

Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Greetings Georgia and HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

It goes without saying that this truly is the most wonderful time of the year! And the wonder is wrapped up, tied up and tangled in the fact that "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!".

Indeed, He is a Wonder in our souls!

As I reflect on all that has transpired in this year, I stand in awe of what God has done! In spite of everything we've been through, we still have joy in celebrating our King of Kings!

Because of His faithfulness, we held 22 Weekends this year!

Because of His faithfulness, we are still serving 22 communities in all three Kairos programs!

Because of His faithfulness, we are doing Prayer & Share, S.W.A.P and mentoring!

Because of His faithfulness, we have added more than 108 new volunteers and received numerous inquiries about how to get involved!

Because of His faithfulness, we remain OVERCOMERS!!!

As we are searching for the best gifts to give this year, my challenge is for us to remember those who may be in a season of loneliness. May we look for opportunities to give the gift of our presence. May we look for opportunities to give the gift of our smiles and hugs.

May we look for opportunities to give the gift of a spa day or day of babysitting. May we look for opportunities to give the gift of encouragement. May we look for opportunities to be a Barnabas for someone who is missing a loved one this year.

God gave the very best gift He had, His only Son Jesus, so we can be a blessing to others.

May the wonder of this season carry over and into the New Year!

Because of Him I have hope!



Kairos of Georgia State Chair







Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Fall Weekend Leader Notes

Valdosta SP #45 - 9/21/2023 - Its always a great weekend - helping guys find Christ is always a victory.

Emanuel #17 - 10/12/2023 - The first night was interrupted by long fire alarms from a faulty system so we had to finish the chapel talk on Friday morning. On a positive note, those interruptions gave us time to visit with the participants and put them at ease. The rest of the weekend went as scheduled. It seems that with only three tables and 18 participants we were able to form better relationships with the Participants. We all felt the Spirit moving throughout our spaces on the weekend. The weekend was relaxed and comfortable. Some of the key positions on the background team were covered by experienced leaders, and they contributed toward a comfortable family atmosphere. We were stressed during the preparation time because of our small volunteer team, but we found it worked to our advantage with strong camaraderie and mutual support for all.

Macon YDC Torch Female #3 - 10/20/2023 – I felt honored that the Lord allowed me to take this journey. And it was a journey - I was on the top of the mountain and I was in the valley. I was excited, nervous and feeling unworthy but...with prayer and with God I knew that I was not alone. You have a team of Kairos Brothers & Sisters that are there for you. When things are not going your way, remember to pray and know it's not about you. It is "God's Special Time."

Coastal #25 - 11/02/2023 - The minor afflictions that we experienced in the preparation were dwarfed by the joys and blessings of the weekend. At the last minute, we lost 4 of our new guys to badging issues with the state. The remaining team stepped up to the task and with a little effort we ran the full weekend without problems, Praise God! The Spirit moved and men came into relationship with God, and others became closer to God. Sixty-six men bonded in Christian love. The instructional, today was filled with men eager to get in their prayer groups and begin to allow God to work in them. Amazing! Stay in the riverbanks and let God do the work to His glory. Three men professed faith in Christ. One went to the podium immediately to share and then shared again at closing. The process can seem overwhelming at times, it's not, but that's hard to see. The blessings that come far outweigh the burdens. Hang in there and cherish the time.

Atlanta Metro RF #4 – 11/02/2023 - I am glad that I did the walk. I saw joy and tears in the participants faces. I too became overwhelmed when the participants made me a drawing depicting praying hands holding a cross with the inscription "Brothers In Christ". This was a manila folder and they all had signed it on the inside flaps. That was the high point of the experience. Lows happened too frequently.



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Fall Weekend Leader Notes

Kairos Outside #43 - 11/10/2023 – It was an honor and privilege to be God's Appointed Leader for Weekend #43. I thank God for choosing me and giving me that opportunity. God knew Weekend #43 team before we even thought about it. He chose this team and although we may have been small in numbers, we took the task that God gave us, we came together, we worked together and were able to succeed and give God the glory.

Kairos Outside Weekend's purpose is to show God's grace, His unconditional love, and to give the ladies the opportunity to see that they are not alone -- that they can have a relationship with God. The five guests that attended Weekend #43 were the guests that God chose and needed to be here.

They along with the team members received an unforgettable blessing. We showed our guests that unconditional love does exist, that the Kairos Outside family is here and loneliness is a choice that does not have to be chosen. Most of all through our talks, meditations, and interactions with the guests they were able to see and feel that no matter what the situation, thoughts, obstacles, etc., turning to God and having a relationship with Him is a must. He is the one constant in our life, the one that always does things for our good and there is not a price tag on that.

Lives were changed!



Mary and Elizabeth



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Fall Weekend Leader Notes

Kairos Outside #43 (cont'd)

One guest said that the moment she got on the campsite she felt something good shifting in her and knew it was meant for her to be here. She said that she realized just how good God is and she wants more of Him and Kairos. Every guest had an experience that impacted them in some way this Weekend and God's will was done.

Along with hosting our guests we also hosted observers from another Kairos Outside community. This was a new experience for some of them and for some it gave a better understanding of the Weekend flow. I can say the observers left the Weekend with more knowledge, ideas, excitement and eagerness to prepare for their upcoming Weekends.

As the Weekend was concluding the guests were excited and anxious and wanted to know more, when was the next weekend, how can they share with others the blessings they have received. They don't want to let go of what they have received. Of course, we answered all those questions with smiles, excitement and enthusiasm because we are adding to our family and it's an amazing and fulfilling feeling. We assured the ladies that our Kairos Community will always be here to support and encourage them and they too can join us as we continue to share God's unconditional love with each other and our future guests.

Now, no weekend is perfect, no schedule is perfect but through those imperfections we learn, we discuss, we make adjustments, and we pass on that information to help make the next Weekend even better for God, the guests and the team. The opportunity that was given to me to serve as Weekend #43 Leader has been an experience that I won't forget and it was truly a blessing. I look forward to what God has in store for our Kairos family and serving on the Weekends to come as we continue to change lives one guest at time while continuing to grow our community and serving God.

Roxann

Roxann Davis, Weekend Leader





Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

The Secret to Recruiting for Kairos Prison Ministry: Prayer and Timing (and a Church Leader Who is All In!)



In early Fall of 2023, Stone Creek Church in Alpharetta, Georgia introduced their vision for the next ten years: "X Multiply, The Vision for 2033". One of their ten initiatives is "A Commitment to Serve the Poor, the Prisoner and the Orphans". In October, placed on each seat at all three Sunday services, was a card which listed five of the initiatives. Each attendee was encouraged by the Executive Pastor to check the box next to the initiative he or she was interested in learning more about.

The Pastor's message that Sunday made it very clear how committed he was to living the Gospel message in Matthew 25:35-40 where we are called to give food to the hungry, drink for the thirsty clothing for the needy, and to visit the stranger, the sick and those in prison. Ninety-one attendees checked the box next to the initiative involving Prison Ministry.

Two weeks later we were invited to make a presentation to those interested in learning more about Prison Ministry, including Kairos Prison Ministry International. After hearing the witnesses of Kairos Volunteers representing Kairos Inside for Men and Women, Kairos Outside, and Torch who all shared their experiences of serving in Kairos, thirty-five new volunteers signed up to serve in one of our three Kairos Ministries. Another information session was held in mid-December at Stone Creek's Sister Church, Elevate City in Sandy Springs, and even more potential volunteers were identified!

The timing was right, and we were blessed to have a Pastor committed to serving the incarcerated. That, and the fact that the sessions were covered in prayer, made quite an impact!

Jím





Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Kairos is a Ministry Like No Other

When people ask me what prison ministry is like, I tell them it is the truest, most pure type of church I have ever attended. It's raw; it's real; it's powerful. There's no room for fluff. KAIROS #50 at Pulaski State Prison, Georgia, was no exception. We prepared for weeks, preparing and bonding, readying our hearts and minds as a team to minister to the residents, officers and staff God chose for this ministry experience, well before we arrived. It was always them. It was always us. "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps." Proverbs 16:9. That's always how it happens. We think we know the best way, but God...

Leading up to the weekend, the prison had been locked down for some safety and security purposes, not allowing any ministries inside, but God made a way for KAIROS to be allowed inside. The chaplain and the warden have witnessed the value of KAIROS within the walls of the compound. They know the message of forgiveness works to change hearts and the culture inside.

COVID reemerged at Pulaski State the week prior to Weekend #50, threatening to put a halt to the Weekend. Dorm after dorm was being placed on quarantine lockdown. Residents who had been selected to attend were prevented as dorm doors were locked, even as late as Thursday morning, more dorms closed, more residents deferred, but God...

Based on our available KAIROS team members, we were able to serve 36 residents inside. All 36 spots were filled by the time we walked onto the grounds Thursday afternoon. **EVERY** woman who arrived Thursday afternoon finished the weekend on Sunday afternoon, residents and volunteers alike. **Not one** of us had to or chose to leave.

We brought with us the spirit of "Listen, Listen, Love, Love", and we absolutely loved on those women through the course of the weekend. Their facial expressions and body language on Thursday suggested closed-up, unwilling spirits, behind walls of protection, guarding fear, hurt, abandonment, brokenness, loneliness, and rejection. The residents God selected were desperately seeking the love only God can offer, and they found that offered through our team, but most surprisingly (to them perhaps), they found God's love poured out through each other. They've had their guard up so long, fearing for their very lives, at the hands of one another, they couldn't see they all felt the same, that they all yearned for the same connection and acceptance.



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Kairos is a Ministry Like No Other, (cont'd)

During the course of the weekend, I heard two women profess their love for Jesus. I saw a Muslim woman praise the Lord singing contemporary Christian songs along with the rest of us, raising her hands in praise while wearing her hijab. I watched women breaking down in tears as they realized we're not so different, that we all have hurts and hang ups, that we all have the same basic needs: to be loved, to feel connected, to be heard. I heard women forgive their parent, their families, their children, their predator, their bunkie, themselves... God... not that He needed their forgiveness, but I watched as freedom happened, right there inside the gates of the prison compound. I listened to residents challenge one another to be the change they want to see inside, to call the resident leaders in the room to utilize their influence to change the culture inside to one of protection and love for each other, to create an environment where the undesirable behaviors aren't tolerated. I watched as shackles broke off in Jesus' name and women danced for joy and openly wept over the healing they were experiencing. I watched the church be church, in love and grace; I watched the residents become church for one another. I watched as hearts broke wide open to receive His love, gratefully.

KAIROS #50 PSP or lovingly called Pulaski State "University" by some of the residents who declared, we are all still learning and growing. Amen!) was a powerful move of God, done beautifully His way. The vessels He sent were forever changed. We pray the soil will be fertile and ready to foster amazing growth and a culture shift within the walls of Pulaski.

Eugenía

Eugenia Helms, Pulaski Women's Prison





Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Advanced Kairos Training in Fortson, GA

Georgia held its first Advanced Kairos Training (AKT) since COVID the weekend of November 3-5, 2023, at Fortson 4-H Center in Hampton, GA. We had training for all three programs, Kairos Inside, Kairos Outside and Kairos Torch, with 45 people in attendance. We were also blessed to have two KPMI Coordinators with us for the weekend, Kevin Resnover (Youth Ministries Coordinator) and Tina Davis (Women's Ministries Coordinator). Participants from CA, NH, OH, ME, SC,AL, FL, MS, AR, TX and of course our own state of GA were actively engaged during this weekend filled with fellowship, good food, and much-needed instruction to prepare future leaders. Special thanks to our Georgia AKT Coordinator Ann Straham for her great coordination skills that helped ensure a pleasant experience for all in attendance. We also want to give a great big GOD-BLESS-YOU to volunteers who assisted with transporting our out-of-town attendees to the Camp -Tom Kibler, Octavia Everett, Verlyn & Sue Criswell, Steve Byrd, Silas Pendleton, Harry Booth, and Kevin Resnover. **Pictures tell the story!!!**











































Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

(1) Thursday, Sept. 21st, 2023 (10:30 Am) Kairos tamily in the State Georgia. Hope and pray that this etter finds the commonly in the best of health and Spirits along with each members family and friends and Staying Safe at all My name is, Jorge here at Hays State Prison Im going on 30 ups, now irst time that have did and that is that this prison really needs Kairos back Could bring Change to and bring lots has done

DUERCOME

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that

¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

Col 1:12-17

and my life inside out. I have my wife and daughter now going to do there walk in November and I can't wait to see how much it will change there lives and the way they will start seeing the world through God's eyes.

I want to thank you't for everything you'l have done for my life and now my families also after they do there walk. God bless everyone in the Kairos community and I pray for it to come book to this prison soon.



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Rest in peace, faithful servant



Paul A. Caruso, 78, Acworth, Georgia, passed away Friday, November 19th. He was born in Newark and raised in New Providence, NJ. Paul settled in Toms River, NJ where he lived for 35 years. He has since settled in Georgia. Paul had a fulfilling career as a kindergarten teacher for the Toms River Board of Education. He was known for playing his guitar in the classroom, Paul made a difference in the lives of his students and their families. Paul was also a proud Veteran having served in the Marines. He loved gardening and was always very generous with his harvest. Paul was an avid reader and loved to learn. He enjoyed bowling, karaoke, country line dancing, and playing card games. He was very spiritual and was active in the Catholic Church. He is survived by his devoted wife of 28 years, Lorraine Weinberg-Caruso, and children.

Kairos Daily and Monthly Prayer Times

Prayer is foundational, transformative, and prayer works!

We are asking every volunteer to pray for Kairos daily at noon (your time).

Also, a Kairos prayer conference call is held on the first day of each month at 12 noon Eastern Time/US for 15 minutes.

A designated Kairos volunteer leads us in prayer each month.

This call is open to everyone in Kairos!

Dial-in: 301-715-8592 Meeting ID: 3202518737# Passcode: 215540



A Christmas Prayer

May Knowing Jesus bring you Peace to bless each day, Hope for each tomorrow, And Joy in every season.



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Prisoner to Prisoner Devotionals

Consider ordering Prisoner to Prisoner devotionals (also known as P2P), the only devotional written by prisoners for prisoners.

This uniqueness makes it more than a devotional, but a written account of the lives, experiences, and heartfelt feelings of those who are incarcerated, making for unique and relatable content.

This quarterly devotional is perfect for ordering to distribute to your church, Christian friends, or directly to the prison chaplain in your area. Orders can be recurring or one-time.

Ask your Advisory Council to order via the Kairos supply order form by the following dates:

1/15/24 order deadline for the April/May/June Issue

4/15/24 order deadline for the July/August/September Issue

7/15/24 order deadline for the Oct/Nov/Dec Issue

Georgia Volunteer Renewal Process

- 1. Go to gdc.ga.gov
- 2. Scroll down to "Volunteer Opportunities" and click "Get Involved"
- 3. On the left side of the page, click "Volunteer Renewal Application"
- 4. Scroll down and click "FILL OUT THE RENEWAL FORM"
- 5. When this page opens, note that the page is for <u>renewals</u> only. If you are a new applicant, click the link on this page that says "NEW APPLICATION PROCESS"
- 6. Complete the info with your name, badge number, and expiration date, click that you are not a robot, then click "Submit." This will take you to the correct screen.
- 7. Watch the This will take at least 30-40 minutes.
- 8. Follow the remaining instructions to complete the app renewal.
- 9. When this part of the process is completed, look for the email notification that your renewal has been received.



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Lavender Lemon Shortbread



Ingredients

For shortbread

- **3/4 c.** unsalted butter (1 1/2 sticks), at room temp, plus more for greasing
- 1/3 c. granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 1 tsp. finely grated orange zest
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 c. all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt

For glaze

- 1 1/4 c. confectioners' sugar
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. milk, plus more as needed
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- Pink or red food coloring (optional)
- · Dried lavender, for topping
- Orange zest, for topping

Directions

- Step 1 Make shortbread: Heat oven to 325°F. Butter 9-inch round cake pan, then line bottom with parchment paper
- Step 2 In stand mixer, beat butter on medium until smooth and creamy, 1 minute. Add granulated sugar, citrus zests and vanilla and beat, scraping down bowl halfway through, until combined, about 2 minute. On low, gradually add flour and salt and mix just until dough comes together.
- Step 3 Using lightly floured hands, press dough into prepared pan in even layer and prick dough with fork several times. Bake until edges are light golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool in pan 30 minutes, then loosen edges with small offset spatula and very carefully (shortbread will be delicate) turn out onto wire rack lined with parchment paper. Let cool completely.
- Step 4 Meanwhile, make glaze: Sift confectioners' sugar into medium bowl. Add lemon juice, milk, vanilla and 1 or 2 drops food coloring, if using; whisk, adding more milk if needed, until smooth and thick but still pourable. Spread glaze on gooled shortbread, leaving border. Sprinkle with dried lavender and orange zest. Let glaze set at least 30 minutes: slice into wedges.



Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

Christmas and the Christian Witness

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." (Isaiah 9:2)

I am so grateful for this privilege to share a few words this Christmas season and my prayer is that you be encouraged and have a Merry Christmas and a better understanding of the Word of God.

My brothers and sisters this is the easiest time of the year to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ, but it is also the most missed opportunity to share with the world what Christmas really means. During this season there are a countless number of people we encounter, strangers we don't even know, who will speak in passing and say, "Merry Christmas". In other words, they are telling us "Be happy with Christ".

Although it's mainly during this season when the world hears that Christmas is about the message of God giving us His Son, they hear it in the music, they read it on Christmas cards, and the Hallmark Channel does a whole series on television.

It's everywhere you look, but it's been so commercialized for businesses to make a profit.

They still see him as a baby Jesus, but not the Savior of the world and the reason for our salvation.

Therefore, as reflectors of the light, we should always be willing to share every day, and be a witness to the lost. We cannot allow another missed opportunity to pass us by without telling them about the true light, the best gift, and the purpose of the tree. And contrary to public opinion, Jesus is not only the reason for the season, but Jesus is the one who created every season.

Seasons change. But Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. He is there in the good seasons, the bad seasons, and even in our dark seasons.

He is right here with us to brighten our path and lead us to the light.





Kairos of Georgia...Changing Hearts, Transforming Lives, Impacting the World December, 2023

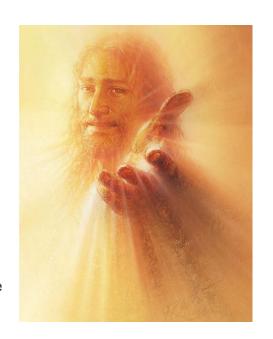
Christmas and the Christian Witness (cont'd)

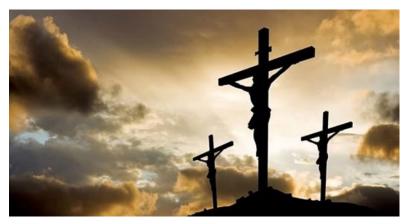
#1. The True Light: "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." (John 1:9).

#2. The Best Gift: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." (James 1:7)

"Thank God for this gift too wonderful for words!" (2 Corinthians 9:15)

When the world gives you a gift you can believe not all their gifts come from a truly lovely and caring spirit. But just imagine if we give the precious gift that God has given us which is Christ -- and passed Him on.





#3. The Purpose of the Tree.

Trees play a significant role in Christianity; the cross was made from a tree, and it symbolizes God's provision and the choice between obedience and disobedience.

It also symbolizes the redemptive work of Jesus on the cross.

Evergreens were used as a sign of eternal

life because the evergreen flourishes all year round and that symbolizes eternal life through Christ's birth, death, and resurrection. The tree's branches and shrubs are said to symbolize the crown of thorns worn by Christ on the cross.

May the Lord keep you and bless you this holiday season.



Brother Ron Jones
State Clergy

