



Ritz Charles

COPE Members
are invited to attend the

Jesus House Miracles

FREE Dinner
Fundraiser Banquet

SUNDAY
August 29, 2016
6:00 pm

Ritz Charles
12156 N Meridian Street
Carmel, IN
(north suburb of Indy)

Ministry Member Spotlight

Jesus House

#COPEspotlight

This month COPE shines the light on an organization that serves families and loved ones standing on this side of the glass; those left behind by incarceration.

Ministry Profile

We took a moment to speak with William Bumphus about the Jesus House.

- Q. William, as the Director of Jesus House, can you tell me a little bit about yourself, your organization and what fueled your mission?
- A. I am William Bumphus, founder of Jesus Inside prison ministry, Jesus House and Faith Center Church in Indianapolis, Indiana
- Q. Please tell me more about Jesus house:
- A. Jesus house is a 46 bed residential re-entry facility for just released Christian prisoners
- Q. How do you qualify the men who enter Jesus House:

- A. They are qualified by application process, and they come from prisons from all over the country. We send them (prisoners) an application before they are released and if they qualify we send them an acceptance letter. The only disqualification is if they are not a Christian or if they have a sex offense.
- Q. Tell me about how your ministry began:
- A. Well my ministry started while i was incarcerated in 1978, after i was born again in prison. [I] came out and founded Jesus Inside prison ministry and we were incorporated in 1981. We've been going inside prisons across the United States, Lagos, Nigeria and have been running a reentry facility for the last 25 years
- Q. What types of changes have you observed over the last 25 years in the men you have coming through Jesus House?
- A. We've seen longer incarcerations and more violent crime along with drug addiction
- Q. What about the impact that your ministry has had? How successful have the men been who come through your program?
- A. We have a 90 percent success rate!

- Q. How do you keep these guys focused and on the right path?
- A. We have a strict faith based program. We have some type of religious service 3 times a day, 5 days a week. That includes Sunday worship service and all of these are mandatory
- Q. I imagine a deep rooting in faith and spiritual relationship with Christ, makes a huge difference in these mens lives.
- A. It's the only thing that works!
- Q. Do you have a particular story that sticks out to you over the last 25 years?
- A. Well I have a lot! I have 25 years worth! But I'll just pick one. There was a guy, his name is Johnny, and he came to us 3.5 years ago. He completed 38 years 9 months in prison. He was serving 4 years for theft and while he was in there he killed 2 guys. He was born again while in prison, towards the end of the 38 years. He began to come to my services and was accepted into the Jesus house. He has been fully employed for the last year and a half and loves his job. He is also a registered volunteer for the state of Indiana and goes with us into the prisons doing prison invasions.

- Q. How has your own experience with the judicial experience affected the way you navigate recovery with these men.
- A. I was arrested 23 times and served time 4 times in 3 different prisons. 3 times for the state and 1 time for the feds. I was a heroin and cocaine addict for 13 straight years. I came from a non religious family. The second time i served time, I accepted Islam as my religion and so that was my mindset. On my last incarceration, I was facing 60 years. I heard the gospel in jail and got born again. I didn't do 60 years, I got 4 years. And after I started serving my time, I started studying and reading the Bible and only did 10 months and have been set free ever sense. I guess the prisoners all understand my personal testimony. I've written 6 books. So when they come out, their mindset is, "If he can do it, so can we". That gives me credibility.
- Q. What about the reality of the struggle when they are free?
- A. A lot of the time when they are first released they are so hopeful. But the frustrations that come from society rejecting them, whether its employment or whatever it may be may throw them off track.
- Q. How do you help these men overcome those hurdles while they are in the Jesus house?
- A. Well that's part of our program. We base everything off Matthew 6:33, Seek first the kingdom of God and all things will be added". When they are here, there is no pressure on them. There is no time limit on how long they are here as long as they are doing the program. There is no time limit on them to find a job. They can eat all they want, they have clothing, everything they need in house and as a result it eliminates the stumbling blocks and fear that if they don't find something within go days, they are out on their own. The whole key to our program is to focus on Christ. When they are focused on Christ, they won't be use, and we have random drug tests. But our benefits outweigh the struggle. It's like I tell them Why would a person jeopardize all they have at the Jesus house to go smoke a joint? Then they would be homeless! The program itself is the incentive to stay and work it out.
- Q. You mentioned that you have volunteers that are past residents. Tell me about how they influence the newer residents.
- A. We have a program they follow every day. Monday through Friday we have an

ex-offender or ex-resident of the Jesus house that comes in and teaches those Bible studies. So a lot of the guys who have graduated from Jesus House are not only teaching, but they are now married, with families, fully employed, going into the prison with us, and serve as pastors their own churches.

- Q. Tell me about the other arms of your ministry?
- A. We have a church, founded by my wife and I, Faith Center Church International. The Lord gave us a really nice building. And the entire bottom floor, we turned into a community center, where we have 50-100 kids come in every week where we provide them free food and help them with their homework. And by the way we do this without any grants or state funds. We just want to make an impact on the community that we are in. We also have a women's facility called Juanita's House. We have 8 beds, so we have been operating that for about 2 years.
- Q. Have you seen similar success with Juanita's house that you have with Jesus House?
- A. It's still pretty new and the women's need are a little different than the men's, so we are still working on it.
- Q. You mentioned that you don't receive funding. How are you providing for these ministries?
- A. Well, we are 100 percent privately funded. Donations and funds that are given to us by churches or individuals
- Q. Is your congregation heavily involved in the other aspects of ministry?
- A. Our congregation is predominately ex convicts. It's a prison ministry church. We have some people who have not been locked up but for the most part, everyone has been behind bars. So many ministries focus on the issue behind bars, and you are reaching them once they are released. We go inside every week somewhere around the country and we let them know there is a place for them when they get out.
- Q. What is your vision going forward in this ministry?
- A. Well to help others to start reentry programs across the country.
- Q. Do you have a program already developed to help others?
- Well I have a book called Jesus House that outlines how to start a reentry program. It details how to deal with

funding, what type of program you want to create, and all of that.

- Q. Where can someone get that information and/or purchase the book?
- A. From my website, www.jipm.org
- Q. What can COPE members and fellow ministers to do help grow this ministry?
- A. Basically, just keep us in their prayers.
- Q. How do people reach out to you and give back?
- A. We have volunteer staff who are ex offenders who don't live at the Jesus House anymore but they lead our classes. As far as giving back, we could always use household items such as bedding, towels, toiletries, and personal items.
- Q. Is there anything else you'd like to share with the readers about what's coming up for Jesus House?
- A. **We have a fundraising banquet August 28th in Indianapolis, Indiana. If they are interested in attending, they can go to the website and send me an email and I will send them the information packet.**
- Q. Thank you so much for your time Pastor, and I know that it is a special place that you are touching in this community.
- A. To God give the Glory!



William Bumphus, Jr.

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