

# MISSION GATE UPDATE

*Turning Lives from Crime to Christ since 1985*

March-April 2023



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

## Annual Fort Good Shepherd & Saint Louis Guest Homes Luncheon

Hosted by Directors Rick and Trish Mathes, Reyna Colson, Bob Arb, and Senator Jim Talent



Complimentary lunch \* Music \* Fellowship \* Testimonies

Speakers Men and women residents

Friday, April 28, 2023, Noon-1:30 p.m.

The Lodge Des Peres, 1050 Des Peres Rd., Saint Louis, MO 63131

Call (636) 391-8560

April  
28

## April Fool's Day —Rick Mathes

**The years have slipped by, and we just passed the 38th anniversary of Mission Gate.**

It seems like yesterday when Trish and I stood in our living room as new Christians. I asked her, "What day is this?" She replied, "It's April Fool's Day!" I couldn't believe it. I might have been daffy, in mid-life crisis, or anointed—but I knew the Lord was playing with me our first day with Him. I called the pastor who led me to Christ and asked, "What verse comes to mind when you think of prisoners and our ministry?" He replied, "John 10:9, where Jesus said, "I AM the Gate." Amen! We instantly knew we would call our ministry Mission Gate Prison Ministry. Let's take a closer look at that verse.



**John 10:7-10 NIV**

*Jesus is the Gate to eternal life. Step through and press on.*

<sup>7</sup> Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who have come before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep have not listened to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. <sup>10</sup> They will come in and go out, and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."



**First**, thank you Jesus, there is a **heavenly gate** because stepping through Satan's prison gate, called "The Department of Corrections," is a nightmare. But once inside, we tell the prisoners about another gate that offers life instead of death.

**Second**, thank you Jesus, **there is only one gate!** I just know that if there were two gates, with my luck, I would choose the wrong one.

**Third**, thank you Jesus, **the gate is a turnstile!** We can go through one man at a time. We can put our shoulders back, lift our heads, and step through the blood of Jesus, one born-again man at a time; each special in His sight.

**Fourth**, thank you Jesus, **it's a strong gate!** Jesus assured us that the gates of Hell cannot prevail against us, that He will always provide us a way out, that He will never give us more than we can bear, that no one can take us out of His hand, that He will never leave or forsake us, and that where He is we will be.

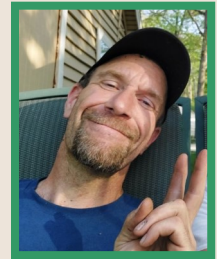
**Fifth**, thank you Jesus, by stepping through, we pass from failure to victory, sorrow to joy, and from earth to heaven. Let me encourage you to step through the Gate for an experience you won't soon forget!

*Dear Lord, some people just don't know how to step through the gate. I remember running from you. It is so amazing that the sinful life we are afraid to give up really amounts to nothing. And the minute we believe, you offer us everything ... everlasting peace and eternal life.*

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## A Letter From Prison—William Batterton

Many of you have been praying for William Batterton, a former resident and wonderful man of God. While he was at Mission Gate, old felony charges came to light. We hoped and prayed for a light sentence, but the judge said, "I sentence you to six 4-year, consecutive sentences in the Missouri Department of Corrections." We were all shocked and so very sad. But William said, through his tears, "if one man comes to Christ in prison, then this will be worth it." Here's a letter from William:



**"I'm William Batterton, and I'm a sinner saved by Grace.** When Trish told me how many people have been praying for me, it truly blew me away. That just shows how real our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ really is. I haven't been a Christian that long and for Him to bring that many prayers together for me is nothing short of a miracle. I pressed into our Lord and not away from Him when the going got tough. Without a doubt I knew there was a reason that I truly am ok, and in God's Arms.

**"I don't care what anyone says, prison is rough on a man's mental state.** Not once did I waver in my faith to Christ, but at one point I lost my peace about the situation. So after 3 days of praying, and God letting me wrestle with it, the Holy Spirit brought to my mind the most profound but simplest saying I have ever heard:

**It's not about the what. It's about the Who!**

"Thank you for that, Rick. See, I was stressing on the situation, not on CHRIST. Once I turned my focus back on praising, worshiping, praying, and studying about our Father—every day I get to spread that joy and love in a place where in most instances there seems to be no hope, which is Jesus Christ and HIM crucified.

**"Today I'm leading Bible studies in Licking Department of Corrections.** I'm in the best housing unit on the camp and have a job in the kitchen. This is a level 5 prison, and there is a 1-2 year waiting list for that job, but God gave it to me. We have Bible studies, encourage each other, and grow in the Lord every day. Plus I have a whole camp of people to witness to. Revelation 12:11 'And they overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony!'"

***Let's Get Together in 2023! Call (636) 391-8560 to Set a Date***

### We'd love to be invited to your church

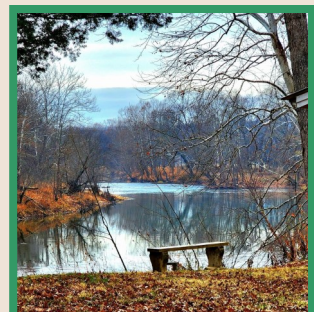
Senator Jim Talent, board member, has stated that this year we want to take Mission Gate into churches more than ever before. We want our local churches to hear our residents' powerful, life-changing stories.

**Please consider inviting Mission Gate to:**

- A worship or evening service
- Meetings about local missions
- Your Bible study group

### Bring your church to horseback rides in the country or a BBQ in the city

We want to see more churches coming out to Mission Gate facilities. We're eager to offer volunteer projects, we would love people to get to know residents personally, and we will gladly share our beautiful scenery—maybe even on horseback!



# MISSION GATE UPDATE March-April 2023

## Caring for Mothers and Children—Hannah's Ranch Staff

Mission Gate's 4 women's homes, accredited by MCRSP and NARR, bless so many women and children.

- Hannah's Ranch (2 homes) can house 38 women and children.
- Promises of Hope Ranch (2 homes) can hold 22 moms and children.

Hannah's Ranch staff—Joyce, Susan, Tamara, and Jenny share this:

**When parents are living by the ways of their world**, not only do they come to us broken, but also their children are broken. We are blessed to see the milestones the children are making while in the program with their mothers. We start helping the children get into a routine that the mothers can follow once they leave our 9-month program, such as getting them up and ready for school, cooking them meals at the same times, napping, snack times, encouraging daily hygiene, and bedtime routines. With your help we have been able to provide Kid Bibles so the mothers can help their children grow in the Lord.

**God's restoration allows for mothers and their children to start bonding** and building a relationship they have both desired for so long. Celebrating 1<sup>st</sup> birthday, 1<sup>st</sup> day of kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> birthday with a sober mom, 1<sup>st</sup> school sports activity, baptisms, 1<sup>st</sup> car with mom, and even 1<sup>st</sup> dance are just a few of the moments Mission Gate gets to be a part of.



## I Love When the Lord Works Like This—Trish Mathes

**The gifts you give throughout the year mean so much** to those who receive them. Zhy, the precious boy in the photo, is blind and needs assistance and braces to walk. Mission Gate's Christmas Angel Mission gifted Zhy with sensory toys, and his grandmother says he is rarely without them. Zhy also has a twin brother.

**Please pray for Laurie**, who has congestive heart failure and takes care of both boys.

## Our women's retreats were beautiful! —Trish Mathes

*God makes all things work together for the good of those who love Him.*

Jane Wiese's message was driven by the Holy Spirit! Our women applauded because they had heard the same message the past 2 weeks and in their local churches.



## Oakbridge Community Church, Arnold, MO —Bob Arb

**A great example!** In winter 2022, I spoke to the Men's Ministry at Oak Bridge Community Church about Mission Gate. In summer, Oak Bridge responded by sending a group of men to paint the interior of the Coral Bunkhouse and also power-wash and stain the deck. In October, more Oakbridge men came out to paint and do electrical work. Currently, several men volunteer weekly with the Men's City Guest House Program. We so appreciate this involvement!



Call (636) 391-8560

**We'd love to see your church connect with Mission Gate too. Give us a call, and we'll share some ideas.**

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## House Bill 1028 – Trish Mathes

**Exciting news for donors!** The March 3 edition of the *Jefferson City News Tribune* featured a bill that would give a 50% tax credit to people who donate to organizations that provide recovery support services. The bill received unanimous praise before a Missouri House committee. Greg Smith, formerly with Mission Gate, had a hand in crafting the bill.

The *Jefferson City News Tribune* also stated that Mission Gate serves people inside and outside of prisons across Missouri.



Testifying for House Bill 1028

**Joyce Fields, Mission Gate's program coordinator, testified to the committee** that, "This bill would directly benefit our donors and, subsequently, Mission Gate. I came to Mission Gate in 2018 from prison, and it really gave me the chance to not only grow in the Lord, but to also become a member of society again." She added. "I was hired in 2019 and during my tenure, Mission Gate has helped reunite over 60 children with their families."

**James Fields, Joyce's husband, also informed the committee** that the Mission Gate men's program helps around 300 people a year. He added, "About 13 years ago, Greg Smith (formerly with Mission Gate) picked up a wild-haired, crazy looking guy, fresh from prison, from a bus stop. The parole boards warned Mission Gate not to accept this guy (me). Today I sit before you with 13 years of sobriety, with my life completely changed thanks to programs like Mission Gate."

**Jennifer Osborn—who had been released from prison just hours before—**also praised Mission Gate. Testifying at these proceedings was her first stop on her way to begin a new life at Hannah's Ranch.

**Call your state representatives to support House Bill 1028.**

## Mission Gate by the Numbers

Thanks to our faithful donors, Mission Gate's numbers never looked so good:

- **Hundreds of people** who have received Christ's blessings through Mission Gate
- **28 buildings**, all with top-notch furnishings provided by our donors
- **25 cars** that transport residents to and from prisons, jails, court appearances, doctors' appointments, places of work, and to visit families and children.



**You have kept us going** so we can provide quality living arrangements and powerful programs. We manage your donations very carefully and stretch the dollars as far as they can go. Yet we carry out maintenance and repairs daily, with surprise projects constantly popping up. Please consider contributing to our current, most critical needs listed below. Thank you, our amazing partners.

Funding Needs ~ Please call (636) 391-8560 if you can help	
\$3,500 Curricula for classes	\$2,500 Recovery Bibles and study Bibles
\$4,000 Fencing for cemetery at Fort Good Shepherd	\$10,850 New heating/cooling system for Hannah's Ranch
\$4,000 Cooling system for Louisiana House first floor	