

**KAIROS OF COLORADO, INC**

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PRISON MINISTRY

**"GOD'S SPECIAL TIME"**  
Volume 11 #4 Christmas 1993

*"I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:36*

**++ CELEBRATE THE GIFT ++**

**+ WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHO, HOW ++**

As we celebrate God's greatest gift to us -- His coming as a helpless baby, born to bring us salvation -- we thank Him for the testimonies of many whose lives have been touched His gift through Kairos. As we share a few of those with you from Kairos Closings, we are also glad to be able to include a very special one from an officer at the women's prison.

**LAST FRIDAY REUNIONS** in the Denver area are monthly and open to everyone interested in Kairos. For information call Ed Junghans 303-466-9224.

**SPRING 1994 KAIROS SHORT COURSES** need team volunteers. Contact the Facility Coordinators **SOON** for dates and information.

We ask that you consider a special gift at this time to help Kairos reach out to our brothers and sisters in prison. Your gifts are very much needed and gratefully received. Please tell us if you wish to designate your gift for ministry in a particular prison (Women's, Fremont, Territorial, Delta, or Limon) or if we may use it wherever it is most needed. For your convenience and ours, please use the information form on page 2 and the enclosed envelope.

- Fremont: Ed Quintana 303-433-4764
- Women: Gerry Lam 719-390-8732
- Territorial: Gene Wilkowski 303-939-8171
- Delta: Andy Kaminski 303-752-4184

**LIMON** needs a **Coordinator**, Kairos men to attend current monthly Reunions, and more prospective team members for Kairos #1. For information call Jim Strub 719-634-2821.

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## KAIROS INFORMATION FORM

\_\_\_\_ Check here if new address.  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help Kairos Prison Ministry  
\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ prison.  
\_\_\_\_\_ wherever help is most needed.  
\_\_\_\_\_ I'd like to volunteer. Please send team application.

*Thank you for your support!*

Printing courtesy of St. Michael the Archangel Episcopal Church Editors: Peggy and Jim Strub

## COLORADO DISTRICT BOARD

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## ADVISORY COUNCILS

In previous newsletters we have written about "facility Advisory Councils" and their gradual assumption of some of the Board's (District Committee's) responsibilities -- all in the spirit of the general outline given on pages 407 and 408 of the Kairos Manual. This is now taking place in different ways at each of the four full-program facilities. At Fremont, for example, the AC has organized itself and taken on responsibilities as follows:

Coordinator:	Ed Quintana	Board rep and single point liaison with FCF
Chairman:	Dick Evans	convener and head of the AC
Finances:	Dan Halperin	team finances and liaison with Board treasurer
Materials:	Terry Kruse	palanca, food, "shed things", storage facilities
Team Building:	Jim Strub	recruiting, aiding Rector in team formation
Training:	Jim Waters	training new members, refreshing the others
Current Rector:	Denny Shea	traditional responsibilities, with strong AC help
Fund Raising:	Everybody	

## FROM KAIROS CLOSINGS

I've known since childhood I was a chosen vessel. You can try to hide but can't. My family, drugs, pimps... my Mom kept the faith. Those guys in here showed me how to share the gospel. One night in my cell in maximum, I experienced such pain, I broke down and cried. I prayed and the Lord showed me I had to be broken so He could use me.

I've been in prison a long time -- on the outside. Now I believe that my addiction -- I've been on drugs since I was 10 -- can be lifted off me.

I came for the food, but got a lot more. I grew up in an orphanage, no family. Here I found friends, a loving family, found a life I didn't know existed. I'm taking Jesus Christ with me, holding on to the cross. I didn't have such a good life out there -- this is a family.

All those letters from all over. And the lady with cancer who baked a turkey for us. It's a good feeling to know that people who don't even know me are praying for me. I hope to leave this penitentiary with God in my heart.

All these people -- I'm still surprised! And all that mail, more letters than I've ever seen. This morning my muslim neighbor heard me reading the Bible aloud and asked me for one, so I'm giving him my other one.

How's He supposed to forgive me if I won't forgive myself? I always blamed others for my mistakes. It feel so good to take my own blame for my mistakes.

I was sure I could make it when I leave tomorrow. Now I know I need God with me and with Him I really know I'll make it!

This Kairos experience is truly beyond description. You can tell some of what goes on, but that still won't describe what goes on. When we were told about the placemats, that kids decorated them, I was elated -- that the children could care for us. This is the beginning of a beautiful walk for us all.

(Two together): #1 -- I gave her some "love cookies" last night (special forgiveness cookies). #2 -- We've had a lot of problems at work together, but now we're OK. I apologize, too, and I forgive you. #1 -- I just want to tell you I love you. (Hugs!)

Before these three days, I had a lot of hatred in my heart. I wasn't afraid to risk taking a life if someone crossed me. But that's all different now. I know God called me here. Now I'm part of God's army. God took my mask away and opened me up.

I'm going to be here a long time. I thought I'd just do the time, stay out of everyone's way. Now I can live a life of celebration. And I need you sisters in here when I'm not following the Lord, that you'll tell me and help me.

God's a totally radically awesome dude!

## KAIROS - God's Special Time

(The following witness is used with permission from the author.)

As a boy growing up in Carmel, New York, I had gone to church on a regular basis. Somewhere along the line, I grew away from religion. Jesus was not in my life, though I still called myself a Christian.

A short time after high school graduation in 1963, I joined the Marine Corps. Like most new Marines, I could drink and swear with the best of them. Nineteen months in Vietnam did not help me to find Jesus, although, looking back, he was beside me everywhere.

After the Marine Corps, I found myself working as a Sheriff's deputy in Santa Barbara, CA. This was another "hard outer skin" type of job. One has to keep up the professional image at all times lest others think of you as "too soft hearted" to be effective.

Ten years of working in a county jail and also as a street cop made me tired of the revolving door justice we have in America. I moved to Alaska, got into retail sales, and tried to enjoy the good life. God was still not there, however. I moved back to California and worked my way up the managerial ladder of a retail drug chain. I had always wanted to live in Colorado for its hunting and fishing opportunities. When a transfer opened up, I was ready. The job went well for a few years. I went up the success ladder but something was missing.

In Nov. of 1989, I parted company with retail business, but had no other job lined up. In late Nov., early Dec, a friend mentioned the Colo. Dept. of Corrections was going to be hiring new officers. I had never wanted to work in a prison, but I did need a job. My thinking was only to have money coming in until I found a permanent job I liked. Little did I know then that God was already working for me. Although the DOC personnel department has deadlines, I seemed to make them all with a minimum of prior notice. It was as if God had personally taken me by the hand through each phase of the hiring process.

On Jan 1, 1990, I began my career with the Dept. of Corrections, assigned to Centennial Correctional Facility in Canon City, a maximum security prison which also houses death row. The most hardened of the hard core convicts are sent to Centennial. I thrived with God's helping hand.

On Apr. 1, 1993, I was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and transferred to the Colorado Womens Correctional Facility. I had been warned by other staff of the type of convicts there. If a male staff member did not watch his step, the women would set him up to have him fired. Claims would be made he had sex with a convict if he found himself in a room with an inmate. She could claim he raped her and begin screaming. A few such incidents and he would be fired. His career with DOC would be over. It was with great apprehension that I started my first day at CWCF. I was assigned a labor crew on grounds maintenance. Some of the inmates were exceptional workers. Others were exceptional by their laziness. On my third day, I was called into the Security Manager's office and informed that one of the inmates on my crew made allegations that I had grabbed her breasts and buttocks. Luckily for me, I had not had contact with the inmate that day other than to lock her into a yard area to work. I had spent the rest of the day working with other inmates.

CWCF has a long hallway with administration at one end and housing units at the other. The housing and programs supervisor, a man who was my supervisor at Centennial, had his office at the housing end of the hallway. I was discouraged as I walked the hallway to seek his advice. It was a low spot of my life.

Just outside his office, one of my better workers approached me. She said she had to talk to me about something important but did not know where to start. She almost had tears in her eyes. I was afraid of another "set up" so I tried to maneuver her outside of the supervisor's office where he could see both of us. When I asked what was wrong, she said there had been allegations against me, that I had touched one of the inmates. She was worried I would be fired. She also said I could not have done anything wrong because I had been with her and other convicts all day. She agreed to tell the housing supervisor and I was cleared. This was new to me. At Centennial, if an officer got himself into trouble, the consensus from the inmates was that it was his problem. If they could clear him, they would not. It was against the "code" of the convict population.

From my first day at CWCF, I was told I and a female sergeant would be assisting the Chaplain with the KAIROS weekend, April 15-18, 1993.

From the first day, I was skeptical of the KAIROS program. I thought it was a waste of manpower to give convicts four days to eat food and have it easy. I felt the volunteers, though having good intentions, were wasting their time.

While the other Sergeant was there -- we overlapped shifts -- I usually stayed outside with her. I had to keep up my hardened exterior. When she went home, I gravitated inside. I wanted to try to pick out who was there to eat and who was there to seek the power of Jesus Christ. I spotted two right off the bat. I know in my heart these two women could care less about religion. I kept it to myself. Prison staff are there only to keep order. They have nothing to do with the weekend. Remember, KAIROS is strictly for the inmate population.

The first time I entered the prison chapel, I looked at the pictures on the walls as I entered the building. When I turned around to go back outside, a beautiful picture of Jesus, painted by one of the convicts, was right in front of me. I quickly turned away from it. Yet, I could not keep my eyes from looking at it again and again. It was so beautiful. I finally left the chapel with tears in my eyes. I realized that I was angry with God for taking both my father and my 16 year old daughter within two weeks in 1990. I was furious with God for taking my daughter. I thought I hid my feelings well but the Chaplain and a few of the volunteers noticed something in me and asked how I was doing, did I go to church regularly? I was honest with them and told them how mad I was at God and why. They said they would pray for me.

I was becoming more and more engrossed in the weekend. I did not sleep more than two hours on any night. Something kept churning over and over in my head. I was angry at God but the transformation I was starting to see in the women was amazing. They had begun to pray openly with volunteers. There were no petty arguments or name calling as I usually saw

## God's Special Time -- continued --

within the prison population. Profanity had all but stopped. What was happening to these women? What was happening to me? The inmates were asking me to sit at their table and share meals with them. I was not used to this. My "set up" time was still to come and this was part of the process. By their actions, they were saying, "trust me".

On the third night of KAIROS, inmates are given a chance at an open microphone. Tears are the order of the day as one woman after another gets up in front of the group and tries to tell of her inner feelings. One of the women handed me a handful of her Kleenex as she noticed I seemed to have something in my eyes. A murderess got up and began crying as she said she has always found it hard to trust people. Now, this was a woman I had thought was as hard skinned as I was. But she wasn't hard skinned at all. Other women came over to me and said they were glad I was with them for the weekend. This was not supposed to be happening. These were convicts, wearing green uniforms. I was a Sergeant, wearing blue. Green shirts and blue shirts were supposed to be against one another. There was to be no union of the two.

Also, on the third night, each participant is given two bags of cookies. One is for them and the other is to be given to any person with whom they have had a problem (in the prison). They must give it and either ask forgiveness of that person or give forgiveness to that person. As I went to work on the fourth day I wondered how the given bags had been received. As each woman got up and told her story, it was to be another day with dirt in my eye. All the bags were received with gratitude. The giver and the recipient were on a new footing of friendship and a hug sealed the bargain.

The last night of KAIROS is special to everyone of the volunteers and to the participants. From the chapel, everyone moves to the larger auditorium. There, all of the volunteers including those behind the scenes have gathered for a final ceremony to hopefully send these women back to the prison with Jesus Christ as their savior to spread His word.

It was to be a double handful of Kleenex night. Each workshop table was to get up before the audience and explain what they had gotten out of the four days. After that, there was open mike time. One by one each of the girls got up and accepted the Lord as her savior. The two girls I thought were there just for the food, both had accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord. One wanted to be baptized as soon as possible. It is nice to be wrong once in a while.

The leader called one of the volunteers up to give a short speech. While she was talking, I suddenly realized why I had not slept the past few nights. What I had been churning over and over in my head were things I wanted to tell these ladies; one was that I, too, had accepted Jesus into my heart again. I was no longer angry with God. But I couldn't tell them. This was their weekend with the Lord. This was not my time, it was theirs. I was engrossed in my own thoughts when I looked up and realized the leader was holding the microphone out to me. I started to decline but then realized it was useless for

two reasons. Every one of the inmates who made KAIROS that weekend was cheering and clapping for me to come up. I also realized at that moment that this was the reason God had brought me to CWCF. It had nothing to do with the labor crew or my promotion to Sergeant. It had everything to do with my life as a Christian and with those women who had allowed me into their private lives. I owed my life as a Christian to those convicts. I would not let them down.

I told them of my father's death. How he was old and sick for many years. God taking him was a blessing. He was in a better place. I could not tell them of my daughter. It would have been too emotional. She was an honor student, she was a potential world class ice hockey player. She had also suffered a breakdown after the suicides of three of her friends. She had been hospitalized as potentially suicidal herself. Just when she was putting all of that behind her and was due to come home for good, she died of an apparent allergic reaction to medicine prescribed for her. The support I received while talking that night both from God and from the KAIROS participants was overwhelming.

After the ceremony, I was thronged by everyone. Hugging was the order of the day. One woman told me she had been a con for 17 years and had never hugged an officer, but she did that night. A Catholic priest took a KAIROS cross on a rainbow of woven yarn from his neck and placed it around mine. Volunteers said many times they had never seen an officer getting such a warm welcome or being asked to speak. It was a beautiful night for everyone.

Watching these ladies break away all barriers to let Jesus Christ into their hearts was painful for each of them. I have never seen a group of people put forth so much emotional work and they did. I am honored these lovely ladies allowed me to touch their lives. I am proud they have touched mine.

Editor's footnote --

Six months later, at the next Kairos Closing, this officer pulled his Kairos cross out from under his shirt and witnessed further: "Since the last KAIROS weekend, this cross I wear is one of the proudest possessions I have, and I carry a lot of Kleenex, too. Not just because it's a cross -- I can buy a cross -- but because you guys gave it to me. One day my wife said, 'Grown men don't wear little pieces of rainbow yarn.' -- she wanted to get me a nice chain. But I said, 'Honey, this man wears a little piece of yarn.' (To inmates): He's carried me for years. He'll carry you, too. And I challenge you that if I hear you cussing and swearing in the halls, I'm going to call you on it, and I want you to call me on it, too. By the way, (laughing) I'm going to have to write up all this hugging and kissing going on here."

"God's Special Time"



Prison Ministry