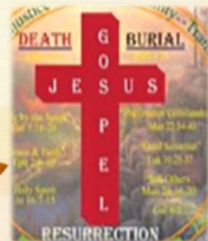




# \*\*\* THE MIRACLE NEWS \*\*\*



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

## Fight the Good Fight

by Paul Kruse

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**VISIT US ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA!**

facebook.com/firststepbackhome

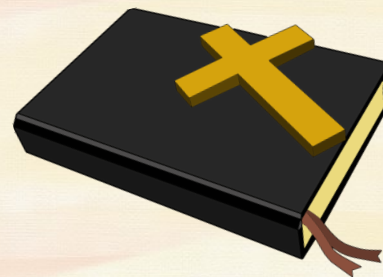
twitter.com/1ststepbackhome

bit.ly/fsbhyoutube

*For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 2 Corinthians 10:4*

There are many wars we need to win right here in St. Charles, Lincoln and Warren Counties that are going on as you read this, mostly unnoticed by others not facing the battles. These are silent wars we can't hear, and for the most part can't see. Sometimes we read about them but think someone else or some other entity is taking care of them. Truth is we are losing the war on poverty. But with prayers and physical help we can see some great successes and victories. The other internal wars are listed below. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

- Crime
- Morals
- Rejecting **God**
- Lies
- Corruption
- Adjusting to climate change
- Political Unrest
- Racism and more



### The War on Poverty

When I was fighting in the Vietnam War, I thought that after the war ended, I was through with war. When I got back, I was curious about Heaven and Hell, and I got saved. Little did I know **God** had plans for me to fight more wars. But this time it would be the War on Poverty.

16 years ago, I had no idea there were still people living in the woods and in shelters that were always full. So that is when I began helping the homeless and working poor. I have since learned that you must be careful with how you help them.

If you take care of all their needs, that leaves nothing for them to do to help themselves. **Helping themselves is the key to becoming self-supporting.** If we just buy a homeless, jobless guy food, clothes, books, day timers, gas etc. and say, "There you go," he falls back into the poverty rut again pretty quickly. But if you say, "Now we require you to submit 15 job applications per day for every day you are in the motel," then that awakens his own creativity to get a job and take responsibility for his own life.

We have hundreds of examples of doing this with people. We hardly ever give a needy person all they need. We give them half and tell them they must raise the other half before we give ours (except for the basics of life, we give that freely). Then they get busy and do whatever they have to do to get their half using their own **God**-given creativity. But if they can't raise their half and we know they tried we will help as much as we can. Most of the time they would say, "I didn't think my aunt would help me, or I didn't think I could get that part time job." So, putting the ball back in their court helps them to get creative and figure something out for themselves.

(continued on Page 2)





## Fight the Good Fight

(continued)

This works over 50% of the time. We still only have a 50% success rate in clients becoming better off than when we found them. But there are other agencies and institutions for the other half. Like my doctor used to say, "Don't drink alcohol, don't smoke, get overweight, do drugs or chase women, and I have a pill for everything else."

A Biblical perspective of this may be to help the poor by helping them to nurture their **God**-given gifts and opportunities to better their own circumstances. (1 Peter 4:10). Work has two benefits. One is to pay for our basic needs and the other is become a contributor to society and provide personal well-being.

For Christians, this is simply obeying the mandates of the Greatest Commandments: To first love **God**, then to love your neighbor as yourself. (Luke 10:27)

Only **God** can create something out of nothing, but we must create something out of something else. (Matthew 5:16). I had no idea I would have a ministry that would in 16 years have helped thousands of people, but this is what can happen when you turn your life and future over to **God**. (Phillipians 4: 6-7).

We must keep in mind that there are unrighteous poor and righteous poor. The unrighteous are those that go their evil ways that lead to a lifetime of poverty. The righteous follow **Jesus** and do the right things but sometimes fall into unforeseen circumstances they can't prevent, due to no fault of their own. (Psalms 11:7).

As the Bible says, "The poor will always be with us." We are guaranteed opportunities for charity work as long as we live. But with **God** in our minds and **Jesus** in our hearts we can win many battles for the homeless and working poor. Then it's up to them to continue in a Christ-led life. (Deuteronomy 15:11).

We work with our clients in three different ways: Relief, Rehab and Development. We give them the basics of life, get them stabilized in transitional housing and then guide them to improve their lives by helping them realize the full potential of their gifts and abilities. They are naturally overwhelmed by the hole they dug for themselves, but they must learn to prosper through their own strengths, skills, and ingenuity. These are the building blocks that pave the way for a better future. We always advise clients that they need to read the Bible, get closer to **Jesus** and continuously strive for better jobs, trade skills, or education so they can use their own resources for a self-providing life. (John 15)

If anyone would like to join in this battle let me know and we will enlist you in our boot camp and show you how **God** can work through you as He has us and do great things in the War on Poverty.

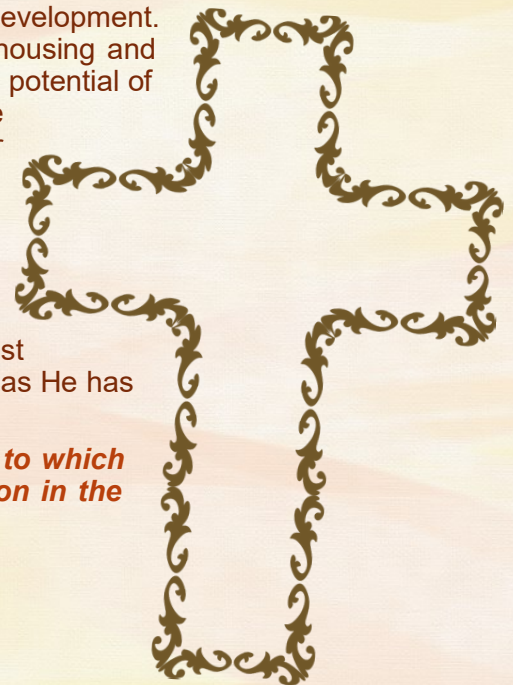
***"Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." (2 Timothy 6:12)***

**God** Bless You All!!

Love in the name of **Jesus**,

Paul

(636-466-1365)







## 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Wonderland: December 11th

The **13<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Wonderland** is set to happen on Saturday, December 11, 2021 at **Wentzville United Methodist Church**, 725 Wall Street in Wentzville, MO. We will hold it like last year, as a drive-thru event for 120 pre-registered clients and families of the homeless and working poor population in our region of St. Charles, Lincoln and Warren Counties. The word has already gotten out and ALL of the spots have already been reserved!

This year we need volunteers to help us make it all happen. If you'd like to get involved, register on the **Sign-Up Genius link**, which can be found on the FSBH website or Facebook page as well.

Also, to bless the clients who come, we are still in need of donations of \$25 Walmart Gift Cards (we have 40 so far); filled laundry baskets, toys for kids (some will come from the **Toys for Tots** organization), and people to help with the set up the day before (Dec. 10 from 9 am – 3 pm) and various assignments on Saturday from 9 am – 3 pm.

Last year we served 535 people who came from the 120 registered family units. We expect it will be about the same this year. Let us know how YOU can get involved!



**FIRST STEP BACK HOME**  
13th ANNUAL

### CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND

A special celebration for the homeless and needy families!  
Drive Through Event by Pre-Registration Only – No Walk-ins



**Saturday, December 11, 2021**

12 – 3 pm  
Wentzville United Methodist Church,  
725 Wall Street Wentzville, MO 63385



**Toys for Tots**  
**Holiday Music**



**Bibles, Diapers, Laundry Baskets**

### Wave to Santa!

Brown Bag Snacks will be provided.

Come celebrate **Jesus is the Reason for the Season** with us!

Volunteer registration: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094AA8AE23A13-fsbh1>

Whoever is kind to the needy honors God. Proverbs 14:31







## Sleep in Heavenly Peace Ministry Makes Beds for Kids

by Lana Kruse

Don't you just love the name of this ministry? I was awed by the concept and loving service expressed when I heard their story - They seek to provide hand-made bunk beds to children who don't have any beds of their own. Local chapter leaders, **Ken Kaibel** and **Bill Brunner**, shared their vision with the **100 Women Who Care** group in October and were selected as the recipient of this quarter's benevolent impact funds.

The very same day as this meeting took place, I had received a text from a client of ours who said she had to toss out her son Tristin's bed due to mold in the place they were renting, and could I help her find one. Just like God to help me put those two together: the bed-less child with the bed-making men all in the same day!

Within a week of the expressed need, our client and her son were blessed for him to have a brand-new bed, with bedding, sheets, pillow and comforter in his favorite colors! On the day the bed was delivered, Tristin was shown how to put the bed together and he helped to assemble the parts. He was so proud of his accomplishment! And mom asked if they could all pray over the bed before Ken and Bill left. "Well of course!" they said, and added, "It was great."

Interested in helping this partner charity? Contact **Ken** at 636-295-6188 or **Bill** at 417-225-8790 or check out **SHPBeds.org**. The Wentzville Chapter is one of 280 nationwide. It serves to support the needs of kids sleeping on a floor in Wentzville, Foristell or Lake St. Louis areas.



## 6<sup>th</sup> Year for Thanksgiving Feast at Mobile Home Park

Our **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Dinner** for residents at Rolling Meadows Mobile Home Park will be held as a drive-thru event like we did last year. Ministry volunteers will hand off pre-packaged food in to-go boxes to each car that comes by.

Most everything will be happening outside, so we're hoping for another great weather day.

This event will be hosted by **FSBH** and friends from **Gateway West Church** on Saturday, November 20, 2020 from 3 – 5 pm. Thanks to **FSBH** Board Member **Cheryl Street** for organizing all the details!







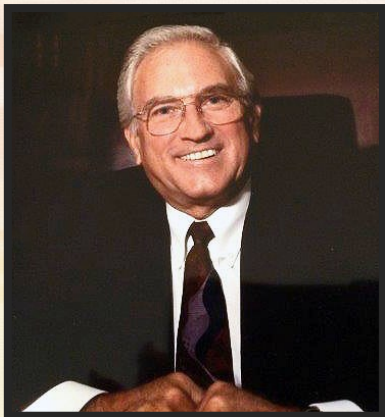
## Faith & Blue Collaboration

Taking a local spin on a national program, the **Wentzville Faith Network** group supported the **Wentzville Police Department** in a food drive at the local **Dierbergs** store on October 9, 2021. Throughout our county and the entire nation, this powerful initiative sought to build bridges to more engaged communities by reinforcing connections between law enforcement professionals and the communities they serve through relationships with faith-based organizations and churches.

**FSBH** staffed the event for part of the day, along with several from the local police department and other church/community groups. Folks were given a list of the most-needed items as they entered the store, and dropped them in the barrels as they left. Local food pantries that received the non-perishable items were **Caring & Sharing** and **LINC** ministries. By the end of the day, the police trailer was full and the food pantries were blessed beyond measure by the generosity of our community.



## FSBH Advocate Promotes Ministry



Thanks to the late **Ron Hollis**, Lake St. Louis, visibility about **FSBH** had been promoted in several community wide events and programs this spring and summer. **Ron** was a great advocate for the work being done in our region to end homelessness and identify programs that work well particularly for men. **Ron** reached out to **Mid Rivers Newsmagazine** to write a story about the state of homelessness in our region. Subsequently, the October 20, 2021 issue featured a wonderful story called "Fighting Homelessness – The first step back home begins with a call" written by **Cassandra Langley**. Our ministry story was well told as being a key component in the work being done in our region. Check it out online or find a copy at a local **Schnucks** or **Dierbergs** store.

In addition to the October story, our ministry was also featured in the August **Community Strong** section of the **Community News Magazine**. That article was composed by **Carol Felzien**.

Each of those articles has resulted in calls to us from the public wanting to get involved with donations or volunteer opportunities.





## First Gospel Festival for FSBH Friends

What a blessing to have **Steve Gregg** from the **Narrow Path Ministries** here from California to be the key-note speaker for our first ever Gospel Festival Saturday, September 11, 2021. Several local ministries participated and all enjoyed great testimonies, good music, food and excellent Bible teaching.

Thanks to **Chris Bray, Dave Bonney, Tom & Cheryl Street** (all FSBH Board Members) along with **Broken & Beautiful, Shielded by Faith** and our local **Crisis Nursery** for making it all come together on a warm, windy, late summer day at the nice pavilion and facilities of Rotary Park in Wentzville.







## 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** of the **St. Louis Community Foundation**
- \$4,000 – **Central Presbyterian Church**, Clayton
- \$1,200 – **Element Church**, Wentzville
- \$ 950 – **Mary Martha Thrift Shop**
- \$ 900 – **Mission Financial-** St. Peters
- \$ 800 – **Vilatte Institute**
- \$ 800– **Home Maintenance Solution**, Wentzville
- \$ 800– **Grace Community Chapel**, St. Peters
- \$ 525 – Memorial allocations for **Mrs. Lori Depp** (long-time volunteer and supporter of FSBH who died Oct. 10, 2021) from **Michelle Kim, Brandon Haynes, Martha Burmaster**, and the **James Depp Family**.
- \$ 500 - **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**, Manchester
- \$ 400 – **Warrenton Christian Church**
- \$ 225 – **Chapel of the Lake**, Lake St. Louis
- \$ 200 – **ESA Foundation** President's Choice Gift (**Sharon Gardner**, President)
- \$ 182.90 – **Gateway Church** Missions
- \$ 100 – **Boeing** Employee Corporate Match
- \$ 63– **Thrivent** Choice Dollars as allocations from **Dennis and Donna Hall**
- \$ 40 - **New Life Nazarene Church** - \$5 for each visitor
- \$ 11 – **PayPal Giving Fund**

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



Mrs. Lori Depp

## Trucker Church Celebrates 20 Years with BBQ

The **FSBH Board** celebrated 20 years of Trucker Church with a **Trucker Appreciation BBQ** in late July.

We're so very thankful for these public servants who travel the roadways to bring us every good thing we have! We've met more than 6,000 drivers and travelers through the years at our 9 am Sunday Services at the TA TravelCenter in Foristell, MO.

We served up the dogs, brats, burgers and all the trimmings with love on a hot summer evening. One trucker was so touched by it all, he called his family in Eastern Europe to tell them all about it!







## FSBH Client Services for 2021

Here's a snapshot of where your donation dollars have been spent so far in 2021. The data shown below details services rendered by FSBH for clients by the type of service and how many people were served.

### Services by Program



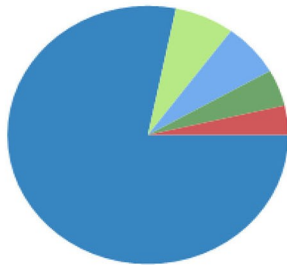
St. Charles, Lincoln, & Warren  
Continuum of Care

Service Dates: 1/1/2021 - 9/30/2021

Services: 678

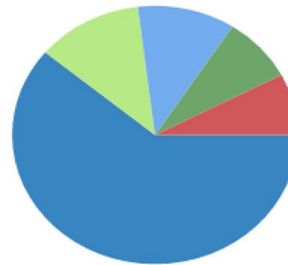
#### First Step Back Home Supportive Services

Top 5 Services by Units



- Motel Vouchers-Homeless
- Utility Assistance
- Rent Payment Assistance
- Fuel
- Car repair

Top 5 Services by Clients



- Motel Vouchers-Homeless
- Rent Payment Assistance
- Utility Assistance
- Fuel
- Car repair

Service	Entries	Units	Total	Clients	Families	Adults	Children	Seniors
Assistance to purchase vehicle	11	11	\$40,922.26	11	11	17	8	1
Car repair	16	16	\$4,831.19	16	16	20	10	0
Cell phone	7	7	\$329.79	7	6	6	5	1
Cell Phone Minutes	3	3	\$196.80	3	2	2	1	0
Clothing	3	3	\$432.24	3	2	2	0	0
Department of Revenue Payment	2	2	\$120.37	2	2	1	1	0
Food	15	15	\$1,835.06	14	12	12	3	0
Fuel	20	20	\$642.73	17	15	19	9	2
Household Goods	1	1	\$190.21	1	1	1	3	0
Insurance	3	3	\$175.00	3	3	5	4	0
Medication Assistance	4	4	\$339.24	4	3	4	5	1
Mobile Home Expenses	1	1	\$563.91	1	1	2	4	0
Motel Vouchers-Homeless	186	341	\$31,900.02	127	122	160	78	5
Personal hygiene items	3	3	\$170.45	3	3	3	1	0
Rent Payment Assistance	26	29	\$7,387.40	25	25	29	12	2
Rental Arrears Payments	4	4	\$1,237.00	4	4	4	5	0
Rental Deposit	11	11	\$2,766.00	10	10	12	7	0
Storage	8	8	\$1,153.90	8	8	11	7	0
Transportation	5	5	\$857.34	5	5	5	3	1
Utility Arrears	12	12	\$3,172.06	12	10	20	12	1
Utility Assistance	30	30	\$5,382.42	23	22	33	18	2
<b>Program Total:</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>\$104,605.39</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>12</b>





## Emergency Weather Response Plans

When temperatures are predicted to be 20 degrees or colder from Nov. 13 – Mar. 12 the **Tri-County Emergency Weather Response Hotline** will be activated. This means that homeless people can call to get instructions on where to go for a warm sheltering night. Churches will be opened again this year, and possibly some hotels as well, depending on the daily situations that might present.

Last winter, 168 nights of lodging were provided to those in need, including pets. Be sure to pass on the hotline number to anyone in need. Keep it handy in your phone list, so you can share when the time comes for the need to be addressed.

If you know of people or churches that might like to get involved in this project, let us know. We'll help you get connected to the ones who can make that happen!



## 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 **Industrial Ally, AT&T, Wells Fargo, Monsanto, Boeing, MasterCard, Pfizer, VMWare, 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: **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.**
- 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. Use this direct link to our page: **smile.amazon.com/ch/20-8676289**







## Meal Ministry Update

We are thankful for all the groups that continue to care for the families at the Economy Inn by bringing hot meals that do more than fill their stomachs. In the last few months we welcomed new groups the **Walkowski Family**, **Element Church**, **Gateway City Church**, **Mission Financial**, and the **Young Family**.

The current openings are **1st Mondays, 2nd Tuesdays, 2nd Thursdays, 3rd Thursdays, 3rd Fridays** (odd months only), **4th Sundays**, and **5th Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays**.

The calendar is always available online at [firststepbackhome.net/meal-calendar](http://firststepbackhome.net/meal-calendar). If you are interested in serving, contact Meal Coordinator **Kim Orf** at [korf18@hotmail.com](mailto:korf18@hotmail.com).



Servers from the **Element Church**  
**Burnt Offerings Group**

## New Community Meals Program

After 12 years of serving meals to the homeless and working poor at Economy Inn (or Budget Inn, in the early years), there is **FINALLY** an effort in Wentzville to create a **Community Meals Program** open to the public for any people needing food. We are instrumental in getting this off the ground, and when it happens it will become a community-run effort.

**Caring & Sharing**, along with **St. Patrick's Church** in Wentzville have leadership with experience in Meals on Wheels meal delivery and access to lots of food from restaurants, grocery stores, Operation Food Search and the St. Louis Food Bank. The idea will be to have different local churches who have **St. Charles County Health Department licensed kitchens** become the places where meals are prepared.

Each day when meals are ready, volunteers will drive them to the three motels where homeless stay and allow the public to stop by the church to pick up meals as well. We're planning on preparing about 25-30 meals each evening. Any leftover meals will be taken to a local day-care facility where second shift moms can pick them up after their workday, if available, so we won't have any leftovers daily.

Each church group can determine the meals they want to prepare, based on items available at our freezer at Caring & Sharing, or their own food resources. **The important change here is that all food needs to be prepared and packaged in a licensed kitchen**, to meet the Health Department Food Service Codes. (In the past we haven't been bound by those rules, as our meals have been served to our clients, and not advertised as open to the public, so things have been done like a home kitchen).

We're looking for groups to commit to this new plan. **Would you and your group want to participate in this effort?** If you don't have access to a licensed kitchen, perhaps your new role might be to become a driver on a given day to deliver the meals. We'd like to identify a meal coordinator from each church or group who will serve as the primary contact person.

We've been so very thankful to each of you who have helped to feed the homeless over the years. The program is becoming bigger than we can manage, and having it "grow up" into an official **Community Meals Program** is the next step.

If you are interested in serving in this ministry, contact **Lana Kruse** [lanakruse@gmail.com](mailto:lanakruse@gmail.com).





## FSBH Bookkeeper Baton Passes

by Lana Kruse



Gina & Tracy

After nearly six years of careful and accurate bookkeeping for FSBH, **Mrs. Gina Calderone-Balliet**, Lake St. Louis, will be passing on her pencil and papers to **Mrs. Kim Hudson**, Foristell, this month.

**Gina** had been a long-time supporter of our ministry before she took on the part-time position, and now she and her husband **Tracy** are leaving the area to start a new chapter in their lives closer to where their daughter's family lives, near Springfield, MO. **Gina** is excited to become a grandmother for the first time and wants to be close at hand for all that action. **Tracy** is excited to build a new home for them on a plot of land in the countryside of that beautiful part of our state. We'll miss them both and all they have contributed to FSBH over the many years.

The very day **Gina** told me of her plans, we had an email from **Kim Hudson**, saying she'd like to volunteer for FSBH more than she had been doing, which was to provide occasional meals at the motel for the past two years. After talking with her about her skill sets and how she might be able to contribute, we realized she was a professional bookkeeper! She'd been working at a local church, she knew all about FSBH, and she was looking for a part-time job!

Isn't that just like **God**??!! The same day the need was known to me, **God** supplied a skilled, knowledgeable worker! It's always so amazing how **God** continues to provide for all the needs of this ministry. We are blessed beyond measure!



Kim Hudson

## Client Expresses Appreciation for Help Given

We received this nice handwritten note from a happy client a few weeks ago. We never know the impact your resources bring to allow for us to help others like this. Thanks again to all our donors! We could not do this without YOU!

