

MISSION GATE UPDATE

Turning Lives from Crime to Christ since 1985

November 2022



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Real Faith: When You Know, You Know—Rick Mathes

"Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, and ready for every good work." 1 Timothy 5:17

Faith is not doing what you think you can do.

Faith is reaching out to what you know you can't do.



Who gets the credit? When you have a high probability of accomplishing something based on *your* training, *your* past experience, and *your* self-confidence, you will likely accept some or all of the credit when it is accomplished.

In real faith, God gets the glory. Real faith in the Lord is when you reach out beyond your grasp and, when it comes to pass, you have no choice but to give all the honor to the Lord. You know you know that you had nothing to do with its success. Listen as our saints give all glory to God.

"For once, I shut my mouth"—Randy (Irish) Springli

On May 20, 2020, When Irish Springli arrived at Mission Gate, Rick said, "As soon as Irish walked in, I knew this is the one I needed to work on." He thought, "God can do it."

About Rick, Irish said, "He called me out on my very first day at chapel. Instead of snapping out, I decided to shut my mouth and listen to the man." And the work began.

Irish: My come-to-Jesus moment came in prison, when I was trying to calm down my cell mate. When he snapped out and lost control, he would kick the door and beat his head against the wall. The only way I could get him to sit down was to read him a story. The only book I had to read was the Bible.

When I got to Mark 2:13-17, where the Pharisees asked Jesus why he dined with tax collectors and whores, Jesus said, "The healthy don't need the doctor, but the sick do." Well, that dropped me to my knees, and I gave my life to Christ at that exact moment.

Recently, the judge granted my early release from probation. I asked her why she granted me that blessing. She said she doesn't often get positivity in her courtroom.

"I rarely get to see a man completely turn his life around," the Judge said. When she finished speaking, she applauded for me! Then everyone else in the courtroom starting clapping as well. I was in shock and humbled by the power of the Lord. I would never have believed it possible with my past. I consider myself a very blessed man and thank God every day that I am a changed man.

Before



After



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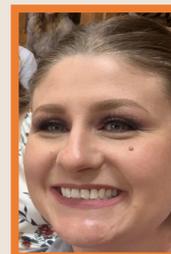
We Are Blessed by Outside Recognition—Trish Mathes

*"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters."
Col. 3:23, ESV*

In our ministry, we work for the Lord. He often blesses us in turn with special recognition from organizations and individuals in the communities where our residents work. This outside recognition increases our credibility in communities and prisons, as well as increases our visibility—all to bring more souls to Christ and start new lives. We've shared some recent examples in the orange-titled articles on this page and the next.

1. Recognition from a Division of Family Services Branch

Tamara Caron, Hannah's Ranch Family Support Specialist, works with our moms, children, and community organizations. Recently, Tamara received the following letter from a case worker connected to the Division of Family Services.



"My experience with Hannah's Ranch is in its infancy, but I have been greatly impressed with not only the success of their program, but also the incredible people who dedicate their time to the women and to the women themselves—dedicating their life to becoming better.



"The mission of Hannah's Ranch is to regenerate, rehabilitate, and reintegrate ex-offenders, recovering addicts, and their families through Jesus Christ. It is apparent to me through my interactions that they fulfill this mission. There is a deep love and understanding from the staff to do the very best for the women that they serve. They want to see them not only succeed, but thrive. "The work that they do embodies that Christ-like love—it is beautiful, forgiving, and full of love and commitment."

—Sonya Rackham, FCCM at Great Circle, a branch of the Division of Family Services

2. "You Truly Are a Success Story"—Phil Pearl's Story

At the age of 50, Phil Pearl graduated from Fort Good Shepherd on March 19, 2021. Phil has stayed on to reach all his goals. So far, Phil:

- Is just 2 tests away from earning his high school equivalency diploma
- Helps with whatever needs to be done at Mission Gate and at his workplace
- Is a beloved member of a local church
- Hasn't missed a day of work in 2 years, and has earned 4 promotions
- Got his driver's license and bought his own car
- Has never missed a class, chapel service, or counseling session



To top this off, Phil received recognition recently for a Peoples Bank financial class he completed at Mission Gate. The staff of People's Bank in Cuba, MO, wrote:

Phillip, We just wanted to tell you how proud of you we are! It has been a fantastic thing to watch as you've grown and flourished ... as a person, in the Lord, and of course financially speaking! We have enjoyed getting to know you! Thank you for making us here at Peoples Bank your banking family!! And thank you for having your journey and triumphs with us! You truly are a success story! Keep up the amazing work, Phillip! We look forward to seeing you soon. (Signed by 5 Peoples Bank staff members)

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3. It'll Be a Warm Winter at Promises of Hope

We're only \$2,800 away from building a firewood shed at Promises of Hope!

The shed will keep the wood nice and dry for staff to feed into our Hardy Wood Stove, cutting down on propane and heating bills. The Bank of Old Monroe is helping fund the project, and Redemption Road Church has pledged to cut wood. Co-pastor of Redemption Road Christian Church and Mission Gate Advisory Board member, Ryan Ruckel, says, "I'm committed to seeing this project through."

Branch Manager of the Bank of Old Monroe, Mike Miller, who is pictured on the right above, also teaches financial classes at Mission Gate. He says, "The ladies at Promises of Hope Ranch are so engaged and eager to learn biblical financial principles. I know from my own testimony that second chances are so important in our Christian walk. Sowing into these ladies' lives—like people did for me—brings me such joy!"



The Bank of Old Monroe presented Shawnya Blankenship, program director at Promises of Hope, a check for \$2,000 to help fund the project.

4. Impact 100 Award—Thank You!

Impact 100 is a group of women who want to improve the quality of life in Crawford County. Joyce Fields, Hannah's Ranch supervisor, spoke about Hannah's Ranch at Impact 100's annual event. Of the \$35,000 in awards, Mission Gate received \$10,000!



L-R: Cheri Schutte, Joyce Fields, Kathy Lasley

This award will fund the concrete needed to rehab an existing building to create a play area for older children at Hannah's Ranch. Then the older children will have their own play area, separate from the play area for the younger, smaller children. In good weather, we'll begin using this building right away. In the next phase, we'll install electricity, plumbing, a bathroom, and heating and cooling.

Christmas Angel Mission* —Reyna Colson

The Christmas Angel parties are back in person this year! For the past 2 years, because of Covid restrictions, we could only deliver gifts, for which we were grateful. But there's something special about all our staff, volunteers, residents, and families coming together to celebrate Jesus.



Our Christmas Angel Mission serves children whose parents are in prison, facing financial hardship, or living at Mission Gate. Each party has entertainment and a Gospel presentation. Matthew 19:14 says, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

- **Can you help provide gifts or volunteer?** The day of the party, we need gift wrappers and distributors, plus escorts to help families through the gift line and to their cars, and then stay to help clean up.
- **Could you check with your church or business** to see if they can purchase gifts, donate financially, volunteer the day of the party, or provide children's entertainment?



**Call Reyna
636-391-8832**

Party dates:

St. Louis, Monday, December 12, Christ Memorial Lutheran Church, 5252 S Lindbergh Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63126
Crawford County, Friday, December 16, Meramec Music Theater, 26 MO-8, Steelville, MO 65565

*Mission Gate is not affiliated with Prison Fellowship Angel Tree or Salvation Army Angel Tree

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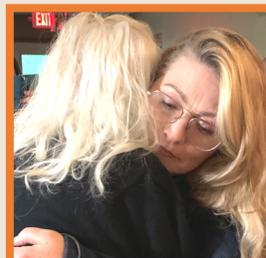
A Grandmother's Prayers—Jordan's story

Jordan's grandmother drove from Fulton, MO, to see Jordan graduate from Mission Gate at Promises of Hope Ranch. Not only that, but this grandmother delivered a moving speech, thanking Mission Gate. At one time, she thought she had lost Jordan forever.

"I thought she was going to die out on the streets. There was nothing I could do but pray." And pray is what this grandmother did. "I got my granddaughter back!" was her thank-you message to Mission Gate.

Today, Jordan is our senior resident in the main house at Promises of Hope. She has her driver's license, bought her own car, and is preparing for the Certified Peer Specialist exam. Jordan has 4 sons, and is once again involved in their lives.

Note from Trish Mathes: Jordan first heard about Mission Gate when she was in the Community Supervision Center in Fullton, MO, a facility that invites Mission Gate to share God's Word. When she heard about Mission Gate, Jordan applied. Now, living a changed life, Jordan is going back to the Center where she was incarcerated to share her testimony with the other women there. Our work goes full circle.



How Mission Gate Changed My Life—Chris's story

Chris graduated from our St. Louis program in 2018. He went on to marry Carey, then graduated from Ranken's HVAC program. In his current job, Chris works with another graduate of Mission Gate who also has his HVAC certification.

Chris says he often thinks about how Mission Gate changed his life. He still goes to church, reads his Bible daily, and takes time for devotions. As the Lord opens doors throughout his day, Chris connects with customers, telling them about the goodness of God. "Mission Gate was my starting point. I worked hard while I was there, and I never thought I'd be where I am today—with a wonderful wife and a great job."

Now Chris is giving back to Mission Gate—he donated a car for our residents to use!



Everyone Saw the Change in Me—Krysanya's story

I was facing the termination of parental rights to my daughter when I was released from prison in December 2022. But at Hannah's Ranch, I continued building my relationship with the Lord, and now the courts have changed their decision: My daughter and I will be together in a new home by Christmas! In court, everyone saw the change in me and didn't hold my past against me. God paved the way for me to begin my new life with my daughter, as I've always asked Him to.

I was amazed to see how the judge and attorneys in the Children's Division knew that change is possible. With the right foundation and the right mindset, you can do anything with God, but you can do nothing without Him. I am grateful to Mission Gate for believing in me and helping me start my life anew. I have a new life, my family back, sobriety, stability, and love in my church family—now at Covenant Praise Church here in Cuba. I started going to this church while at Hannah's Ranch, and they continue to be a support to my daughter and me.



I am forever grateful that Hannah's Ranch was my stepping stone in the right direction and thank all the amazing staff who work endless hours pouring into us.