



God's 2020 Vision...

— *The Blessings of Faith* —



2018 Annual Report

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God's 2020 Vision for His Church — Faith, Hope and Love

God's Blessings of Faith in 2018

It's been said that hindsight is 20/20. With God, however, **His vision** — past, present and future — is always 20/20. What's more, **God's vision** concerning His own (those who belong to Him now and those who will belong to Him in the future) is always crystal clear. God sees how and when His own will be brought to **faith**, and how they will be kept in that **faith** till he comes to call them home. God also sees how the certain **hope** that they have in his Son, Jesus Christ, literally changes their lives, both now and in eternity. And finally, God sees how the **love** of Christ burns in their hearts, moving them to reach out to others, wherever they may be, so that everyone who belongs to Him is brought into His fold.

In his first letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul speaks of the spiritual gifts that God bestows upon the Body of Christ, to nurture, bless and grow the Church. And, at the end of chapter 13, Paul highlights three of these gifts of the Spirit, which play a prominent role in the building up of His Church. He writes, "And now these three things remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

As we count down to the year 2020, let us use these three gifts of the Spirit (**faith, hope and love**) to guide us in carrying out the work He sets before us — reaching out to the institutionalized — so that **God's vision for His Church** is at the heart of all that we do together. Thank you for partnering with us in this ministry of building up the Body of Christ. Here are just a few of the spiritual **blessings of faith** that God has bestowed upon His Church through your partnership with us in 2018.

Struggling to Believe:

Recently, a man (who is new to the faith) started attending my prison Bible class. He made a rather interesting statement in class. He said, "I have faith. I just don't know if I believe." That's Interesting, I thought to myself. He knows God exists. He knows Jesus is God's Son sent here to redeem the world. Every week he continues to grow in his faith as he learns more and more about his Savior by reading his Bible. And, every week, the Holy Spirit leads him to return and seek out Jesus in our study of God's Word. As I pondered his words, I was reminded of the man in Mark's gospel (9:17-24), who was seeking Jesus' help for his demon-possessed son. He, too, was struggling in his faith. "But if you can do anything," he pleaded with Jesus, "take pity on us and help us. 'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief." Mindful of Jesus' words to this father struggling in his faith, I invite you to join me in praying for everyone struggling in their faith — struggling to believe. May the Holy Spirit continue to deepen their faith, as we work together to share God's Word.

- Chaplain Joseph Radsek





Modeling Her Faith:

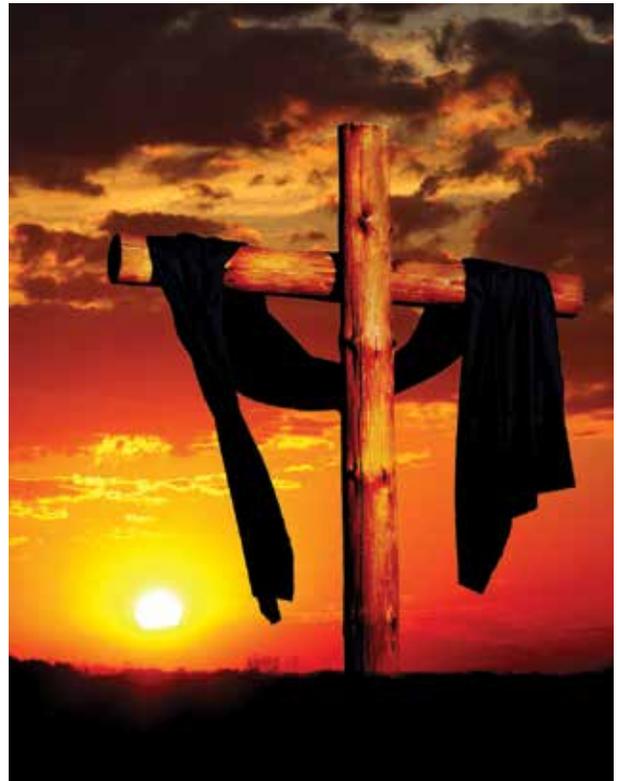
Lily made body parts. She made them out of plastic and assembled them for the purpose of educating people on their body parts and how they function. "I know about every one of my body parts and what they do," she told me, when I visited her in the hospital. She also shared with me that a disease had started to attack her real body parts. She wasn't afraid to die, as the saving Lord had been with her through the death of her husband and in caring for her many children. As we talked, Lily indicated that in her remaining days, she would continue to model her faith and knowledge of Jesus to all. We talked about Romans 8:28 where Paul writes: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him who have been called according to his purpose." After she was gone, God would most certainly use the way Lily continued to share her faith to bring comfort to her family and friends long after her death. Her body parts would disappear, but her faith and example would live beyond her earthly life and be a blessing to others.

- Chaplain Ken Wenzel

The Muscle Memory of Faith:

It was the middle of the night. He had just learned of the death of his infant granddaughter. After receiving the news, he lay in bed, unable to sleep. A portion of the third article kept running through his mind. "I believe in... the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen." In my service to the law enforcement community, I learned how important rote memorization was. Actions repeated often enough become mechanical and habitual. They develop into what is called "muscle memory." You have done it so many times that it becomes an automated response. Muscle memory carries an officer through when he or she is in crisis. God uses the "muscle memory of faith" in the same way. Repetition of Scripture and Biblical truths provide us with "automatic memory" of the comforting truths of God's Word, which carry us through traumatic moments of crisis. It is only after the crisis that we fully recognize the value of what we have learned and believe. The Holy Spirit's gift – *the muscle memory of faith* – enables us to face a traumatic crisis and yet find comfort in the promises of our God.

- Executive Director Philip Henselin





FAITH (Father All In Thy Hands):

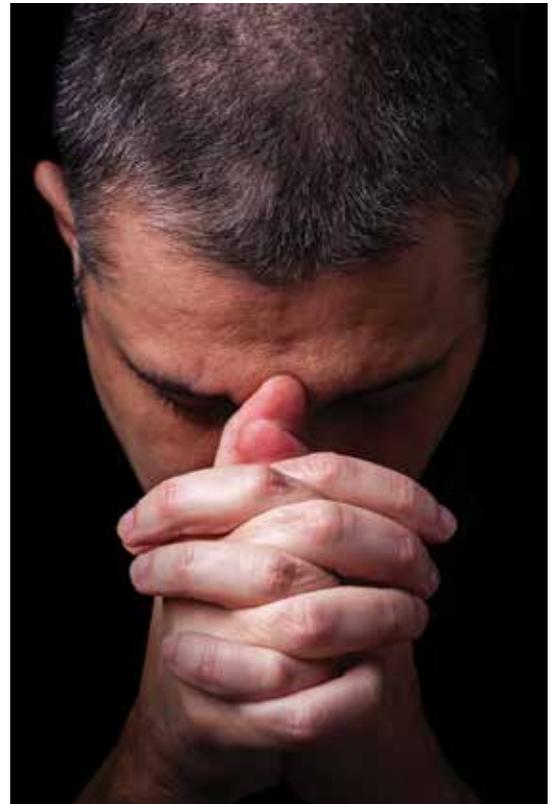
People sometimes say, “you just gotta have faith” or “keep the faith.” That might sound nice, but what exactly do they mean with such nebulous and ill-defined words? What are they suggesting that we place our “faith” in? Whenever this subject comes up in jail ministry Bible classes with the ladies, I always share this simple explanation to keep them focused on God, the *object* of our FAITH: Father All In Thy Hands. In other words, “God, I’m trusting in You! I’m putting it all into Your loving hands.” For Natasha, it means taking her upcoming court date, which will result in either her freedom or time in prison, and placing the outcome into God’s hands, trusting in both His decision, and in His promise, that “all things” will work “for the good of those who love him.” For Janice, it means trusting that God will find a way to provide for her three children while she is incarcerated and unable to care for them herself. And for all of the ladies I minister to in jail, it means taking all the guilt and shame, that’s either simmering in their hearts or being hurled at them by others (you’re a “terrible mom,” a “danger to society,” a “hopeless junkie”) and giving it to Jesus, trusting that all these sins have been covered over by His nail-scarred hands – removed, never to be revealed again.

- Chaplain Sarah Guenther

Surprised by Faith:

I was concerned about the faith of an alcoholic I’d been working with named Ron. He’d had lots of exposure to the gospel, first from his years of attending several churches and then from many visits he and I had, in and out of treatment facilities, where I tried my best to help him see God’s grace and to encourage him to entrust his problems to Jesus. But Ron relapsed over and over and over. He couldn’t seem to string five straight sober days together. As I was on my way to meet with him yet again after yet another relapse, I wondered: The book of James says that “faith without works is dead.” So, if Ron really had faith, wouldn’t I see some evidence of it? Wouldn’t there be some progress in his recovery, however small, if he were really connected with Jesus by faith? I wondered if I’d see Ron in heaven. But when we met that day and I prayed for him, he asked me, “What can I be praying about for you?” I was surprised, and I told him so. He told me, “I have a list of people I pray for every night, at least when I’m sober enough, and you’re on that list.” Here he’d been praying for me every day! I hadn’t been praying daily for him, but he was praying daily for me! So, which one of us was showing evidence of faith? “My word... will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11). What’s it going to take for me to start having faith in that promise?

- Chaplain Philip Merten



Expressions of Faith:

I will often counsel people in the hospital or in the jail about our very human need to daily recognize the blessings we receive from God. The other day in jail, a young man gave me an even better way of accomplishing the same thing. Instead of just naming the blessings for which he was thankful, he would also list the bad things going on in his life, and after each one he would write, 'for this I have Jesus.' What a wonderful way to express our faith – thanking God for His blessings, and trusting in Jesus to always help us in our time of need.

- Chaplain M. Wenzel

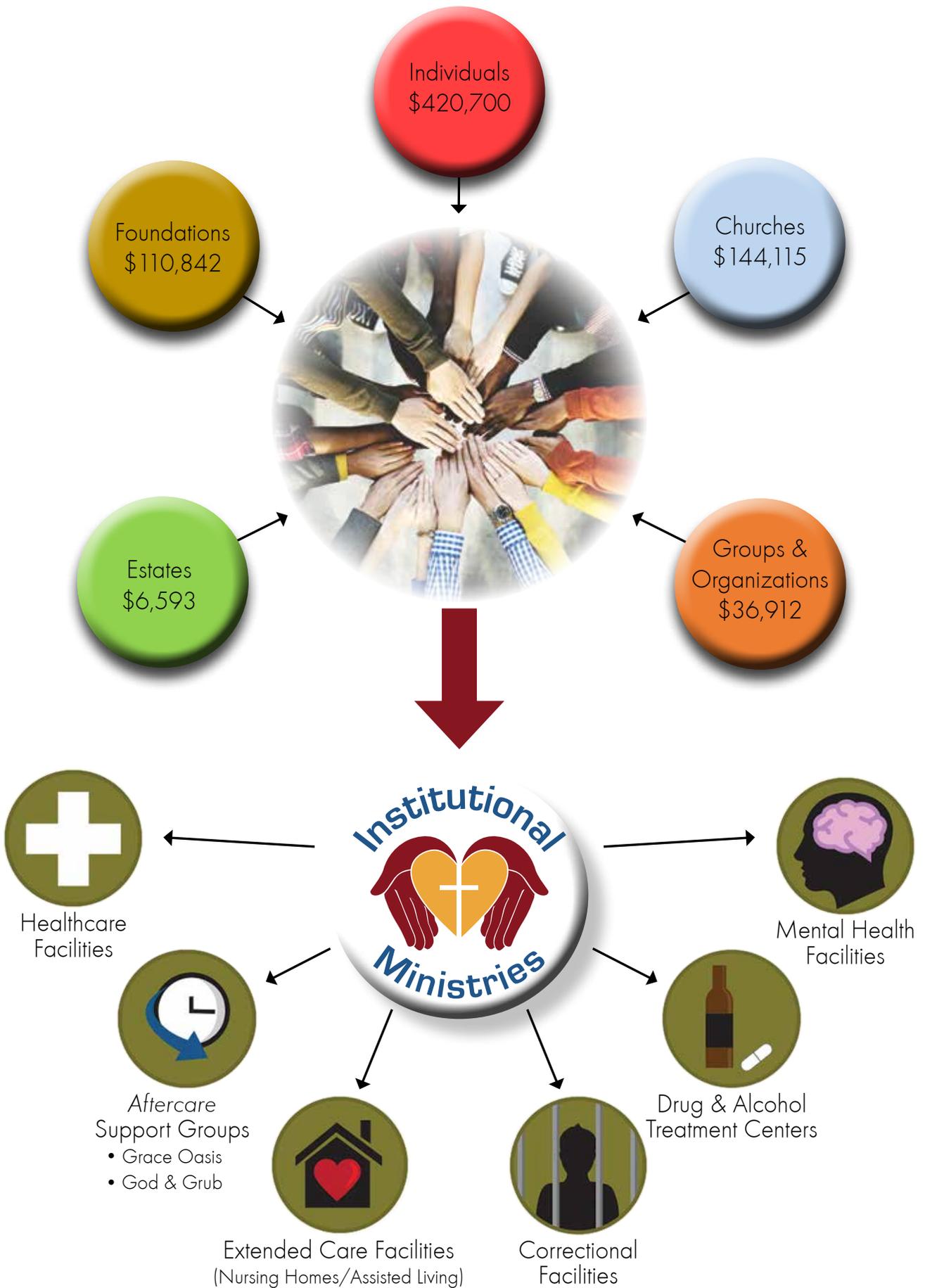


The Spirit's "Click" of Faith

Jason was 28 and had spent nearly half his life incarcerated. He had grown up without the Word of God and saw no reason to spend any time reading the Bible or learning about a Savior named Jesus, until he met a fellow inmate named Robert. They began having long discussions about God, life, heaven, hell and a Savior named Jesus. Then "something clicked," as Jason put it. That "click" was undoubtedly the Holy Spirit working faith in his heart. Jason requested a Bible and began reading. Filled with questions, he turned to Robert, who in turn, encouraged him to request a visit with me. That was three months ago, and we've been studying God's Word together every week since. Jason often thanks me for making time to study the Scriptures with him. And I am thankful, too – thankful for all the ministry partners that make it possible for me to tell people like Jason about a Savior named Jesus. Jason's eagerness to learn about his Savior is a wonderful blessing of faith and evidence that the Word of God is "living and active" (Hebrews 4:12) as the Holy Spirit touches Jason's heart and soul with the Gospel.

- Chaplain Charles Iles

As the count down to 2020 continues, may we remain mindful of **God's Vision for His Church** and faithfully share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so that the Lord of the Church might pour out His **blessings of faith, hope** and **love** upon all the institutionalized and continue building up the Body of Christ.



Ministry Locations



LOCATIONS OF INSTITUTIONS BEING SERVED BY THE MINISTRY

Institutional Ministries is a nonprofit organization established in 1901 that ministers to people throughout the upper Midwest, who are living in correctional facilities, drug and alcohol treatment centers, hospitals, mental health centers and extended care facilities, as well as through Aftercare support groups.

2018 Staff

Full-time Staff



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Executive Director



Rev. Charles Iles, Sr.
Chaplain



Rev. Philip Merten
Chaplain



Rev. Mark Wenzel
Chaplain



Rev. Joseph Radsek
Chaplain

Part-time Staff



Sarah Guenther
Chaplain



Martin Rosewicz
Chaplain



Stephanie Burk
Office Manager



Michelle Storlie
Office Assistant

Emeritus Staff



Rev. Kenneth Wenzel
Chaplain



Rev. Robert Sievert
Advisor



Rev. Robert Pasbrig
Advisor

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Rev. Conrad Prell - Hillsboro
Rev. David Cooper - Beaver Dam
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Mr. Carl Rudolph - Appleton
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Rev. David Cooper - Beaver Dam
Rev. Joshua Kesting - Neosho
Mr. Scott Krause - Watertown
Mr. Carl Rudolph - Appleton
Mr. Bill Finn - Fond du Lac

Our Mission

“To provide direction, comfort and hope by sharing God and his love with individuals (and their families) who are, or have been, in an institution.”