

The Essence Of Kairos of Texas in Unit:

Through a systematic, structured program, the residents of correctional institutions are given the opportunity to experience a religious renewal and to accept God's call to a life of Christian witness and service to one another during their stay in the institution and beyond.

The Kairos strategy is to identify leaders from the key environments of the institution, leaders who have the greatest potential to impact their environments with the message of Christ's love. These leaders are then invited to attend a 3-Day Short Course in Christianity where they are introduced to the Kairos community.

Stability and predictability are very important to the prison environment and to the security staff who are our hosts. For that reason, it is important that changes other than local needs be considered and accepted by the national leadership and incorporated into the protocol of the manual in an orderly way before application in the community. In like manner, it is extremely important for all branches of Kairos to follow the guidelines set forth by Kairos manuals and State Chapter customizing to meet the TDCJ Unit needs and needs to be enforced strictly by each Kairos Unit Advisory Council.

Continuing Ministry:

Kairos weekends have but one purpose: the formation of resident leaders in correctional institutions into small share and prayer groups to be support for each other.

The residents, once they have experienced the 3-Day Short Course in Christianity, are ready to attend an Instructional Reunion and learn how to participate in and enjoy the life of the church. This life is neither automatic nor easy.

At the conclusion of the short course, the participants return to the compound where the Christian community is usually a minority, and find themselves largely dependent for Christian fellowship on those residents who have already participated on a Kairos weekend. Many residents soon find themselves missing that deeper fellowship with other Christians, which they enjoyed during the weekend. Most will avoid establishing vulnerable relationships with other residents. A relationship established with someone from the street requires little or no real vulnerability on the part of the resident. One established with another resident requires a great deal of vulnerability if it is going to be a viable relationship in which they can love one another.

The job of the Kairos volunteer **is not to become the primary support person** for any resident. **It is not even to become one of several principle support persons.** Anything Kairos volunteers do to make residents more dependent on them than upon the other residents among whom they live in the institution is a ***disservice*** to the resident. So, we must **encourage residents to enter into community with each other rather than with ourselves.** This is the goal and purpose of the Kairos continuing ministry, which consists of the Instructional Reunion, weekly or bi-weekly small groups, monthly Sat. Kairos reunions, and Kairos 2-day retreats in the TDCJ Kairos Unit.