

On a Quest to Be Warriors for Christ

By Brian Beckman

Greetings from The Ladder!

In the past, when I attended my sons' and nephews' basketball games, I would yell, "Battle!" encouraging them to raise the intensity level. My family still laughs at me over that word. In the past six months, God has impressed upon me the need to battle for the hearts, minds and souls of our family, friends, neighbors, the youth of our community and our nation. What has been good in our country is now called evil, and what is evil is now considered good in many people's eyes.

Isaiah 5:20 reminds us that this has been Satan's plan since the beginning:


Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

We are experiencing a spiritual battle of good versus evil, with Satan waging war against America and its people. This is not a political battle. I have recognized that we are in a battle of a lifetime for what is good. We are needing to fight this unconventional war with a Biblical understanding and God's strategies.

Recently I was introduced to José Trejo, a man passionate about his relationship with the Lord. He is involved in a ministry for men called No Stones that meets weekly. José invited me first to Base Camp, a men's ministry that meets monthly at The Barn in Shelby, hosted by Wes Vander Wilk. This ministry brings men together to challenge each other to become authentic men. Each month a man shares his journey with Christ.

The following week, José introduced me to Sam Stitt, the founder and leader of No Stones. Sam's passion is to see men become warriors for Christ. He desires for them to meet in small accountability groups weekly and study the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is moving in the hearts and minds of the men in this county. Henry Blackaby, the author of the book *Experiencing God*, writes, "Watch to see where God is working and join Him in His work." The Ladder is joining in God's work by allowing men's groups from No Stones to meet weekly here. Presently, there are four groups of men meeting. Two of those four groups are meeting at The Ladder.

The first thing in the morning during the past several months, I have been reading Ephesians 6:10-20, recognizing my need to put on the full armor of God daily to battle in this spiritual war we are up against. Yes, the Lord has impressed upon me the need to battle. Sam's interest in helping men become warriors for Christ caused me to ponder how we should teach our youth

to be warriors that battle. If we are teaching our youth how to battle with a warrior mentality, then I and other adults—especially men—need to know how to battle with a warrior mentality. As Christians, part of our daily routine should be to put on God's armor, which includes the sword of the Spirit. I know one thing for sure: we need to be on a quest to be a warrior for Christ, so we can battle against the enemy, Satan, and teach our youth how to battle, too. 

For more information on No Stones, call Sam Stitt at 231-225-1808. For more information on Base Camp, call Wes Vander Wilk at 616-250-0727.

What's New at



Core Values Banners

By Cathy Zoulek

Over the past two years, the staff at The Ladder has worked diligently at developing our core values. It was a long process, but there are now 12 beautiful banners hanging from the ceilings in the café and game areas at The Ladder. These 12 banners are a visual display of the 12 core values that have been established at The Ladder as the guiding principles for living a life of worship.

Each banner includes one of The Ladder's core values, a scripture verse that reflects the meaning of that core value, and a beautiful background graphic that visually supports the core value.

Moving forward, one of our core values will be highlighted as our theme each month. To see each month's highlighted banner:

- Visit The Ladder to see it in person
- Check our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/theladdercommunitycenter
- Check our website: www.theladdercommunitycenter.com

Youth & Family

Our Daily Mission

By Phil Santellan & Beth Pranger

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

After many hours of prayer and discernment, the Lord made it clear to us that this is His mission for us at The Ladder. What does this look like in action?

Monday through Thursday we have middle school and high school youth hours from 2 to 4 pm. During this time, we build relationships with each youth as we hang out, playing various games and engaging in conversation. Every day we have a chance to be a consistent, positive adult presence in these kids' lives as representatives of Jesus Christ as His sons and daughters.

At 2:45 pm we take a break for a meal, which is provided by Shelby Public Schools' food service. We use this opportunity to share truth from the Word of God with the kids. First, we take a moment to pray and ask God to teach us from His Word through His Holy Spirit. Then we read the Bible, listen to the words, and apply them to our lives. We ask relevant questions to help the kids connect what we read to their own experiences, so they can apply these biblical principles to their lives moving forward.

During the month of March, we learned about what God's Word says about repentance and forgiveness by looking at various parables of Jesus. We then proceeded to discuss the events leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

From 3 to 4 pm, we spend time having fun and playing games with the students, such as basketball, air hockey, ping pong, and billiards.

In addition to the youth hours, we continue to engage families through phone calls and texts. We look forward to bringing our families together in person in the near future.

God is faithful and goes before us each day. We are excited to see what God does through the disciples that are raised up here at The Ladder! 🙌

Champion Spotlight:

1 Year = 365 Opportunities!

1 John 3:11 - For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.

LUNCH BREAK

What: Pick up and deliver meals to shut-ins on your daily lunch hour.

When: Monday thru Friday 11:30 - 12:30. Volunteer one or more days a week.

MAKE FRIENDS

LEGO LEADER

What: Help youth build and organize Lego tournaments.

When: Tuesday and Thursday 2:15 - 4:00.

YOUTH TREKKING

What: Boldly go where few have ever gone! Mentor a youth through daily devotions and activities.

When: Monday thru Thursday 2:00 - 4:00. Volunteer one or more days a week.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

What: Organize storage area, paint, make small repairs, and build shelves.

When: As needed.

IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY

GUARDIAN ANGEL

What: Spend 2-3 hours a week with special needs children.

When: Fridays; times vary.

JUST FOLD IT

What: Fold newsletters, stuff and stamp it!

When: 2-3 hours every 2 months.

DOUBLE THAT SMILE

What: Greet guests by sharing your smile and signing them in.

When: Monday thru Friday 9am - 4pm. Volunteer one or more days a week, 4-hour shifts.

SHARE YOUR SKILLS

WASH, DRY, SANITIZE

What: Wipe down tables and areas of high touch use.

When: Monday through Friday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM volunteer one or more days a week, 4-hour shifts.

SUDZ THOSE SPUDZ

What: Wash pans after AgeWell meals are served.

When: Monday through Friday 12:00 to 1:00.

Your opportunity to influence our community awaits!
Please call Anne Byl: 231-259-0211.

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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.

Celebrating the Life of a Champion:

Marge Sillman April 23, 1939 - March 11, 2021

By Brian Beckman

Spunky and sassy would be our words to describe our dear friend Marge Sillman. She was an original Ladder member and champion, with a fun-loving and caring personality. We at The Ladder were shocked and saddened by her unexpected passing on Thursday (Bingo Day), March 11, 2021. You see Marge rarely missed Pinochle on Tuesday, Cribbage on Wednesday and Bingo on Thursday. She was full of life and full of laughs.

I remembered the day that she was skunked in cribbage. As you can imagine, all her cribbage friends were giving her the raspberries. Then to top it off, Holly created a slide for the monitor with a big picture of a skunk with Marge's name below. Everyone got a charge from it, including Marge, who could laugh at herself as well. Marge's pinochle friend Diane Keller said, "Marge really enjoyed life. She was always upbeat, and we had so much fun together. Marge was looking so forward to golf this Spring."

No grass grew under Marge's feet. Whether it be her numerous hobbies or her enthusiasm of watching her grandchildren play sports, she was on the move. Marge was primarily a Shelby Tigers sports fan, but her grandchildren took precedence, as she switched allegiances at times because some of them attend Hart Schools. "Boy, my great grandson is such a great football player. He scored three touchdowns, and boy did they smear Shelby," Marge once told me with such pride.

Marge was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, where Steve Crothers served on several committees with her. Marge helped serve at the church's Smorgasbord Dinner each year and sang in the choir for several years. "I will miss her sense of humor," said Steve. "She was such a positive person and lived life to the fullest, enjoying everything she did. Her willingness to jump in to help was so appreciated."

Additionally, Marge enjoyed trips to the casino, reading and puzzles. She was an avid Detroit Tiger fan, along with all things Michigan. She cheered for both M.S.U. and the U. of M. Marge loved the marching band.

We are going to miss the spunk and sass that Marge dealt out to so many. She enjoyed The Ladder family, and we truly enjoyed the character she was. 🏰



Our Friends



By Michelle Deuling

Providing a safe walking place is just one way The Ladder Community Center has impacted our special friend Sue Richards. Sue told us the story of walking out on the country roads where a vehicle followed her all the way back to her house. She shared that having a safe place to walk has really impacted her life.

Carla Sue Richards has been married to Dave for 54 years. They have two daughters, two adopted sons, and two others they call their own. They also have four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Sue began work at the Secretary of State in Lansing before she worked in the adult education field. Many years were spent working in schools – both in Tennessee and then here in our community at Shelby Public Schools, where she retired.

When they lived in Tennessee, Sue and Dave were volunteer chaperones for their church's youth group. Nowadays, Sue stays busy reading, skiing, walking and watching the *Waltons*. She loves to sing, also. One of her fondest memories at The Ladder is singing with Michelle while Ron Cooper played the piano. Sue has read all of the books in the *Little House on the Prairie* series, and also reads her *Bible* and *Portals of prayers* daily. During the winter, she enjoys cross-country skiing. When it is too cold, she has been grateful to be able to walk The Ladder's walking track, where it is warm and she has company.

Being greeted by name and the friendly people at The Ladder are two of the things that Sue likes best about this community center. She would like to invite everyone to join her walking daily. She says, not only is the exercise good for her, but she loves having people to walk and talk with; if they can keep up! She is an inspiration to other people who have health issues. She certainly doesn't let hers slow her down! 🏰



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

The Ladder has 12 core values. Here is this month's highlight...

**WE
SHARE**



BOLDLY

**PRAY FOR ME,
TOO. ASK GOD
TO GIVE ME THE
RIGHT WORDS
AS I BOLDLY
TELL OTHERS
ABOUT THE LORD.
EPHESIANS 6:19A**



Give Generously Wish Lists

Item Requests:

- Bounty Paper Towels
- Viva Paper Towels
- Postage Stamps
- Bingo Prizes
- Clear Liquid Hand Soap Refills
- #6 Peel & Seal Envelopes
- #10 Peel & Seal Envelopes
- 150-300 Piece Themed Lego Sets (New)

Monetary Investment Requests:

- Cost of Grounds Maintenance (any amount)
- Cost of Printer Ink (\$118 - \$136 each)

Contact the Oceana County Community Foundation (231-861-8335) to fund these items for The Ladder:

- Gifts of Gratitude: ~~\$450~~ \$130 (**\$320 FUNDED!**)
- Building a Legacy of Love: ~~\$1,450~~ **FUNDED!**
- Air Hockey Table: ~~\$3,300~~ **FUNDED!**

A Huge Thank You

to the folks who have provided the following items we needed in January & February:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| • Postage Stamps | 1200 |
| • CPR Mannequins, AED Trainer and Supplies | |
| • Greeting Cards | 10 |
| • Quart Ziploc Bags | 42 Bags |
| • Gallon Ziploc Bags | 38 Bags |
| • #10 Envelopes | 1,000 |
| • Handmade blanket and sweater (bingo prizes) | |
| • Bottled Water | 424 |
| • Copy Paper | 20 Reams |
| • Hand Sanitizer | 2 Gallons |
| • Monetary Gifts - Jan. | \$5,179 |
| • Monetary Gifts - Feb. | \$7,610 |



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)