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KAIROS OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

We cannot witness what we do not live

By David Carvin,
Autry AC Team formation advisor

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 other 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 cannot 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 candi-



dates, 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 ministering to 4 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 the prayer and share community in the facility.

And when I study my community, and other communities, I find an over-

whelming majority of volunteers who do not practice group reunion. And I can't help but remember: "We Cannot Witness What We Do Not Live."

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 is not going to 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 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 perspective of WCWWWDNL.

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, a 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.

...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 the prayer and share community in the facility.



It's taken me 13 years to attend a weekend with Kairos. Every prison I was at was full or the waiting list was long.

Kairos helped me reconnect my contact with God. I've learned how to express my love through Jesus. Kairos showed me how to forgive and forget the people who put me in prison for a crime I didn't do. I carried this so called want to "get back" for many years. Now, thanks to Kairos and God, I've forgiven them and want to express my love to them through God.

I'm ready now to walk the road of a Christian life with Jesus right beside me, showing me how to handle the right way and the wrong way in life's everyday problems. I can walk away from a problem now because I can hook up to God for advice. Now, I can express my love for others, like I never knew how to before.

Kairos group table leaders (outside sponsor) are warm hearted, fun loving people who meet you and talk to you on a level you can understand. I received power, wisdom, love, and learned about my inner feelings I never knew about before the weekend.

The weekend will bring out feelings you have been hiding behind for a long time and teaches you how to deal with your feelings through God.

Since attending Kairos I'm a stronger person, peaceful with myself, have a stronger relationship with God. Now I'm wanting to learn more about God and Jesus in my heart. Now He sleeps with me, He walks with me, He's always there when I need him.

Kairos made a different man out of me. Through the Kairos weekend I'm ready to face the world with Jesus, even if it's inside these prison fences.

Kairos is love, power, friends, partners more than words can explain. I'm a new man, living within God's world thanks to Kairos.

May God bless everyone who prayed for me during the weekend. It meant a lot to me just to know there are so many caring people out in the world today.

May God bless everyone. He will be there when you need Him. All you have to do is believe in Jesus and live a wonderful life.

God bless everyone.

Your Brother in Christ

Rickey F.

Dooly State Prison

The Newsletter needs more submissions from those who have completed a Kairos weekend. It does not matter when the weekend was completed, we welcome submissions from all. We want participants to tell us how the weekend impacted their lives and how they are continuing on in their Fourth Day. It is another way to spread the word about the impact of Kairos and prayerfully draw more volunteers (and donations) to this ministry. What could be more meaningful than hearing directly from someone behind the prison walls! We would like you to inform the residents of this opportunity at your next reunion and then remind them at subsequent reunions. All letters should be mailed to the Kairos post office box (P.O. Box 475, Tyrone, GA, 30290) and should be no more than two handwritten pages in length. Letters can be submitted at any time. Thank you for your assistance in getting the word out about this special opportunity. Please let me know if you have any questions.

LaJauna Ellis, lajauna@bellsouth.net

GOD'S WEEKEND

By Pamela Felice Hill

In January 2012, the phone call came from the Advisory Council Chairperson asking me to consider being Leader of Weekend #14 at Lee Arrendale State Prison.

She suggested that during the next few days I pray and listen to God's Voice and call her back.

I kept murmuring to myself, alternating between "God doesn't make mistakes?!!!" and "Really, God?!!!" I sought confidence and wisdom. I prayed and prayed some more.

I called the AC Chair back in three days with a "Yes."

She and I discussed the particulars of KAIROS Leadership: AKT, key Team Leader selections, and my life as Observing Leader, Leader, and Advising Leader. I appreciated her wisdom and experience very much.

I felt deep in my heart and soul that my life would change, but I was not prepared for the extent of the change. To say that I will never be the same is a true and definite understatement. God pruned me of my fear of Leadership and its corresponding Responsibilities. He gave me boldness to speak His Words of Obedience, Humility, and Servanthood. He corrected me when it seemed



Lee Arrendale Chapel

easier to "water down" the expectations for the Team. He rebuked me when I wanted to do things my way instead of listening to His Directions. He strengthened me when it was difficult to present information to the Team that I was duty-bound to present. He comforted me, guided me, and encouraged me during the rough times when I didn't know what to do or how to do it.

During my Leadership process, I realized that Jesus required much more of me as a woman of God. He expected me to be more obedient, to be more prayerful, to be more patient, to be more faithful, to be more trusting, and to be more humble than I had ever been. I needed to exhibit these characteristics in order to encourage and exhort the Team to try and follow my example as I tried to follow the example of Jesus.

I tried to show Jesus to the Team, but I failed. My humanity, at times, was in the way and I pray that this will not dampen others' Spirit of Servanthood.

However, God still abundantly blessed the Weekend!! It was memorable to say the least, as 36 Participants came boldly seeking

MY WEEKEND

God and His Love, His Comfort, His Forgiveness. They accepted all that God had prepared for them— He used the Team as His Hands and Feet. I am still amazed by God's Miracles during His Special Time. The miracles were lavished not only on the Participants, but on the Team, as well.

We, as Team Members, prayed for strength of body and spirit during the Weekend, and we received it as we needed it. Miracle!

We prayed for God's Provision and our Coordinator was able to obtain everything needed for the Weekend. Miracle!

We covered each other in prayer to bind the enemy and his schemes. God still worked His Miracles. Truly amazing!

The Weekend will be a great memory, not just because I was given another chance to go into Prison, although I do love being there!

It will be memorable because I began to truly feel God's Purpose in my life — to strive to be a more humble and loving servant. I felt Him with me as never before. I now know that I was blessed beyond measure to be chosen as Servant/Leader for Weekend #14.

Chosen by God. That is His Miracle, indeed!

When God Resides Behind the Fence

By Kevin Resnover

It still mystifies me how God shows up so powerfully through the volunteers on a Kairos Torch Weekend. By the start of the second day we see change on the countenance of the youth's faces, and their hearts seem to soften with each passing hour.

What a wonderful feeling it is to be used by God to bring real hope to youth who find themselves in a desolate place. It makes coming back to mentor every week so much more rewarding when the youth show such a receptive attitude to the outpouring of God's love, and an ear to hear what His word has to say in their daily living.

Volunteers in Kairos Torch have certainly proven that the mission of Kairos is solid. Through sharing the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, hearts and lives of the incarcerated are being impacted and they are becoming productive citizens not only when they get out, but in the facilities before their release.

Can you imagine how much more could be accomplished if volunteers were able to return to the facility every day and mentor these youths who are so open to hearing and receiving God's message of love? Well this is the concept of the Kairos Torch Peer-to-Peer program. In fact this ministry program uses the graduates of Kairos Inside who have shown a



consistent and faithful attitude in their Prayer and Share groups to conduct the Kairos Torch ministry inside the institutions where they reside. It is awesome to see these men and women who were once guests on a Kairos Inside Weekend now become Kairos volunteers and deliver the ministry to those younger inmates. Because the older/mature inmates are now the ones giving the talks, leading the discussion at the family tables, directing the Lite N' Lively's and giving the meditations; the precision of the Weekend is even more accurate. They know first-hand the devastation of incarceration and how the grace of God has given them

hope to walk out their faith in harmony through His Word!

As each talk is given you can almost hear a pin drop on plush carpet. The conversations at the tables and during the Guide Meetings take on a whole new dimension. The younger inmates seem to always be amazed that their older peers are concerned about their well-being.

Instead of being taken advantage of, as they expected, they are being cared for. And if that is not enough, after the Weekend, it is those same Kairos graduates that we train to serve as Christian mentors to the Kairos Torch participants. The only word that I have to describe it is AWESOME!

I was recently privileged to help conduct some of the training and serve as the Advising Leader at the first Kairos Torch Peer-to-Peer Weekend for women. This number one Weekend was held at the Lee Arrendale State Prison in Georgia and was skillfully led by Karen Miller. I asked Karen about her experience and here is what she had to say:

Did you see God move in ways that were new to you? How?

As a leader, I learned that conducting team formation inside comes with a whole set of new challenges, but each time I thought we hit something insurmountable, God made a way for the ministry to continue. He worked on each team member stretching them to the brink, molding them into what He needed and then as the weekend progressed I could see His hand in all that transpired.

What were your most powerful experiences?

When the talks were given on the weekend, the participants sat riveted at the testimonies they heard. By becoming transparent and allowing God to shine through their pain, the inside team opened the door for the young women to share deeply. I have never heard more powerful talks on a weekend. I learned how truly deep their faith is.

What did you learn that surprised you?

As team formation progressed the women began to arrive with smiles on their faces, uplifted and focused on the task at hand. They eagerly accepted their team assignments and even those who thought they did not possess the confidence to give a talk gave the talk of their life on the Weekend. I learned they blossom when asked to do something?

What is the value of the Torch Peer-to-Peer program from your view point?

The Kairos Torch Peer to Peer provided a way for inmates to feel good about themselves — to give back. I

cannot count the number of times an inmate shared they were incarcerated very young and “if only they had had someone to talk to when they started serving their time it would have made a huge difference in their experience.”

What did you see as the most profound experience for the Inside Team?

These wise women are equipped to mentor the young women inside the prison in ways I could never imagine. Being able to talk to them about the prison experience is something we on the outside will never be able to do. Peer to Peer works because the inmates speak a language foreign to most of us.

What did you see as the most profound experience for the Outside Team?

Peer to Peer team formation was held inside the institution and this is where I discovered profound wisdom and kindness waiting to be released in a positive way.

What did you see as the most profound experience of the Participants?

The young women who attended the weekend bonded as a group immediately. After the weekend, we learned that the young women were seeking each other out on the compound, gathering together in groups. I also learned they reached out to the inside team members, even those not selected to mentor, demonstrating a yearning for fellowship and connection. I learned that the young women yearn for someone to talk to.

As we packed up the cars and pulled away from the institution, I glanced over to my left in time to see the red brick church behind the

barbwire fence. Quietly I thought to myself; “God has certainly made a home for Himself behind the fence”. I know that because I saw Him living inside some very precious women who had opened up their hearts for Him to dwell.





Dear Kairos Community
First of all let me introduce myself. My name is Raymond B., Kairos Weekend #5, Baldwin S.P., Table of St. Paul.

My new walk with Jesus is just totally awesome on the Fourth Day, as well as all the days following Kairos Weekend #5. It was the best thing that ever happened to me and I was blessed by it.

From the beginning to the end, there was nothing but love spread around the table and through the room from the outside team. It didn't matter why you were in prison, they wanted you to know that you were loved and forgiven. You see, I thought that God would never love me or forgive me for the mistakes I've made in my life. But I have been forgiven by God through the blood of Jesus upon the cross at Calvary. For God remembers the sin no more. Amen, and praise God.

I was raised in the church and I knew about Jesus and His saving grace. I went to Sunday school, church services and Wednesday's youth group growing up. As I grew older, I also grew away from the church, and started to live in the world and for the world. This was for most of my life.

In my early 40's, I started to get into trouble with the law, mostly small stuff living in sin. After a few times in jail (county), I rededicated my life to God by being baptized (I was never baptized while growing up because my parents saw the church as a babysitting service).

Everything went fine for a while and then I backslid, making the big mistake that got me a 10 year prison sentence.

While being in prison I started going to church again. Every time they called it. I figured I needed to make amends to God for my mistakes in life. I thought after the stuff I've done, God wouldn't forgive me. I couldn't

even forgive myself, let alone forgive those who hurt me. Then it all finally came to light on the last day, when we needed to write down those that we needed to forgive, including myself on the disappearing paper. The way the paper melted away and vanished was what I've been needing all along.

The weight was lifted from me and Jesus came in His Spirit. The way God forgives if you love Jesus. I feel it wouldn't have been possible without my Kairos Weekend. My sins are no longer remembered by God and I'm truly saved. I will now have eternal life in heaven with God in all His glory. Praise God!!!

Ever since the weekend, I've been involved with Kairos Agape Team (Inside). I pray that when I'm released I will be able to continue God's work with Kairos. The work Kairos does in the life of prisoners is truly a life-changing event. It's a blessing for those that are lost and searching for a change in their lives, by giving it all over to God. Amen.

May God continue to bless your ministry with all your needs.

Your Fellow Kairos Brother
Raymond B.
Dooly S.P.

Dearly Beloved,

It is with great joy that I write this note of thanksgiving on behalf of our sisters behind the wall. Once again our faithful God has met us and delivered his people in a mighty way! His love through your giving and prayer shown all over the prison grounds. You could just feel it in the atmosphere. As we traveled to the prison Thursday it began to rain hard and we did not ask God to do away with the rain but to allow it to stop so that we could get inside. It is a pretty good walk to get to the location where we hold the meeting.

Well, as we arrived the rain stopped until we were inside! Glory to God! Thursday evening we met our participants, ate fresh strawberries, pound cake with whip cream as we shared a little bit about ourselves. We all got up and introduced ourselves and shared something about ourselves with the group. For many women it was the first time speaking in front of an audience.

On Friday morning the ladies are assigned to table families and given a family name of a woman in the Bible and they remain together for the week-end.

They dined on food many had not had in years such as fresh fruit, McDonald's, Pizza, tacos, hot-dogs, cookies, brownies, apple cobbler (made by a lady who attends one of our team member's church) and many other treats.

Friday was good, but Saturday was tremendous because the theme for the day was forgiveness which ended with a special service.

God delivered with a strong arm and a mighty hand. There were souls saved and deliverance all over the room...even one who had been an ordained witch of wicca. God be praised, hallelujah!!!

Sunday was the pinnacle, it was like the mount of transfiguration.

If you could have seen the light of the Lord shining on their faces, it was glorious. On Sunday we invited those who would like to come to the closing ceremony and the ladies are always in awe and disbelief at the love shown that someone would come to share with those they don't know.

I am reminded of what Christ said, "Whatever you do to the least of my little ones you do unto me". If you gave or sent a drink of water, cookies, prayed, donated money or visited at closing...you have done it unto HIM! I just want to share a little of what the ladies said on Sunday. They were asked not to thank anyone but God and to respond to the following three questions:

In what condition were you in when you came to Kairos?

We came closed minded, untouchable, dry, crushed, feeling unworthy, confused, unforgiven, angry, afraid. disappointed in God, lonely. We knew God existed but we were so broken, tired and spiritually deprived we felt detached, we felt lost.

What did you find here?

We found God. We found a new beginning, love in action, compassion, prayer, healing, forgiveness, self worth, a second chance.

What are you taking away with you when you return to the compound?

We are taking God, his love, words of joy, affirmation, peace, a new level of trust, healing, purpose, security, and a new sisterhood back to the compound.

There was one individual response that stood out in a mighty way. She said, I experienced a powerful and undeniable love of God in this place. Just

to hear the applause, with this uniform on, from people we don't know in this place is overwhelming. The outside world sees us and this place as dirty and cold. They don't feel like we deserve this love and we deserve to be here. I see now that not everyone is the same, God has to move you from one situation to another in order for you to grow.

There was hardly a dry eye in the place. I so thank all of you for the part you played in making this weekend happen.

I want to particularly thank The Glow Women's Ministry of our home church, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Marietta, Chaplain and Min Stith, and John Copeland owner/franchiser of All State Insurance Company in Savannah, GA for your prayers and monetary contributions. May God supply all your needs according to his riches in glory through Christ Jesus is my prayer.

Love to all of you,
Denise Redd

**"Therefore I say to you, her sins,
which are many,
are forgiven,
for she loved much.
But to whom little is forgiven,
the same loves little."
Luke 7:47 (NKJV)**

Updates from the International Office

By Lee Turner



The Kairos International Office has been a busy place. Our Kairos Executive Director, Evelyn Lemly and the staff have been busy preparing to move to our new International office in DeBary, FL. By the time you read this, the move should be completed or well on it's way. The new office address is 100 DeBary Plantation Drive, DeBary, FL, 32713.

A new Men's Coordinator has been hired. Ken Rocks has been a Kairos Inside volunteer for 10 years during which he has served in various roles including Weekend leader, Advisory Council Chair, and two years as State Chair of CA. He will take on this very important leadership role for Kairos Men's program effective January 1, 2014. He and his wife, Kim, will be moving to Florida early 2014.

For the first time that I can remember, we are holding the annual Kairos Winter Meetings somewhere other than Winter Park. This year, we will all gather in Atlanta to elect new Board members, seat newly elected International Council members from several states and begin to chart our course forward under Evelyn's leadership. The 2013 Financial Policies and Practices manual is published and reflects all the changes under the new financial infrastructure.

THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU "THANK" ABOUT!

By Rev Beverly Upperman

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." 1 Thessalonians 5:18

This is the time of year where our hearts are focused on giving thanks. We give thanks for friends. We give thanks for family. We give thanks for clothes on our back. We give thanks for food on our table. We give thanks for a roof over our head. We give thanks for money in the bank. We give thanks for a job. We give thanks for good health... and the list goes on and on!

But did you notice that the list of things to give thanks for typically consists of 'good' things? Did you ever really stop to think about what you thank about? I must admit that at times I've been challenged by Paul's words regarding giving thanks. To be perfectly honest, I can recall numerous things (circumstances, situations) in my life that have not prompted me to a place of thankfulness. If anything, I have been tempted to moan and groan, grumble and complain – a far cry from thankfulness!

Yet, in the midst of it all, I have been helped to realize that Paul did not tell us to be thankful FOR every thing, he told us to be thankful IN everything! Now that really puts things in a different perspective.

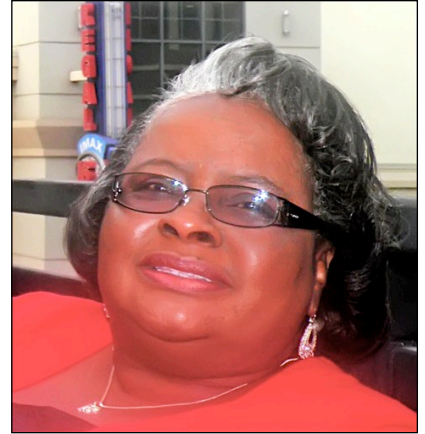
While I may not be able to say thanks FOR the loss of a loved one, IN the midst of my sorrow and grief, I can say thanks that God is with me, and that He is my Comforter!

While I may not be able to say thanks FOR being unemployed, I can say thanks that God has promised to supply all my need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus!

While I may not be able to say thanks FOR the negative doctor's report I may have received, I can say thanks that with His stripes I am healed!

While I may not be able to say thanks FOR my present situation, I can say thanks to God for His promise to always be with me!

Even Paul, in spite of the many times he was imprisoned, always took time to thank God.



First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ (Romans 1:8); I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 7:25); I thank my God always (1 Corinthians 1:4); I thank my God (Philippians 1:3); For this cause also thank we God without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 2:13); We are bound to thank God always (2 Thessalonians 1:3); I thank God (2 Timothy 1:3); I thank my God (Philemon 1:4)

So the next time you are confronted with a challenging situation, THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU THANK ABOUT! I'm sure you will be able to find something to thank God for! And if you have trouble, David gives us quite a list in Psalm 103:

"Praise the Lord, my soul, and do not forget how kind He is. He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. He keeps me from the grave and blesses me with love and mercy. He fills my life with good things, so that I stay young and strong like an eagle."

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