



COLORADO



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Blessings of God's Peace, Joy and Love to all of you,

Well, I started this article the way I normally end an article, wishing you abundant blessings from God, because I know how totally faithful he always is to grant us blessings beyond our imagination, even though we don't earn them. He has blessed this Kairos ministry beyond my ability to explain it to people. How do you explain the supernatural way the Holy Spirit changes lives right before our eyes, even the ones some people might not expect to have their heart softened? But we have come to expect it based on many, many years of witnessing God's Amazing Grace and Forgiveness.

You probably noticed the new logo and banner on the top of this Newsletter. Special thanks to Jim Strub and Pat Mills for working out a new header that conforms to the Kairos Prison Ministries International (KPMI) "Style Guide" standards. You may not know this fact, but the IRS requires any 501(c)3 non-profit organization (like Kairos) to act like one common international organization along many dimensions, not to act like several separate state organizations. One thing they look at is all our state websites to see that they have common logos, mission statements, core values, and other factors.

Consequently, in the next few months we will roll out our new state website for Kairos of Colorado, which you can read about in another article in this newsletter. We used a standard website template provided by KPMI so that we would have a common look and feel with the other states' websites. Big thanks to Susan Despotopulos, who has been doing a fantastic job working with KPMI to flesh out our new website.

As you all know, our number one priority for Kairos of Colorado is for all of us to actively and intentionally recruit "new blood" into our volunteer bases for every institution we are currently in, and for the new facilities we are about to open up. These new volunteers will help us build a strong pipeline of volunteers and leaders at the Advisory Council level up through the State Committee. Many of you

stepped up to help us find local volunteers, local clergy and ongoing local support. Special thanks to Lee Schafer for his true leadership! Also, Kevin Condon is working with the great Buena Vista facility leaders, amazing state CDOC leaders, committed local churches, and passionate local volunteers to bring Kairos into that institution as well. We're all excited to see where God leads us in Buena Vista.

In addition, Paul Osborne is working with Denver Seminary to find ways we can work together to help each other in amazing ways. For example, we hope we can offer the students the opportunity to spend significant time interacting with the residents alongside our other Kairos volunteers. We hope some students and teachers will be able to participate as "clergy" on some of our weekends and other events.

Please let me know what other positive results you have experienced in talking to pastors about the needs and potential volunteers in their churches. I can't wait to hear what God is doing!

I see the state of Kairos being strong in Colorado. I see wonderful volunteers and leaders across the state. I see God's Holy Spirit alive and very present at every weekend! I see the lives of the incarcerated being changed in dramatic ways. I see growth and strength. I see Kairos in every institution in the state coming in the future.

So, come on! Let's go recruit the leaders of the future who will serve God and get us to that vision!

Blessings of love, peace and joy to all of you!!

Randy Weldon , State Chairman, on behalf of the entire State Committee

NEW WEBSITE IN THE WORKS

It is with great anticipation and excitement that we are pleased to announce that the great state of Colorado will soon have an updated Kairos website! This product is the result a team effort and the guidance and expertise of the Kairos Website Administrator Lee Turner who has developed websites for many states.

Our goal with this website is to provide a common look and feel with other states' website. It will provide information on locations where we serve and an overview of the Kairos ministry as well as opportunities to donate online. We will also have a calendar that we can list our team events at.

It will be a fantastic recruiting tool!

The website is still being developed and we hope to have it up and running this summer.

The address will be <http://kairoscolorado.org/>

If you want to get a sneak preview, you can go to Kairos of Indiana's website at <http://kairosindiana.org/> as the layout and content will be similar to Colorado's.

We hope that you will find that the new website has a fresh look, is easy to use and is informative..

Submitted by Susan Despotopulos

HOW IS YOUR WALK?

The Walk

I groan from the effort required to lift my legs. My feet, once purposeful, are now reluctant, ill-balanced. The pressure on my shoulders from the beam across them strains my joints, crushes my muscles.

The sweat pouring down my forehead mixes with the road dust, turning into a streaky paste that blurs vision as well as frustrates from not being able to wipe it off. The ache in my lungs and stitch in my side from my demanding, humbling journey causes me to moan all the louder when I realize how much further I have to go.

My parched mouth adds to the suffering and I can smell the odor of fear rising from me. All of this fades to nothing when compared to the weight on my soul as I walk down the cobbled, narrow, uneven path to my certain, intentionally humiliating death. Additionally, for those lining the path, smirking, pointing, gawking as well as recoiling, I look so beaten, so dejected, so alone.

How's Your Walk?

Why does the desire to accept God's love require us to give up our life? To walk His path? To willingly put on His yoke? To know beforehand we will encounter way more than ego bruises, fair-weather friends falling away, and even some frightened by our purposeful walk with Him? The term TANSTAAFLIH applies: there ain't no such thing as a free life in Him.

I'm probably not alone when I picture that kind of scene, when I hear texts like Luke 14:26-27, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters — yes, even their own life — such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

There are some who think involved belief is the only discipleship requirement, that one only has to declare belief in Jesus, toss some money and an occasional little project time His way and hang on to be accepted by Him and receive eternal life.

John addresses that issue in John 3:36, "And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life. Anyone who doesn't obey the Son will never experience eternal life but remains under God's angry judgment."

Volunteering to walk that reality out requires genuine commitment, not just involvement.

Yet, through our willing acceptance of His call to follow Him as our Lord and Savior, we submit our life (especially the ownership and purpose of it) to His direction and control. Through the resulting process of sanctification, He and His Good News transform our life to conform to His example with the help of His comforting gift of the Holy Spirit.

If you are not already carrying your cross, are you ready to drop ego, bend down, lift the cross beam on your shoulders and begin your walk? Everything that genuinely matters depends upon it. After all, He is risen. He is risen, indeed!

God Bless, Tom+ Hall

“Heaven on earth”

...that's how one resident described her Kairos 4-day experience at Denver Women's Correctional Facility earlier this month. This heavenly weekend marked #23 at DWCF, that's twenty-three 4-day weekends where participants have been allowed access to the selfless love of Kairos volunteers whose goal is to strictly follow the footsteps of their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in reaching those who God has not forgotten!

It was my unique and honored privilege to serve as the Observing Leader on this Team #23 along-side our (fearless) Leader, Edna Robinson. Together we joined many more faithful women of God, our fellow Kairos Teammates, and were able to answer His call. We were also able to claim Romans 8:28 to be true in that “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” and His love was poured out through us, His vessels, for His Glory! Souls filed into the room on Thursday evening and our team was amazingly blessed to fill six family tables including; The Family of Anna, The Family of Elizabeth, The Family of Esther, The Family of Martha, The Family of Ruth, and The Family of Sarah.

Every single one of the ladies seemed to be completely open to receive His Love the entire length of the weekend. This touched my heart, for of all the weekends I have served, this was the hungriest group of women I had come across on the first night. They just wanted to be filled, no reservations or pushback. They just wanted Jesus...and our King, as always, was there waiting and ready to share of Himself. He breathed life into those women and we literally had a front row seat.

When the weekend came to a close, there was much emotion behind the words strewn across pages of neatly folded notebook paper and sent freely into that eager crowd through a solitary microphone, their life stories like messages in a bottle, sent into an ocean of love.

There wasn't an empty seat in the house, I know for sure because I didn't have one! It was evident that God's family had greatly expanded and that God's people came to meet the newest members of The Church, His Church.

Each woman, one by one, came to share how the Lord had worked miracles within them; that broken hearts were now mended, that new life was found to replace the numbness, that anger was chased away with agape love, that new friendships were made and that a deeper relationship with Jesus was found.

One woman laughingly recalled how her fellow prisoners, the previous Kairos graduates (or Angels) had commented that they wanted to “see her face change” and that she was a little hesitant to continue with the program - what was going to happen? Was she going to grow a giant wart or what was the deal? Now knowing and confirming the transformation which had occurred on the inside (shown on her face), she understood what was meant by their then confusing statement!

Another woman said her and her table family would describe the weekend as plainly as “heaven on earth.” I suppose these words will always stay with me, as they instantly gave me (what I like to call) Holy Ghost Bumps. I felt His presence in that moment, for truly no better comment could there ever be, but that God had shown Himself and therefore heaven was found on earth, as our Heavenly Father drew His children closer to His breast.

It is no wonder why these experiences continue to forever change me every time I come to prison. It was absolutely an honor to serve on Kairos #23 and I will continue down this road, for isn't this why we do Kairos ourselves? That we never forget what Christ saved us from...ourselves? Let us bring heaven to earth, through Christ-like love, until we leave this earth for our heavenly home my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Submitted by Elizabeth Wilson

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS BENT COUNTY?

Bent County is in south central Colorado. I know all you Coloradans have heard of Rocky Ford cantaloupes. Even we Texans know nothing is better than a Rocky Ford melon. To be precise, Bent County Correctional Facility is located in the town of Las Animas. The Correctional Facility is operated by CCA, which stands for Corrections Corporation of America. There is no difference between this privately operated facility and one that is operated by the state. CCA still must abide by all the rules, policies, and regulations set forth by Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC). And the mention of Rocky Ford? Las Animas is 35 miles to the east of Rocky Ford on US Hwy 50. About 35 miles to the east of Las Animas is Lamar Colorado. Now you know where Bent County is located!

You are getting this information about Bent County, because God is doing some fantastic things. About a year ago, I met Kevin Condon. After talking several times, he asked me if I would be interested in helping start a new Kairos program at the Bent County Facility. I agreed to take on that task. Kevin and I went to Bent County in May of 2014 to meet with the facility Chaplain. Privately operated facilities have paid, full-time Chaplains. The Chaplain at Bent County is David Hestand. In an e-mail to Kevin, David had said he had been praying for 12 years for the Kairos program to come to BCCF. That day in May we also met two other wonderful people (the Gorrells); like me, they too had lots of Kairos experience volunteering at prisons in Texas. Russ and Karla Gorrell were eager to join us in starting a Kairos program at BCCF. Russ, Karla, and I went back to Bent County in June to meet with the Warden, Assistant Warden, and Chaplain. Everyone was in agreement that we should start work on getting the program established at BCCF.

Later on that June day, the Gorrells and I met with the pastors of several Methodist churches in the area. We had the pastors from churches in Las Animas, La Junta, Rocky Ford, and Ordway in attendance. Russ, Karla and I presented the Kairos program to them. Being experienced Emmaus workers, they were somewhat familiar with the Kairos format. They agreed to support us in getting Kairos established at BCCF..

Our biggest concern was finding 30-40 volunteers willing to travel to Bent County. The pastors of the area churches gave me contact information of people they knew that might be interested. The Chaplain became a great recruiter for us, talking about Kairos with other Christian volunteers that came regularly to BCCF with other Christian programs. I met with the Director of the Emmaus of the Rockies Group in Pueblo, Paige Gordon, and he too became an effective recruiter for Kairos.

By the end of the summer of 2014, our recruiting was in full swing. By the end of the year we had enough dedicated volunteers to start an ad hoc advisory council. We now have seven members on this council. Our list of potential volunteers has grown to over 42 people. Of this number, over 20 are dedicated to serving on BCCF #1. Another 10-12 are very good possibilities. Our goal is to have 40 members on our very first team with 28-35 volunteers being the inside team and another 7-10 as outside team members. We will send out the formal Kairos application and invitation to serve on BCCF #1 in mid-April..

This past June, we started monthly reunions and prayer and share with inmates at BCCF that have completed a Kairos weekend at another prison. We have been averaging close to 40 residents in attendance each month since our first meeting. From this group will come the stewards that will serve on BCCF #1. We will have 42 participants attending their first-ever Kairos weekend.

Our first weekend is set for October 1-4, 2015. God is answering prayer in every way. To tell you all about the ways He has intervened for us would require another newsletter. Our desire is that you, the Church, will continue to keep us in your prayers as God continues to work in miraculous ways at BCCF.

Submitted by Lee Schafer

7 December 1943 — SAMUEL J. ABEYTA — 8 December 2014

This past December the Lord drew to His bosom someone we believe to be very dear to Him – Sam Abeyta. Sam was one of the founders of Kairos of Colorado and, later, of Chosen Men of God Ministries.

Sam and Louise Abeyta were among the original group of Roman Catholic and Episcopal Cur-sillistas who established Kairos of Colorado in 1982. They then served on the Colorado Kairos Secretariat until it was merged into Kairos of Colorado, Inc, for which Sam later served as President. (The corporation eventually became what we know as “the State Committee.”)



In April 1983 Sam was a team member on the first men's Kairos in Colorado, Fremont #1. In April 1984 he was Rector of Fremont #3, which was this editor's first Kairos Weekend. In 1986, he helped establish the program at Territorial and was Rector of Territorial #3 in May 1987.

Through all this time of presenting the agape love of Jesus to so many men, the Lord was grooming him to establish a somewhat similar program for men on the outside – the Chosen Men of God Ministries. God blessed this ministry richly and it is still going strong.

When Kairos of Colorado started the program at Delta, Sam was right there, serving and supporting. A few years later it became obvious that Delta needed to upgrade its religious program facilities, like maybe a whole new chapel – the Chapel of Hope. To facilitate this, through his Front Range Fabrication company, Sam donated all the structural steel, pre-cut to specs and delivered to the site ready to erect. Unusual? No. Sam was well known for being generous in donating to churches or anything that had to do with the Lord's Ministries. He was an astute business man and shared the profits abundantly.

Beyond that, he shared his life in Christ with so many. Some 750 people participated in the three-hour-long Celebration of Life at the Victory Church for Sam. Many of those present shared stories of how Sam helped bring Jesus as Savior into their lives -- not only into their lives but also into the lives of their families -- sometimes with a small push, sometimes with a big shove. As Louise (“Weezie”) reports: “He was honored and sent off with a blessing and with so much love, as my daughter and sons all said, 'Dad was our Hero, he taught us so much.' Because of his love for God, many lives were changed and families started serving the Lord together.”

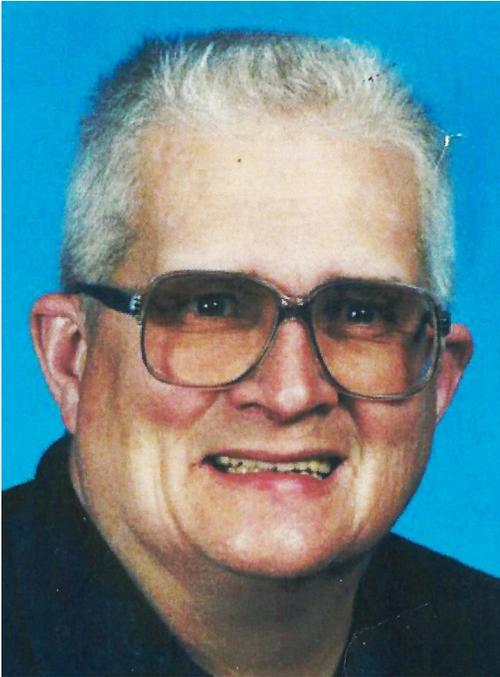
How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Gospel to others.

“Sam did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”

(Paraphrase of John 21:25)

Note: normally the accompanying photo would be only of the subject of the story, but for the Abeytas a photo of Sam and Weezie together seemed more appropriate.

6 December 1931— FRANK F. MERRILL, Jr. — 9 January 2015



We have lost another long-time, loyal team member.

Frank Merrill started life in Waterbury, CN, grew up there and in Barrington, RI. Along his way, he served as an Army cook in Korea, a Country Club cook in Rhode Island, and a rolling mill operator and quality control man in Pawtucket, RI. One night at a square dance he met Rusty (Phyllis) and they married in May 1978.

In 1992, after visiting with Rusty's family here in Colorado every summer for some 14 years, they finally gave up the "Yankee" thing and moved to the wilds of Woodland Park. They soon became involved in the life of Mountain View United Methodist Church,. This led to Frank going on a "Walk to Emmaus" weekend. He loved it and went on to work Emmaus teams for the better part of ten years. This put him in touch with Kairos men, so, not surprisingly, he then began about six years on the Kairos teams, at Territorial. The inmates knew him as a man always ready to listen - so very kind and gentle, and one who remembered their names. He served as Leader (aka Rector) of Kairos #38 in November 2004.

He loved the Lord, his church, Emmaus, and Kairos. He felt so bad when his health began to fail and he could no longer participate at the prison. But even then, with the help of his driver (Rusty) he continued in his small group every week in Colorado Springs.

Frank was always ready with a pun. His pet project was "Fur, Feathers, and Fins" -- a pet-sitting business he and Rusty started in 1994, and which for Rusty is now her pet project.

Frank and Rusty dedicated much of their lives to the Girl Scout programs in Rhode Island and in Teller County. Frank was an avid stamp collector and often traveled to share this love with others. He was a Wrangler with the Woodland Park Chamber of Commerce, a volunteer with Search and Rescue, and served in many ways to many people in his church. In his later years he served in Parkinson's Support Groups in Woodland Park and in Colorado Springs.

In short, Frank was the loving hands and feet of Jesus -- for a long time, and in many ways.

Thank you, Lord, for Frank.

RECRUIT! RECRUIT! RECRUIT! RECRUIT! RECRUIT!

"Recruiting is the life blood of Kairos.

If every current Kairos volunteer would only recruit one person a year, we would have enough volunteers to start a new Kairos every six months.

I have found that other Christians love to hear my story about Kairos.

People really do find something interesting about prison ministries.

Team members need to be ready to always give an explanation for their joy and hope."

Lee Schafer

TERRITORIAL KAIROS #57 — October 2014

From the six Table Families:

In what spiritual condition did you arrive when you came to Kairos?

Anxious, spiritually broken, knew of God (but did not know Him), ready to learn, seeking, conflicted, justified but not sanctified. Some were curious, blind to God, nervous, detached, deflated, “discombobulated”. Lacking in faith and feeling. Didn’t know what to expect or what was expected of us. We had questions, we were trying to fill a void.

What did you find here?

Growth, love, joy, comfort, new friends and brothers. Great physical food and better spiritual food. Some found a roadmap and direction with answers to the question, “Why?” Relaxation, inner peace guidance, hope, truth, life, a safe haven. We found the flower that was thrown over The Wall (*referring to “The Wall” meditation*). We found forgiveness, spirituality, brotherhood and answers to some questions, while generating more questions.

What are you taking with you?

Thankfulness to God for another spiritual step in our life. We are leaving filled with the Holy Spirit. We are filled to overflowing and ready to share. We have answers to many questions, but have some new ones, too. We are taking an open mind, peace in our hearts, and new-found brothers in Christ. We found a New Church, forgiveness, knowledge of not being alone. We are leaving with a lot more than we came with — a new family and endless Agape.

From Individuals at Open Mike:

- Who “The Church” is came to clarity. I built a wall the last few years, and have been building a wall with “positive things”. I found out though, I was missing the cornerstone, Jesus Christ. I had a large stone on top of that wall with my name on it that I had to remove.
- I did not want to face issues I had since I was 3 years old. Some walls just can’t come down so easy, but you can chip at them. I kept asking, “Why” wanting answers to the journey I was travelling. I now see the light from the mountain top and the valley. I accept God’s calling. If you don’t want to hide behind a wall, don’t lay the first brick.
- I was able to surrender everything, forgive myself and others who hurt me.
- I give GLORY TO GOD – You all are the most beautiful people I have ever seen (*referring to the all those present*)
- God put it on my heart to come; I found a new sense of freedom.
- I decided that I would do The LORD a big disrespect if I did not say, “THANK YOU, GOD” for the wonderful weekend and time spent together.
- I was so impressed with the completely open environment and very positive atmosphere during the whole weekend. I will never forget any of you.
- I look at all the posters (*hanging on the gym wall at the closing*) – It is a message. I know about God’s LOVE – Agape Love. I love you all and if I see you in the yard, you are my brothers.
- (*From a deaf brother, his exuberance was very evident in his signing*) I was so excited to be able to come! This is my first opportunity to experience something like this. I did it mostly out of curiosity, but it is so wonderful and joyful. Everything in The Bible is real and true. Barriers were broken through and even during the short periods when the interpreters were not there – I got the message through actions!
- STAY STRONG, Pick Up your Cross – tie your shoes and boots and Let’s Go!
- I was looking to renew my spirituality and found so much more. I owe all this to God.
- When I think about how Christ died for my sins, I never thought I was good or worthy enough. Now I know I don’t have to be good enough.
- I work with my hands a lot and God brought to my attention that all our names are engraved on His Hands
- I give thanks to God for what I received. I did not expect it, but felt the Holy Spirit through my whole body – from head to toe. I will try to be stronger and live my life better every day with the whole armor of God.
- I learned about forgiveness. I used to say, “I forgive, but don’t forget”. That’s not true anymore.
- Two Things: HOPE – I don’t think you really know how much it means to us and you gave us hope. I haven’t cried since 2007 – God must be dwelling here. (*Referring to a time after the “Discovery through Study” talk*)
- I knocked and you Kairos guys opened the door for me.

From the 4th Day Speaker:

It is such a blessing to serve the volunteers and participants. There are many folks here I never expected to see. As the weekend goes on, we get to learn more about each other and then the letters show us how much love there is in the world. We get to see just how much God is in each of our lives and shows us wonderful and amazing things. Being here together shows us how The Church works – It is where The Love is. My eyes were opened to things I did not know about myself. I never thought I would have to come to prison to experience God. I encourage you to sign up to serve God – each of us has some time, even if it is a short moment or two.

Help Wanted in Buena Vista! New Facility Pioneers please apply!

At our November statewide **Celebration Event** at Frisco in Nov. 2014, I sat at the table with Evelyn Lemly, the KPMI Executive Director, and we discussed Kairos with the CDOC Deputy Director of Prisons, John Davis. Director Davis, as it happened, had spent the prior evening reviewing the KPMI website. He has been a guest at Sterling Kairos weekends, visiting what we are doing and with whom. At one time, Director Davis was Warden of [Buena Vista Correctional Complex](#) (BVCC). The evening before the Frisco event, he had discussed the advantages of the Kairos program for inmates and staff at BVCC with the current warden, Jason Lengerich. We told him about the good work the Gorrells and Lee Schafer were doing at the Bent County CF and, after our visit, I agreed to turn things up a notch at BVCC and have been supported in doing so by other state committee members. Warden Lengerich and his staff called me in the car one day and we had an extended conversation about Kairos and we have been invited to visit the facility. A planned site visit a couple of weeks ago was snowed out, but phone work had turned up four local churches who were interested in meeting with us and we will reschedule with all in the coming weeks. It appears we have four churches, several pastors, a bible study leader volunteer, an agreeable chaplain, and a helpful warden. Now all we need is the usual support of God in what we are doing so that the people and the resources show up. Realistically, we will need a year and a half of spade work before the Kairos #1 at BVCC, possibly October of 2016.

Retired? Want the fun of a new Kairos program start? Call me. This will be a wonderful adventure. If you couldn't serve on the first Bent County CF weekend, this is your next opportunity to be a Colorado Kairos pioneer. All positions open. Hurry, hurry.

Submitted by Kevin Condon

2015 EVENTS

CONTACTS

9-12 April	RIFLE #20	Tyne Bush
16-19 April	TERRITORIAL #58	Jim Carter
16-19 April	DELTA #47	Bill Bennett
30 April - 3 May	STERLING EAST #13	Mark Cook
15-17 May	ADVANCED KAIROS TRAINING <i>Denver: Epiphany Episcopal Church and La Quinta Motel</i>	Liz Costello
6-7 June	DENVER Two-Day Retreat	Glenda Condon
11-12 July	RIFLE Two-Day Retreat	Tyne Bush
11-12 July	TERRITORIAL Two-Day Retreat	Jim Carter
18-19 July	DELTA Two-Day Retreat	Bill Bennett
28 Jul-1 Aug	KAIROS ANNUAL CONFERENCE <i>Fort Worth TX: American Airlines Training & Conference Center</i>	
8-9 Aug	STERLING EAST Two-Day Retreat	Mark Cook
10-13 September	DENVER #24	Glenda Condon
1-4 October	RIFLE #21	Tyne Bush
8-11 October	TERRITORIAL #59	Jim Carter
15-18 October	DELTA #48	Bill Bennett
5 - 8 November	STERLING WEST #33	Mark Cook

KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY INTERNATIONAL

[Kairos Prison Ministry](#) is a lay-led Christian ministry which conducts a highly structured program designed for use in male and female correctional institutions. The Kairos program starts with a weekend event which allows participants to receive Christ's love through the servitude of Christian Kairos volunteers. During this event participants are given the opportunity to experience a spiritual renewal, accepting God's call to a life of Christian witness and service to one another during their stay in the institution, and beyond. Participants are encouraged to establish small, two-to-five-person "Fourth Day" Prayer and Share groups within the institution. The groups meet regularly to share their lives on a deep spiritual level and to pray for one another, other residents, and staff in the institution.

Kairos is currently in 36 states and nine other countries – Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, South Africa, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Peru. The course materials are available in English and Spanish. The international ministry now includes some 30,000 volunteers.

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* Jim Strub assists Pat with the Newsletter

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