's Edge served and earned goodwill with the community by hosting dozens of events from blood drives to galas for non-profits to school graduations. As Omaha, Gretna, and Elkhorn continue to develop around our property, many new opportunities will emerge, and WE want to be prepared to be like Jesus and "welcome the stranger."

4. During the pandemic, church landscape changed. People all over the world lost their habit of attending worship regularly. Being in a fast-growing area of Omaha, The Water's Edge is well-positioned to be home to people looking for a new faith community. WE are currently experiencing this with many visitors every week. The Water's Edge, being in a new building with new technology, was as prepared as any church for the pandemic. People are re-engaging in worship. As of September 2021, in-person attendance is two-thirds of pre-pandemic levels and continues to grow weekly.

5. During the pandemic, the generosity of the people of The Water's Edge indicates high levels of buy-in for our vision. Generosity has increased, with 2020 annual giving 8% above 2019. During the first half of 2021, giving was 21% higher than the first half of 2020. Churches that have held steady during the pandemic are celebrating and they should be. Increases in giving like The Water's Edge is experiencing are very rare. This generosity has resourced The Water's Edge to do amazing things, including preparing to launch a capital campaign that expands our facilities and reduces, or even eliminates, our debt.

## Creative Strategies In Giving

### Gifts-In-Kind

A gift-in-kind is transferring the ownership of an asset, rather than selling the assets and giving the cash.

#### **What kind of assets should I give?**

- Appreciated investment property held more than one year, such as stock, mutual fund shares, bonds, and real estate have tremendous tax advantages.

#### **Why gifts-in-kind?**

- The tax code is very generous toward this form of giving.
- Giving the asset to the church, then letting the church sell, eliminates potential capital gains taxes and can increase the after-tax proceeds.

#### **How do the tax benefits work?**

- Itemized deduction: The individual or business is allowed to include 100% of the market value of most such assets as charitable contributions for tax purposes if held more than one year.
- Capital Gains: The transfer of property does not generate a capital gains tax. The church, as a tax entity, will realize the full market value, less transaction costs, at the time of sale without paying capital gains interest.

#### **How do I give gifts-in-kind?**

For stocks, mutual fund shares, and bonds:

1. Contact our Administrator, Jennie Clements ([jennie@weomaha.com](mailto:jennie@weomaha.com)), so she can provide you with the church's transfer information.
2. You will then contact your broker to request a transfer and provide them with the account information needed.

## *Other Strategies*

### ***Cash Flow Gifts***

A person can give significantly by giving smaller amounts of higher frequencies. Weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly giving allows large gifts to be reached in smaller steps.

### ***Sale of Assets***

Sale of assets - such as a house, car, land or business - provides available income for giving.

### ***Raises/Bonuses***

Dedicating one's forthcoming raises and bonuses is a creative method people have used to increase giving.

### ***Savings and Annuities***

Savings for special projects, retirement or a "rainy day" may offer a resource for increased giving. Often, we realize that a portion of our savings may safely be given to the work of God's Kingdom through our church.

### ***Special Tax-Free IRA Gifts***

For those aged 70 1/2 and older, it is now possible to make tax-favored charitable gifts from traditional and Roth IRA accounts. A total of \$100,000 per year can be transferred directly from traditional and Roth IRAs to one or more qualified charities, such as The Water's Edge, free from federal income tax. There may also be state income tax savings. Amounts given in this way count toward required IRA minimum withdrawal amounts for the year of the gift. To make such gifts, it is important not to withdraw funds prior to a gift, but have the gift amount distributed directly from an IRA to the church. For those with check writing privileges on their accounts, this may be the most effective way to make gifts directly from an IRA. Check with your tax advisor for more information.

# Capital Campaign Commitment Cards

Your Welcome Home commitment will go solely to our 2021 Capital Campaign.

The money you pledge will be over and above your annual commitment to the Ministry Financial Plan. The amount pledged to the Welcome Home Campaign will be given over the next three years beginning January 2022.

Online Commitment Cards for  
Welcome Home may be found  
at  
[weomaha.com/  
welcomehomecampaign](http://weomaha.com/welcomehomecampaign)

**2021 Capital Campaign**

**HOW YOUR GIVING GROWS**

Weekly	Monthly	Annually	3 Year Total
\$1,000	\$4,333	\$52,000	\$156,000
\$750	\$3,250	\$39,000	\$117,000
\$500	\$2,167	\$26,000	\$78,000
\$400	\$1,733	\$20,800	\$62,400
\$300	\$1,300	\$15,600	\$46,800
\$250	\$1,084	\$13,000	\$39,000
\$200	\$867	\$10,400	\$31,200
\$150	\$650	\$7,800	\$23,400
\$100	\$433	\$5,200	\$15,600
\$75	\$325	\$3,900	\$11,700
\$50	\$216	\$2,600	\$7,800
\$30	\$130	\$1,560	\$4,680
\$20	\$86	\$1,040	\$3,120



God, help me  
welcome others home

We rejoice in the opportunity to participate in this campaign and have prayerfully considered our **Welcome Home** commitment.

My/Our commitment for the three-year period beginning January 2022 and ending December 2024 will be:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Single Gift**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Weekly for 156 weeks**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Monthly for 36 months**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Annually for 3 years**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

\$  **Total for 3 years**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Gifts Other Than Cash**  
(Approximate Value)

I am interested in electronic transfer of funds.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



19600 Harrison Street • Gretna, NE 68028  
402.952.4473 • [weomaha.com](http://weomaha.com)

# 2022 Annual Budget Commitment Cards

This Commitment Card is your commitment to the 2022 Annual Budget. This gift is for The Water's Edge to be able to appropriately plan and implement its yearly budget.

Your 2022 Annual Budget Commitment will:

- Allow The Water's Edge to operate with greater confidence
- Ensure funding for all WE Omaha ministries

## 2022 Annual Giving Commitment to The Water's Edge Church Ministries

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PRIMARY EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

I/We pledge to give a total of \_\_\_\_\_ in 2022.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly for 52 weeks, or  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Semi-monthly for 24 periods, or  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly for 12 months, or  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ As follows: \_\_\_\_\_

GIVING OPTIONS (select the one that applies)

**New Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)**

Please indicate the frequency. New EFT withdrawals begin January 2022.

- \_\_\_ Semi-Monthly - 15<sup>th</sup> and last business day of each month  
 \_\_\_ Monthly - 15<sup>th</sup> of each month  
 \_\_\_ Monthly - last business day of each month

For new EFT's, attach a voided check.

- Changes to Existing EFT** (as indicated by new commitment amount)  
 **Previously Authorized EFT's** - continue in 2022 with no change  
 **Online Giving**  
 **Check**



Bring to church on Commitment Sunday or mail to The Water's Edge, 19600 Harrison St, Gretna, NE 68028

Online Commitment Cards for the 2022 Annual Budget can be found at [weomaha.com/give/2022budget](http://weomaha.com/give/2022budget)



# *Welcome Home Leadership*

## ***Campaign Co-Chairs***

Tim and Nan Carmody  
Darrin and Julie Dukart

## ***Coordinators***

Heidi Smith  
Cheryl Summers

## ***Communications***

Michele Bonewell

## ***Affinity Groups***

Leandra Esler

## ***Lead Gifts***

Michael and Trisha Hall

## ***Advance Commitments***

Jon and Pam Ehly  
Bob and Nicole Kucera  
Kyle and Sara McCormick  
Rusty and Jen McKune

## ***Prayer***

Liz Fleming  
Doug Giffin  
Gaileen Krebs  
Shirley Manthey

## ***Celebration***

Chuck and Jen Peters

## ***Annual Campaign***

Ron Christensen

The background of the image is a soft, abstract watercolor wash in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deeper cerulean and indigo tones. The colors blend together with soft, feathered edges, creating a textured and serene atmosphere.

*So welcome each other,  
in the same way that Christ also  
welcomed you, for God's glory.  
-Romans 15:7*



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Gretna, Nebraska 68028

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