



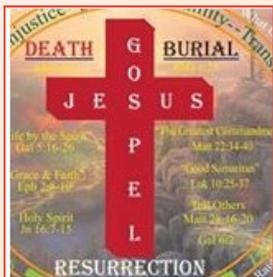
FSBH Website: firststepbackhome.net

*** THE MIRACLE NEWS ***

First Step Back Home
PO Box 966, O'Fallon, MO
63366

A Revelation about Heaven

by Paul Kruse



First, THANK YOU ALL- our donors and prayer partners - for another blockbuster year at FSBH! Don't know how **God** does it through you all, or if He will even continue to make one year better than the previous one. But **Lord**, please continue in your love, grace and mercy to us puny little humans just trying to live out and do your Greatest Commandments: Love **God**, and love others deeply, beginning with the poor!

Overwhelmed, understaffed and underfunded we still, with the power of the Resurrection, continue on **God's** path in having empathy for the homeless and working poor by trying to supply the resources they need to become self-supporting. This, I believe, is the new American Dream. Jobs may be up but the wages are still way down. A living wage

around here is \$15 per hour for singles and up to \$40 per hour for a family of five. The average wage is about \$10 per hour. It's almost impossible to raise funds for a car or a house for the poor. And it's very hard for some just to get a birth certificate and ID.

Just did that earlier this month for a client with \$0 in his pocket and only one pair of pants to his name. Also this client could only see plainly for two feet in front of him. Earlier this month I had found some adjustable glasses on-line and gave them to him so now he can see and read almost anything. He also has a new change of clothes for job hunting too. He said he now feels human and it opened a whole new world to him now that he can see and dress cleanly. Pray for **Anthony** as he does have auto body skills and through the **Lions Club** hopefully we can get him new prescription glasses. Now that he has an ID, and was able to raise some funds for his lodging expense, I can get him a week in the motel. *(If people can't feel a pain in their hearts for this guy I feel sorry for them. They are just denying **God's** existence and deity if they don't).* See Page 10 for more about this client's connection with **Lions Club** grant for glasses.

Well what about **Heaven**? As **Revelation 22** talks about **Heaven** I am so encouraged especially at 72 now I have two feet in the casket, living dangerously on borrowed time as I have been for 50 years at least, or as my wife says, I'm in my bonus years, HA!

The **Bible** paints a beautiful unimaginable picture of this **God**-run place that has these qualities: A paradise better than the one **Adam** and **Eve** lived in, which is a restored paradise by the second **Adam, Jesus**; a second paradise where whole cities and nations shall find abundant delight and satisfaction; and a crystal-clear stream running down the main street coming directly from **God** through the mediation of **Jesus**.

The presence of **God** in **Heaven** is the health and happiness of the saints in whom they find remedies for all their former maladies. There is perfect freedom felt from every form of evil. There shall be no more curse or serpent there. The devil can't draw the saints to himself as in the earthly realm.

Heaven's inhabitants can see the face of **God** and feel the supreme happiness and paradisiacal state there. **God** will have His seal on our foreheads and we will reign there forever.

(Continued on next page)

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A Revelation about Heaven

(Con't.)

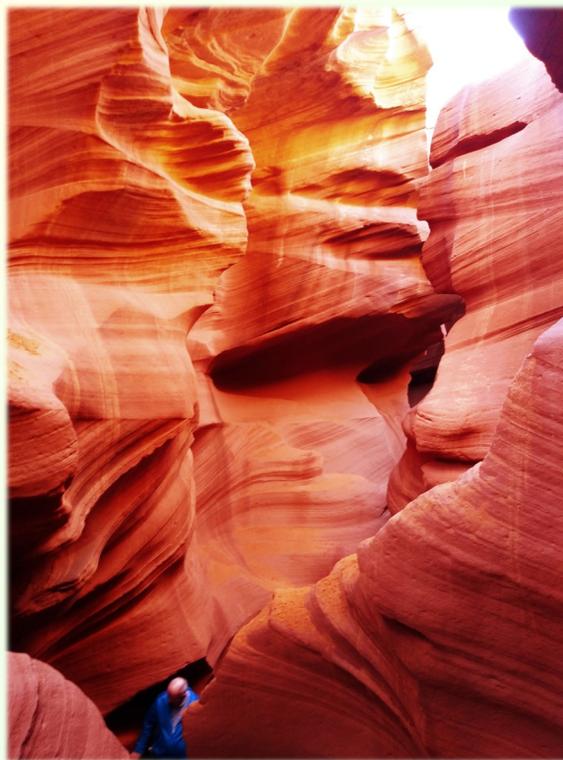
We will have perfect knowledge and joy full of wisdom and comfort, continually walking in the light of the **Lord** forever! All these revelations were shown to **John** by **God's angels**.

God will judge justly. He will let those who are filthy and unjust remain so, and get deeper in their sin. But He will confirm, strengthen, and further sanctify those who are upright. **Jesus** will give rewards and punishments to men according to their works as **Jesus** is the author, finisher and rewarder of faith and holiness of His people. He will by His **Word** give to His people the right to the tree of life and an entrance to heaven. He will also condemn and exclude from heaven all wicked, unrighteous and lying people. All this is confirmed by the testimony of **Jesus** and the spirit of prophecy. It is also confirmed by an open and general invitation to all to come and partake of the promises and privileges of the **Gospel**. The **Spirit** and the **Churches** all testify to the excellency of the **Gospel**.

In conclusion, **God** says all who add or subtract from His word will experience all of the plagues of the **Bible** and not experience the promises and privileges of it. All need to realize the **Bible** is of the most sacred nature, divine authority and of the last importance.

I pray this gives everyone who reads this the hope and realization of **Jesus'** second coming and of **Heaven**. We encourage everyone to experience the joy and heartfelt gratification having empathy towards all who suffer from poverty, and the pain and agonizing of it, then doing something to relieve their plight!

Thank You!
God Bless You!



We recently took a trip to **Antelope Canyon** in Arizona and this place made me think of what the intense colors of Heaven might look like. *P.K.*

New Wheels for Needy Family

On January 18, **FSBH** was able to acquire another vehicle for a needy family. This time a family of five, with Dad who is an Afghanistan Army Vet, benefitted from the car. **Paul** found this **2003 Dodge Durango** for them at a local used car lot. Their previous vehicle had its catalytic converter stolen and the cost to replace would have been greater than just finding them a different one. Having wheels again is making a positive difference for this family!



College Student Writes Grant for Playground Equipment

Zach Killion, a junior at **Olivet Nazarene University** majoring in non-profit ministry services and member of **New Life Church**, O'Fallon, needs to write a grant as part of his spring semester on grant-writing. He has chosen to work with **FSBH** on this project and will be researching funding opportunities for two much needed playground sets for our two mobile home communities.

Paul met with **Zach** at one of the mobile home parks to show him the area already prepped for a playground set. Hopefully **Zach** will be successful in finding new funding for this project so our ministry resources can be allocated for other needs.

Children in both of the mobile home parks where **FSBH** has homes do not have safe, outdoor play areas at this time, so they often ride bikes or just hang out on the streets. Having nice playground sets will give kids an improved quality of life in a safer space. We hope to have something ready to be played on by early spring.



Paul and Zach in front of the designated space near the community pool, where one of the playground sets will be located.



Paul with Senior Pastor Jim Chapman, Sandy Wilson and Outreach Pastor Brandon Fields

New Life Church Provides Blessings and Encouragement

New Life Church in O'Fallon has come alongside **FSBH** for many years in lots of creative ways to help us help others. At Christmas time they made up 300 blessing bags of toiletries and snacks, filled laundry baskets and provided gift cards. They also designated their \$733 **Christmas Eve Service** offerings to **FSBH**.

Students from their church have used our ministry as a model for grant writing and for story telling in their college experiences. And one member there won a national grant from a foundation run by her employer and chose **FSBH** to be the recipient of \$5K! (See Car Foundation story on Page 9).

A group from there has faithfully served meals monthly for many years at the local motel and they encourage us all the time with their Love **God** and Love Others focus.

Save the Date for GiveSTLDay: May 1, 2019



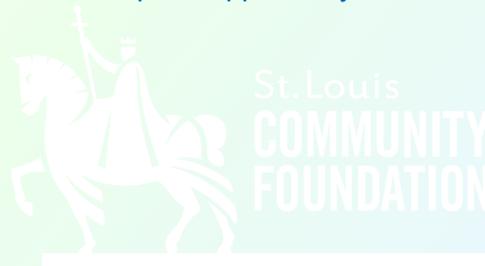
Please mark on your calendars now to make a special one time financial gift to **FSBH** on Wednesday, May 1, 2019. That is the date for the **6th Annual GiveSTLDay** campaign. Nearly 1,000 public charities from all across the St. Louis region will be participating in this 24 hour on-line giving blitz, hoping to raise more than \$2.4 million!

FSBH has been a part of this annual campaign for several years and last year we received \$27,278.17, partly by strategically having donors contribute at specific periods of time throughout the day, which earned us one \$1,000 prize, and by us receiving \$1,312 from corporate “power hour” extra dollars during set periods of time during the day with percentages based on the total campaign giving during those periods. Overall, we came in 11th for most donations from a group of more than 900 public charities! All because of donors like **YOU** who believe in the work we are doing and encourage us by being a part of it all on special days like the **GiveSTLDay**.

This year we hope to raise \$30,000 on **GiveSTLDay**. Any amount you give (\$10 or more) can be an anonymous or known donation. At this time we have \$9,500 in matching gifts sponsored by friends of the ministry. Help us make their dollars count by having your dollars matched \$1 for \$1.

Would you help us reach our goals this year and make it happen? Click on this [GiveSTLDay.org/FirstStepBackHome](https://givestlday.org/FirstStepBackHome) link to make your donation on Wednesday, May 1, 2019.

Watch for details on specific “power hours” or prize opportunity times, which we’ll post as we get closer to the Give Day.



How Did the Numbers Stack Up?

2018 Touchpoint Summary

When compiling data from services rendered last year, here's some interesting stats that show the many different touchpoints we have with clients, donors and volunteers.

CLIENTS

- 383 Total people served
- 243 Households represented
- 80 Children represented
- 1,288 Motel nights in 14 local motels for 285 family units
- 2,462 Mobile home days in 2 parks for 32 people in 8 mobile homes
- 77 Received phones/cell minutes
- 104 Received assistance with transportation/fuel
- 100 Received personal care/prescriptions/clothing/groceries
- 51 Received rent/housing/utilities/repairs assistance
- 5 Help with purchase of a vehicle
- 5,000 Calls for help, estimated

HELPERS

- 3,280 Volunteer hours spent related to meals served
- \$24,600 Value of meals served at motels
- 42 Groups that took meals to motel including 15 new groups
- 328 Meal events
- 1,608 Volunteers providing meals
- 235 Other in-kind volunteers
- \$22,121 Other in-kind donations

DONORS

- 144 Individual Contributors
- 23 Church Group Donors
- 18 Business Contributors
- 7 Community Group Contributors

CAPS Students Improved FSBH Outreach Tools



The **St. Charles County CAPS Program** – Center for Advanced Professional Studies, under the leadership of **Dr. Dan Tripp**, worked with **FSBH** last semester to focus on the enhancement of several of our ministry outreach tools. The group of five senior high school students, **Faith Rush**, St. Charles West HS, **Alison Aguilar**, Liberty HS, **Michael Howrey**, Francis Howell HS, **Justin Stephney**, Ft. Zumwalt East, and **Henry O. Young**, Liberty HS, each worked on specific projects including flyers, our website, Facebook posts and a new ministry video.

L to R: **Faith, Henry, Lana, Justin** and **Alison**. **Michael** was in an interview when we grabbed this shot.

A Decade of Christmas Wonderlands!

Our most successful **10th Annual Christmas Wonderland** happened at the Wentzville United Methodist Church. We had 552 people show up on Saturday, December 15, 2018 including 362 working poor and homeless from 130 families, including 156 kiddos who received gifts from Santa, 41 teens who got to "shop" for their own stuff, and 180 kid Bibles given away. Great entertainment was provided through games and activities as well as by the aerial scarf performances from **Kinetic Tapestry** of St. Louis County and their **Barnstormers Youth Troupe**.

More than 190 volunteers and visitors helped us make it all happen, with nearly \$10,000 in donations of the 750 toys, 197 filled laundry baskets, 300 bags of personal care items and 5000+ diapers and wipes. **Toys for Tots** came through big time for us this year, when a last-minute toy drive at a business was canceled. God provided for every single detail, including great weather that day. 14 different churches, 14 community organizations, and 7 local businesses participated. Oh What a Day!

Mark your calendars now for the next Christmas Wonderland: **Saturday, December 21, 2019** at Wentzville United Methodist Church.



Thanks to **Toys For Tots** for donating most the toys that were given to the children!



Myah Olson, who collected 1,000 pairs of socks through her Operation Warm-A-Sole, to give to the families at Christmas



Holt HS collection coordinated by The Key Club and **Lacey Haitt**, sponsor.



LEFT: Cheryl Smith from **Chapel of The Lake Women's Bible Study** brought us diapers and homemade afghans!

RIGHT: Mission Financial donated at least 10 filled laundry baskets and lots of toys.





Festive centerpiece created by **Marjorie Schoonover**, Grace Community Chapel.



LEFT: Volunteers from **Matthias' Lot Church** giving out Bibles.

BELOW: Laundry baskets full of household supplies for the families, donated by many groups.



Volunteers from **Crisis Nursery** who gave diapers to the families that have babies.



Too many helpful volunteers to list them all, but we are thankful for each and every one who helped make this day such a wonderful success!

For more photos from the event, visit bit.ly/FSBHXmas2018



Davita Corporate Christmas Community Donation



Sweet surprise on January 23, 2019 when **Paul** and **Lana Kruse** were called to show up at the Lake St. Louis **Davita Dialysis Unit** for a \$950 check presentation. Thanks to **Mary Anderson, RN**, Facility Administrator and Lana's former dietitian contact, their **Peggy Liliensiek, RD, FSBH** was chosen as the local charity for the company's Christmas benevolent giving this past holiday season! Such blessings!

Donation Methods to Support FSBH

We want to remind you that your tax-deductible charitable donation is a great way to support the ministry. We are a public charity per IRS Regulations of a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations will be receipted for tax-deductible documentation purposes. Here are several options to consider:

- **Corporate Matching Grant Donations**
 - Some matching grant companies are **AT&T, Wells Fargo, Monsanto, Boeing, MasterCard, Pfizer, VMWare, CarMax, Coca-Cola, Exxon, BP Gasoline, General Electric, Avon, IBM, American Express, Gap** and **Thrivent Financial Services**.
 - Boeing and perhaps other corporations offer **volunteer time grant matches**. If you volunteer 25 hours with our ministry, Boeing will send a \$250 cash gift.
 - If you work for a company that offers match gifting, please initiate the paperwork for this to be done, and we'll complete the required elements so you and others can participate.
- **Write a Check payable to "First Step Back Home"** and send to the following address:
 - First Step Back Home, Inc.
 - Paul Kruse
 - PO Box 966
 - O'Fallon MO 63366
- **Log onto our ministry website and click PayPal** for direct donation via your credit card. There is a small fee charged to the ministry with this option. www.firststepbackhome.net
- **Thrivent Members** can create an "Action Team" and receive \$250 "seed money" twice per year for charitable causes. Details can be found at this link: thrivent.com/actionteam.
- Log onto **GoFundMe** to support the **FSBH Sponsored Housing Project for Mobile Homes**.
- When you shop online, use **Amazon Smile** and choose **First Step Back Home** as your charity. They will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. You can use this direct [link](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-8676289) to our page: smile.amazon.com/ch/20-8676289



Recent Donor Acknowledgements

We want to thank several businesses, churches and community groups who have financially supported FSBH this past quarter with these recent gifts.

- \$5,000 – **Fleming Charitable Foundation**
- \$2,500 – **Central Presbyterian Church**
- \$2,500 – **Franciscan Sisters of Mary**
- \$1,300 – **Grace Community Chapel**
- \$1,200 – **Steve Crawford Trucking, Inc.**
- \$1,000 – **Ameren UE Foundation**
- \$1,000 – **St. John UCC, St. Charles**
- \$ 950 – **Davita Dialysis, Lake St. Louis.** See story on page 8
- \$ 900 – **Mission Financial- St. Peters**
- \$ 758 - **New Life Nazarene Church -**
\$5 for each visitor who attends their services and special Christmas Eve Offering.
- \$ 515 – **Network for Good Giving Tuesday anonymous donors**
- \$ 500 – **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Ballwin**
- \$ 413 - **Thrivent Choice Dollars** as allocations from **Dennis & Donna Hall** and **Paul & Cindy Profrock**
- \$ 400 – **Element Church, Wentzville**
- \$ 400 – **Warrenton Christian Church**
- \$ 350 – **New Life Evangelistic Center, St. Louis**
- \$ 300 – **Chapel of the Lake, Lake St. Louis**
- \$ 300 – **Ladies Auxiliary Knights of Columbus Council 823, St. Charles**
- \$ 225 – **St. John UCC Women's Wednesday Bible Study Group- Weldon Spring**
- \$ 100 – **Amy Clark** on behalf of co-workers **Sandy Lowery, Maureen Mueller** and **Christy Beckman**

Thank
You

We are so very thankful to all of you who think of donating to our public charity when opportunities present.

Car Foundation National Award Benefits FSBH

Liz Fields grew up in a poverty-ridden situation but her Mom taught her from a very young age that others always had it worse than them, and that they should “pay it forward” every opportunity they had. So **Liz** has had a heart for helping others in many ways: serving meals to the poor, lending a hand when she could, participating in the charitable foundation of her employer.

Someone submitted an application to the Foundation for the outstanding community involvement of **Liz** through her St. Peters business operations, and she was surprised and delighted last fall when she realized she would be one of 12 business associates nationally who would be recognized for her outstanding contributions through its **Community Service Award** at a nation-wide convention in Las Vegas. She and her husband, **Brian**, enjoyed the truly “red-carpet” treatment they were honored to be showered with, including all expenses for airfare, hotel and entertainment...AND she was then able to select her favorite charity to receive a \$5,000 cash grant. Guess who she chose?

All this was unknown to us, until one day last fall when we received a letter from the Foundation asking for our public charity tax identification papers and policies. Then we started putting two and two together and figuring out how all of this was coming about. **Paul** had been invited to share our ministry with the congregation at **Liz** and **Brian's** church one November Sunday, and during that service **Liz** shared her story and told us about how she won the **Community Service Award** and selected **FSBH!** **Liz** and her church family, **New Life Church**, have helped **FSBH** for many years, serving meals at the local motel and collecting toiletries, laundry basket items, personal care items and food. She lives out the message of “Loving God and Loving Others” in all she does at work and in the community. Our emergency motel lodging expenses are about \$5,000 each month, so these funds truly help many in need, especially during the bitter cold winter nights we've been experiencing this year! *(Story composed by Lana Kruse).*

Meal Ministry Update

We are continually thankful for the dedicated groups that serve meals to the families at the Economy Inn. These groups serve in all types of weather and feed more than stomachs as they share the love of **Jesus** with people in need.

In the last quarter, we have welcomed new meal serving groups from **Wentzville First Assembly of God Homeschool Group**, **Cub Scout Pack 358 at Heritage Intermediate**, **SCCHE Homeschool Group Class of 2020**, and the **Matz Family**.

Current openings are: 1st Fridays (odd months), 2nd Sundays, 2nd Thursdays, 3rd Sundays, 3rd Wednesdays, 3rd Thursdays, 3rd Fridays (even months), 4th Sundays and 4th Saturdays.

The calendar is always available online at firststepbackhome.net/meal-calendar. Contact **Kim Orf** to sign up for serving meals. (Her contact info is on Page 1).



Meal group from Wentzville First Assembly of God Homeschool Group serving December 17

Lions Club Improves Vision for Client

by Lana Kruse



Anthony came to **FSBH** in early February as part of an inter-agency networking situation when one agency helping him needed emergency lodging assistance. He had stayed at a Warming Center one or two of those bitter cold nights, but now he just needed a safe place to stay, so **FSBH** was asked to help out.

Thankfully, he was still working with a caseworker from another agency who could help him with some immediate transportation needs and help him get to the Health Department for a birth certificate and to DMV for a new ID, all of which were paid for by **FSBH**. Once he had those resources, he was ready to start his 15-a-day job search.

We paid for his first two days at one of the local motels and told him he needed to see if he could round up some other cash resources to help with the cost for one full week, which he did the first time this was requested at another partnering agency.

So with having ID and a place to stay, the focus then became finding work. But one more BIG obstacle faced this client. He could hardly see, due to extremely poor close-range vision. We knew the **Lake St. Louis Lions Club** might be of help, so we applied to them for assistance to get **Anthony** an eye exam and some new specs. In the meantime, he was able to wear some powerful over-the-counter glasses **Paul** had purchased for himself earlier in the month. The **Lions Club** did not delay in approving this request and now **Anthony** is just waiting for his new glasses to arrive!

And to top this all off, he actually has found a job with less than a three-day search in Wentzville. We found him a bike to help with his local transportation needs, thanks to a donation from a ministry friend. He rounded up some clothing at **Mary Martha Thrift Shop** and we got him working boots and uniform clothes. It's amazing to see all these things come together when everyone cooperates. It takes a motivated client and a network of others, each of whom can do one part to put the puzzle pieces together. It will be fun to see what the future holds for this 30-something young man! I'll bet he won't remain homeless for too much longer!

Coordinated Entry Celebrates First Birthday

Just a little over a year ago **FSBH** joined with about 100 other community organizations in the St. Charles, Lincoln and Warren County areas to make the **Tri-County Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry (CE) Case Management Program** come alive. Since January 23, 2018, 3,312 people have been assessed for services and when it seemed **FSBH** was the best resource to meet identified needs, we then received referrals to help with motel emergency lodging, cell phones, gas cards, ID's and a variety of other necessary services for the homeless or near-to-be homeless callers.

The best news for some of those people is that 380 now have been permanently housed through the CE providers. You can see from the chart here that 98.5% of callers received assessments within 24 hours of calling the 2-1-1 CE phone number. Of the 2,356 referrals made, those that came to **FSBH** were able to be handled in a more streamlined fashion, since basic intake information had already been gathered, and through an on-line data base system, we have been able to see a better picture of the needs of the clients and services already happening for them.

FSBH also provided 50 cell phones with minutes and 50 \$25 gas cards for the CE team to use as they needed without having to refer to us for individual situations. This represented about \$3,750 in resources for homeless in need of communication or transportation support.

Now better, more reliable, data is being collected, and shared with community and governmental leaders about the true status of homelessness and poverty in our region. **Todd Barnes**, Executive Director, has been presenting data at many leadership meetings throughout the Tri-County area. Hopefully all this will translate to more appropriate funding for resources here to help in the seemingly never-ending battle with these conditions. **Ms. Jamie Flores** is the CE Project Manager and oversees the daily staffing and activities at the Call Center.



One Year of Coordinated Entry

The Tri-County Continuum of Care opened the Coordinated Entry case management center in January 2018. Coordinated Entry provides centralized access to assistance for people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness. Through a research-based, coordinated assessment process, callers receive housing stabilization resources tailored to their specific needs, including referrals to HUD-funded housing programs and other services offered by community organizations, as appropriate.

The Continuum of Care consists of 50+ organizations participating in community planning efforts to end homelessness in the Tri-Counties (St. Charles, Lincoln and Warren)

MAKING ENDS MEET IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY

When a household earns below the poverty level, how do they pay for basic needs in the St. Charles region?

2019 Poverty Guidelines
\$12,000 Single Person
\$25,750 Family of 4

A full-time job at the 2019 minimum wage (\$8.60/hour) earns only \$17,888 per year.

BUT... How much does it cost to live in St. Charles County?

Rent (30%*)
Average Rent: \$952/month (2 Bedroom, approx. 900 sq. ft.)

Food (15%*)
Average for family of 4: \$843/month

Utilities (6%*)
Average: \$100/month (900 sq. ft. apartment)

Transportation (10%*)
Approx. \$225/month

Healthcare (7%*)
Approx. \$150/month

Clothing, Services, Etc. (2%*)
Average Monthly Childcare: \$678 - Home care: \$817 - Center based

* Recommended % of Income
Source: Department of Health & Human Services, Missouri's Child Poverty, Child Abuse, Neglect, and Child Care Act

3,312 People were assessed for services through Coordinated Entry in 2018
36% were children

1,009 were from St. Charles City
365 were from Westville
296 were from St. Peters
539 were from O'Fallon
133 were from other parts of St. Charles County
434 were from Lincoln County
317 were from Warren County

2,356 Referrals were made to **104** Agencies and Organizations in our Community

380 Individuals have been permanently housed through Coordinated Entry providers

98.5% Received an assessment within 24 hours of calling Coordinated Entry

71% Of the 1,510 households assessed for services, lived below the poverty level
38% were families with single mothers

To Connect to a Coordinated Entry Case Manager, Call 211

2018 Client Stats By Age

