

God's Special Time

Winter 2013

News from Kairos Prison Ministry International, Inc.

Vol. 39 No. 4

Kairos Prison Ministry Moves the International Headquarters to DeBary, Florida



that have helped to make this vision become a reality.”

This purchase is just one of the many sound financial goals that the ministry has been improving on. Since the ministry has been blessed with 100% of the funding of the building, we will no longer be leasing, which will result in a sizable savings for the ministry now and over the coming years.

Many volunteers also helped to secure the funds needed to purchase new server and phone equipment to replace the outdated systems that were in place.

The staff of Kairos is excited to be moving the International Office to a beautiful building in DeBary, FL, about 30 minutes north of the current office.

Our new address is 100 DeBary Plantation Boulevard, DeBary, FL 32713. The phone and fax numbers will remain the same.

Executive Director, Evelyn Lemly, wants the ministry to know that the staff is grateful for this wonderful blessing. “This office would not be possible without the selfless funding and support of the ministry. We so appreciate all of the efforts from so many of our volunteers over the past few years

New Address:

**100 DeBary Plantation Boulevard
DeBary, FL 32713**

All in all, the entire Kairos

community has done a fantastic job to ensure the stability of the ministry by acquiring our own property.

Kairos Remembers Thorton Crouch

Long-time Kairos volunteer, Thorton Crouch, will surely be missed by the entire Kairos community. Thorton served for many years in Kairos South Carolina Leadership in State and Advisory Council roles but will be best remembered for his wisdom when working through issues on the Kairos Board.

Thorton served for many years as a Board member and Officer sharing his financial expertise to ensure that the ministry remain fiscally sound. Along with his wife Alrene, (pictured on the right) he attended every Summer Conference and Winter Board meeting while serving on the Board.



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God's Special Time

God's Special Time is published quarterly for Kairos Prison Ministry International, Inc.

The Mission of Kairos Prison Ministry is to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, as well as their families, to become loving and productive citizens of their communities.

Evelyn Lemly
Executive Director

Cindy Butcher
Controllor

Jo Chapman
Women's Ministry Coordinator

Kevin Resnover
Youth Ministry Coordinator

Ann Kreller
Executive Administrative Assistant

Janet Santiago
Administrative Assistant

Jim Hankins
Board Chairperson

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VC for Planning VC for Operations

Vicki Spurgeon **Peter Wilson**
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**“Listen, listen,
love, love”**

This past quarter has been a busy time for everyone in Kairos. There have been hundreds of Weekends for Kairos Inside, Kairos Outside and Kairos Torch, with several #1 Weekends across the world, and numerous planning meetings for the teams, states, councils and committees. We are seeing new ministry opportunities in many facilities with the Kairos programs.



Evelyn Lemly
Executive Director

While some states in the U.S. have correctional institutions and/or state leaders asking for us to grow within the facility or to new facilities, other states are working prayerfully to get the DOC or institutions to accept Kairos programs. Our prayers are needed for these growth opportunities for both situations.

In several cases on January 1, new officers will take their positions of leadership throughout the organization. This is especially true at the Advisory Council and State levels across the U.S. We are grateful for those who have served and for those who are preparing to take on these new roles of responsibility.

Let's keep each in our prayers as they lead and pray for their

leadership to reflect Jesus Christ and to reflect our motto of “listen, listen, love, love”.

Everyone involved with the Kairos programs know that they work and continue to see the impact on the lives of the incarcerated men, women, youth and their families daily. As shown in numerous articles, we receive thanks and testimonies regularly

of the impact on the person's life and the learning from the Weekend and follow-up of the Kairos program in sharing the truth of Jesus Christ that changes them forever.

The key impact is often the Community that is established right where the person is at, so they have support, prayer teams, accountability and friends in Christ surrounding them. We know this only happens when the Weekend AND the regular follow-up (Prayer & Share, Reunions, Torch mentoring, KO SWAP, etc.) occurs to bring the graduates together. Each of these local communities that thrive on their own and without us present is the backbone of reaching the

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON

As I began to compose this article, I realized how quickly my first year as Chairman of the Kairos Board has passed. We have faced many challenges and experienced many rewarding moments. I am truly humbled to be working with incredibly talented and dedicated men and women on your Board of Directors. It's very similar to the experience I have each time I work on a Kairos team, and as I return each month to be a part of God's plan.

The spirituality that is at the core of this ministry is present at Board of Directors' meetings, just as it is at team meetings. The Vision God led us to create this year grows more meaningful each day.

This year began with our introduction to our new Executive Director, Evelyn Lemly. Evelyn has worked tirelessly to carry out our mission, and she brings a fresh outlook to the challenges that lay before us. With our Vision Statement as a guide, she has enlisted many committees to aid in the development of a Strategic Plan for Kairos. She has also opened lines of communication with and between the State Chairs.

The Board of Directors was faced with many challenges this year; the biggest one was getting our financial house in order. Previously we had employed Sparrow Capital, a financial counseling company, to create a

workable accounting system for Kairos. In January, we asked our Executive Director to develop and implement the new accounting system. She and our Controller, Cindy Butcher, now made it possible to have the first ever ministry-wide Consolidated Financial Report.



We also give credit and great thanks to the State and Advisory Council Financial Secretaries who worked overtime to bring the new system on board. Because of this hard work, the record keeping will be easier, we will be financially accountable, and the reporting will provide useful information for the State Committees and the Board.

Another challenge for the Board has been the current location for headquarters, which has been in leased office space that no longer meets our needs, is overpriced, and situated in a neighborhood that is declining.

We formed a committee at the end of last year to examine location possibilities. After a long methodical search, a wonderful building was found just north of Orlando in the city of DeBary, Florida to be the new home for Kairos. Through generous donations, we now

own our new building mortgage free. There have been many circumstances related to the acquisition of this property that has shown God's provision and blessings. If you get an opportunity in 2014, please visit our new home.

As a member of the Board of Directors it is easy to be occupied with the business of the Ministry, but as we worked on developing the Vision Statement for Kairos we were brought back to our experiences in the field.

I thought about the men I had cried with in Kairos Inside, the young boys I watched change into caring young men in Kairos Torch, and the ladies I had served meals in Kairos Outside. After 18 years as a Kairos volunteer, I see the Vision of what Kairos can become.

**A Community
Spiritually Freed
From the Effects of
Imprisonment
Reaching all Impacted by
Incarceration,
Through the Love, Hope, and
Faith
Found in Jesus Christ.**



From the Executive Director

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Kairos Vision:

A Community Spiritually Freed
From the Effects of
Imprisonment Reaching all Im-
pacted by Incarceration,
Through the Love, Hope and
Faith Found in Jesus Christ.

Kairos Prison Ministry is continuing to focus on our spiritual health, financial health, and operational health. Each of us should be focused on our own spiritual health and how we can impact the spiritual health of the whole body of Christ at Kairos.

To operate daily at all levels properly as good stewards and with appropriate accountability we need financial health in our funding, reporting, accounting and stewardship of each gift. And we need focus on gaining funds as we grow and find new opportunities to reach more people who are impacted by incarceration.

Kairos Meets with President and Mrs. Carter

Kairos Executive Director, Evelyn Lemly, meets with President and Mrs. Carter in Georgia to share about Kairos ministry work and the impact on incarcerated men, women, youth and their families. Evelyn, along with Beth Maycumber and Doug Unger (GA volunteers), shared about Kairos Prison Ministry at a private lunch on Sunday, November 24, 2013. There was great interest in the ministry and various opportunities were discussed. More information to come in future articles in the next few months. This is part of the initiative by Evelyn to begin meeting with people to gain support for Kairos.

As the Kairos programs are conducted, we need to do them properly and in accordance with the tried and proven approach of the manuals, attend AKT timely as Weekend leaders, and use the tools and programs provided for support and reporting to ensure we have operational health. Operational health also includes being focused on recruiting new volunteers and leaders and inviting them to experience the wonderful blessings of serving in Kairos. Let's all work to ensure Kairos is spiritually, financially and operationally healthy today and for the future. And let's all be praying for the ministry daily.

The Kairos staff is excited to be moving to a new office location. At the same time, there have been a lot of details while preparing to move everything, set it up and remain operational in order to continue to serve the

needs of the ministry daily. We are blessed that we can keep our current phone, fax numbers and email accounts. The new address of the ministry is 100 DeBary Plantation Boulevard, DeBary, FL 32713. The physical move date is scheduled for December 11th. Your prayers are appreciated as we pack, move and set up in our new office space. We continue to be awed by God's provision of this office and the funds to fully pay for the building and build out to make it our home.

It is truly exciting for Kairos, with numerous opportunities for new volunteers, new leaders, new correctional facilities and new graduates to join the community of the current Kairos Ministry. Together as one, we can have an even greater effect on those impacted by incarceration.



Pictured: Beth Maycumber, GA volunteer, President Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalind and Evelyn Lemly, Kairos Executive Director.

The Importance of Reunions

Written by a Kairos Volunteer

Where did I first hear, "Our true Ideal is shown by how we spend our time, talents, and treasure"? Oh, I remember. It was the first talk of my Cursillo weekend, 33 years ago. Because I had received a letter of prayers for me on that weekend, from a resident at Broward CI, I immediately looked into Kairos and began to serve.

But serving in Kairos was much simpler than what I had been told was of primary importance for my Fourth Day: Group Reunion. My continuing attempts to make reunion the centerpiece of my Christian life is probably the most difficult part of what I committed myself to on my Weekend. I have lost groups due to relocation of members and my own moves, but even more frequently my groups have lacked discipline, and tended to become social rather than Christ-centered. But what else can a human being expect? I have persisted and the quality has improved.

Twenty years ago, I attended Cursillo Leadership School. Its book states, "We cannot witness what we do not live." That line reached out and grabbed me as an essential truth. It didn't much lessen the obstacles to successful group reunion. But when I served a term as Men's Leader for the Tres Dias Secretariat, I brought up the point, after finding that

only one member of leadership was in a weekly reunion group.

These were all committed, active and engaged Christian men and women who participated in Bible studies and other Church groups, and they considered me a bit legalistic, as if I had suggested that they were lacking in their spirituality. They were focused on administering the details of putting on good Weekends that were led by properly formed leaders.

I might have let the issue go, but for the part of the Leaders Manual that followed, "We can not witness what we do not live." This part said that the signs of a community that focused on the weekend rather than the Fourth Day would be that many would want to participate on weekend teams, but the community would suffer a decrease in the number of applicants.

And that was just what we experienced in the three communities I was part of. The local Catholic Cursillo stopped having weekends for lack of candidates, the local Tres Dias Community got to the point where 130 team members put on a Weekend for 20 candidates. And the Anglicans had 27 team members ministering four candidates!

Thank God that Kairos, with a waiting list of 2 million, does not

have such a problem. But as I have studied the Kairos Program Manual, one thing leaps out from the pages: there is only one reason we have Kairos Weekends - to develop prayer and share community in the facility.

When I study my community, and other communities, I find an overwhelming majority of volunteers who do not practice group reunion. And I can't help but remember: "We Cannot Witness What We Do Not Live." (WCWWWDNL)

There is no easy solution here, other than to ask God to convict his children to examine themselves. So often, I see Weekend Leaders standing up front, reading from a script to Weekend participants about the Four L's, about not talking while others speak; then they return to the Leadership table and have whispered conversations with other "leaders" throughout the next talk. "WCWWWDNL"!

Because of our "captive audience", Kairos won't suffer the same consequences from a lack of integrity as the street Weekends. But we will suffer consequences of effect, because weekend participants always sense the difference between personal witness and pedagogy.

I notice that the Program Manual emphasizes repeatedly the Kairos goal of active Reunion

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Groups in the institution. But I also notice that AKT training and the Excellence Initiative focus on Kairos Wisdom and Riverbanks, what I call Weekend QC. The EZRA materials similarly seek to document standardized Weekend preparation and database development.

So I am calling on our leadership to examine and reweigh Kairos' Time, Talents and Treasure from the WCWWWDNL perspective.

What can be done?

On Kairos #28, recognizing that team formation is a type of temporary reunion group, we tried out something new. Since Table Families are the Weekend model for group reunion, we immediately assigned all the Weekend volunteers to table families, headed by the Leader, Assistant and Clergy assigned to that family on the Weekend.

We gave each member of the family the contact information (phone and email) of the other members of the group, and asked them to call one other member each day, to share a scripture, devotion, or answer one of the reunion card questions.

The Family of Leadership exempted itself from participating, since preparing

for the meetings required so much of their time. Also the majority of the team failed to make their calls. Those who did practice it, however, reported a full measure of blessings.

The plan on our next Weekend will be for the family of Leadership to be assigned to contact each of the table leaders during the week to hold them accountable for their family group. This may not fully address the integrity issue, but it is a start.

The other action I think would help would be for the National and International Kairos leadership to make this a

priority that is reflected in training materials and Kairos Wisdom statements. Because this message – that the Christian Mission is most effectively accomplished when it is the result of intentional application of prayer, and study to guide and motivate action, with weekly self-examination to assess shortcomings and successes in an environmental group - that message is true, and worth the effort required to overcome obstacles.



And Oregon Makes it 34 States for Kairos



Oregon joined the Kairos Prison Ministry community on Nov 8-10, when Kairos Outside #1 was launched. 27 anxious and excited Team Members awaited the arrival of their 12 Guests and wondered what the whole experience of Kairos Outside was going to be all about.



The leaves were part of the prayer vigil.... each leaf represented the prayers of someone for 30 minutes.

How could a Weekend not succeed when its foundation was built on this many prayers?

Thank God for faithful Kairos Outside volunteers who were willing to drive 7 hours one way to help a community in need.

The Spiritual Director asked the Team to write Weekend wishes for the Guests on stars. The stars, Weekend crosses and speakers were prayed over in the chapel for the entire time.

We all lived the “experience of Kairos Outside” and felt the unconditional love of Christ pour down on the Weekend as a result of the prayers of thousands of faithful Kairos volunteers from all over the world. The Agape let the Guests and Team know that they were not alone in this huge undertaking called “Kairos” in a new state without the presence of other Kairos ministries.

The Kairos Outside Leader lost her two Observing Leaders due to family and medical emergencies prior to the Weekend. She was blessed by Kairos Outside sisters, who travelled from Eastern Washington to fill in the blanks.

As I read the stars, I believe that God honored those wishes for each and every Guest who attended this special Kairos Outside #1 Weekend.

In the community room A Prayer Table was created by everyone present.

The candles represented round the clock prayer for the Guests on the Weekend.

The Sand Art represented the burdens and feelings shared throughout the Weekend.

The flowers represented the incarcerated persons and the community that had been built to pray for and support them.

THIS IS HOLY GROUND



By Jo Chapman
Women's Ministries Coordinator

Aliceville Federal Correctional Institution for Women had something going for it before it was built in this rural Alabama town. The local church people, upon hearing of the prison being built in their town, went out on the land and prayed for a place of Christ's healing rather than a place of pain. In fact, when the walls were going up, some of them volunteered there and placed Bibles in the walls, wrote Jesus on some walls, then painted over it. One might say that the Christian community dedicated the prison to God.

One of the Weekend participants, who had arrived on the first busload, shared that when she stepped off the bus and her feet hit the ground, she felt that the ground was holy. She had no knowledge of what had been prepared by the community on that site.

If one were to describe the team on Aliceville Kairos Inside #1, it would sound like we were describing the early years for many of the Kairos volunteers. Full of expectation, nervousness, enthusiastic and wondering who the women inside were going to be, what

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What Incarcerated Youth Say About Torch

By Kevin Resnover
Youth Ministry Coordinator

I always want to know if our program materials are developed in a way that positively stimulates and motivates at-risk youth. I often look to the youth leaders, sociologist, psychologist or those professionals who study behavior and experiences, and to those who are licensed to provide therapeutic services for these answers.

Researchers have suggested that programs which teach youth life skills may be a very critical

component in the reduction of recidivism.

However, when developing programs for youth, the important step of asking participants what they think provides critical information. In particular, youth in the juvenile justice system are rarely asked what they think would be effective approaches to helping them succeed once they are released from detention or complete their term of parole.

As I sat down to considered what to write that would inspire those

reading this publication, I was thrilled to receive an email from the Mentor Coordinator in Kansas, Lori Williams, titled: **Kairos Torch Weekend Score Card.**



I truly was encouraged by her forward thinking to get the youths impute and even more inspired when I read what they said about their Torch experience. Below are just a few of the questions and the participants answers:

WHICH TALK WAS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU? AND WHY?

- **Who Ya Gonna Trust**-*cause that's my issue.*
- **Forgiveness**-*I have a hard time forgiving-don't know how.*
- **Forgiveness**-*It helped.*
- **2x You Are Not Alone**- *because I always think I have to do everything by myself.*
- **You Are Not Alone**-*Always thought I didn't need anyone but there are people who do care and will help.*
- **Who Ya Gonna Trust**-*sometimes you've got to let some of your friends go.*
- **You Are Not Alone**-*you don't have to be reclusive or hide.*
- **Choices**-*got to make smart choices.*
- **You Are Not Alone**
- **You Are Not Alone**
- **Father/Mother Forgiveness**
- **Mother Talk**
- **Relations**

HAVE YOU USED YOUR BIBLE SINCE YOU GOT IT ON SUNDAY?

- *Yes, our Bibles have been used 2 times a week*
- *20 times*
- *Yes x 5*
- *Yes-1st night*
- *No*
- *One table said "All Yes"*
- *1 time*
- *Almost every night*
- *Michael reads our Daily Bread*
- *Rick reads Revelations*

WHICH MASK MADE YOU THINK ABOUT YOURSELF?

- **King of the Hill** (*money*)
- **2x I Don't Need Anybody**-*wouldn't take help*
- *A little bit of all of them.*
- **Laughter**-*don't take things seriously.*
- **Anger/Laughter**-*need to pass things off and then need to look mad.*
- **Anger -2, Laughter,**
- **Laughter and Anger,**
- **Anger,**
- **King of the Hill**
- **Laughter**
- **Happy Mask and I Don't Need Anyone Mask**
- **I don't need anybody**
- **Being Happy**

WHAT ONE WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE THE WEEKEND?

- *Awesome*
- *Great*
- *Happiness*
- *Fun*
- *Love*
- *Top-notch*
- *Joyful*
- *Eventful*
- *Powerful*
- *Joyful*
- *Helpful*
- *Supercalifragilistic*
- *Immaculate*
- *Fantastic*
- *Special*
- *Food*
- *Relaxing*
- *Fellowship*
- *Experimental*
- *Learning*

I regret that there is not enough space to share all of the questions and the youth's responses, but I thought we should share that when the youth were asked

“What Was Your Favorite Thing About The Kairos Torch Weekend?”

one youth said *“Sit down dinner - never sat with family like that.”* Another said, *“Building the Church”*, and a

third youth stated *“The love in the air”*.

The final question was asked, **“What Could We Do To Improve the Weekend?”**

When I read the second to the last response I heard a call to action in my heart. The young man simply stated *“Having more mentors so more guys can come”*.

In this season of giving thanks

and the giving of gifts, I am truly thankful to all of the wonderful volunteers that have given the gift of time to fill these incarcerated youths air with love.

But I wonder if those reading this article might extend that gift by recruiting more mentors like yourselves *“...so that more guys (and girls) can come.”*

KAIROS TRAINING

AKT is for Kairos Inside, Outside and Torch volunteers who are in or will be in a Weekend leadership role, including Advisory Council or State Chapter positions, anywhere within the Kairos program. Advanced Kairos Training gives the what, who and why of the Kairos ministry. **Kairos policy requires that all Weekend leaders must have completed the entire AKT course 6 months prior to leading a Weekend.**

PRINCIPLE STATEMENTS CONCERNING AKT EXPENSES

1. All AKTs are essentially free to any and all attendees.
2. However, paying the expenses of an attendee for AKT is borne by the state sending its volunteers to an AKT training in or out of its local state.
3. This means that all Advisory Councils or SCCs should be budgeting for any AKT expenses deemed necessary for their future Weekend Leaders or other attendees that the AC or SCC wants to attend.
4. **Registration is to be paid by your State Chapter from Ad Council funds; No personal checks will be accepted.** AC or SCCs should encourage its volunteers (who may have been used to paying out of their own pocket previously to a Host State) to make their donations to its local AC instead to help build the budget to allow for more volunteers to attend trainings like the AKT training.

Kairos 2014 Advanced Training Schedule

January 3-5, 2014 Kairos Inside	COLUMBUS, OH	June 20 – 22, 2014 Kairos Inside and Outside	HUNTSVILLE, TX
February 21-23, 2013 Kairos Inside	FORSYTH, GA	July 12-14, 2014 Kairos Inside, Outside and Torch	RALEIGH, NC
Feb. 28 – March 2, 2014 Kairos Inside, Outside and Torch	WOODWORTH, LA	August 15-17, 2013 Kairos Inside	BUFFALO, NY
March 7 – 9, 2014 Kairos Inside and Outside	POMONA, C A	September 5-7, 2014 Kairos Inside and Outside	CANTON, MS
March 7 – 9, 2014 Kairos Inside and Outside	CAMBY, IN	September 5-7, 2013 Kairos Inside and Outside	PITTSBURGH, PA
March 14 – 16, 2014 Kairos Inside	AMARILLO, TX	October 17-19, 2013 Kairos Inside	FORSYTH, GA
March 28-30, 2014 Kairos Inside	KANSAS CITY, MO	October 24-26, 2013 Kairos Inside	POMONA, CA
May 16-18, 2013 Kairos Inside	DENVER, CO	November 14-16, 2013 Kairos Inside, Outside and Torch	WAXAHACHIE, TX
June 6-8, 2013 Kairos Inside, Outside and Torch	JACKSONVILLE, FL		

Detailed information for each training can be found on the mykairos.org website on the Kairos Kalendar

"Get Out of the Way" - Kairos #1 Goffstown, NH

Isaiah 40:31 - *But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.*

This scripture describes the small Kairos volunteer community that brought God's love into the women at New Hampshire CF in Goffstown, NH this past month. This community waited many years for it to be "God's Time" to go into this facility, however, when they did enter on Friday, November 8th, they entered on the wings of the Holy Spirit. They ran and never looked back. To my knowledge, no one fainted!

Their Weekend mantra was "get out of the way" so the Holy Spirit could get the work done. Many times throughout the Weekend they had to "literally" get out of the way at the tables so the women could get together to do a poster and start to build community inside the walls. The ministering that happened so early on in the Weekend within the participants was extraordinary.

All Kairos Weekends are special, but anyone who has served on a #1 knows that this is the time that logistics are really put to the test. This Weekend was no exception. Every team member came with a servant's heart and never shied away from

a task put in front of them. Leadership never lost sight of what needed to be done and kept the team on track. They received support and guidance from the Chaplain and with that came respect and enthusiasm for the Kairos program for the future. The team also had the undying love and support of an outside team to greet them every morning and night with delicious meals you

could only receive in a gourmet restaurant. I could go on and on about this community...in this environment, but I think God has this one!

What a blessing to witness someone receiving the love of God for the very first time in their life. I feel sure that God is smiling down on Goffstown, NH and thrilled by all the seeds that were planted.

The "Holy Smoke" Cooking Team



Pictured are Reggie, Richard Hoshour, Lenny Mourey (Head Chef), Dave Garmus, Dave Boyer, J. Allen Kimbrough, Kirk Young and James McGill.

The Holy Smoke Cooking Team had the opportunity to provide one home cooked meal on Saturday night of the four-day Weekend at Putnam CI, located in northeast Florida. They have been doing this for several years. The Holly Smoke Cooking Team is made up of Kairos volunteers and other kind hearted souls. Their mission is to serve churches in raising funds

through barbecues.

Needless to say, the team has a lot of fun on these Saturdays and the inmates are thrilled to eat a first class meal on the Weekend.

The "Holy Smoke Team smokes 105

chicken leg quarters, prepare 105 - 8oz. cups of baked beans, purchase 105 rolls and 105 - 5oz. cups of coleslaw for approximately 50 inmates and 55 Weekend volunteers.

The team had put together the aforementioned dinner for PCI #25 "Weekend" that was completed November 10, 2013.



John M. Quirk, 89, of Lakeland, FL, went home to be with the Lord, September 20, 2013 due to complications of Leukemia.

He was born 9/12/1924 in Montour Falls, NY. He was an Army Veteran of WWII and graduated from Alfred University in 1950. He was married for 60 years to his loving wife Conny who preceded him to heaven. John is survived by 6 children, 12 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and a very large extended family.

John was a very active Kairos volunteer and served on numerous Avon Park, FL Kairos Teams.



Lloyd H. Mangus, age 90, of Union Mills, IN passed away September 29, 2013, at his home.

This country lost another one of its dwindling number of World War II Veterans. Lloyd, along with many others, was known as "the greatest generation." He was a platoon sergeant who led his men in Europe. His discharge papers thank him for his "honest and faithful service to this country." But he was also a soldier in another "Army," God's Army. He served as an "honest and faithful" follower to the God he loved and trusted.

He was called Lloyd by his large family in Union Mills, but to those who knew him in later times, and other places, he was known as Magic. He was known for his integrity, his belief in the virtues of hard work, his dry sense of humor and his love for and joy in nature.

Lloyd was a member of Rotary Club, Liberty Bible Church, and Kairos Prison Ministry. His family and friends knew two things: he loved them, and they could count on his word. We will miss him. Please keep his wife, Penny, and his family in your prayers. Memorial contributions may be directed to Kairos Prison Ministry International.



Thornton W. Crouch, age 90, passed away October 24, 2014. He was born in Florence, SC. He retired from Banking having served as President of Peoples Bank and later as President of

Mutual Savings Bank. He was a graduate of Wofford College.

He was a long time member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Hartsville and when he moved to Florence became a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church.

He served as Chairman of the Board of Kairos Prison Ministry and was a member for 28 years. He was Treasurer of the Association of United Methodist Evangelists from 2004 to 2010.

Surviving are his wife, Arlene Webster Herndon Crouch, of Florence; one son and one daughter and six grandchildren and six great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a daughter, Martha Herndon Campbell, one sister, Darthea Kemp and two brothers, Manning Crouch and his twin brother, Jimmy Crouch.



Kairos Prison Ministry International

In Loving Memory

Often, people who have lost a loved one ask that a tribute gift be made to their favorite charity in lieu of flowers. A memorial contribution to Kairos Prison Ministry pays thoughtful tribute to the memory of your loved one. Donations will support sharing Christ's love with the incarcerated.

A memorial letter will be sent to the family of the bereaved, along with the name (s) of the donors. The amount of the gift will not be disclosed. Donors will receive a letter from Kairos Prison Ministry for their tax-exempt contribution.

THIS IS HOLY GROUND

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they were going to look like and what they would think about the Kairos volunteers as we met for the first time. Over a third of the team were in their 30's and 40's, not the usual makeup we are used to on Kairos Inside teams.

It would be hard to judge, who wept the most on the Weekend... the volunteers or the participants. We all felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in such a powerful and healing way. Some of the volunteers were former Kairos Outside Guests and shared the grief of

mothers, who have an incarcerated son or daughter. Their honesty set the bar very high for everyone in the room to "Get Real".

The Warden, who was from F.C.I. Terminal Island, determined upon arrival at Aliceville that she wanted Kairos to come into her institution. The doors were opened to Kairos even before the institution was filled. The Warden personally saw to it that the Kairos Weekend had fresh baked cookies and cold milk delivered two times on Sunday.



During the Forgiveness Service, the participants were stunned by a Lieutenant, who got in line and deposited her own forgiveness list along with the rest of us. Talk about a movement of the Spirit for that moment.

All in all, Kairos Outside #1 at Aliceville was special and reflects what happens on all Kairos #1 weekends everywhere. In fact, the same things happen on #1, # 10, #20, etc. No matter where you are or what Weekend it is, Christ uses the team as vessels to bring unconditional love and forgiveness to everyone present on the Weekend.

AMEN!

Kairos Australia CEO Steps Down



John Bignall announced his resignation from the position of CEO Kairos Australia effective December 31, 2013. The Kairos Australia Board and all Kairos volunteers want to thank John for the time, energy and commitment he has given to Kairos over the last 3 years. John has provided

real leadership for the Kairos organization in Australia.

John came to the position of CEO at a time of unsettlement and brought much healing, unity and harmony to the ministry. Coming from

Western Australia has helped people understand the national vista of Kairos.

In his term as CEO, John has reviewed the overall strategy for the ministry and set in motion expansion and development plans to take the ministry

forward in new and exciting ways. Through him, Kairos has taken up the challenge he gave us at the National Conference to see more Kairos courses in more places.

We wish John, Vivienne and their family well for the future and look forward to hearing about the plans God unfolds before them in the next phase of their journey through this life.

Many U.S. volunteers met John at the 2012 Summer Conference in St. Louis, along with fellow Australian, Coraine Sopru. We wish John well in all of his future endeavours and we are grateful for all that he has accomplished for Kairos Prison Ministry International.

Successful Recruiting at Kairos Avon Park CI

In order to keep Kairos ministry alive and vibrant, it is imperative that we continually recruit new team members. The wisdom of Kairos recommends one third of our team should be made up of new members. We all understand this to be a worthy goal, but experience has taught us that it is often times difficult to achieve. The Avon Park, FL Team #41 met that goal. They were blessed with five new team members who were truly a gift from God that have breathed new life into this ministry.

Mark Nealis worked in the maintenance department at Avon Park CI. In that capacity he met and often worked with an inmate named Jim Albes. Mark was well aware that Jim had been walking with Christ for a long time, however, he was surprised when Jim asked him if he would be interested in participating in a prison ministry. He wondered why Jim would ever want to go back to prison. Out of curiosity and trusting in the providence of God, Mark agreed to attend a Kairos team meeting. When he encountered the spirituality of the team members, Mark knew that this was a call from God. Mark says that his “yes” to God was truly one of the best choices he had ever made and hopes to be on another Kairos team.

Jim also recruited another one of his co-workers, Paul Anderson, who is a Youth Pastor at the Church of God in Frostproof, FL.

After hearing the impact that Kairos had on Jim’s life, Paul knew that he had to get involved in the hopes that he could help some inmates turn their lives around as Jim had. He was surprised to discover that his Kairos Weekend had a profound effect on his life as well. Since this was Paul’s first Weekend, he received a bag of letters, along with the inmates. He was not expecting that. Seeing the impact that those letters had on the inmates helped him understand how isolated and alone many of them are and how important it is to let them know that they are not alone. As inadequate as we may feel, we must never forget that just by our presence, without even saying anything, we really do bring the light of Christ into a very dark place.

For several years, Gary Kenney’s job requirements had made it difficult for him to commit to ministry. However, he recently accepted a new position with regular hours. A parishioner, suggested Gary consider Kairos Prison Ministry, so Gary went to a meeting and committed to participating in the upcoming Kairos Weekend. He came away from the Weekend with new found empathy for the plight of the incarcerated. He now understood that the greatest pain of the futility of prison life is a direct result of isolation from friends and loved ones in the free world and the Kairos presence gave them hope.

Jeff Olson, a teacher and GED tutor volunteer, was interested in serving on a Kairos team, but also had a very busy schedule. Jeff felt that God would provide him with the necessary time to answer his call to Kairos. It did work out and he was able to serve on the Weekend. Jeff said what impressed him the most on the Weekend was the sincerity of the inmates. He expected to see a lot of false jailhouse religion, but what he encountered were truly sincere men, the likes of which he had never seen before.

Russell Frank was approached by his pastor and other parishioners, all who had served on many Kairos Weekends to serve on the upcoming Weekend at Avon Park CI. Russell had attended a Cursillo Weekend years ago and was assured that the Kairos Weekend would be even more of a profound spiritual experience, so he decided to give it a try. After the Weekend, Russell agreed that what his friends had said about serving on the Kairos Weekend was absolutely true. He really did experience the presence of our blessed Lord even more than on his Cursillo Weekend and thanked his pastor for leading him to the holy ground that the world calls a prison.

James Waters,
Agape Coordinator
and fellow brother in Christ.

Reflections from a First-Timer's Summer Conference

I attended the KPMI Summer Conference for the first time this past July in Oklahoma City. I really didn't have too many preconceived ideas of what to expect, except the workshops, which were great! Blessings were bountiful during the Conference - from finding the Kairos representative at the airport, the entertaining shuttle driver, the warm greeters at the Welcome area and the awesome conference facilities (including the food).

The Kairos Outside Sub-Committee meeting was very informative with numerous helpful ideas presented. The workshops were awesome, with so many to choose from. It was a hard decision on where to go, but each one was well worth my time.

Morning worship was a great start to the day - energizing speakers and inspiring music every morning!

Special blessings were the people - everyone was helpful and friendly. People that were only names now had faces. I met someone I hadn't seen in a few years and it was a joy to get reconnected and share laughs. I'm thankful to God for bringing me to this ministry and to have a greater understanding of KPMI from attending the Summer Conference.

Sandy Allen
Kairos Outside, Tucson, AZ

Prayer of Jabez – To Expand Your Territory

“God’s ways are not like our ways.” That is so true. He proved it to us on October 25-27, but the adventure started in the spring of 2013. It began with a visit to a local addiction recovery center called the Home of Grace. We visited the center to bring them some brochures and tell them about Kairos Outside. By the time we left, we had been invited to do a Weekend at the facility. We had lots of questions about how this would all work, but we were convinced that the Lord was leading us to say “yes!”

We began preparing for the Weekend by getting approval from the Advisory Council, SCCC and Kairos. We also sought advice from our national advisor. We visited the facility several times to see the physical set up and plan what would happen in what place. The staff at the Home of Grace was wonderful and

helped us plan a Weekend that would work well at their facility as well as stay within the Riverbanks of Kairos Outside.

The facility had 41 clients when our Weekend began – so we had 41 guests. From the very first moment, God was there. Every aspect of the experience was blessed, powerful and effective. The ladies were totally involved with each activity. They listened intently to the talks and sang beautifully. They laughed and cried together. Many of them shared with us that the Weekend was life-changing.

This Kairos Outside, was at an addiction recovery facility and was a great success. It was, in fact, described by many on the team as the most Spirit-filled Weekend that they had ever experienced. We are so thankful that God leads us to do new things

in new ways and He is always faithful to lead us every step of the way.

I will sum up the impact of our experience at the Home of Grace. At the conclusion of the Weekend, we opened the door to see all of our guests lined up on each side of the sidewalk, singing “You Are Loved” to us as we boarded the bus to leave. The team was overwhelmed by this precious expression of love and gratitude. The bus ride was a time of grateful tears and heartfelt testimonies to God’s faithfulness. It was truly an experience blessed by God.

The KO in South Mississippi did a Weekend at a rehab center for the residents who were ex-felons or their lives had been impacted by incarceration.

Patti Tilley, KO Chairperson

Men's Inside Weekends

Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader	Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader
12/12/13	MD	Jessup CI	2	Gene Davis	3/27/14	MS	Parchman #30	11	Hal Davis
12/12/13	NY	Wende CF	53	Tom Felong	3/27/14	NC	Pender CI	27	Art Pohl
12/12/13	OH	Belmont CI	2	Gary Myers	3/27/14	SC	Evans CI	41	Bryan Vanderhill
12/26/13	TX	Estes	7	Mike Settlemyer	3/27/14	TX	Clements	40	Jim Adams
12/27/13	TX	Ferguson Unit	56	Tim Hammond	3/27/14	TX	Hightower	12	John Osborne
1/6/14	AUS	Arthur Gorrie	4	Lindsay Currell	4/3/14	DE	Sussex CI	4	Charley Albert
1/13/14	AUS	Glen Innes CC	4	Garth Skinner	4/3/14	FL	Columbia CI	25	
1/13/14	AUS	Port Augusta	3	Graham Buchanan	4/3/14	OH	Southern OH	18	Herman Dick
1/23/14	TX	Wallace	30	Carl Brown	4/3/14	TX	Allred	26	Bob Crane
2/6/14	GA	Georgia SP	24	Jeff McNeal	4/3/14	TX	Eastham	27	John Van Fleet
2/6/14	OH	Ross CI	28	Mark Williams	4/3/14	TX	Hughes	34	Ron Bolek
2/14/14	CA	San Quentin SP	43	David Harris	4/3/14	TX	Lockhart Men's	4	Jeff Coatney
2/14/14	PA	USP Allenwood	19	Tom Ask	4/3/14	TX	Polunsky	32	Wes Robertson
2/20/14	AR	Pine Bluff Unit	40	James Tate	4/7/14	TX	Connally	23	Jim Parker
2/20/14	NC	Alexander CI	18	Jim Chandler	4/8/14	MS	Central MS CF	33	
3/6/14	AR	Tucker Unit	34	Johnny Jackson	4/10/14	IN	Miami CF	13	Kevin Ward
3/6/14	FL	Martin CI	40	Mike Deskin	4/10/14	TX	Boyd	23	Curtis Coomes
3/6/14	FL	Moore Haven Sp	28	José D Saavedra	4/10/14	TX	Darrington SP	53	Larry Porter
3/6/14	GA	Walker SP	10	Donald Hopkins	4/10/14	TX	Neal	32	John Casey
3/6/14	TX	Jordan Prison	35	Daryl Robertson	4/10/14	TX	Roach	29	Troy Monroe
3/7/14	TX	Vance	52	Bob Patton	4/10/14	VA	Greensville CC	48	Mike McEntire
3/13/14	FL	FL State Prison	16	Matt Richards	4/17/14	FL	Avon Park CI	42	Archie White
3/14/14	TX	Huntsville	22	Bill Darnall	4/23/14	TX	McConnell	37	Mike Harrington
3/19/14	VA	Augusta CC	32	Gerry Hartmann	4/24/14	AL	Donaldson CF	59	Charles Fridlin
3/20/14	AR	Quachita River	14	Ernie Hover	4/24/14	FL	Union CI	76	John Cochrane
3/20/14	OH	North Central CI	12	Don Rioux	4/24/14	FL	Zephyrhills CI	66	Alan Rood
3/20/14	TX	Daniel Prison	21	Joe Beach	4/24/14	GA	Autry SP	29	R. Schumacher
3/20/14	TX	Rudd Prison	14	Tony Hill	4/24/14	LA	Winn CC	39	Sam Wiersma
3/20/14	TX	Stiles	31	Ray Baker	4/24/14	MO	Potosi CC	8	Tim O'Dell
3/20/14	WA	Clallam Bay CC	17	Roger Stimbert	4/24/14	OH	Marion CI	35	Tom White
3/21/14	AUS	Alexander	4	Barry Brown	4/24/14	TX	Coffield	37	Josh Clark
					4/30/14	TX	Torres	30	Lynn McChesney

Men's Inside Weekends

Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader	Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader
5/1/14	FL	Putnam CI	26	Mike McPhillips	5/5/14	AUS	Acacia Prison	5	Geoff Evell
5/1/14	ME	Maine SP	28	Claude Carbonneau	5/5/14	TX	Beto	50	David Lundeen
5/1/14	OH	Warren CI	12	Dale Truster	5/8/14	NH	Concord SP	55	Dan Nolan
5/1/14	SC	Tyger River	19	Rick Krainas	5/8/14	TX	Briscoe SP	12	Dwayne Vignes
5/1/14	TX	Bartlett Jail	20	Russell Reinhardt	5/15/14	NC	Marion CI	12	Mike Leamon
5/1/14	TX	Lynaugh SP	31	James Bell	5/15/14	S. A.	Johannesburg	10	Basil Peters
5/1/14	TX	Michael	44	Gregory Jensen	5/15/14	TX	Montford	31	Ed Comey
5/1/14	TX	Stevenson	22	Hondo Martin	6/11/14	NC	Avery Mitchell	1	Neil Brown
					6/12/14	FL	Baker CI	24	Oren Reedy

Women's Inside Weekends

Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader	Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader
12/5/13	CO	Denver Women's	20	Glenda Condon	4/8/14	MS	Central MS CF	33	
3/9/14	SC	CG Graham CI	50	Vermatine Williams	4/23/14	TX	Murray	17	Mary Frucella
3/31/14	NC	NC CI Women	39	Fran Henderson	4/24/14	FL	Lowell CI	19	Dru Pardee
4/1/14	AUS	Emu Plains CC	21	Jill McGilvray	4/24/14	GA	Pulaski SP	36	Mina Lacanilao
4/3/14	MO	Chillcothe CC	5	Pearline Moore	4/24/14	OH	OH Reformatory	40	Susan Dick
4/3/14	SC	Leath CI	24	Debby Grover	5/15/14	NY	Albion CF	68	Toni Sessamen

Kairos Outside Weekends

Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader	Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader
12/6/13	C R	San Jose	9	Flory Lara	4/4/14	KS	Kansas KO	12	Paula Cheney
12/13/13	CA	Desert	22	Stella Luna	4/4/14	TX	Lubbock	7	Char Rantz
12/13/13	PA	Western PA	4	Cynthia Boswell	4/11/14	NH	NH	28	Jackie Collins Riddick
3/14/14	FL	Northeast FL			4/25/14	GA	North GA	32	Rosa Gilbert
3/14/14	NC	Eastern NC	17	Gloria Smith	4/25/14	ID	Idaho	3	Tammy Smith
3/14/14	TX	Houston	30	Sonja Rodgers	4/25/14	NM	New Mexico	27	Connie Baker
3/21/14	LA	East LA	11	Mary Core	4/25/14	TX	Midland	28	Susanne Griffing
3/21/14	MS	Mississippi	19	Karyn Brannan	4/25/14	TX	North TX	34	Kim Smith
3/21/14	PA	Eastern PA	1	RoseMary Caragol	4/25/14	TX	Wichita Falls	14	Kathy Stephens
3/21/14	TX	Amarillo	25	Mistey Williams	5/2/14	FL	Southwest FL	13	Vickie Dinkel
3/28/14	AZ	Phoenix	16	Toni Berg	5/2/14	TX	East TX	4	Leeann Moos
3/28/14	TX	Central TX	2	Kay Johnson	5/16/14	TX	San Antonio	27	Eileen Kinhead
4/4/14	IL	Illinois	1	Kristin Andrews	5/23/14	CA	Desert	23	Hazel Hagy

Torch Youth Weekends

Date	Loc.	Institution	W/E #	Leader
2/21/14	MS	Walnut Grove CF	8	Skip & Linda Jack
3/14/14	OK	SW OKJC	21	Orlandon Howard & Maggi Forthman

What I Learned in Prison

It's a sound you don't forget: the clang of metal hitting metal. The clamor of the front gate at William E. Donaldson CF closing behind me as I entered last Thursday still echoes inside my head. It was a cold, metallic and permanent rattle — the dying breath of lost freedom.

I had the experience of a lifetime when I worked a Kairos Prison Ministry Weekend with a group of Demopolis volunteers at Donaldson, a Level 6 maximum security prison near Bessemer. Most "experiences of a lifetime" are happy and long awaited occasions, maybe trips like an African safari or cross-country motorcycle ride, or they are exciting like whitewater rafting or skydiving. You know ... things on your bucket list.

Happy and exciting aren't words most people would associate with time in prison, particularly an institution like Donaldson, where armed guards are perched atop high towers and, on the yard, high-voltage electrical fencing is sandwiched between two rows of razor wire. It goes without saying that visiting such a place never was on any bucket list of mine. But I can honestly say my four days at Donaldson were for the most part happy and exciting.

Though I'd be lying if I didn't say I wasn't apprehensive, or even a little scared, when the gate closed behind me that first day.

My assignment for the Weekend was that of assistant table leader. In that role, I sat for most of the weekend with a table leader, a member of the clergy and the same six men in white. During the Weekend, they're not called inmates or convicts or prisoners, they are simply described by the color of the jumpsuits they are wearing.

A couple of the men in white at my table kept saying, "You ain't never been around nobody like us have you?" To which I always responded, "No, not like y'all," which they got a kick out of. All the inmates at the table were young black men, somewhere between 20 and 35. I don't know what they all did to get to Donaldson and had I known I likely might have never come through the front gate. Some of these young men — four of them within a year or two of my age had already been in prison for going on 10 years. One of the oldest guys at the table, just 30 though, is soon to be in prison as long as he was free on the streets.

We had a good time at my table, too good of a time Thursday and Friday. A good portion of the Weekend, when you are not singing or eating the thousands of cookies volunteers baked, is spent in talks, mediation and table discussion. These talks cover everything from the power of choice to forgiveness to how to live a spiritual life. After each,

there is a period of group discussion that follows. The first couple of days my guys wanted to talk about women, football, food and — well, that's about it.

By Saturday and Sunday, our talks got much more real and honest. Most of them, though not all, acknowledged that they are at Donaldson because of choices, the bad choices, the repeatedly bad choices they made. I think some of the men in white made serious breakthroughs on understanding that choices have consequences and that we have to accept responsibility, quit passing blame and making excuses for the dumb decisions we make.

So it was a happy weekend and exciting in some ways, but it was also one that was heartbreaking. I'll admit I teared up a few times Saturday and Sunday, but like most of the inmates I didn't really let my guard down enough to cry in public, but, let me tell you, when I got home Sunday night I cried like a baby.

Let me be clear, these guys committed crimes, many of them horribly brutal, and do have a debt to society. Virtually all of them deserve the sentences they have. The choices they made hurt a lot of people, their victims' families as well as their own. But most of them never had a chance. I don't think any of the guys at my table had a father or positive male influence in their life. Most said they have never had another man tell them that they love them.

One guy at my table was living on the streets as a teenager, said his mother's boyfriends regularly beat him and, at age 10, the then fifth-grader had to beg for his life when one put a gun to his head and threatened to shoot him. Some of them were raised by grandmothers because mom was doped up, locked up or worse. I can't imagine what it must feel like to never know a mother's love.

It's a vicious cycle without end. Remember, the 30-year-old at my table, the one who has been in prison almost as long as he was outside? His dad wasn't ever in the picture. That inmate went to jail early as a teen, but before doing so, he fathered a child at 12. Twelve years old. His boy is now about 16 and is in juvenile lockup himself.

What about the boy who had to beg for life at the hand of mom's boyfriend? That 10 year-old will turn 23 in November serving a life sentence. The only thing he wants for his birthday is to meet his 3 year-old boy for the first time.

The motto of Kairos is "Listen, Listen, Love, Love." I listened to these guys. As a newspaper reporter that wasn't too hard for me. I listen to people every day for a living. I also tried my best to share God's love with them. That proved much harder. The men in white don't know how to be loved, how to accept unconditional love. It's a foreign concept. For the most part,

they've never had anyone love them without expecting something in return. They're "loved" by their "homies", their gang members and partners in crime. Understandably, they don't trust many people. How can you when trusting somebody might get you backstabbed if not literally stabbed in the back?

I've heard Ben Sherrod, who has been working in Kairos for 25 years, say it's addicting as any drug. And I really feel like I got a lot from the weekend for my own spiritual journey. There will be a reunion in November for this Kairos group. Sherrod may be right about the addiction because I'm looking really forward to that, but, even if I wasn't, I don't think I have a choice about whether I can go back or not.

I had two of these guys, these men who have never had another man tell them they love them, who can't trust anyone, who have only been repeatedly let down, ask me if I'd be back for the reunion, if they would ever see me again. How can you say no to that? I'd be just another person who abandoned them. As an ambassador of Christ, I'll be back at reunion unless I'm in a coma. I told them that was up to them but I would be there regardless. So I guess I'm stuck, at least for a while.



The sun sets behind Donaldson Correctional Facility in Jefferson County.

But we are humans and in our frailty, we do hurt people. A major focus of the weekend was forgiveness. These man in white have been hurt a lot by mothers and fathers, girlfriends and wives ... they have a lot of perceived wrongs, maybe a few justifiably so, with the court and correctional systems. But the No. 1 person each needs to forgive is himself.

John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and WILL forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." We talked about that verse at length on Sunday. God doesn't have some hierarchy of sin. He's not tipping some scale way beyond the blue saying, "Oh, you've reached your sin limit ... I can't forgive you." The men in white struggle with that. They think their sins are too great. They feel like they don't deserve to be forgiven. But you know what? Neither did you or I!

Another verse we talked about several times was Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." That ALL includes everyone in that prison chapel, those in white and those in street clothes.

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So what do I take away from this Kairos Weekend? I think I have a much better understanding of the struggles inmates face and really most have had since the day they were born. I might have picked up some prison slang along the way.

I hear people say that prisoners are exactly where they should be, and, like I said, I agree with that in many ways. Choices have consequences and debts must be paid, but I also hear people say things like, “Just hang them or fry them and save us a bunch of money.” I’m glad God doesn’t judge me, a sinner, by that same manner because I would be there with them.

We all sin, we all make mistakes. We’re human. In the same regard, we can grow in our relationship with God. I’m not the same person I was at 16 or 26, or after Kairos, even six days ago. Yes, if freed, many of these guys would go out and do the same kind of stuff that got them into Donaldson in the first place. But not all would. Some are growing and will continue to as long as we don’t give up on them, as long as they aren’t abandoned again.

They can change as long as there are people like “Big Ben” Sherrod as he is called at Donaldson, John David Barnes, Mark Bedsole, Michael Lynch, Willie Slay, Brandon Smith, Rebecca

Culpepper and Daphne Glaser who are fulfilling the commission Christ gave all of us, that being to go out into all the nations and corners of the world and preach the Gospel, even the little chapel at Donaldson Correctional Facility in Jefferson County.

I learned this weekend who the typical criminal is. He’s not black or white, tall or short, big or small. The criminal I got to know best, the one who needs forgiveness the most, was a white guy though, about 5’10, brown hair and eyes, had a beard ... I saw him this morning in the mirror.

Justin Averette

In the Mailbox

This letter is in response to the October 31 to November 3, 2013 Kairos Weekend. Having the great opportunity and pleasure to participate, I wish to express my heart-felt thank you to all those that were present as well as those behind the scenes that made this phenomenal Weekend possible.

Being incarcerated and around a lot of negativity has a tendency to wear a person down, making a person’s days that much darker. That first night, walking down the corridor, the energy that I had felt was amazing. The energy the team members produced was a burst of fresh air. With that fresh air, the Kairos team members also brought the Holy Spirit with them. The team member’s speeches and testimonials were great and immensely enjoyed. The placemats drawn by the schoolchildren, the letters that I had been given and the one-on-one talk with clergy literally broke me down.

Out of my whole experience that I received was that no matter how alone I feel in in my life, there are so many people out there that I do not even know that care for me and are praying for me. If I had not experienced this for myself, I would have never believed it. Wow! What a great feeling that is and knowing that an event this size takes a lot of time and effort and of course, not cheap to produce, was very much appreciated.

In conclusion, in my wildest dreams, I would have never expected a group of people I had never met, to take precious time from their lives to come and share it with a bunch of inmates amazes me. With the kindness, warmth and love as well as the generosity the Kairos team members displayed will forever be etched upon my heart and mind forever. Thank you for the experience. That is love!

*Sincerely,
Rick, Kairos Graduate*