

Watching God Move | Stacey Stender

A few months ago, I shared with you how we had started a Thursday night group at That Place For Teens and that we were taking some time at the end of the evening to start an “Investigation” into the Case for Christ. At that point, we were only about 2 weeks into our investigation, but I was encouraged by the teens’ interest in the investigation and the evidence that it was uncovering.

Now that we have finished the Case for Christ investigation study, I want to share the rest of the story with you. For about 2 months, we had a consistent group of 6-8 teens come back to continue the study. They listened to the evidence presented and the arguments against Jesus being a real person. At the end of the study, we had seen each and every one of the teens grow in their personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as real, and relevant to them. I can say this with certainty because the questions that followed were amazing, and the conversation has been ongoing with many of these teens. In fact, because of the in-depth and ongoing questions, we had the opportunity to bring in a special guest speaker, Pastor Dave Timm from a local congregation to better address their questions on “how God can be three things at one time”; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Pastor Dave helped our teens better understand the Trinity and what this means for them.

Over the last couple of months, I have seen God move in so many ways throughout our Brunswick ministry. I have seen Him move through our teens, our volunteers, and the doors that he is opening up for the ministry to grow in the community and make a kingdom difference. I have seen him move in the lives of teens we would not normally meet. Please continue to pray for His plan to be revealed to us and those that He has planned to put in our path as our partners in this mission field.

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New Look, Same Life-Changing Message | Steve Pausch

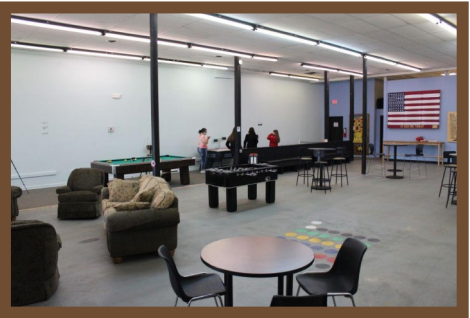
That Place For Teens, our drop-in center in Brunswick, recently underwent a dramatic overhaul to its appearance, thanks to many adults and an opportunity with a school being torn down. This large open space, previously used for other businesses, was dark and distant due to drab walls and black ceiling tiles. The space was not conducive to what we wanted to reflect. Brunswick City Schools is combining 3



Stacey Stender, right, cuts ribbon for the Grand Re-Opening. Superintendent Mike Mayell, left, and Debbie Boehmke, Executive Director of Northern Medina County Chamber Alliance, look on. Pictures credit of The Medina Gazette, <https://medina-gazette.com/news/235126/that-place-for-teen-solidifies-its-place-in-medina-county/>

middle schools into one, just across the street from the teen center. An old building was being torn down, and we were able to take down over 400 ceiling tiles and many other tables and useful pieces of furniture for the center. A two week shutdown from teen ministry and many, many hours from amazing adults and the space was ready for a Grand Re-opening. Many from the community and local officials were there and the local paper covered the event.

The health department recently approved our plan and gave us permission to have up to 50 people in the space. We are open every day after school for homework help and activities, and we have several other evening teen events each week. The community and teens have been appreciative of this opportunity. We are seeing really good things happen in the lives of teen as a result. We are still in need of 8 partners to join the team at \$50 per month to help That Place continue its daily outreach to teens. Will you join the team and help make a difference in the lives of teens in Brunswick?



God in the Long Term | Laurie Beal

Ministry work can be discouraging at times, especially if you lose sight of WHY you are doing what you are doing. Focusing on God's calling and His purpose for your endeavors versus thinking you will see the fruit of your efforts will help get you through the moments of doubt. We don't often get a "thank you" or see the impact we pray that we are making. But, oh, when we do, the sweetness is not lost on us, and we realize what a true blessing that is!

Over the last few weeks, I've been blessed by a couple of interactions that very clearly remind me why I choose to continually invest in the young parents and babies in our Teen Parents/ Parent Life program. First, I received a message from a gal that had recently aged out of our program but had just had her third kiddo. She wondered if I wanted to meet her for breakfast so I could meet this precious baby. Of course, I did! As we ate, we reminisced over the MANY things she had been through since she was 14 and first pregnant and that she had allowed me to help her with along the way. We talked about how her relationship with God has grown and how amazing her life is now. Then we talked about what we were both thinking about: the phone conversation we had about 9 months ago late at night. She had called me and shared that she was pretty sure she should get an abortion this time, for a variety of reasons, all based on fears. I listened to all the angles she had. Then I reminded her that she called me because she trusted me and trusted me to be honest. And that I was going to be. I very frankly explained why I felt she would be making a very big mistake to follow that notion and spoke of the regret I felt she would feel. I shared that I would love her regardless of her choice, but I challenged her to not decide right away and to pray about it and to think about our conversation. Within a couple weeks, she knew she wanted to have this baby. All of the things she was worried about slowly melted away as the months unfolded and she is now happily raising 3 beautiful children, has an amazing job and her own home and is in a healthy relationship. And there I was at breakfast (that she insisted on paying for!) meeting this beautiful baby girl and feeling so blessed that God let me be part of her journey! Thank you, Jesus, for the privilege of that!

Then the second nugget of fruit came in the form of late night, bittersweet Facebook messages from a gal that aged out of the teen parents program about 5 years ago. The first message she sent was accompanied with photos that I didn't realize had been taken. They were of me holding her stillborn daughter in her hospital room. Her pregnancy had been normal until about 8 months in. She had been told her 2nd baby was a healthy girl. Then, out of the blue, she was told her little girl had many health issues and would most likely pass away inside her. We all grieved with her and for her, surrounded her with prayer, prayed for a miracle but, within a week the baby died and she had to give birth knowing all of her dreams for this little one were already crushed. She asked me to be there that day. So I was. Then she asked me if I wanted to hold her little girl. My heart was shattered for this sweet young mom. And so, my answer to that question was more about what SHE needed me to do, not what I wanted to do. Gut-wrenching very inadequately describes that entire day, yet, it's the only word that comes to mind. And 5 years later she is sending me these pics along with a message thanking me for being there and that she often thinks about how much I helped her through that.

She shared that she was mad at God for a long time and had lost all faith, but that it was His love that got her through all of the rough roads she's traveled (her husband also died of an overdose a year ago.)

And that He put people like me in her life to remind her of Him and all his love. Wow! I am immensely and humbly grateful that God allows inadequate me to be in the trenches with these young people and other amazing mentors, and that He trusts me to share His love and to embrace His kids. So thankful.

How the School Year Kicked Off | Matt Mountjoy

Certainly COVID-19 has provided extra hurdles and changes to our process on our Garage programming, however this has not dampened the kick off to the school year. Most years, the first few Thursday nights at The Garage are inconsistent in attendance, however, this year we have averaged 18 students a week so far. The coolest part is that each week we have had new kids attend! The group is fun and very active, but they also do a great job of settling down for the more serious moments and really engage in the discussions or lessons. The first lesson series has been on unity. We are working towards the need for unity and the ultimate unity that comes in Christ. Last week, we broke away from that with a special suicide awareness/prevention night with two guest speakers who shared how suicide impacted their lives and their family. It was an incredible night with many tears, but also great conversations.

In other areas of update, would you please prayerfully consider, if you are local, getting more involved? We are always in need of more leaders for our evening events. This includes our normal Thursday night program as well as our Wednesday night group with a slightly different target group of students. Our Wednesday night program will be starting back up October 7th. Also, in the works is a group that we have done in the past and are hoping to do again this year. It is a discipleship group for kids who want to dig in a little deeper. Right now, we are working on interest and commitment level before we begin that group. Thank you for your continued prayer and support for The Wadsworth YFC Ministry!

September was Suicide Awareness Month | John Roush

September was National Suicide Awareness Month. I procrastinated, but I still need to call teen suicide to your attention in October. The risk of suicide should be on the radar of anyone who interacts with teens, says Dr. Jane Pearson, a mental health expert at NIH. The stressors of COVID lockdowns and other restrictions that began in March have in some cases resulted in teen anxiety, depression and even thoughts of suicide. This comes as youth suicide was already at a record high before the pandemic, with increases every year since 2007. Suicide is the [second leading cause](#) of death among people ages 10-24, after accidents, as it has been for many years, according to the most recent data available from the CDC.

Parents and YFC volunteers and staff need to know that suicide is preventable. A red flag is when sadness is more than a passing mood. Details on other warning signs and what to do can be found at numerous web sites such as: <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2019/09/teen-suicide>, <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/teen-suicide>, and <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/suicide.html>. *If a teen you know is having suicidal thoughts, assist them in reaching out for help. The [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) is open 24 hours a day at 800-273-8255.*