



## Ministry Newsletter

January 2022

### 2021 Year in Review – Miraculous



Atlas of the Lakes Area was miraculously blessed by God in 2021. The ministry officially began on February 4<sup>th</sup> with the designation of non-profit status and official office opening. The first 7 months of ministry were painfully slow serving only 10 clients. While working to share the ministry and encourage referrals went on continually, the client progress was disappointing and even concerning.

The August and September referrals doubled the number helped before, as 11 additional people facing life crises came seeking help. This was the beginning of an onslaught of people facing eviction and homelessness. From October until the present, Atlas has dealt with an additional 33 referrals.

Serving as the only Atlas staff member, filling this rapid expansion of need has become extremely challenging. I was able to provide client intake and address their immediate problems. However, clients who had been helped in the past and who would benefit from personal mentoring were neglected. The miracle of increased client referrals has become detrimental to the broader mission of Atlas.

The solution to the problem is evident: hiring of additional staff. The problem with hiring staff was also evident: the lack of adequate funding to even humanly consider that possibility. God generously provided the startup costs including the office remodel. Since the office opened, He has continued to provide all monthly ministry expenses while maintaining an approximate \$10,000 cash balance.

At the December board meeting our cash balance was just under \$9,000. We discussed the need for staffing and agreed to assess the possibilities at the January board meeting when we would know any results from year end giving. We discussed whether we would hire staff based on faith or wait until we had adequate funding to do so. We prayed about that decision and waited for December 31<sup>st</sup> as a few donations began to trickle in. Then in the last week of December the floodgates opened. Our income in 2019 was \$6,500, in 2020 it was \$14,500 and in the first 11 months of 2022 it was \$15,500. Then in December, donations from many varied and unexpected sources provided \$42,500 and brought our 2021 total to just over \$58,000. We ended the year with a cash balance of just short of \$50,000.

God's miracle of unexpected funding allowed the board to reach the decision to begin the staff hiring process. Although the year-end giving removed the need to proceed purely on faith, the board decision had been sought in faith, and God's provision verified the decision. The faith of the board was simply rewarded and renewed by His blessings provided by many of you. We extend our boundless thanks to each of you for your part in this blessing as we look to the future of Atlas and a staff to better serve our clients' needs. We thank God for the miracles of 2021 and look forward expectantly for those to come in 2022.

### Trusting God's Direction for Atlas 2022 Staffing Dreams

Atlas staffing for 2022 seeks to fill two high quality administrative positions: Ministry Director and Administrative Assistant. The new personnel will team with me working cooperatively in all aspects of the ministry. Together, the Ministry Director and I will jointly build both the mission and the vision of Atlas of the Lakes Area. I will

#### Our Mission:

Changed Lives  
Through Christian Love  
and Advocacy

#### Our Vision:

Fostering Community  
Awareness, Concern,  
and Response to the  
Needs of Area  
Residents

#### Atlas Board

Neil Heiser  
President  
Roland Schmidt  
Vice President  
Sandy Krout  
Treasurer  
Jennifer Heebeck  
Nancy Johnson

#### Atlas Staff

Dave Butterworth  
Executive Director

#### Donate:

By Mail: PO Box 201  
Arnolds Park, IA 51331  
Online:  
[www.lakesatlas.com](http://www.lakesatlas.com)

#### Newsletter:

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you prefer a mailed  
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#### Lakes Area Email

[lakesatlas@gmail.com](mailto:lakesatlas@gmail.com)

#### Visit our Webpage:

[www.lakesatlas.com](http://www.lakesatlas.com)

#### Thank You:

For your Prayers,  
Ministry, and Financial  
Support

concentrate my attention on the Atlas vision of building a caring community across the Lakes Area while the Ministry Director will concentrate on the Atlas mission of helping those in need. The Administrative Assistant will provide ministry services and will be responsible for assisting all staff as the numbers increase in the future. Our staffing plan is always subject to God's changes in His plan for the life of the Atlas ministry.

Considering the 2021 ending cash balance, projected repeat donations, additional grant funding, and expanded individual donations for the coming year, the projected annual budget of \$115,000 seems achievable. Trusting the provision of God offers the confidence that 2022 will provide continued ministry growth and will be an exciting continuation of the miracles experienced during 2021.

During 2021 I have had conversations with several people, all content in their current jobs, who had interest in possibly seeking full or part-time Christian work. In each meeting, our discussions dealt with potential future staff positions, exploring all possibilities for the positions. Since the January board approval of the applicant search, I have contacted each of these people to meet again to explore a "real" job. I will look with each applicant at how the job can be structured to fit their skills and their call to ministry while also fitting with the evolving Atlas ministry. The job description may vary depending upon the ability and experience of the applicant. Seeking God's will, the Board of Directors will make their decision based on the experience of each applicant and the job description as presented. Because I have past corporate background in human resources, this approach is certainly foreign to me. However, my planning of Atlas and God's surprising intervention in that plan make this hiring method an exciting evolution as we follow this process, waiting for God's choices to lead the future of this ministry.

### **Thank You for Your Support for Atlas in 2021**

We cannot adequately express our gratitude for the part each of you has played in this first full year of operation for the Atlas ministry. Your support comes in a variety of ways:

- Each of you who is informed about the Atlas ministry and shares it with others in your circle of influence is critical to the growth of the ministry. This is evidenced by the wide variety of client referral sources that have come from individuals familiar with Atlas who willingly shared the ministry with someone in need.
- Some of you have volunteered your time to the ministry: 1) the Board of Directors who guide the ministry, 2) individuals who join with us in cooperatively serving the needs of clients, 3) volunteers who willingly provide transportation locally or to more distant places, 4) others who provide manpower and transportation to help people who are forced into emergency moves, and 5) those who provide general help with client needs or assistance with ministry operations.
- We are truly grateful for those of you who pray for the ministry. These are the unseen supporters that are so important to us as each prayer also builds their relationship with God and the ministry.
- And finally, thank you to those of you who have been led to donate a one-time, monthly, or annual gift. These contributions will help provide the staff needed to meet face-to-face with our clients, providing mentoring so the primary purpose of the ministry can be realized. We cannot accomplish our mission or vision without this generous support.

Together, with your various forms of support, God has used us all to provide for the daily miracles of 2021 that are impossible for me to fully share. I am amazed every day as I witness His hand in the growth and development of the ministry including provision for the physical and funding needs which enable the ministry to serve people's critical life needs. More importantly, I see the miracle of changed lives for people who had nowhere to turn. I see God creating in them an awareness of Himself while cracking the resistance that has kept them from a relationship with Him throughout most of their lives. The real miracle is how God, through this ministry, touches and changes the hearts of those we serve. For some it may be only a small awareness of His greater power but for most there are obvious and visible seeds planted in their hearts.

Please know that you are a part of God's touch on each client we serve. In addition, each of you who choose to serve Atlas in your own way are also drawn closer to God. We are eternally grateful for each of you.

### **Prayer Requests for Atlas:**

- Please pray that the staff search will provide God's choices to fill the positions He identifies.
- Please pray that God will build a close-knit team to share life changing mentoring with clients and build the Atlas ministry to successfully reach more people well into the future.
- Please pray that God will continue to provide for the financial needs of the ministry as He guides Atlas to explore expanded options for serving those in need in our community.