

# Increase

"So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." | Corinthians 3:7



## FAITHFUL for 50 YEARS

By Tim Sheetz, Founder and Ministry Ambassador

***"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail.  
They are new every morning; GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS."***

*Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)*

**T**here was a day when people could trust an agreement made with a handshake, or hearing: "You have my word on it!"

Not so much today! Now, even a legal contract, carefully drawn up, signed and witnessed is not always a guarantee that what was promised will be fulfilled, because people often look for and find creative ways to be released from commitment. Faithfulness means being trustworthy, sure, reliable, able to be counted on and true. Sadly, too often we find that a person will promise to do something, then change his mind and not follow through.

But God is always true to His Word. He is committed to do exactly what He has promised.

He has committed to: hear and answer prayers; finish what He started; supply all we need; never leave or forsake; provide wisdom; heal the brokenhearted; give us a future and a hope...

"Our God is faithful" has been the testimony of H\*V/H\*VMI for FIFTY YEARS, beginning in October 1973 when He "...chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; ... and chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong." He planted the seed in the heart of two very unlikely people to begin a ministry that continues to grow stronger and stronger as the years go on.

Over these years, in His faithfulness, God has given this ministry an incredible Board of Directors which humbly and prayerfully seeks God's wisdom and guidance in every decision they make. Their sense of dependency on God filters down to the dedicated full time staff who love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength; and love the people to whom He has called us to minister.

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A result of God's faithfulness: people of all ages have come to Christ; others have grown in Him; families challenged by disability have found support; individuals have been comforted in the loss of a child; church members have been challenged and trained to show Christ's compassion to those in their communities; His children

worldwide have experienced the joy of being prayer warriors and financial partners in all that He does in and through H\*VMI.

And, now, for the first time in our history, He has provided the ministry with its *own* property being developed as the H\*VMI Ministry Center. We're so excited to see how this will enable H\*VMI to do even more ministry in the coming years, until Jesus returns.

Is it any wonder that H\*VMI's theme song is—  
"Great is Thy Faithfulness?!"



# THE FOUNDATION — God's Hand on

## The 1970s—the decade of INCLUSION.

*While bell-bottoms and wide neck-ties reigned; before the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) was introduced; before “inclusion” was in vogue; when the common practice was to institutionalize and put away the “handicapped” (the term used at the time)...*

HANDI\*VANGELISM was born to encourage and train the Church to include people with disabilities as growing and serving members of the Body of Christ. The very first Handi\*Vangelism Newsletter published this article: *“We are happy to present a brand new ministry which is being developed by the Bible Club Movement, Inc. Handi\*Vangelism is designed to reach God’s very special children, the handicapped, with the message of Jesus Christ.”* Noticing that something—or rather an entire people group—was absent in the local church, H\*V pioneered the way in challenging, training and equipping congregations in disability ministry, writing a training manual that sold for the whopping sum of 75¢ and forming the first “God’s Special Children” Sunday School Class in Collingswood, NJ. But H\*V didn’t stop there! Through the first Handi\*Camp program for 10 campers in 1974; and year-round Bible clubs in hospitals, institutions and residential facilities, H\*V faithfully proclaimed the Gospel to those who had, for so long, been overlooked.

*“I prayed to the Lord and asked Him to come into my heart... because you see, I’m in a wheelchair, and He’s someone I can count on.” – Rusty*

## The 1980s—the decade of EXPANSION.

*The world was expanding and changing at an incredibly rapid rate. The internet transformed technology and connectivity. Pop culture took off with trends like the Rubik’s Cube, Cabbage Patch Kids and Pac Man. Even McDonald’s expanded their menu to include chicken McNuggets!*

H\*V’S MINISTRY was also expanding in response to the needs seen in already existing ministries. While conducting Sunday school classes at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia,

H\*V staff realized many children did not make it home. Their illness or injury had ended their lives here on earth. Challenged to support the families, H\*V staff gathered a small group of women at the first-ever Ronald McDonald House. Each woman in attendance had one experience in common: the profound grief of losing a son or a daughter. The group was designed to be a safe place for parents to share with and to support each other. It was a place for them to find the only true Source of comfort and hope—the LORD! It was the birth of the BASIS Ministry! But God had even more new opportunities for H\*V in His mind. While attending the Lausanne II Congress on World Evangelization in Manila, Philippines, God touched the heart of H\*V’s leadership to consider needs beyond the United States. The challenge was there... expand H\*V’s ministry—around the world!

*“I just had to let you know how much BASIS has meant to me. During one of the deepest and darkest valleys of my life you were there to give me hope, shine the light of Christ and remind me of His love and care.” – a BASIS mom*

## The 1990s—the decade of REFLECTION.

*The 90s saw the world in turmoil: the collapse of the Soviet Union; the Gulf War; the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City Bombings; and Columbine just to name a few.*

In the midst of instability, REFLECTION on God’s sovereignty brings us back to a place of peace and purpose. Built on the solid foundation of Christ, God continues to allow H\*V to share Truth and Hope with a very hurting world. To date, H\*V has reached more than 500 children, teens and young adults through Handi\*Camp; more than 15,000 children, teens and adults through Bible clubs and Sunday school programs in hospitals and residential facilities; and more than 500 bereaved families through BASIS. 25 God’s Special People Sunday school programs have been developed or are supported by H\*V with 28 additional churches purchasing our “all new” video training series (yes... VHS tapes!). PIP, a support system for parents of children with disabilities began; and 100’s of grief or





# the Ministry of H\*VMI Through the Decades



disability-related workshops and seminars have been presented stateside and overseas in countries including Romania, Russia, England, Ukraine, Malaysia, Ghana, Canada...

*"That training impacted my life, especially your illustration on the value of life. I continue to use your training in my present role in advocacy, relief and development supervising those serving in Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia."*

*—a training attendee from Malaysian Care*

## The 2000s—the decade of TRANSITION.

*Y2K, 9/11 and other world changing events brought fear, grief and loss to the forefront of many people's minds.*

H\*VMI was ready to respond with care, compassion, support and resources. As the transition into the 21st century began, God was preparing H\*V for its own big TRANSITION: becoming Handi\*Vangelism Ministries International (H\*VMI), our OWN independent mission organization. No longer under the leadership of BCM, H\*VMI was ready for whatever God had in store! Through the years, God provided all of the finances and personnel needed for the ministry not only to carry on, but to grow. He pruned and shaped our ministry focus to be three departments that were not only our foundation, but also our strengths: Disability, Grief and Training & Equipping. He provided for the purchase of 16+ acres of land in a centralized ministry location for the purpose of constructing a Ministry Center specifically designed for those we serve. The 30+ years of wandering and renting facilities would come to an end. And, He allowed the Truth of His Word to be shared with more people than ever before as Handi\*Camp, discipleship Bible clubs and studies, support groups and training opportunities continued to expand.

*"If we accept the call to be ministers of His Good News, we agree to be willing to take that message to all people —and that includes those with disabilities." — Joni Eareckson Tada*

## The 2020s—the decade of INNOVATION.

*2020 is a year indelibly engrained on the hearts and minds of those who were "old enough" to live through it and realize its vast, worldwide impact. It is an understatement to say that loss, grief, challenge and change affected everyone's life in some way.*

However, God, in His abounding grace, purposefully redeems and uses such times. In H\*VMI, it led to a period of re-working and finding innovative ways to do the ministry we had done for so long: Zoom chats to encourage those we serve; online venues where our staff had opportunities to share the Gospel with complete strangers; making Bible teaching, training and support group materials available digitally; putting together video devotionals when in-person support groups were not an option; and transforming Bible clubs into outdoor, drive-in style Lessons on the Lawn—just to name a few. In the midst of "It can't happen because of Covid," GOD allowed H\*VMI to receive long-awaited zoning and construction approvals for the ministry center. Then, on February 1st 2023, construction finally began! There is already a long list of even more innovative ministries that can take place on this site once completed! Through the years, H\*VMI has had the privilege of serving tens of thousands of individuals and families facing life challenges. We may be turning 50 years old, but by God's grace, "we've only just begun!"

*"I say this because I know what I am planning for you. I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I will give you hope and a good future."  
—God (Jeremiah 29:11, NCV)*



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50 years old, but by God's  
grace, "we've only just begun!"**

# THE FUTURE IS NOW!

By Kyle Robinson, Executive Director

*“Everyone can do Everything at Handi\*Camp.”*

These are the precious words one of our campers this summer spoke to his younger brother while they were both attending Handi\*Camp. These two brothers who have disabilities were quite the pair through their camp session with us. Both boys need assistive devices such as wheelchairs or walkers, and required one-on-one support to be able to attend camp. Playing on the swings and engaging in other camp activities, older brother looking out for younger, they sometimes wanted to avoid one another and sometimes wanted to occupy the same exact physical space. Typical brothers!

The older brother signed up for the archery elective thinking he couldn't participate but could enjoy watching other campers shoot the bow and arrow. A Handi\*Camp staff member alerted me to the camper's reluctance to be involved. I headed over to him and said that, at Handi\*Camp, “EVERYONE CAN DO EVERYTHING.” Every activity and elective is designed so every person can participate. Whether it's special bows at archery or playing soccer sitting down or having three different

At Handi\*Camp, things that seem impossible for people with disabilities, are possible!



It's been true that, for 50 years, “EVERYONE CAN DO EVERYTHING AT HANDI\*CAMP.” However, through these years, we've been facing a heartbreaking challenge. It's this: NOT EVERYONE CAN ATTEND HANDI\*CAMP!

Why? Because, without our own camp, we've needed to rent or use facilities that are not designed for people with disabilities; and we've been restricted on scheduling, having to work around the calendars of other facilities. Without adequate rental options, we had to close down our *overnight* programs and hold only *day* camp programs. Day Camp has been highly successful but limits participation to mostly local participants. Day Camp also makes it impossible to serve some campers with complex medical needs who require air conditioning or other special accommodations. Handi\*Camp applications continue to outnumber our capacity to serve, forcing us to tell campers and their families that they must wait and try again next year. Many of our overnight campers are just waiting to return once we have facilities!

The plans for H\*VMI's Property Project will make it possible to serve many, many more families affected by disability. Having to say, “NO,” to potential campers due to facility or scheduling concerns will be issues of the past. More people than ever before will be able to attend Handi\*Camp and experience what it's like for “EVERYONE TO BE ABLE TO DO EVERYTHING!”



styles of swings, anyone can have the opportunity to enjoy every activity. With some encouragement, the camper gave archery a try and succeeded in shooting an arrow into the target! Then, he did it again and again, with much glee and laughter! When he finished, he found his little brother and encouraged him to give it a try. His brother responded, “I can't shoot the bow; can't do it.” Big brother sprang into action and said, “No! EVERYONE CAN DO EVERYTHING at Handi\*Camp!” So, little brother tried—and succeeded in the elective, his arms flapping, laughing and smiling from ear to ear. The brothers laughed with each other as they sat together to reflect on what they'd just enjoyed.



# FUNDING THE FUTURE

By Kyle Robinson, Executive Director

God is providing thousands of dollars in response to the 50/50 challenge introduced in our last SPOTLIGHT, helping us move toward completion of the first step in the H\*VMI Ministry Center Property Project: construction of the H\*VMI Office. This allows for amazing ministry benefits and opportunities:

- H\*VMI will save thousands of dollars per year for office rental, which can be invested in ministry programs.
- Until we can construct the next structure, the office building, will provide a location for some monthly Bible clubs, PIP and BASIS Support Groups to meet.
- Having the office on our own property, with the landscape complete that surrounds it, allows for spaces to host outdoor events such as H\*VMI's Lesson on the Lawn.

We will be maximizing use of the office building because we want to serve YOU and the individuals and families to whom we minister as much and as well as possible. We're praising God for this accomplishment.

This first step must be completely funded prior to beginning the next steps which include the multipurpose building, dorm building and recreational facilities. To fund this first step for 2023 we need to raise 1.6 million dollars. That's why we're alerting YOU to the need while also sending out grant requests and looking for other financial resources. Above all, we are trusting God to provide, just as He did with the purchase of the property. The goal may be daunting to us, but no amount of money is too large for Him. He has a plan. We are striving to walk in it. Please see the sidebar to understand more about the immediate and the long term needs.

Please consider how you can invest in this ministry project so that H\*VMI can continue, far beyond these past 50 years, to



- ① **H\*VMI Headquarters**  
Office, training center, Bible club/support groups, and most of the site excavating/grading.

**Step 1 Cost in 2023: \$2.1 million**



**Donations Needed to Complete Step 1: \$1.6 million**

**Donations Invested in 2023: \$500,000**

**Your donations will help propel us to the next step in the project!**

support individuals and families affected by disability, comfort grieving parents and train churches to help provide for the needs of their members and communities so that "EVERYONE WILL BE ABLE TO DO EVERYTHING" according to God's plan and purpose for their lives.

## H\*VMI Upcoming Ministry Events

### *Fellowship and Fun*

Visit [hvmi.org/upcoming-events](https://hvmi.org/upcoming-events) or call our office at 717.859.4777 for details or to RSVP.

**September 30** All-Family 50th Birthday Party for H\*VMI, H\*VMI Property, Akron PA

**October 14** 50th Anniversary Luncheon Celebration and Office Open House, Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland PA/H\*VMI Property, Akron PA

**October 15-17** Faithful Give, Donation Opportunity

*\*The 2023 Golf Outing that was scheduled for September 14th has been cancelled.*

**YOU'RE INVITED!**

**Our 5 YEARS Birthday Party**

**September 30, 2023**  
**2:30-4:30pm**

**H\*VMI Ministry Property**  
 3261 Rothsville Road, Akron PA 17501

There will be soft pretzels, cupcakes and beverages available.  
*(with gluten free options)*

**Schedule**

2:30 PM *and onward* Games and soft pretzels available  
 3:10 PM This Way Up Band performance  
 4:00 PM Favors  
 4:15 PM Birthday Song, Cupcakes and Gift Opening

**RSVP: No need to register, just drop in and help us celebrate our Ministry's birthday!**

**Optional:** If you would like to bring a wrapped gift to the party, please visit [hvmi.org/wish-list](http://hvmi.org/wish-list) for options or contact us for a printed list.



**OCTOBER 15-17, 2023**

You may know that H\*VMI declined to participate in the Lancaster County Community Foundation's (LCCF) Extraordinary Give Program last year. We made that decision because of the conflict between the values of the ExtraGive Sponsoring Organization, LCCF, and H\*VMI's Biblically-based values. It is clear to H\*VMI that ExtraGive is maintaining their position, holding to those values that caused us and many others to cease participation with that program. For this reason, H\*VMI will not be engaging with ExtraGive again this year.

However, due to the diligent work of some who feel as H\*VMI does about these issues, there is an alternative option we are thrilled to share with you. The Faithful Give ([www.faithfulgive.org](http://www.faithfulgive.org)) is a new giving event that seeks to, "Connect[ing] Generous Givers with Kingdom Causes." H\*VMI is one of two dozen organizations which have applied

and been approved to participate in this special time of giving from OCTOBER 15-17, 2023. One criteria is that all participating organizations agree with the values statement of Faithful Give. They can be found at: [faithfulgive.org/about](http://faithfulgive.org/about).

We would encourage you to consider supporting H\*VMI through this new opportunity by:

1. Emailing us at [info@hvmi.org](mailto:info@hvmi.org) to let us know you're planning to support H\*VMI through this new giving event.
2. Logging on to [faithfulgive.org](http://faithfulgive.org) and exploring their new platform.
3. Watching your email, Facebook and H\*VMI's website for details about how the event will take place and how to give.
4. Engaging with the Faithful Give Event through their site anytime from October 15th through 17th to show your support for the ministry of H\*VMI.



## HANDI\*CAMP THANKS YOU!

A BIG "THANK YOU" to all who supported the ministry of Handi\*Camp this summer! Your financial support, supply donations, purchases from our Amazon Wish List, opening your homes to house out-of-town summer staff, bringing meals, serving at camp...blessed the 118 campers who attended one of our eight Day Camp sessions. Smiles, fun and laughter were abundant. Our JOY lessons on What the Bible Says About Jesus, Others and You helped plant and water seeds of Truth in our campers' lives. May God richly bless you for all you have done!

Gratefully,  
Tara Kelley, Director of Disability Ministries

## Serve Christ • Serve Others • Serve With H\*VMI!

Visit our website and click on the GET INVOLVED tab.

Visit [HVMI.ORG](http://HVMI.ORG) for:

Blogs • Resources • Ministry Events & Dates • Missionary Information • Property Updates

Visit our [DONATE](#) page online to support H\*VMI or the ministry of a designated missionary; or shop our Amazon Wishlist.



Like us on Facebook! [facebook.com/handivangelism](https://facebook.com/handivangelism)

Evangelizing • Caring • Discipling • Training • Equipping

# Handi\*Vangelism Ministries International™

A Ministry of Compassion since 1973

## 50th Anniversary Luncheon Celebration and Office Open House



**Saturday,  
October 14, 2023**

**11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**

Doors open at 10:45.

### **Yoder's Banquet Center**

14 South Tower Road  
New Holland, PA 17557

**Luncheon Registration** (required by October 10)

**Online:** hvmi.org

**Call:** 717.859.4777

**Mail** the response form to H\*VMI.

There is no cost to attend the Luncheon, but RSVP is required. An offering will be taken to help fund H\*VMI's ministry programs. No reserved seating. Sign Language interpretation available upon request.

### Join Us for the 50th Anniversary Luncheon...

...a tasty Lancaster County family-style meal and a walk through the decades of the ministry of H\*VMI. For 50 years, God has been so faithful, and YOU are a key part of that story! We encourage our ministry partners to bring a friend—someone new to the ministry—so he/she can also learn about what God is doing in the lives of those we serve!

### Followed by the Office Open House

Following the Luncheon, there will be an Open House at our newly constructed Office Building located at **3261 Rothsville Road, Akron, PA 17501**. **The Open House will be from 2:30–4:00 pm** with brief tours of the building available. See you there!



## I/We would like to attend H\*VMI's 50th Anniversary Luncheon.

**YES!** I/We would like to attend the H\*VMI 50th Anniversary Luncheon:

Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

For additional names, please include on separate sheet—for registration purposes.

**Special Needs:**  Sign Language Interpreter

**Unfortunately,** I/we are unable to attend but want to help the ministry work of H\*VMI with a gift of: \_\_\_\_\_ For:  General Fund  Property

#### Method of Payment

Make your gift securely online at: [hvmi.org/donate](http://hvmi.org/donate)

Text GIVE to: 717.210.4759

Scan this QR code with your phone.

My check payable to H\*VMI is enclosed.



▲ Name \_\_\_\_\_

▲ Street or PO Box \_\_\_\_\_

▲ City \_\_\_\_\_ ▲ State \_\_\_\_\_ ▲ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

▲ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ ▲ Email address (Required for credit card donations.) \_\_\_\_\_

This is updated contact information.

I prefer to receive H\*VMI mailings by email.

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Security code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you!**

