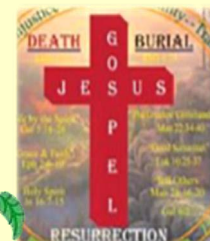




*** THE MIRACLE NEWS ***



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

What Exactly Is FSBH?

by Paul Kruse

CONTACTS

Paul Kruse

636-466-1365

paul.kruse.1947@gmail.com

Lana Kruse

314-799-3694

lanakruse@gmail.com

Meal Coordinator

Krista Zahn

636-299-0347

fsbhmeals@gmail.com

Newsletter Designer

Kim Orf

korf18@hotmail.com



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SOCIAL MEDIA!**

facebook.com/firststepbackhome

twitter.com/1ststepbackhome

bit.ly/fsbhyoutube

I thought I would focus this newsletter article with a little overview of what we do. Some people are confused, so here it is. We called our corporation **First Step Back Home** because we knew we didn't have enough funds to buy a house or pay the high deposits for an apartment (sometimes \$1,500 or more to get into an apartment right now), which would be Last Step Back Home.

But that was our ultimate vision - to help people take the necessary steps to obtain and maintain permanent housing if they were financially unable to do so on their own. When we started back in the spring of 2005, we were just helping by paying for motel rooms for the homeless. Through the years we have developed beyond those initial first steps into helping with many subsequent steps to permanent housing success.

That's why we have the mobile home project now. We have permanent housing options and clients there are self-sustaining with a good life, keeping their jobs and maintaining their bills to continue the success they have achieved with our help and by **God's Grace**.

We don't have the money to buy many more mobile homes right now. We have the answer to affordable permanent housing by eliminating the barriers like credit checks and deposits that keep many fragile families from obtaining permanent housing. The mobile home parks do background checks and we make clients go through a financial analysis so we know they can afford to live and maintain a home. Also, we own the homes and do not charge rent. Clients pay lot rent to the mobile home parks and are responsible for their own utility costs. That is what makes our program affordable.

I could fill 50 mobile homes in a couple of weeks if we could afford to purchase them. Mobile homes are a logical and economical step from life on the streets to living in a real home. After staying with us for a season of time, if they progress enough, they can buy a stick-built home if they want or move on to other permanent housing options. At this time, we own seven units in two parks, housing 19 people. Current clients are stable, happy and most have lived in there for over two years. None seem to see any way they could move out right now to other housing options.

So, we have the answer to affordable permanent housing but just can't convince the government and other social service agencies to help us buy more. They are all interested in their own programs and just won't support the mobile home project, even though they can see it has been 100% successful for over 5 years for 64 people who have been in our units. **Lord**, help us!

We are financially able to help people with these first steps to success and sometimes all the way to reaching that point of self-supporting life with **God in Jesus'** name, transitional housing, good job, transportation, basics of life and permanent housing.

There are many steps to complete before clients can achieve total housing success, and that is what we specialize in! We get calls (15 to 20 per day) from people who have many different problems and drastic situations they find themselves in that have caused them to become homeless.

(Continued on Page 2)



What Exactly Is FSBH?

(continued from page 1)

Here is how we guide them towards their end goal of becoming self-supporting, living, and maintaining housing:

First is intake to get all the information we can get through many questions about themselves and how they got to this point. We want to learn about each client - who they are, their background and what they need.

The people we work with are in a state of shock, not knowing what to do next. Some don't even realize fully how they became homeless. We begin the stabilization process such as transitional housing in a motel, food, clothes, Spiritual guidance, transportation, job assistance, etc. We then give them a room at a motel for a day or a week depending on their place on the success scale. Most importantly we give them a plan to success.

Next, we determine the direction we can advise to lead them to their next steps. We take the necessary actions to get them started on their journey. That may be that we require them to submit 15 applications per day for work if they don't already have a decent, regular job.

When they get a job, or have a job, we continue to pay for most of their needs until they get their first check. After they get their first check, we ask them to pay part of the motel bill until they can afford to pay it all, usually \$325 per week. This completes the first step to success and prayerfully first step to trusting and believing in God for their heavenly home.

At that point, it's up to the client to further advance by finding more permanent housing through our mobile home project or through other agencies with a lot more money than we have.

There are many other things **FSBH** does to help those who are further along in the process towards permanent self-sustaining housing success. We basically provide homeless crisis intervention and homeless prevention services as shown below when funds are available to do so:

- Cell phones
- Food or rides to food pantries.
- Buy cars and bikes for transportation
- Pay for ID's
- Car tags and licenses
- Car insurance
- Utilities
- Rent and Mortgage Assistance
- Housing Deposit Assistance
- Legal fees



And much more to help client succeed to the next step in becoming self-supporting.

Sometimes our only connection with the homeless is to aid in their First Step along the continuum from staying on the streets towards permanent housing. Other times, we are able to provide much more support. How can YOU help us help others? Your financial support helps us continue in many of the areas described above. Your prayer support helps us in every area! Remember the poor. Be the hands and feet of **Jesus**. Thanks for being a part of **First Step Back Home** in any way you can!

- ***FSBH is the only agency with a program for clients from the street to permanent housing.***



Lake Forest Charity Classic Benefits FSBH!



Lana & Paul

On Saturday, July 16, a wonderful, family-friendly golfing, pickleball and swimming event took place at the **Lake Forest Country Club** in Lake St. Louis, all to benefit the work of **FSBH**. About 100 golfers and others participated in the day-long event, which culminated in a BBQ style dinner, a silent auction and lots of stories about our ministry and how it has impacted many lives right here in our community.

Ministry clients **Jeremy & Jamie Rodgers** briefly shared their life story and how FSBH has helped them. Paul gave an overview of the ministry purpose and results, and Lana shared ways the community could become engaged, by helping with meals, or collecting items for the **14th Annual Christmas Wonderland**.

At the end of the day, **FSBH** was presented with a \$17,500 check of proceeds from the event, plus more to come later, the organizers said, from the silent auction funds. All of the tournament winners donated back their winnings, and caddies/servers also donated back their tips for the day. Such a humbling experience for all of us from **FSBH**!



FSBH Foursome Team



Kim & Mike Hudson



Dave and Jeff Clay, Mike Hakenwerth and Mike Derr



Check presentation by **Geoff Poli**, LFCC Chairman



2022 Give STL Day Final Results

What a blessed day May 5 was for the annual **Give STL Day** in our region, as we were showered by so many loving donors with memorials for loved ones and anonymous contributors who always amaze us! Thankful too for all of you who shared our cause with others. We ended up with several new donors this year. Looks like the region gained more than \$4.2 MILLION from so many generous hearts! Praise **God** from Whom All Blessings Flow!

For the 6th year in a row we won the midnight hour prize for most dollars raised by a micro-charity. **FSBH** came in 11th overall, out of 1,024 non-profits that participated in the day.



Total Donors: 65

Prize: Most Dollars

12-1 am: \$1,000

Grand Total: \$63,104.77

Your donations have helped us continue to assist people in our community struggling with homelessness and other difficulties.



POWERED BY THE
St. Louis Community
Foundation

**THANK
YOU!**

- *FSBH utilizes 6 motels and has provided 273 nights of lodging this year for 170 people.*

Taste of St. Charles Event Coming Nov. 15



The evening of November 15, 2022 will be a tasty one for anyone who chooses to come to the **Rotary Club of St. Charles** annual **Taste of St. Charles** at the St. Charles Convention Center. More than 30 local restaurants will feature their specialty cuisines for delicious tastes throughout the evening.

FSBH is one of several local charities benefitting from this year's popular event. You can be a part of it with us. After September 1, 2022 you can order your tickets online from this website: tasteofstcharles.com or send us a note that you'd like some, and we'll make arrangements for you. Our ministry must sell

20 tickets this year. If you make an online order, please indicate **FSBH** in your order so we'll get the credit for those ticket sales, please.

The grant that **FSBH** will receive will be used to help homeless or fragile families in our region get reliable transportation if they are in need of a car for work purposes.

If you come to the event, please stop by our informational table and say "Hi!" We'd love to visit with you then.



New Board Strategies for Coming Years' Impact

Iron sharpens Iron... **FSBH** Board Meeting in June began a new strategic planning effort to think about where this ministry is headed in the years ahead. God started all of this 17+ years ago... where will we be in the next 17? 10,000 homeless and working poor served in our region with more than \$2.8 million that the Lord has supplied for this work so far!

New Board Members **Mike & Janet Derr** join guests/caseworkers **Nathan & Brenda Wilson**, advisor **Bryan Spencer** and seasoned board members **Dave Bonney, Tom & Cheryl Street, Nick Guccione, Paul & Lana Kruse**.



Trucker Church Keeps Rollin' Along



After 21 years of Sunday morning worship services at the TA Truckstop in Foristell, **Trucker Church** continues to go strong. We've had some changes in who's helping out in this dynamic ministry. Long-time leader and former **FSBH** Board Member **Chris Bray** has resigned and left our area with his family for some new adventures traveling throughout the country in a camper. Chris hopes to carry on his ministry outreach to families at RV parks in new places they visit during their travels.

FSBH
Board member

Tom Street is now leading the Sunday morning services. His wife **Cheryl Street** helps, as do **Chaplains Marshall & Marion Wright** from **Power of God Trucking Ministries** who have come alongside and been on hand most Sundays for a couple of months now.

In June we held a Trucker Appreciation BBQ one Saturday evening and served up burgers and dogs with all the trimmings to about 50 drivers who had stopped in for fuel or rest. Along with physical food we provided each of them some spiritual nourishment tools as well.



Chaplains Marion & Marshall Wright with Paul & Lana.



Christmas Wonderland Laundry /Cleaning Supplies Baskets

Now's the time to start collecting items for laundry baskets and other treats for the working poor and homeless from St. Charles, Lincoln and Warren Counties who will come to our **14th Annual Christmas Wonderland** on Saturday, December 10, 2022. The event will once again be held at Wentzville United Methodist Church, 725 Wall Street, Wentzville, MO as a drive through event from noon – 3 pm.

See the list below for what to put into the baskets, so we have consistent “gifts” when distributing them. In the past, several groups have made it a project to collectively gather items and then assemble them towards the end of the year. This list is also posted on our ministry website under “tangible assistance.”

Please bring filled baskets to Wentzville United Methodist Church on Friday, Dec. 9 from 9 am – 3 pm or on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 9 – 11 am. Thanks for your consideration! For questions or further information contact **Lana Kruse** at 314-799-3694 or lanakruse@gmail.com

FIRST STEP BACK HOME
14th ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND
A special celebration for the homeless and needy families!
Drive-thru Event by Pre-Registration Only – No Walk-ins

Saturday, December 10, 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!
Registration will open in late October.

Laundry/Cleaning Basket Suggested Contents

Last year we had plenty of filled baskets so each of the 120 families was able to receive one at the Christmas Wonderland. If you or a group you're a part of could make up one or two, it would be so very much appreciated! We can provide a tax-receipt for your donation.

Sturdy Basket	Dish towels
Hand Soap/Bath Soap	Laundry Detergent
Dish Soap	Powdered Bleach
Bathroom Cleaner	Dryer Sheets
Dusting Spray	Toilet Paper
Stain Remover	Window Cleaner
Sponges	Paper Towels

\$5.00 in quarters (optional- for laundromat use)



- *Volunteer Jim McCormick has been the Santa for our Christmas Wonderland for many years.*



Mobile Home Park Bible Club Happening Soon

We're looking forward to a fun week with lots of neighborhood kiddos at this year's **5 Day Club**, happening during the early evening hours of the last week of July. Last year about 35 children from ages 5 – 12 showed up and enjoyed each evening filled with fun activities, games, songs and Bible lessons. This year's event is being sponsored by **Child Evangelism Fellowship of Greater St. Louis**. Ms. **Cindy Wells** is the director. FSBH Board Secretary **Cheryl Street** will coordinate the on-site logistics and arrange for snacks each evening. Plans are to have a BBQ for families on the final evening. Anyone wanting further information can contact **Mrs. Street** at 314-610-9047.

Grace Community Chapel Salts the Mobile Home Park



On Saturday, July 9, 2022 dozens of volunteers from **Grace Community Chapel**, St. Peters, served the Rolling Meadows Mobile Home Park in an event they called "Salt St. Charles." Why "salt?" **Daniel Maasen**, Director of Outreach at GCC said, "Jesus called His followers "salt and light" in the world, and this was an effort by the church to show His love to the people in the community in a tangible way."

GCC completed several on-site jobs including electrical repair, deck maintenance, yard work, trash removal and more on a somewhat cool, drizzly rainy morning. Perhaps the benefit utilized most by residents was the provision of a very large dumpster where they could unload old large household items not longer useful to them. The dumpster was filled to overflowing after just 12 hours of placement at the MHP clubhouse parking lot. A second dumpster had to be brought in to remove what accumulated there before the first one could be picked up! We were all surprised at what a needed service this was to residents at the park.

GCC is the church that funded the playground equipment at this mobile home park a couple of years ago. This church has encouraged and come alongside of **FSBH** from its very beginnings!

Homeless kids in St. Charles County: 533, Lincoln County: 116, Warren County: 151



Boulevard Residents Complete Thrivent Action Team Project for FSBH



The **Boulevard Retirement Community** of Wentzville posted the following article on their FB page recently.

*Martin Luther King said, "If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way." Our monthly Acts of Kindness for June was made possible by the generosity of The Boulevard Wentzville residents and a **Thrivent** grant which benefited*

***First Step Back Home.** We made over 20 men's hygiene kits to help homeless men in our area. We have no doubt our small contribution will make a great impact!*

We are thankful for long-time ministry supporter **Sue Bauer** (right, masked – shopping for supplies). She is a resident of **The Boulevard**, who coordinated this **Thrivent Action Team** project. Through this process, **Thrivent Financial** awarded her \$250 to purchase items for the kits. Sue told us that 9 ladies were involved for 20 hours to shop and/or pack the kits and numerous other residents donated supplies to the cause. What a blessing to many being served!



- *FSBH helps 1,000 people each year in up to 25 different ways.*
- *FSBH has served 10,000 homeless & working poor neighbors since 2005.*

Backpacks for Homeless from High School Student

St. Dominic High School Freshman **Josie Maassen** focused on the needs of the homeless for her annual Community Service Hours project. She did some fundraising, gathering of donations and put together 18 backpacks filled with toiletries and snacks. Our clients always smile when we hand off one of these to them! Everything matters! Thanks, young lady! We appreciate YOU!





Meal Ministry Update

Thank you to all the meal groups who continue to provide hot dinners to the families at the Economy Inn in Wentzville. In addition to providing food for their bodies; you are also showing the love of Jesus for their souls.

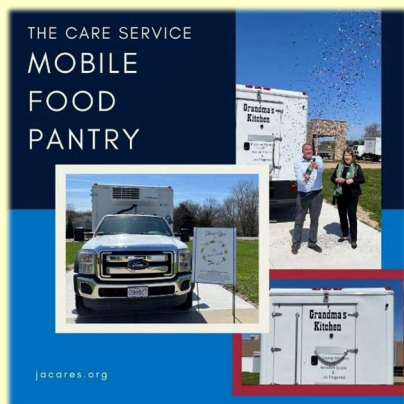
We are happy for new groups and individuals who served over the past quarter, including **Redemption Church, Macie Hinds and Mission Financial**

We still have many open dates for groups that would like to volunteer. Meals don't need to be anything fancy. The families appreciate sandwiches, pizza, casseroles or anything the groups prepare.

The [calendar](#) is always available for viewing online. You can sign up to serve one day, on a fill-in or monthly basis. Any help is appreciated! To volunteer your time and efforts to our Meal Ministry, contact our Meal Coordinator, **Krista Zahn** at 636-299-0347 or email fsbhmeals@gmail.com.



- *FSBH volunteers provide hot meals daily at the Economy Inn for about 25 people.*
- *Last year 7,150 hot meals were served to families at the hotel.*



Mobile Food Pantry Helps Fill Gaps

A new Mobile Food Pantry sponsored by **St. Joachim & Ann Care Service** has been making stops on Wednesday afternoons at the three motels in Wentzville where we provide temporary lodging for many of the families we work with. What a wonderful new resource this has been to help struggling families, especially on evenings when meals are not available at the Economy Inn.

If you're a part of a group that might like to take food to clients on one of the open times, please contact **Krista Zahn** at 636-299-0347 or fsbhmeals@gmail.com.

- *28% of Missourians are on welfare and over 50% don't earn a living wage.*
- *Living Wage in St. Charles County is \$16/hr. for single person or \$33k/year. The median income in our area is \$76,800.*



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. Some gifts have been made in honor or in memory of loved ones.

- \$10,000 – **Cuivre River Electric** Operation Round Up
- \$ 4,000 – **Central Presbyterian Church**, Clayton
- \$ 3,200 – **Tammy Stratman Brown Charities**
- \$ 2,500 – **MasterCard** corporate match from employee gift
- \$ 1,950 – **AbbVie** corporate match from employee gift
- \$ 1,200 – **Element Church**, Wentzville
- \$ 1,200 – **Mission Financial**- St. Peters
- \$ 1,050 – Memorial donation in honor of **Lorraine Depp**, from **Robert Depp**
- \$ 1,000 – **Mary Martha Thrift Shop** (See story on Page 11.)
- \$ 601.67 – **Oakridge Baptist Church**, St. Peters- local mission offering
- \$ 600 – **Grace Community Chapel**, St. Peters
- \$ 525 – **Boeing** Corporate Match from retired employee and anonymous employee
- \$ 385– **Home Maintenance Solution**, Wentzville
- \$ 300 – **Warrenton Christian Church**
- \$ 300 – **Chapel of the Lake**, Lake St. Louis
- \$ 200 – **ESA Foundation** Local President **Sharon Gardner** Designated Gift
- \$ 171 - **Thrivent** Choice Dollars as allocations from **Judith Johnson** and **Sue Bauer**
- \$ 105 – Memorial donation in honor of **Beverly Stone**, from **Don Stone**
- \$ 50 – Memorial donation in honor of **Gary Pezold**, from his sister **Barb Collins**
- \$ 50 – Memorial donation in honor of **Jeff Briney**, from **Dave & Zoe Smith Family**
- \$ 50 – Memorial donation in honor of **Shelly Luerding**, from **Dave & Zoe Smith Family**
- \$ 50 - **TisBest Philanthropy**
- \$ 31 – **AmazonSmile**
- \$ 30 – **PayPal** Giving Fund
- \$ 22 – Anonymous donation in honor of **Chris Paz**, who donated to their struggles when they were facing potential homelessness
- \$ 20 – **AT&T** corporate match for employee gift



Gary Pezold

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

- *FSBH owns 7 units in two O'Fallon mobile home parks for clients as transitional and permanent housing.*
- *FSBH has provided 15,000 days lodging in the mobile homes over the past 5 years.*



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**



Local Thrift Shop Supports Many for Half a Century



They say it takes a village... part of ours is the widespread outreach of the now 51-year-old Mary Martha Thrift Shop (MMTS) ministry in Wentzville, located at 9 West Koenig Street. A total of eight different churches supply volunteer support for this operation which is still going strong after more than half a century.

Last April the organization celebrated its golden anniversary, actually its 51st, but since COVID was around the event had been delayed a year. This all started from a Wentzville school nurse who saw kiddos in need of clothes back in 1971. Mayor Nick Guccione (one of our ministry board members) presented a proclamation to the group at the lovely smorgasbord luncheon, and President Linda Adams told us all about the locations the thrift shop has been in over the years and how it all started.

Now MMTS brings in more than \$130,000 annually and re-distributes it back to needy causes in the area. FSBH is one of those organizations that receives funding, plus we can provide vouchers for free clothing and household items for our clients. All that happens, happens because local citizens donate their used clothing and household items to this worthy cause. I (Lana Kruse) volunteer monthly and work with the incoming items to prepare them for sale or and other recycling. It has been such a joy to be a part of this amazing organization!