Mission Gate Update

Turning Lives From Crime to Christ Since 1985

August 2026

Rick Mathes, Founder, Prison Minister

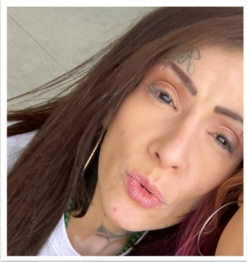


When the lost, last and least look to you, do they recognize you've been with Jesus? I'd rather see the sermon than here it. Wouldn't you? When others behold or rather linger their gaze on you, do they experience the gospel with hands, and that you have surrendered to HIM? Let's get real in a phony upside-down world and step out for Jesus to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, comfort the sick, and visit those in prison as He commanded us to do until His glorious return for the faithful!

"As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Acts 4:20

Anna Martinez– "My life is proof that Jesus still saves."



Before

I walked through the doors of Mission Gate Ministry four months pregnant, on parole, struggling with a meth addiction, and facing the possibility of going back to prison. But God saw me, loved me, and had a plan for my life. When I surrendered my heart to Jesus, everything began to change. Through God's Word, Bible studies, and the love shown to me through Mission Gate Ministry at Promises of Hope, God transformed me from the inside out. The desires I once had are no longer the desires I carry today because Jesus made me new.



Anna and Ray Ray

The Bible tells us about Paul, a man with a painful past who was completely transformed when he encountered Jesus. That same God who changed Paul's life changed mine. Today, by the grace of God, I am three years clean and sober. My daughter and I have a home, peace, hope, and a future because of Jesus. I will forever be grateful to Mission Gate Ministry for allowing God to use you to change my life. My life is proof that Jesus still saves, restores, and sets the captives free.

Haelie Sandage– Come to Septemberfest to hear the rest!



Many of you may remember Haelie's testimony from last year. She made us cry, smile, and know the Lord was working so abundantly in her life all do to the Word of God speaking to her. Wait until you hear how God has been answering this mother's fervent prayers for her child's return.

Come meet and hear these two ladies' stories and other residents from all of our locations at this year's Septemberfest.



Easton and Haelie

Ben Moya– I passed!

"Just passed my CompTIA A+ certification today. A lot has changed in the past year. I moved from Texas to Missouri, started my recovery journey, got back into my studies, and kept at it when no one was looking. Today I got to seal the deal. Grateful for the path that required God's intervention. If you're in the middle of rebuilding or starting over — keep going. One day at a time! I don't believe this could have been done without being at Mission Gate in this structured environment, and sticking to my goals with the help of my biblical counselor and the Lord. I just recently graduated the nine-month program." We are so proud of where the Lord has brought Ben and praying for him as he moves forward in Christ and his career.



Ben Moya

"I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all the marvelous things you have done." Psalm 9:1

MissionGateMinistry.org / PO Box 6644, Chesterfield, MO 63006 / info@missiongateministry.org / (636) 391-8560

Mission Gate Update

August 2026

Jay Major, St. Louis Program Director– Easing anxiety one "dry run" at a time



William, Jeff, and Wesley learning how to take the bus to and from work with guidance from Jay.

Reyna recently had to let a man know that our Fort Good Shepherd location was currently full, but he could be accepted into our St. Louis program. He expressed he had been a country boy all his life and that he did not know the first thing about the city or riding a bus. Reyna reassured him that he would get all the help he needed. He said "This is where God told me to go so I am going to try it!"

Many times, one of the biggest worries men have when going to our St. Louis City Outreach is the bus system. When the residents start working, we help them navigate the bus and train systems. We get them started by providing them with tickets, then we take them on what we call a "dry run" as many of them have never ridden a bus. We take them on the exact route the bus travels, pointing out landmarks to watch for so they know when to pull the cord for their stop. Some have to transfer to the train, so we take them to the transit center, showing them where and which train to get on. Then we take them to their departure station and show them where to either get on their next bus or where to walk to complete their trip. We also give them a printed map to help. Most of them are nervous on the first day but usually come home with a smile and say how easy it was. I love to witness the self-confidence this gives them.

Building Bridges, One Church at a Time



At Mission Gate Ministry, our residents love getting out into the community, and that includes visiting churches near our aftercare homes. Men from Fort Good Shepherd and our St. Louis City Outreach, and women from Hannah's Ranch and Promises of Hope, regularly join local congregations for worship and fellowship.

Recently, women and children from Promises of Hope (home church: Calvary Chapel Troy, MO) visited Asbury Chapel in Lincoln County, and it turned into something beautiful. They were so moved by the sermon that one of our Mission Gate graduates has decided to make Asbury Chapel her new home church. You just never know how the Lord works!

Pictured in the front row is Michael Oelze, our new Volunteer Coordinator, who's diving into some exciting work: launching the Christmas Angel Mission in Lincoln County and recruiting volunteers for prison ministry, aftercare mentoring, property projects, and more. Pictured to his left is Shawnya Blankenship, Promises of Hope Program Director.

We'd love an invitation to your church! Getting to know one another builds the kind of community that changes lives. If you're interested in having our residents visit, or just want to learn more about what we do, reach out to us at info@missiongateministry.org.

Tisha's Ripple Effects



Life changed for Tisha Arnold when she came to Mission Gate's Promises of Hope in 2023. She and her two youngest children came into our program with no social security cards, no immunizations, and the children had never been enrolled in school. Shawnya and the staff at Promises Hope worked endlessly to make sure all these needs were met.

With the ripple effects from that first step, our Lord keeps working through Tisha. Within six months, her father followed in her footsteps by getting sober and accepting the Lord into his life. He has been drug-free ever since. Tisha has obtained her driver's license and HiSet. She graduated our program and works full-time for Mission Gate Ministry at our Promises of Hope location, obtained her Certified Peer Specialist certification and is currently working towards her criminal justice degree. Tisha is also seeing restoration in her relationships with her two middle daughters and their adoptive mother. This is why we do what we do!

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him." Jeremiah 17:7