

MISSION GATE UPDATE

Turning Lives From Crime to Christ Since 1985

DECEMBER 2025



Merry Christmas!

Rick Mathes, Founder, Prison Minister, Preacher/Teacher



Trish and Rick Mathes

How blessed we are to bring the Word of God and spread the hope that comes from Jesus Christ to those in prisons and at our aftercare sites. He is the only way! Jesus, our pre-incarnate hero, found us when we were lost and joined us in our humblest of conditions. He pulled each one of us out of death's grip into life with Him. No place is too lonely or too full of weeping that a song of praise will not cure because He inhabits His praises and dwells in all our song and merriment. Let's raise our voices this Christmas season and give praise for our King that was born to a virgin, and His name is Immanuel, God with us.

"In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace." Ephesians 1:7

Tamara Caron, Family Support Specialist, Uniting Kids and Moms

I am blessed to work closely with mothers at Hannah's Ranch who have open cases with Division of Family Services, this means their children are not yet placed in mom's custody. I work closely with the mothers to achieve goals on their service plans so that they may reunite with their children. When we are building a relationship with mothers, I let them know right away that I won't lie to them and I won't lie for them. All that means is I am transparent with their case workers and the residents both. I love my job because I get to advocate for moms at Family Support Team meetings, court dates, and supervise visits once their service plan goals start being met. It has been a huge blessing seeing doors opened for residents at Mission Gate to have their children placed with them while in the program. I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve our Lord here and the many blessings it has brought into my life.



Mia and Krysanya



Zoey and Kellie

Judge says, "It's time for a change." – by Shawnya Blankenship



Before

Serenity started using heroin at the age of 16 years old. At 17, she already had many run-ins with the law and had lost custody of her baby. Serenity had the same Judge for many of her cases, he watched her grow up in front of his eyes in the courtroom. The last time that she went in front of him, he informed her he was going to be retiring and was sentencing her to do two years at Promises of Hope in the hopes that she would take what she learns out into the world with her. She has finally pled to her last cases and that Judge was also very proud to see the changes she is making through our Lord.

Our God gives us chances to change and puts people in our lives to help us along that path. We are blessed at Mission Gate to be a program that Judges and Probation and Parole officers recommend as life changing opportunities.



After

"The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the Lord; in its time I will do this swiftly" Isaiah 60:22

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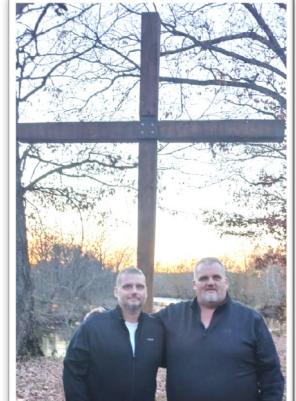
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"My Brother is Here!" - Jason Jones, House Leader

I spent the last 26 years in and out of prison, never making it more than 6 months sober before getting locked up again. I finally hit rock bottom. I couldn't take the hurt and disappointment in my life anymore. I fell on my knees in prison and gave my life to Jesus asking Him into my heart and to take the pain away from me. I woke up the next morning with peace and joy that was unexplainable.

Jesus led me to Fort Good Shepherd and in the 18 months I have been able to accomplish so much through Him. I am a house leader, which allows me the opportunity to help guide men that are new in the program in their relationship with our Lord, the rules, and keeping focus on His will for their life. I have a good job, and the Lord has blessed me by restoring my relationship with my family. Now He has brought my brother, Kevin, here to Fort Good Shepherd. All praise goes to our Lord.

Kevin gave his life to the Lord on the phone with me one day when we were talking. He said he could hear the difference in me and knew if I could change, he could also. This Thanksgiving we are giving thanks to our Lord for allowing us to celebrate together for the first time in 22 years.



Jason with his brother

Community coming together

We are so blessed and thankful for the love and support of our communities and volunteers. Crestwood Baptist Church came out to Promises of Hope to conduct a job readiness class with the ladies. While there, the volunteer men of the group saw a need, put their heads together, and made it a reality. Now we have a beautiful bus shelter at the end of the long driveway where the children can wait out of the weather elements for their school bus to come in the mornings, and moms and staff can wait for their little ones to get off the bus in the afternoons. Thank you to all that helped make this possible.



Bus Shelter

"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." Philippians 2:4

Shepherd's Inn is moving forward - Former U.S. Senator Jim Talent

It's time for another report on our progress in building Shepherd's Inn, which is the beautiful new house we are building at Fort Good Shepherd. When we complete it, Shepherd's Inn will not only replace the housing we lost in last year's flood; it will increase our capacity at the Fort by 35% (55 beds previously, adding 19 is 35% increase). So, the flood will result in more men turning from crime to Christ. Talk about bringing good out of evil! That's what our Lord does.



Front



Back

As of our last report we had raised \$215,000 towards our goal of \$500,000. That amount has grown to \$222,000. We're grateful for that, and confident of a surge of giving at the end of the year. As for the construction itself, the framing of the house is 90% complete, so we can work regardless of weather. The windows and doors have been installed, and the plumbing contractor is doing the "ground rough" work – installing the lines underground so that we can pour the basement floor. The ducts for the house have been delivered and will be installed in the next few weeks.

Will you consider supporting us? Would your church? Do you know a business that might want to contribute? We want to complete Shepherd's Inn by next summer, and we can do it if the Lord continues to motivate His people to help us. Donations can be made by mailing a check, donating online at our website, or calling our office to contribute by credit card. God is so good.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" Philippians 1:3