

# MISSION GATE UPDATE

*Turning Lives From Crime to Christ Since 1985*

MAY / JUNE 2026



## Rick Mathes, Founder, Prison Minister



Rick and Lassie

There is a price to pay when we are a soldier of Christ. The suffering we endure is the consequence of the Lord's permission for a season. We are earning our rank in glory by going through this basic training of this earthly experience. Pain provides gain through suffering. The closest my knees ever get to the ground is during tribulation.

God's grace is in direct proportion to our suffering. The gates of hell cannot prevail against us, He will never give us more than we can bear, He will always provide us with a way out, He will never leave us nor forsake us, no one can ever take us out of His hand and where He is we will be. You can take those promises to the bank. When we walk by, Satan trembles in fear!

**"For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline."**

**2 Timothy 1:7**

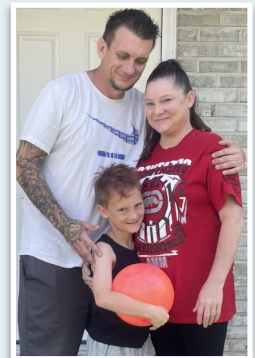
Growing pains are just that, a pain. Our Christian service is enhanced for those of us who have been in combat with the demons and have the scars to prove it. Surrendering to His will unleashes the power of the Holy Spirit. All we need is faith and a willingness to depend on our Lord providing. With His power and our perseverance, we can understand His perspective or world view and remain courageously faithful to it.

## Trish Mathes, Executive Director– Eric and his family together at last!

In our last newsletter, Kandon said that spending spring break with his dad at the Fort was the best week of his life. Now, the family is living together in Cuba. Children need both a father and a mother. For two and a half years, Eric and Alicia lived miles apart and saw each other only on some weekends as they worked to rebuild their relationship by putting God first. Healing takes time, and it grows as a husband and wife commit to sobriety, honest communication, and Christian support.

Their son, Kandon, called Rick and me and said, "Thank you for helping my daddy and keeping him safe." He has such a thankful heart.

Their oldest daughter, Kaylie, stayed behind to finish school, but she still drives to Cuba to attend church with them on weekends. Eric shared how much it means to lead his family and to watch them look to him and his faith in Christ for guidance.



Eric, Alicia and Kandon

He demonstrated his trust in God's leading by stepping into the unknown with faith and obedience to a place God would show him. Genesis 12:1-2 became the verses that guided Eric to Mission Gate.

We are grateful to have Eric serving on our full-time staff. He has made a meaningful difference in many lives, especially his own family's.

**"The Lord had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. 'I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.'"**

**Genesis 12:1-2**

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## **Marissa Clater– Pray I get my baby, Connely, home with me.**

“God has undeniably been working since arriving at Hannah's Ranch from the Department of Corrections. His Word has strengthened my faith and allowed me to have a closer relationship with Him. My baby is in DFS custody at the moment, but my case is coming closer to closing and her being here with me. My older daughter lives with her father currently, but we get to visit each other often. I praise God for allowing me to become the mother they deserve and for the support Mission Gate has given me. They helped me realize I can stand up for the right thing and have faith that God will see it through.”



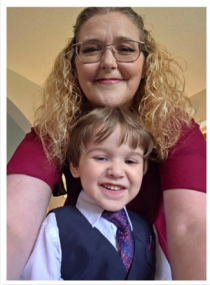
Marissa, Matrix and Connely

**“Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this.” – Psalms 37:5**

## **Susan Waters’ family restored before the throne of grace.**

Rick always said from the beginning, “families restored before the throne of grace is what Mission Gate is all about.” I used to wonder but over the years I have seen thousands of families restored.

How beautiful is this... Susan Waters with her grandson and two daughters! Whoever thought this reunification could have happened, only with the Lord. Susan originally came from prison directly to Mission Gate in 2014 to start her life all over again! She had no family accepting her or supporting her... no mom, no daughters, no son. Susan said half of her family was on drugs and the other half didn't want anything to do with her. She ran the streets of Kansas City and got shot in 2012 while in active addiction. Shortly after she went to Vandalia (WERDCC) and her mom, also on drugs, went to Federal prison.



Susan and Tanner

Susan graduated in 2015 and became our live-in resident supervisor at Hannah's Ranch in January 2016. Since then, Susan has become a Certified Peer Specialist, Crisis Response Peer and received her Pregnant and Parenting Families certification. She is now Hannah's Ranch community support specialist and childcare director.



Leah, Eva and Susan

Susan's mother accepted the Lord and in 2019 she came to live with Susan. Her daughter and grandson recently moved back to Missouri; Susan was only able to see him two times while they lived in Oregon. Over the past years she has also worked to restore her relationship with her youngest daughter, Eva, who is now 20 years old and has asked Susan to join them at their upcoming wedding.—Trish Mathes

**“For we live by faith, not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7**

## **James Fields guided by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

James Fields (Toto) graduated from Colorado Christian University in May of this year with an associate's degree in biblical studies. At his graduation ceremony in Colorado, James was accompanied by his wife, son, sister, mother-in-law, niece and nephew. James is continuing his biblical studies at the on-line university to get his bachelor's degree.

James always says that the reason he got all A's is because he knew the college material from sitting under Rick the last 14 years, which was a great compliment to Rick. Now he steps in to conduct bible studies and chapel services whenever Rick cannot make it. He is also the Fort Good Shepherd program director.



When James came to Mission Gate in 2011, he had no family, was skinny, pale and withdrawn. His mom passed away when he was two and really didn't have a dad in his life. So literally, we feel like we raised him. He came to us broken and by the power of the Holy Spirit. He was withdrawn and shy but listened to every word from the Bible. Alongside Mission Gate this entire time, he landed at Delhi Baptist Church and that is where he met his wife, Joyce.— Trish M.

**“I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” - Psalms 121:1-2**