

Reflections: Do You Desire Peace?

Isaiah 26:3-4—³You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. ⁴Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.

By Brian Beckman

2020 was a difficult year for everyone. On top of it all, our family lost our remaining aunt on my dad's side and my remaining uncle on my mom's side. It is sobering to have lost an entire generation. My uncle's death occurred during my annual time of reflection between Christmas and New Year's, making this reflection much more difficult but seemingly more important. The reminder that life is way too short bears the question, "How do I spend my last days left on this earth?" I was awakened at 4 a.m. on the day of my uncle's funeral with my marching orders from the Lord: peace for the present, peace for the future, and spread peace to others.

Life Focus #1 – Peace for the Present: Live the rest of my life here on Earth in peace, joy, and ultimate victory serving Jesus.

Isn't that what we all want: an inner peace so strong as to withstand all the storms of life? As the world is turned upside down, good has become evil and evil has become good. How do we live in this crazy world with an attitude of peace? The following three steps move us to not only experience peace for the present but afford us the opportunity to have peace for the future.

A—Admit we were born sinners and must turn away from our sin toward God because God and sin cannot coexist.

B—Believe in Jesus Christ to be our Rock, fixing our eyes on Him by reading the Word of God, hiding it in our hearts.

C—Commit to living our lives in service to our King. We give our lives as an offering to our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus.

Life Focus #2 – Peace for the Future: Spend eternity with Jesus and Father God in heaven and with everyone who has turned from their sinful nature, believed in Jesus, and committed to serving Him.

Many people fear death because they do not have the assurance that they will end up in heaven. The secular world tells us that everyone will go to heaven, but that is not what the Bible says. John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." We can all have assurance of reaching heaven by turning from our past life of sin, by trusting that Jesus is the Messiah, and by dedicating our lives in service to Jesus.

Life Focus #3 – Spread Peace to Others: Bring as many people with me to heaven as I can with God's power.

Once we experience peace for the here and now and have the assurance of being heaven-bound, our goal is to grow our relationship with Jesus. 2 Peter 3:18 states, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen." The Bible speaks of many spiritual disciplines, areas we all need to grow. The Ladder has identified 12 Biblical disciplines to live a life of worship to our great God. How about together we each pick an area for growth in 2021? For me, sharing truth boldly ties in with my third life focus of bringing as many people with me to heaven as I can with God's help. We need to reach out into our broken world and rescue people, so they too can experience true peace. People are longing for peace, especially in this time of turmoil. Ask the Lord, "Who shall I befriend?" Luke 6:48 says, "He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock." The Ladder was founded, built, and continues to exist on Jesus Christ, the rock.

We are so grateful for your support, encouragement, prayers and dedication in helping The Ladder continue its vision and mission in Shelby and Oceana County. In humility and love, we want you to experience true peace, the peace found in Christ Jesus. Allow Him to be your rock in 2021. 🙏

20 Year in Review 20

Participation

80	Average visits per month by different registered members
500	Average total visits per month
10	Different groups used The Ladder for community events, with a total of 225 people
10	Different groups used The Ladder for private parties, with a total of 298 people
248	Total documented visits by guests
3,753	Total visits by registered members

Meals Served

10,625	Adult meals (AgeWell/School)
186	Adult holiday meals (AgeWell/School)
5,041	Youth meals (School)
2,312	Youth snacks (School)
2,211	Total USDA food boxes distributed (AgeWell/School)
15,852	Total meals served

Youth & Family Connecting in Times of Distance

By Phil Santellan & Beth Pranger

²²Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. ²³They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ²⁴I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." Lamentations 3:22-24

Even through the storm of a global pandemic, God has been faithful to bring youth through the doors of The Ladder. During the course of 2020, we have been able to regularly communicate with 13 families through phone calls and various other activities.

After The Ladder closed to students in March, we were able to send care packages to them with a handwritten note of encouragement, provide a pizza dinner, and celebrate two of our students' graduations.

At Thanksgiving, we were able to offer five Thanksgiving food boxes to our families, courtesy of Shelby Public Schools. At Christmas time, the staff at The Ladder blessed one of our families with gifts for each of the eight children in the family, as well as their hard-working mother.

We continue to share the Good News of Jesus Christ each day that we gather. Praise God! A few kids are encountering the truth for the first time. We are taking ground for the Kingdom of God each day that we obediently gather and engage the youth God has brought to us. Seeds are being planted, roots established, and seedlings watered. We are certain God will be faithful and cause lasting fruit to grow. 🌱

STARTS FEB. 1 New Hours

Adults Exercise & Games: 8am – 2pm
Walking Track: 8-9am & 11am-12pm
Meal Pickup: 11:30am - 12:30pm

Youth Connections: Mon & Wed 2 - 4pm
The Pursuit: Tue & Thu 2 - 4pm

*Check our schedule of events for updates:
theladdercommunitycenter.com/calendar*



The Ladder will begin asking our champions (volunteers) to come back starting February 1. We will have social distancing, hand washing practices, and masks in place. If you do not receive a call for being put on the schedule and are interested in volunteering, please **contact Anne Byl at 231-259-0211**.

1. DO NOT attempt to volunteer if you have any of the symptoms identified by the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Health. Please review them at www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus.
2. DO NOT take part if you feel uncomfortable with the risk level.

Our Mission

The Ladder is dedicated to impacting families by guiding people to love and follow Jesus: read God's word, live in step with the Holy Spirit, and make disciples.

What's New at



Get Phone, Text, or Email Updates

By Cathy Zoulek

The Ladder will be implementing a new system in 2021 called One Call Now. One Call Now is a great tool that will enable us to keep folks informed of events, announcements, schedules, prayer needs, etc. Messages can be delivered via phone calls, texts, and email.

Please fill out the contact card to the right and return it to The Ladder ASAP, so we can update our database with the correct information. Also, please include only one phone number per household to which you would like to receive calls and texts. (Text messages can only be sent if you are using a mobile phone to receive your messages.) 📶

One Call Now CONTACT CARD

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email 1: _____

Email 2: _____

OK to receive texts: Yes No

Please complete this form and return it to The Ladder. By returning this card, you give permission to receive calls from The Ladder's One Call Now system.

JT's Legacy Lives On

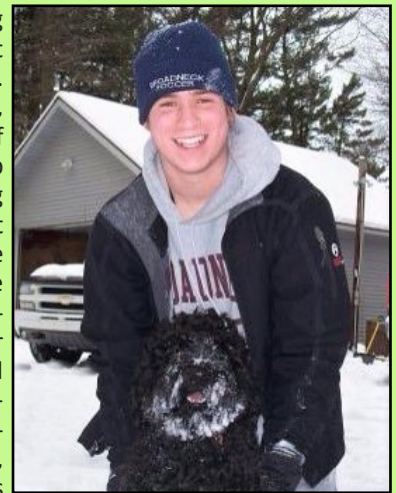
By Holly Baxter

The Ladder was recently blessed with the generous donation of a new air hockey table from Vicki Sparks, in memory of her son JT, who tragically died in 2009 at the age of 18.

JT lived an abundant life, full of laughter and love that he shared with his family and friends. He traveled to many places in his short life, including Alaska, Bahamas, Virgin Islands, Cape Cod, Maine, Maryland and Little Point Sable, MI, where his family vacationed every summer.

JT grew up living the boating life, first in the Bahamas, then in Maine, where he discovered his love for school, sports, art, and spending time with his friends. At the age of 12, his family moved to Maryland. This was not an easy move for JT, being stripped from the friends he grew up with, but he soon joined a soccer team, discovered his love for music by taking up the saxophone, and attended middle school dances.

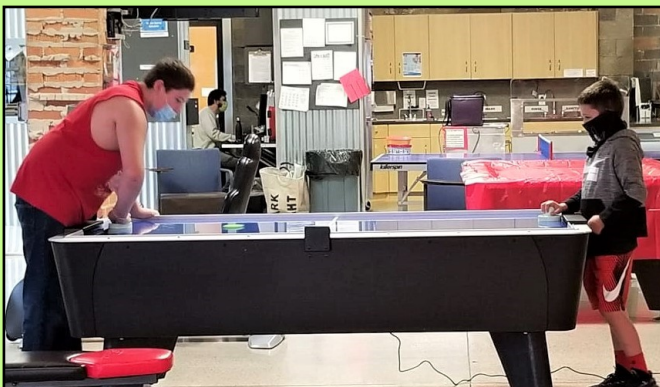
At 15, JT started working as a summer lifeguard at the local fitness center. While on lifeguard duty, he would see groups of kids with their camp counselors splashing around and having fun. It didn't take long before he became one of those counselors and discovered his passion for working with kids. He led many weekly theme projects with the kids, including art, play acting, swimming, and fitness activities.



JT Sackett: 1991 - 2009

In 2009, JT went off to college in North Carolina. He enjoyed the dorm life, taking classes, and spending time with his new friends. His favorite part was living only six miles from the ocean. Sadly, only five weeks into college, shortly after a storm had swept through the area, JT was fatally struck by lightning while he was swimming in the ocean.

Nothing can prepare a parent for the loss of a child. Support from loved ones and guidance from the Lord have been crucial in the healing process. The air hockey table dedicated to the fun-loving, talented, and generous JT is a blessing and a wonderful gift to memorialize his desire to continue working with kids. 📶



Devin and Tristan breaking in the new air hockey table

Our Vision

The Ladder is a friendly, intergenerational and ethnically diverse community center aimed at knowing and serving our neighbors and uniting our community around Jesus, so that lives are transformed.



Core Values

Highlight



We read the word of God 2 Timothy 2:15

We celebrate
Psalm 118:24

We encourage
1 Thessalonians 5:11

We serve humbly
1 Peter 4:10

We share truth boldly
Ephesians 6:19a

We love people
John 13:34-35

We give generously
2 Corinthians 9:7

We give thanks
1 Thessalonians 5:18

We repent & forgive
Acts 3:19 & Matthew 6:14

We pray fervently
Ephesians 6:18

We love God
Deuteronomy 6:5

We are led by the Holy Spirit Galatians 5:25

The Ladder Clothing

COMMUNITY CENTER

CURRENTLY IN STOCK:

Women's:
 T-Shirt: Pink—1 Medium, 1 XL
 Polo Shirt: Black—1 XL

Unisex/Men's:
 T-Shirt: Neon Yellow – 2 XL, 1 2XL, & 1 3XL
 T-Shirt: Neon Green – 1 XL & 1 3XL
 T-Shirt: Gray – 1 Large
 Polo Shirt: Black—1 Medium
 Crewneck Sweatshirt: Black—1 XL

Call or stop by The Ladder to buy your clothing today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Donation Options:

- One-time gift: \$ _____
- I/We want to invest monthly:
\$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 \$5 \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:
 The Ladder Community Center (TLCC)

TLCC is a 501(c)(3) organization in compliance with the IRS code. All gifts to The Ladder are deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the law.