

Agape Guidelines

Institution Agape Procedures for Kairos of Texas

We received new general agape guidelines sent to us from our National office; these guidelines will be included in the new manual. In effort to comply with these guidelines, the following procedures are the current standard for Kairos of Texas weekends.

Each Kairos Advisory Council will elect an Institutional Agape Coordinator (IAC). The IAC will assist their Kairos institution/program with the production of agape to support:

- Texas Kairos Weekends and TX Kairos Outside Weekends
- Kairos National and International Weekends

The Institutional Agape Coordinator's primary responsibility is to supply the State Agape Chairperson with agape from their represented Kairos or Kairos Outside program.

Kairos of Texas feels called to have enough personally signed, hard copies from each of our units to send out to all national and international Kairos and Kairos Outside weekends. It is our goal to send non-copied, personally signed agape to all Kairos weekends & Kairos Outside programs, as an expression of our authenticity of prayer.

Responsibilities of the Institutional Agape Coordinator (IAC):

1. Prepares copies of agape to be signed by participants of the represented Kairos program.
 - Signed by Kairos graduates at the institution
 - Signed by 'free world' volunteers at Team Meetings (If 'inside' signatures are unobtainable)
 - KO signed by team and/or 'guests'
2. Coordinates and is responsible for the transportation of agape to be signed and supplies (pens), to and from the Institution, as well as any team meetings.
3. Composes and shares a list of upcoming Kairos weekends (internationally), so the inmates/volunteers may support these weekends in their prayers as they sign the agape. (Printing current and next months weekends are practical and useful.)
4. Mails signed agape to the State Agape Chairperson for distribution. Approximately 600 pieces of agape are needed from each Kairos institution/program yearly. (That's about 40 sent monthly.)
5. Has email capability and communicates with State Agape Chairperson.
6. The Advisory Council will provide a budget to the IAC covering all mailing cost and materials necessary to generate the Agape.

Here's an example of what Agape duties look like:

It's February 1st and you're at Prayer and Share/Instructional/2-day. You have unsigned photo copies of agape that includes the unit's name and location along with some graphics, drawn by a Kairos graduate or created electronically. You will lay out agape so inmates may sign these as they are able (during breaks/free time), no pressure, no time away from grouping. Just make materials available.

You also have a list printed out from the Kairos Kalender at (www.kairosprisonministry.org) of the upcoming Feb weekends for the inmates so that they can be lifting these weekends in their prayers.

Later...you make your February mailing of these signed agape pieces to the State Agape Chairperson. (These agape pieces will actually probably go out in mailings to the June upcoming weekends.)

Agape Restrictions-Texas Department of Criminal Justice

These restrictions are for compliance to TDCJ guidelines. The IAC have been instructed not to forward agape with TDCJ identification numbers, or agape with a postal address included within the picture. The units name, city and state is appropriate but no further postal information is necessary.

Agape Preferences/Suggestions

It is suggested that men and women in our Kairos communities be given the opportunity to draw a picture which expresses Agape love for the recipient community. This picture is then copied before returning the copies for the signature of our Kairos brothers and sisters. Please do not copy one signed agape picture and use this as your Institutions/Units agape.

Forward all Agape to the State Agape Chairperson monthly.

Agape is left unaddressed and undated. (Non specific units and dates are more useful, as agape contacts and weekend dates frequently change.)

Because of ever rising postal rates, the State Agape Chairperson will accept agape pictures on standard copy paper 8.5 x 11 inches. Agape with a computer graphic or original Kairos graduate's artwork, that is copied and then returned back to the Unit for personal signatures is IDEAL. Poster boards and card-stock paper should be avoided as to be good stewards of the Lords resources, as these increase shipping costs considerably.

It would be financially prudent for the Unit Representatives to exchange any large posters or banners with their in-state counterparts at the state meetings.

Authenticity

The Kairos Prison Ministry General Agape Guidelines presented the following paragraph: Any discussion of General Agape in Kairos must acknowledge that the letters, posters, etc., that we commonly refer to as "agape" are, in fact only the visible symbols of the agape love being offered. Actual "agape" is the love, prayer and sacrifices offered on behalf of others, often unknown, unconditionally, in accordance with the example of Christ's agape love for each of us. An expression of agape that is not backed up in fact by that love, prayer, or sacrifice is phony and hypocritical.

This paragraph challenges our Texas Kairos Community to back up the expressions of love sent from our various units with specific prayer. It is suggested that we take time during Prayer & Share activities, Monthly Reunions or Two Day Retreat to pray as a community for the weekends receiving our agape. In this way we can authentically back up our agape with love, prayer and sacrifice.

In Institutions with an elected Resident Agape Chairperson this activity could be one of his/her assignments. It is then incumbent upon the IAC to furnish the dates and community name for that particular week or month to our brother and sisters in prison for their prayers.

This system will be most effective as each Institution elects to their Advisory Council an Institutional Agape Coordinator. Please email the name, address, phone number and e-mail address of this representative to the State Agape Chairperson.

Institutional Agape Coordinator (IAC) is a voting position on the Advisory Council not to be confused with a weekend Agape Chair assigned by the weekend Leader.

Email Agape

In May of 2005 new positions were created to develop relations between Kairos of Texas as a whole and 4th Day Communities ("street weekends") around the world in exchange for Agape from their communities. We are now making use of an online resource www.3dayol.org that some of the Kairos programs in the state have led the way in utilizing, to obtain this agape. Email agape is currently collected on the state level for all of the Kairos and Kairos Outside weekends. All email agape is collected, printed, and sent to the State Agape Chairperson to be included in agape packets sent out directly to the weekend Leaders. Kairos of Texas also supports all non-Kairos national and international weekend agape requests on the online resource, with scanned agape sent from our Texas Kairos weekends and Kairos Outside programs. IAC's no longer need to continue to collect agape from this site, as it is already being done on their behalf. Relieving Institutional Agape Coordinators from collecting agape for their Institution's Kairos weekends is deliberate, so that their primary responsibility can be focused on.

The Institutional Agape Coordinator's primary responsibility is to supply the State Agape Chairperson with agape from their represented Kairos or Kairos Outside program.

In closing, consider the following information. Currently there are approximately 300 different sites conducting Kairos and Kairos Outside weekends, at least biannually, across the world. We pray that by working together, Kairos of Texas can be supportive to our brothers and sisters throughout this ministry to the incarcerated, and to those who love the incarcerated.

In this endeavor we will all be blessed because it is not possible to "out bless" our Heavenly Father who loves us all.

Please feel free to contact the State Agape Chairperson for more information.

