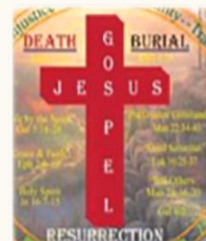




THE MIRACLE NEWS



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

Let's Help Stop the Violence

by Paul Kruse

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Every night on the news we hear of all kinds of violence. Not only here at home but all over the world. **God** didn't intend for His world to be full of hatred, murder, thievery, destruction, and more.

(Jeremiah 29:11) For I know the plans I have for you, declares the **Lord**. Plans for welfare and not evil, to give you a future and hope!

There are 32,000 verses in the Bible, and we hardly use 100 of them when preaching, teaching, or studying. So, I'm on a campaign mission to get more Bible verses out to the public to maybe reach someone who may be contemplating a violent act or some sort of destruction. I hope they will read a verse and decide that is not the right thing to do.

When **God** gave us humans free will, it seems that we abused our freedom in many ways. People killing, robbing, hurting, quarreling, bad name calling, and more to other people. All this violence can be depressing and eventually lead to our destruction if we don't stop it!

The thing that caught my eye was that St. Louis is reported as the most dangerous city in the U.S. I live in the St. Louis suburb area, so I decided to do something about it.

I believe the Bible has all the answers. If you type in a question about how to live life to the fullest or death, you get hundreds of verses that will answer your questions. You rarely see any on mainstream media, just violence reports.

So, this campaign I'm now doing is to get more Bible verses out to mainstream media about how we should behave, treat each other, Love **God** in **Jesus'** name, and show the love of **God** to others.

Results may not happen in my lifetime but at least it's a start. I am sending verses to Facebook, news departments of all the TV stations, radio, newspapers, etc. Also, to my clients who are homeless and working poor. If you have any other ideas let me know.

Here is how **God** intends for us to live and change from violence to love for one another: First, verses on wicked hearts and minds:

- (Proverbs 15:26) Evil plans are an abomination to the **Lord**, but pleasant words are pure. With no Spiritual guidance men's minds are wicked.
- (Genesis 6:5) The **Lord** saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.

This is what happens if we are not taught to put into action the right ways of **God** through **Jesus**. This is righteousness!

(continued on Page 2)



Let's Help Stop the Violence

(continued from Page 1)

These are verses of the **God**-breathed heart:

- (Proverbs 4:24) Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flows the springs of life.
- (Isaiah 58:11) The **Lord** will always guide you; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

But this can only happen if you read and follow **God's** verses. He provides for us so that we will tame the evil heart and mind to think and Love **God's** way and enjoy life through His original plan for us of welfare, future, and hope.

- (Psalms 33:11) The plans of the **Lord** stand forever, the purpose of His heart through all generations.
- (Proverbs 16:3) Commit your works to the **Lord** and your plans will be established.
- (Psalms 18:30) As for **God**, His way is blameless; The word of the **Lord** is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.
- (Romans 3:23) We have all sinned and come short of the glory of **God**.
- (Romans 6:23) The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of **God** is eternal life in **Christ Jesus** our **Lord**.

So this is why we need a **Savior** - so we can come close to **God** and live in His ways. **God** has ordained His only **Son Jesus** to be the mediator between us and **God**.

- (1 Timothy 2:5) For there is one **God** and there is one mediator between **God** and men, the man **Jesus** the **Christ**.
- (Romans 10:9) If we confess with our lips that **Jesus** is **Lord** and believe in our hearts that He was raised from the dead, we are saved.

Such a simple thing but we need to be sincere for it to be true and guide us to peace on earth and eternal life for us in Heaven.

(Ephesians 3:17) We pray that **Christ** may make His home in your heart through faith, that you be rooted and grounded in love.

Love is always the answer to peace and happiness, not hate or war!

(Colossians 3:14-15) And above all things, put on love which binds them all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of **Christ** rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful!

So many great verses, please help to pass them on to all your contacts. Let me know by text if you get a response.

Who knows, the life you save may be your own!

God Bless You!

Paul

Bible Verses to Stop Violence





giveSTLday.org™
POWERED BY THE St. Louis Community Foundation
CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

GIVE STL DAY STATS

- \$1,000 prize for most dollars raised in the midnight hour
- \$44,785 Give STL Day donations
- \$32,215 direct donations

Total \$77,000

Your generosity will help us continue to assist homeless and needy families in our community

Thank You so Much

Give STL Day Blessings!

For any of our readers who participated in this year's **10th Annual Give STL Day** campaign with us, please know that this hearty, sincere **Thank You** is for you! Some of you were match donors, some "on the day" donors, some putting in for corporate matches donors; some we know and some we don't. God knows, though, and we wanted to share that after all was reconciled, FSBH received about 1/3 of our annual budget needs in this one day of giving, with more than **\$77,000** contributed to the cause altogether! Whew! We're just amazed at how all of this has come together.

Some donations were made in memory or in honor of others. The **Robert Depp** family made contributions in memory of Bob's wife **Lorraine Depp** and also his mother, **Louise Depp**. The

Ladies Serving Together ministry of **First Baptist Church**, O'Fallon made a donation to our cause, and **Ed Kallery** from **Minding the Gap Ministry**, donated in honor of **Paul Kruse**.

We're particularly thankful for those who helped to create the giving incentive by being match donors – **Peg & Lynn Griswold**, the **Steve Hollis Family** in memory of **Ronald L. Hollis**, **Mary Ellen Harrison**, **Marshall & Marion Wright**, **Dexter & Toni Martin** and seven anonymous donors.

AND we're also so very thankful for our 10 midnight owl friends who contributed \$7,330, which resulted in our ministry winning the coveted Midnight Hour prize for raising the most money during that first hour of the day. This was the seventh year in a row that we've been blessed with this prize.



Living Lord Lutheran Lenten Benevolence Benefits FSBH Clients

Living Lord Lutheran Church, Lake St. Louis, showered FSBH with blessings from their Lenten season of benevolence. Our ministry was selected this year by their staff for parishioners to support. Weekly, they brought in toiletries and underwear; and families that ate at their Wednesday suppers contributed a total of **\$1,494.15** in cash for motel stays, phones, fuel and other identified needs of clients we'll be helping in the days ahead.

The **God Squad Youth Group** sorted items, and the **F3** (Faith, Family and Fun) **Service Group** assembled them into bags. Office staff **Leslee Demien** and **Paula Barney** coordinated and promoted the six-week project.

What a wonderful example of being the hands and feet of Jesus for church goers to be encouraged, as well as for the homeless to be blessed with these essential provisions.





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 **15th Annual Christmas Wonderland on Saturday, December 9, 2023**. 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. (For those of you who are close readers, yes, this is a date change from what we'd mentioned in the last newsletter).

Here's 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](#).

Last year we had just enough 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.

Please bring filled baskets to Wentzville United Methodist Church on Friday, Dec. 8 from 9 am – 3 pm or on Saturday, Dec. 9 from 9 – 11 am. Thanks for your consideration! For questions or further information, contact **Lana Kruse** at 314-799-3694 or lanakruse@gmail.com

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

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

Easter Blessings From Alleluia Baskets

Below is a 2-page article from the April 2023 Woman's Day Magazine about the St. Charles County based **Alleluia Baskets Ministry**. This ministry was also featured by Mike Bush on KSDK this Easter Season.



FSBH was blessed to receive filled baskets for all of our families in the mobile home parks and for a few others at local motels. Lots of

smiles from the little ones! Thanks to **Kelly Scharnhorst** and team for your Easter blessings to so many families throughout our region!





Home Sweet Home for Family of Seven

Four new beds for four happy kiddos, thanks to **Sleep in Heavenly Peace Ministry**, Wentzville. It has been such a blessing to help re-establish this fragile family who lost their home in March, due to the rental unit being sold, and the new owner not wanting renters. The boys got to help build their own single beds in separate rooms, and the twin girls were absolutely delighted to have a bunk bed constructed just for them!

Along with beds for four kids (and yes, there are 5, but the little guy is still in his toddler bed), **The Sharing Shed** provided a kitchen table with enough chairs for all the family, a couch and matching chairs for their living room, and a practically brand-new dresser for Mom and Dad.

FSBH helped when this precious family needed temporary lodging expenses before they found their wonderful new home, and we paid for part of the rent deposit required for them to move in. We also networked to get them some much needed resources. They're now settled and happy in their new Home Sweet Home.



Outside the Walls Ministry Fair



Harvester Christian Church held a unique outreach awareness event on April 23, 2023 called "Outside the Walls" Ministry Fair.

FSBH was blessed to be a part of this amazing outreach opportunity, where nearly 1,800 folks passed by and stopped to learn ways they can help us throughout the year.





Overcomers Charities Augments FSBH Services In Wentzville

We had a fun evening sharing ministry visions with others in the area at the **Overcomers Charities Board Dinner** at the home of founder **Chaplain Britt Park**. **Chaplain Britt** has come alongside FSBH to fill in meals for clients when groups aren't serving at the Economy Inn and feed our clients' souls with his daily devotions.

We enjoyed meeting his Board who are like-minded,

energetic folks from all around the country helping Britt to grow his ministry. It was a hot one, but thankful the Lord kept the rains from pouring down until later in the night!

Last month alone, **Chaplain Britt** served out 300 meals to folks staying in the three local motels of Wentzville. We've helped him acquire some food items as needed for sack lunches, and he's blessed to receive weekly donations of meat and produce from Trader Joe's for his meal preparations.



BBQ Day at Mobile Home Park

June 10, 2023 was BBQ Day for residents of Rolling Meadows Mobile Home Park, where we provide programs and services. Since COVID, we've created this event as a drive-thru and it still works very well for everyone.

Meals for about 120 people were provided. Also, prayers and encouragement for identified needs expressed by folks there. FSBH Board Members, student volunteers and resident volunteers all came together to bless others. FSBH Board Members **Tom & Cheryl Street** organized the event.





Waypoint Serve Day at RM MHP

by Keith Walton, FSBH Board Member



Waypoint Church, Harvester, held a Serve Day on May 20, 2023 to benefit several organizations in the region. We partnered with First Step Back Home and sent eight volunteers to Rolling Meadows Mobile Home Park to complete several tasks that residents had requested.

We were able to bless eight families by cleaning up debris in yards, mowing, weed-eating, tree trimming, bush planting, securing a deck, and power-washing mobile homes. We were also able to purchase some roofing and

deck-staining supplies that some of the residents needed.



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.

- \$3,200 – **Tammy Stratman Brown Charities**
- \$2,000 – **Central Presbyterian Church**, Clayton
- \$1,500 – **Mission Financial-** St. Peters
- \$1,495 – **Living Lord Lutheran Church**, Lake St. Louis
- \$1,080 – **Mary Martha Thrift Shop**
- \$1,500 – **Element Church**, Wentzville
- \$1,000 – **Grace Community Chapel**, St. Peters
- \$ 750 – **Chapel of the Lake**, Lake St. Louis
- \$ 695 – **Abbie Corporate** Match from employee giving
- \$ 500 – **Warrenton Christian Church**
- \$ 119 – **Thrivent Choice Dollars** as allocations from **Susan Bauer** and **Diane Prange**
- \$ 250 – **New Life Church**, O'Fallon
- \$ 350 – **Church of God Faith Fellowship**, Grubville
- \$ 100 – **St. Charles Junior Service League**
- \$ 100 -- **Boeing Corporate** match from retired employee
- \$ 20 – **AT&T corporate** match for employee gift
- \$ 46 – **Amazon Smile**
- \$ 2 -- **PayPal Giving Fund**



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



New Helpers Bring Expertise for Growth

FSBH is growing in ministry functions, and two new workers will help with the expansion efforts.



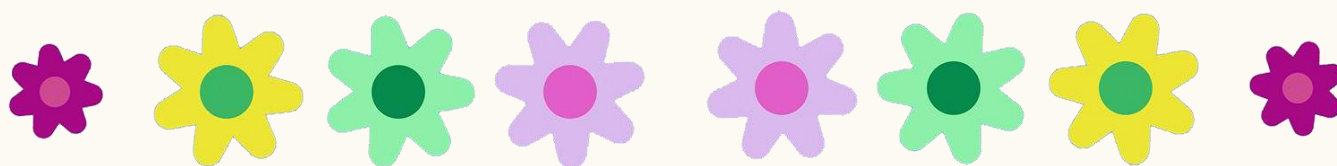
Dana Wideman and Anita Lemke

Anita Lemke, Moscow Mills, who has been focused on bookkeeping for us since last fall, is transitioning to more of a caseworker role, helping Paul with client needs identification and outcome tracking related to housing stability over time. Evaluating if our “First Step” of helping the homeless by getting them off the streets, into suitable lodging and long-term housing has been a project we’ve needed to address with some data tracking. We have over a year’s worth of information now, and Anita will help us understand where we fit in with what we and others do to provide long-term solutions.

Dana Wideman, O’Fallon, will take on the bookkeeper baton for now. Dana has many years of accounting experience, is familiar with our data tracking needs, and will work with our

Finance Committee and CPA to ensure our books continue to be in order at all times. Once the bookkeeping activities have transitioned completely, we hope to add more office functions to Dana’s plate.

Both positions are part-time employees who we hope will provide new insights and expertise to develop the impact of FSBH in our region.



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, Bayer, 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.



Meal Ministry Update

We are thankful for so many groups, families and individuals that continue to give of their time to prepare and serve meals to families staying at the Economy Inn in Wentzville.

Over the last quarter, new servers included **St. Paul St. Vincent de Paul**, the **Kleeschulte Family**, **Waypoint Church**, **The Way Church**, and **Celebrate Recovery**.

There are still many open dates for anyone interested in volunteering. You can serve for a single meal, on a fill-in basis, or sign up for regular dates on a monthly basis. Most of the meals are served at dinnertime, but groups are also welcome to serve breakfast or lunch.

The **calendar** can be viewed online. To volunteer with the Meal Ministry, contact our Meal Coordinator, **Krista Zahn** at 636-299-0347 or email fsbhmeals@gmail.com.



Members of the **Magic Makers** group preparing and serving on May 31.

Families of Prisoners Prison Ministry

We met **Timothy White** at Trucker Church a few weeks ago. He has developed his public charity as a ministry to serve families of prisoners in the St. Louis area. He told us his goal is to reduce recidivism and crime by teaching the Word of God and providing the basic needs for the less fortunate. He provides services for prisoners' children, homeless, victims of crime, those in nursing homes, hospitals or prisons. He helps with clothing, transportation, employment assistance counseling and food.

FSBH is pleased to applaud the efforts of this organization. We helped financially to supply materials needed for children of prisoners in a summer outreach activity and to help him get food for the homeless in a day of outreach in June in St. Louis County. Here's one happy (and full) homeless guy he touched.





Chesterfield Presbyterian Church Benevolence Impacts FSBH Clients

Owen Tarantino, Senior Pastor from **Chesterfield Presbyterian Church (CPC)**, shared the vision of his church for supporting FSBH this summer with these words:

CPC is a biblical church in West County St. Louis, and we desire to be a blessing to our neighbor and the nations. Each month we look at different ways for our congregation to be involved in giving to those around us. It is especially helpful if we find ways that the entire family could participate in a giving effort.

*Recently we asked our congregation to support those who are homeless or in transitional housing situations. We love to partner with ministries like **First Step Back Home** because they are directly connected to those in need. Jesus says that in some sense we are all poor and needy. While some may have more material possessions than others, all of us need the grace and love of God to fill our lives.*

It is our hope that small gestures of care for those in need, would reflect a desire for us to honor God with our lives. And that the giving would be in response to the amazing gift of salvation that has been lavished upon all of us who trust in Christ.

In June, this loving church body conducted a collection drive for items needed in our two-day survival food boxes along with basic toiletries. We were blessed to receive more than a car-load of items which are now being distributed to those staying at our local motels. Recipients are always so happy to get a toothbrush, razor, new socks and easy to eat non-perishable food items.



If you'd like to see our lists for these supplies, check out our ministry [website](#).



FSBH Provides Bikes For Transportation

Jim Boone from **Bridge House Ministries** wanted to say thank you to First Step Back Home for donating some transportation via bikes to the men and women of this ministry!

Thank you for believing in us as well as pouring into the lives of these men and women. God is good!

FSBH often helps with rent deposits and rent shortfalls for clients working on their sobriety through Bridge House Ministries as well.





Client Services Overview: January-June 2023

This is an overview of where your donations have been put to use so far in 2023. 147 homeless and fragile families were served, including 205 adults, 111 children and 10 seniors who have received assistance. As you can see from the charts below, your donations are used to help many families in our area.

Service Summary



St. Charles, Lincoln, & Warren
Continuum of Care

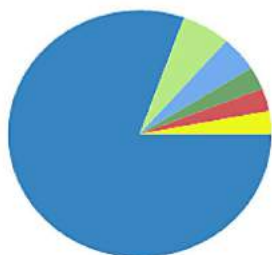
Service Date Between: 1/1/2023 to 6/30/2023

Location(s): All

Organization(s): First Step Back Home

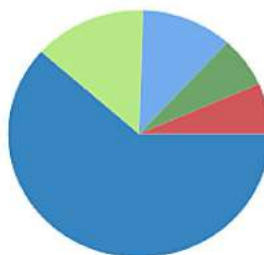
First Step Back Home

Top 5 Services by Units



- Motel Vouchers-Homeless
- Food
- Rent Payment Assistance
- Fuel
- Mobile Home Expenses
- Utility Assistance

Top 5 Services by Clients



- Motel Vouchers-Homeless
- Food
- Rent Payment Assistance
- Fuel
- Utility Assistance

Service	Entries	Units	Total	Clients	Families	Adults	Children	Seniors
Car repair	9	9	\$4,170.06	9	8	14	5	0
Cell phone	8	8	\$534.21	6	6	5	3	0
Cell Phone Minutes	6	6	\$459.23	6	6	6	6	0
Clothing	7	7	\$970.00	7	7	9	9	0
Department of Revenue Payment	3	3	\$379.11	3	2	4	2	0
Food	22	22	\$2,965.91	21	21	27	16	0
Fuel	11	11	\$359.77	10	9	15	8	2
Medication Assistance	2	2	\$28.65	2	2	2	0	0
Mobile Home Expenses	11	11	\$4,836.55	5	4	7	4	2
Motel Vouchers-Homeless	145	297	\$26,075.85	93	92	137	66	2
Personal hygienic items	2	2	\$161.15	2	2	1	0	0
Rent Payment Assistance	17	17	\$4,147.00	17	17	22	17	4
Rental Arrears Payments	2	2	\$410.00	2	2	3	3	0
Rental Deposit	7	7	\$2,038.00	7	7	8	8	1
Storage	1	1	\$246.00	1	1	0	0	0
Transportation	3	3	\$138.79	2	2	5	7	0
Utility Arrears	6	6	\$1,516.09	5	4	9	8	1
Utility Assistance	11	11	\$2,776.51	10	8	11	4	2
Utility Deposit Assistance	1	1	\$400.00	1	1	2	2	0
Organization Total:	274	426	\$52,612.88	147	140	205	111	10