

Find the Blessing!

Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World

Kairos of Georgia



September 2021

Letter from State Chair

Hello Georgia!

During the Kairos Annual Conference this summer, our CEO shared this poem:

Just Think

By Roy Lessin

*Just think, you're here not by chance, but by God's choosing.
His hand formed you and made you the person you are.
He compares you to no one else. You are one of a kind.
You lack nothing that His grace can't give you.
He has allowed you to be here at this time in history
to fulfill His special purpose for this generation.*

As she recited the poem, the first thing that came to my mind were the words found in Esther 4:14, “...**Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?**” During these ever-changing and challenging times, you are remaining steadfast, unmovable and always abounding in the work of the Lord!

As you are being faithful to our theme for this year to *Find the Blessing*, I'll offer you what I believe is a wonderful suggestion – *Look in the mirror!*

You are the blessing! God chose you! God equipped you! God prepared you! God ordained you! God hand-picked you! You, little ol' you! You are the blessing God designed and purposed in this season, for such a time as this! You are helping His kingdom to come here on earth as it is in heaven.



For this, I am most grateful. As you continue to look for and find the blessing, don't forget to start with the (wo)man in the mirror, and may you remain the blessing you are!

Beverly

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Around the State - compiled by Doug Porter, Calhoun SP

1. Although frustrated by our inability to reconnect with brothers on the inside, the Kairos team at **Calhoun State Prison** decided to do something that was within our control. On Saturday, August 7th, (before COVID's Delta variant kicked-in) we held a volunteer picnic at the Sherwood Baptist Church Legacy Park in Albany, GA. We called it a "reunion" since it had been more than a year since we had seen all of our team in one place. We planned to grill some burgers and dogs, serve some slaw and beans, and just have some fellowship. But as usual, God provided more than we asked for. The food was more varied and abundant than expected with hamburgers, hot dogs, grilled corn-on-the-cob, chips, watermelon, baked sweet potatoes, banana pudding, and more. We were also pleasantly surprised at the turnout. We enjoyed the company of about 30 people including volunteers and their families.
2. The **Wilcox State Prison** chaplain will be retiring this fall, so we are organizing an event to celebrate her career as a prison chaplain and give her the sendoff she deserves. We are preparing for life after she leaves and expecting we will have to work with another intermediary (perhaps one of the deputy wardens) until another chaplain can be found. We also have a fairly new warden, not the same one when we had our last Kairos weekend (in October 2019), and we have not been able to meet him yet. We are trying to set up a meeting through the chaplain to determine the conditions/stipulations for Kairos volunteers to re-enter the prison.
3. The **Augusta State Medical Prison** had hoped last month to get into the prison for a reunion. Numbers were going to be limited for those inside as well as those from the outside, but we were looking forward to getting back together, even if it was just a few of us. However, the reunion was called off. We then hoped to get back in for a Prayer & Share, but it was also canceled. We are praying for an end to COVID and a return to serving our brothers at Augusta SMP.



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Brightening the Dark Days of COVID

We were just beginning our second Kairos weekend of 2020. It was the usual Thursday night tradition where all of the outside hosts had met their inside guests, everyone had taken their seats with their sodas and the anxiousness could slowly be felt decreasing in the air. Our Kairos leader began the formal introduction to the weekend when our Deputy Warden of Care and Treatment, Miss Kasper, came to me as the liaison to let me know that the governor's office ordered all unnecessary business within the prisons to be shut down and postponed until after the pandemic was over.

Well, of course, that ended the weekend. Our outside team was almost as disappointed as the inside participants, as you can well imagine. During COVID, our outside team continued to stay in close contact with the prison, wanting to know what we as an organization could do for our brothers on the other side of the wall.

One week we donated pizzas and Coca-Cola for the entire prison. On another week, our Kairos team donated care packages to each inmate. The packages included 2 pairs of socks, 2 washcloths, 2 tubes of toothpaste, 2 toothbrushes, a scented shampoo, deodorant, a bar of soap, and some hard candies.

This especially affected them emotionally, as this was toward the darkest days of the pandemic when a fair amount of the prisons were being impacted by COVID and inmates had little to cheer about.

Needless to say, these care packages definitely brightened the mood around the prison.

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Brightening, (Cont'd)

It wasn't too long after that we learned the prisons were to re-open August 1st. With that news, our council sprang into action with the hope that we could have a reunion in August as well as complete the weekend that had begun before the pandemic in 2020. After asking the powers that be, the prison approved Kairos to hold the reunion on August 21st. Unfortunately, our Kairos process required us to repeat the training.

So, we look forward to Spring 2022

From this time on we will continue to have reunions every 3rd Saturday of the month. The first one since the pandemic had a fantastic turnout with 166 participants in attendance. Kairos treated each to a McDonalds sausage egg and cheese biscuit, hash browns, as well as normal weekend snacks. There were many smiles from both sides of the fence.

It goes without saying that it was a great reunion filled with love and fellowship.

Kurt Yaeger
Walker State Prison





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Wilcox State Prison Pandemic Response

Since the pandemic visitation restrictions began, our Wilcox SP team has undertaken several initiatives:

We have had volunteers write eight different letters to the residents. These letters were intended to encourage readers and contained a spiritual message with a theme, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, 4th of July, etc. With the help of the chaplain, these letters were posted in all of the dorms. Feedback from inside the prison indicates these letters have "struck a chord" with many more of the incarcerated population than just those who are Kairos "alumni".

WHAT GREAT NEWS!

This letter-writing ministry is continuing on, even as we diligently prepare to re-enter the prison.

Our AC has held quarterly Zoom meetings to share information and conduct business. The many initiatives we have taken on include, but are not limited to, AC annual elections, scrubbing/updating the Kairos Messenger volunteer roster, reverifying/correcting e-mail addresses, selecting replacements for deceased (or resigned) volunteers, and organizing various Kairos initiatives at Wilcox SP.

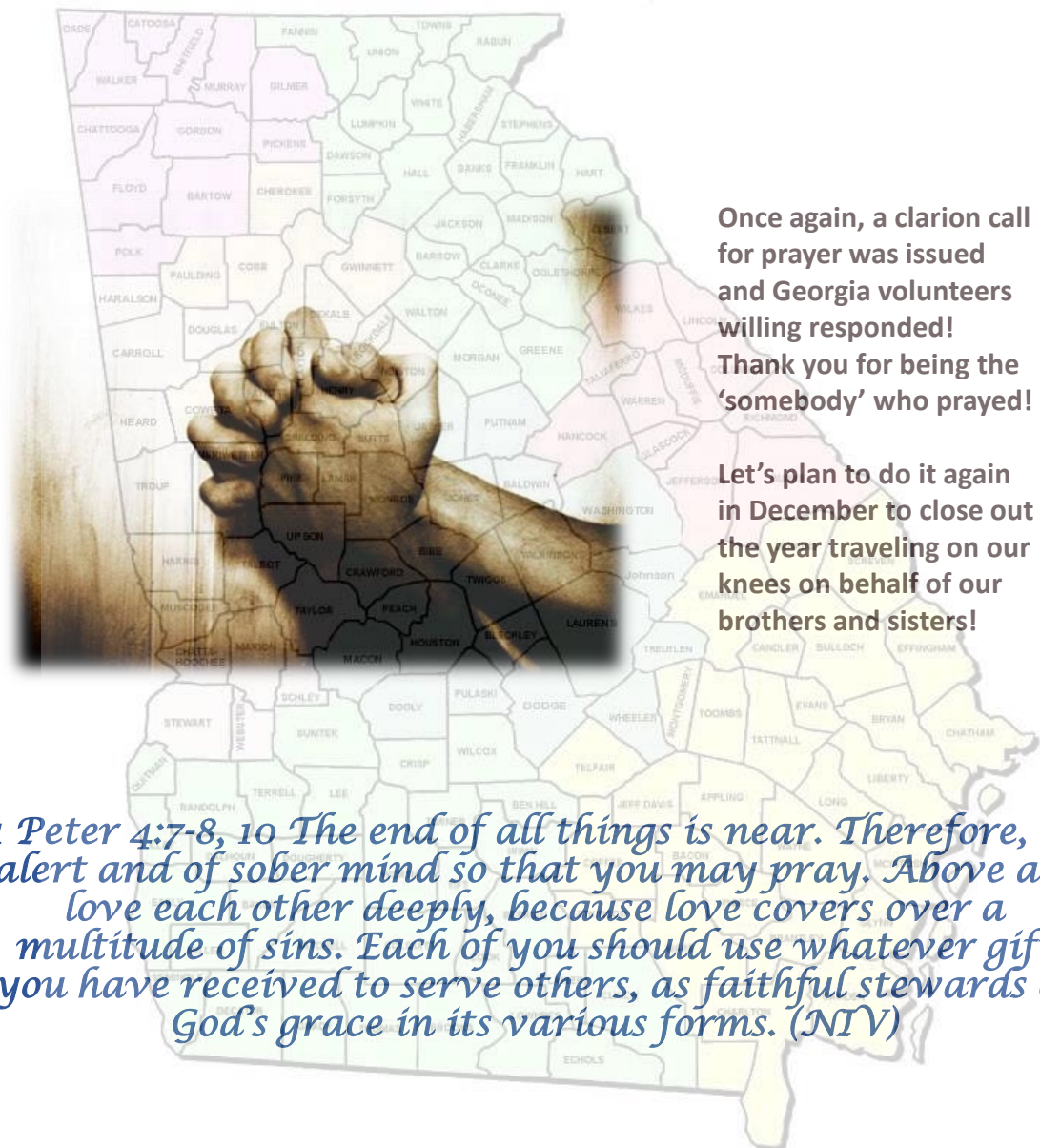
A subset of our Advisory Council meets weekly for Prayer and Share, following the format on page 1 of the Freedom Guide. We have been doing this for over a year, starting several months into the COVID pandemic. The weekly spiritual activity has helped each participant grow in his relationship with Christ, as well as in his relationship with the other participants, drawing us closer together despite the lack of being able to physically come together.

David Nakyama, , Wilcox State Prison

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3rd Quarter 2021 Prayer Vigil, September 17-19, 2021



Once again, a clarion call for prayer was issued and Georgia volunteers willing responded! Thank you for being the 'somebody' who prayed!

Let's plan to do it again in December to close out the year traveling on our knees on behalf of our brothers and sisters!

1 Peter 4:7-8, 10 The end of all things is near. Therefore, be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (NIV)

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Remembrance



Julee Crews

Sunset August 16, 2021
Pulaski State Prison



Delores Mitchell Tulloss

Sunset April 19, 2021
Pulaski State Prison



Bonnie Sue West

Sunset July 31, 2021
Kairos Outside of Georgia



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Easy and Delicious White Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 Cup Packed Brown Sugar
- ½ Cup Granulated Sugar
- 1 Cup Butter, Softened
- 2 Eggs
- 2 Cups White Chocolate Chips
- 1 Teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 2 ½ Cups All Purpose Flour
- 1 Teaspoon Baking Soda
- ½ Teaspoon Baking Powder
- 1 Teaspoon Salt
- ¼ Teaspoon Cinnamon, Optional

Instructions


- In a large bowl using hand mixer or bowl of stand mixer, cream together the butter, both sugars, and vanilla extract for 2 minutes on medium speed until well mixed and fluffy. Add eggs and mix until well combined.
- In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. With mixer running on low speed add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and beat until just incorporated. Fold in the white chocolate chips.
- Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate the dough for 30-45 minutes.
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or spray with nonstick cooking spray.
- Scoop one heaping Tablespoon of dough at a time into a ball and place on the prepared pan about 1 - 1 ½ inches apart. Bake cookies in preheated oven for 10-12 minutes, until slightly golden around the edges.
- Allow cookies to cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan.



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BENEDICTION *Jim Smith, Georgia State Prison Clergy*



Spring; a season of promise. As we entered this new year, we all were looking forward to the start of new beginnings, reunions with friends not seen for way too long, and the hope of making new friendships with brothers and sisters in Christ. As spring melted its way into summer it became quite evident that our best laid plans and goals were going to be put on hold for a later date or cancelled altogether. It would be easy to become discouraged or worse yet just flat give up and say what the heck.

I say not so.

This spring I planted 30 tomato plants with the expectation of having a bumper crop of red ripe slicers for sandwiches, cherry for salads, romas for cooking, and a couple of variety's for making sauce. It was not to be for a wide range of reasons. Yes, it was disappointing, yes it was frustrating. Was it a waste of time, no. It was a time of learning and a time of preparation for the next season.

I will be planting different varieties, doing a better job on managing the bugs and crud.

As I have talked with other folks in the KAIROS community, these past seasons were used to get ready for what is coming. The time was not squandered. Team building has continued; training was accomplished; and I believe time in prayer has become paramount in our preparation for the call God has put on our lives.

Fall is knocking at the door. Let us look expectantly to the challenges and opportunities which lie before us. Our God is already there. Blessings to all that answer the call.



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Thank You!!

So many wonderful contributors this month to make our newsletter timely and interesting! We so appreciate your input for the newsletter, and as we can see there were imaginative and effective ideas for keeping our ministry alive and well during the COVID lockdowns.

And another big Thank You! To our newest team member, **Doug Porter**, your legwork, editorial skills, and can-do attitude have brought so much to us in acquiring interesting materials to publish.

We welcome your stories: About your prison, your Kairos journey, great ideas you've had, funny events, successes and failures. Feel free to email your information to:

Doug Porter: jdporter49@yahoo.com,
Shelley Ross: shelleyjaneross@gmail.com, or
Beverly Upperman: bupper50@bellsouth.net

