

# MISSION GATE UPDATE

Turning Lives from Crime to Christ since 1985

October 2023



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## Press On!—Rick Mathes, Founder

After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

—1 Peter 5:10

**When you finally get past your hurry to recover,** you need to have the courage to press on. The evil one will put up all kinds of scary circumstances in front of you to persuade you that your efforts are dangerous and futile.

**It takes a Holy faith in Jesus to knock Satan down and push on through to the success** you know is a certainty because God's Word says so. If the bible says it, I believe it, and that settles it! The small steps soon become giant steps as you crawl to walk to run.



PRESS ON!

## Commitment Makes All the Difference —Trish Mathes, Aftercare Director

**Many people who come to Mission Gate have no concept of commitment.** They often grew up in chaotic and sometimes violent homes, where family members didn't have steady jobs, strong attachments, or clear values. If these youngsters end up on the streets, they have to do whatever they can—lie, cheat, steal—to get life's basic requirements such as food, water, and shelter. If they have any commitment at all, it's to themselves: a commitment to do whatever necessary to get drugs or alcohol, or to stay alive.

The word *commitment* appears in the Bible 164 times.

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him, and He will bring it to pass.  
—Psalm 37:5

**When newly released inmates come to Mission Gate,** they have often already made a commitment to accept Christ. At Mission Gate, they commit to our 9-month program, then we teach them to practice commitment in relationships, at their jobs, and in church and community. Above all, we teach them to always stay connected to God's Word.

## Shawna Kept Her Commitment to Her Son

**Recently, at Family Day at Promises of Hope, Shawna Kamper spoke about a commitment** she had made to her son: "If you graduate high school, I will give you \$1,000." For many years, it didn't seem possible that Shawna could make this happen, especially because she had piled up a large amount of debt. But when she came to Mission Gate, Shawna not only paid off those bills, but she also scrimped and saved and put away that \$1,000 for her son.

**Shawna traveled a long, hard road to get where she is today.** Addicted to drugs from ages 13 to 37, she came to Mission Gate straight from jail with only the clothes on her back. Committed now to Christ, she not only kept her promise to Chason, her older son, but she also won custody of her younger son, Lucky, who was already being considered for adoption.



Shawna kept her promise and presented her son with a check for \$1,000 at his graduation.

# Mission Gate ~ Overview

## One of Our Guiding Verses

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat,  
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you invited me in,  
I needed clothes and you clothed me,  
I was sick and you looked after me,  
**I was in prison and you came to me.**  
—Matthew 25: 35-36



## Please pray for:

- The salvation of inmates, our residents, and their families
- Our graduates' continued success in their new lives with Christ
- Our amazing local churches and employers, who welcome our residents so warmly
- The donors who support our ministry

## Our program

Mission Gate's 9-month or longer residential program includes housing, transportation, life skill classes, counseling, job placement, and reunification with family. Our residents learn how to be self-sufficient while relying on God in their new lives.

## What we do

- Regenerate, rehabilitate, and reintegrate 350 ex-offenders and recovering addicts every year through our aftercare residential programs in 10 beautiful homes throughout Missouri
- Spread the gospel to thousands of inmates in prisons and jails across the state.

## Our staff qualifications

We have 21 employees, who are credentialed either as ministers or Certified Peer Specialists, or who hold higher certifications through the Missouri Credentialing Board. All staff are committed to Christ.

## How to Get Involved

- Visit people in jails and prisons—we provide training
- Become mentors, lead bible studies or classes, help repair our properties, minister to our children
- Donate food, men's clothing, hygiene items, bath towels, twin sheets, blankets, pillows, household supplies

## We Need You — It's Time for Our Christmas Angel Mission!

**Mission Gate hosts Christmas Angel parties** for the children of prisoners, ex-offenders, and those struggling with addiction.

The smiles of these children show just how much the Christmas Angel parties mean to them.



**Party dates ~ Call (636) 391-8560 for details**

**St. Louis, Monday, December 18,**  
St. John Lutheran Church, St. Louis

**Crawford County, Friday, December 22,**  
Meramec Music Theater, Steelville



## How you can help:

- Provide gifts suitable for infants through age 16
- Donate gift wrap, packaged treats, and drinks
- Volunteer during the parties
- Invite your church to participate

Contact Reyna Rollings for more ideas at (636)-391-8560 or [info@missiongateministry.org](mailto:info@missiongateministry.org)

*We need more churches, businesses, families, and individuals to provide gifts.*



# Mission Gate ~ Residences

## Men's Homes

### In the Country



#### Fort Good Shepherd Ranch

Our flagship center sits on 130 beautifully wooded acres along the Meramec River in Crawford County, MO.

This facility houses up to 55 men at a time in cabins, bunkhouses, and other structures for a variety of living spaces.

### In the City

Mission Gate owns 3 large homes near downtown St. Louis. Together, they house 35 men at a time, both in private rooms and apartments.



Osage House

When Kevin and Amy O'Brien's son Daniel died of a fatal mix of alcohol and Fentanyl, the O'Brien's and their family donated Daniel's House in his memory.



Daniel's House

### Louisiana House



In Louisiana House, a Senior Resident oversees the men, who eventually become mentors themselves.

## Women's Homes



#### Hannah's Ranch

This 14-bedroom house in Crawford County, MO, opened in 2014. It sits on 32 acres and includes a 3-acre pond.

The ranch house features 14 thoughtfully decorated rooms for women and their children.



#### Angels Landing

This residence opened in 2018, right next to our Hannah's Ranch facility and in a wooded setting.

Angels Landing houses 16 women in beautifully decorated rooms. The upstairs and downstairs levels are each self-contained.



#### Promises of Hope

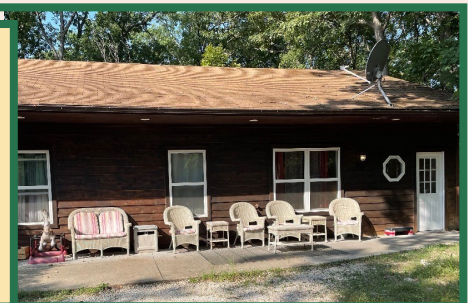
In 2017, Doloris Petty was led by the Lord to provide this large, gracious home. After additions in 2018, it now houses 14 mothers and their children.

Each floor has its own kitchen and baths, with a playground and large yard for the children, plus forest trails to explore.

*\*Mission Gate's aftercare homes are accredited by the Missouri Coalition of Support Providers (MCRSP) and the National Alliance of Recovery Residences (NARR).*

#### Mary's Promise

In 2019, Bill and Mary Neumann were prompted to provide over 50% of the cost to build Mary's Promise. Here, 8 women live in beautiful living quarters on 20 heavily wooded acres— a country retreat.



## They Just Sparkled Up There at Septemberfest!

**The Septemberfest guests looked at the stage in amazement.** There stood 15 Mission Gate staff members—all of whom had graduated from the Mission Gate program! They left their lives of drugs and crime and came to Christ, who set them on a new path at Mission Gate.

**After all their hard work, they decided to stay with the ministry that had saved them.** Now they're helping others get straight with God and discover the life He had planned for them all along.

The staff members gave their testimonies and held up enlarged photos from their lives before Christ.



From Mission Gate grads to Mission Gate staff!

## Septemberfest Testimonies

### I Grew Up in a House of Addiction —Matthew Schmidt

**When Matthew stood up to share his testimony, he was a little nervous,** "Members of my church family are here, and they haven't heard this part of my story." I grew up in a home where some of my family worshiped drugs and alcohol. My mom did the best she could, but she didn't know Jesus and couldn't stop the evil that surrounded me."

**Matthew left home at 15.** Growing up in such a chaotic environment inevitably took a toll on his life. He became addicted to drugs and alcohol and landed in jail. When Matthew was just 17, he heard about Mission Gate and knew it was the place for him. After graduating our program, Matthew had a relapse, but he didn't give up. He went through the 9-month program all over again.

**Matthew said,** "I broke the cycle of crime and addiction in my family."

*God Will Restore The Years  
the Locust Has Eaten*



Jesus redeemed Matthew's life, and today He's redeeming Matthew's relationship with his mom.

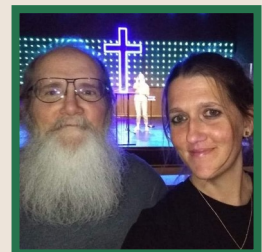
*What the Enemy Meant for Evil,  
God Uses for Good!*

### My Dad Made a Promise to God —Joyce Fields

**I started drinking in elementary school and turned to weed soon after, then on to harder drugs.** At age 20, my sister took her own life—and I was taking all kinds of drugs to numb the pain. My worried father promised to accept Christ if God would keep me safe. The next day I called from Jail. My dad knew I was safe there, and he kept his promise to ask Christ into his life.

**From jail, I went to prison, where I found Jesus.** He changed my life and opened the door to Mission Gate in 2019. Over time, both my father and I grew in our relationships with the Lord.

**By September 4, 2022, my dad was very ill and in hospice care at home.** On a Sunday, he told us he wanted to go to church, so we drove him there to worship with our whole family. We returned home and just a few hours later, my dad peacefully passed away to go to his forever home with Lord Jesus.



My deadly addiction resulted in the miracle of life-giving salvation for my dad and me.