

# The Spirit...

.....of Connally Kairos

June 1, 2011



"A joyful heart is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love."

- Mother Teresa

*"Golf is deceptively simple and endlessly complicated. It satisfies the soul and frustrates the intellect. It is at the same time rewarding and maddening – it is without a doubt the greatest game mankind has ever invented."*

*Arnold Palmer*

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## HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

*Walk a little slower, Daddy, said a little girl so small. I'm following in your footsteps & I don't want to fall. Sometimes your steps are very fast; sometimes they are hard to see. So walk a little slower, Daddy, for you are leading me. Someday when I'm all grown up, you're what I want to be then I will have a little child who'll want to follow me. And I would want to lead just right & know that I was true; so walk a little slower, Daddy, for I must follow you.*

## Kairos Connally #17

*"Believe that problems do have answers. Believe that they can be overcome. Believe that they can be handled. And finally, believe that you can solve them."*

*-Norman Vincent Peale*

**This is exactly what Jerry Salinas and the Connally #17 team did this past month. When Satan thought he had derailed #17 he soon found out that Jerry and the rest of the team would not stand for it as they made other arrangements to bring a three day Kairos course to the men inside the Connally Unit.**

**".....to bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals and their families....."**

*Just a \$125 Donation covers an inmate for a Kairos weekend.*

*Please consider giving.*

*Contact Leslie Hoy our*

*Financial Secretary*

*[triangleljh@yahoo.com]*

**"One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life; that word is *Love*"**

- Sophocles

## THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

*A Sunday School teacher decided to have her young class memorize one of the most quoted passages in the Bible – Psalm 23. She gave the youngsters a month to learn the chapter.*

*Little Rick was excited about the task but he couldn't remember the Psalm. On the day they were to recite the Psalm little Rick was so nervous.*

*When it was his turn, he stepped to the microphone and said proudly, "Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I have to know."*



# Kairos at the Connally Unit

By the time of the 4<sup>th</sup> team meeting for Connally #17 we learned from the Warden that we would not be allowed into the unit on our planned weekend due to shortage of security staff within the unit. Jerry Salinas, our weekend leader, did some quick adjusting and arranged permission from the Warden to deliver the Kairos program in three days, Tuesday – Thursday, during the week. This turned out to provide many blessings for all involved, volunteers, participants, and unit's staff. Connally #18 is being planned for the same 3 day agenda to be held in November 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>. Robert Deming, #18 Weekday Leader, is already making preparations for November.

The shortage of staff has caused Kairos volunteers to make adjustments to all of the other Kairos programs at Connally. Retreats & monthly reunions are being looked at very closely to see how we might be able to conduct these as they can no longer be held in the Chapel on weekends as times past until the staff shortage has been normalized. Weekly Prayer & Share sessions have been moved from the chapel to the multi-purpose rooms where they will be held with at least one Kairos volunteer that is certified as a Chaplains Assistant. We all hope, including the wardens that this is to be a short term situation as the Kairos program is FULLY supported by the unit's leadership as they continue to support Kairos by whatever means is appropriately possible given the current shortage of staff.

During this time that most of us as volunteers are not able to physically enter the unit, Jack Wood, a long time Kairos Volunteer, has come up with a **TERRIFIC** idea how we can all play a key role for the men in the unit. We don't know where God is leading us, but we are willing to follow what comes along. Another volunteer summed it up by saying this about Jack's plan.

**“WHAT A GODLY RESPONSE TO THIS TIME IN THE LIFE OF CONNALLY KAIROS”**

**Read On...**

**New ministry opportunity for all Kairos volunteers**

As you know, we are not able to support our brothers-in-white at the Connally Unit by our physical presence at Prayer and Share and monthly reunions for the near future. BUT, God has given us another opportunity to show our love and support in these challenging times. We have organized an ongoing prayer vigil for the Connally Unit-- a prayer vigil in support of the entire unit-- that we hope to continue until such time as we can return inside the walls. We will be praying for the Kairos community inside, all other inmates, the staff, and all aspects of the Unit. We would like to have people praying 24 hours a day seven days a week. One member of our community estimates that he spends 8 hours a month attending reunion, including travel time, and he plans to use these 8 hours, as four 30 minute slots a week, for his prayer commitment. All of us involved in Kairos, including the outside team members and those unable to attend monthly reunions or Prayer and Share, can participate in this prayer vigil. Some can devote more time, some less.

How can you participate?

1. **Consider** how much time you can devote to this prayer vigil. You might start from where your current time commitment to Kairos is.
2. **Decide** when you want to pray on an ongoing schedule—you decide at what times, for how long, and on what days. We suggest 30 minute slots
3. **Contact** Jack Wood ([wood4fam@swbell.net](mailto:wood4fam@swbell.net)) telling him what times and on what days you will be praying. Jack has volunteered to coordinate and maintain the schedule. Don't worry about overlapping with someone else—all prayers count. We are trying to cover all 24 hours of all seven days of the week.
4. **PRAY.** The prayer vigil has already begun—just join in!

Won't it be exciting to be able to tell our brothers inside the Unit that we are praying for them around the clock all week long to offer the love of Christ until such time as we can get back to see them again?

***We encourage you to join in today!***



# Characteristics of prisoners when they arrive for the weekend

by *Ken Cooper* graduate of Kairos 13 CI, Raiford, Florida

What a Kairos volunteer sees and hears from an inmate during the Kairos weekend is not necessarily the real who, what, and why of the person. I am convinced this stems not from the desire of the inmate to manipulate, please the team members, or fit in; it comes from the tremendous difference between the two worlds.

The Team comes from a World of choice. The team member's world is a place of decisions, busy-ness and business. He lives in the privacy of his own home. He lives with his wife, children, and pets. His home is a place of love, comfort, good food, and respect. He is loved. He works for his living or is retired. His is a positive, uplifting, "normal" environment. There isn't time enough in the day for him to do all he wants or needs to do. He comes and goes as he pleases. He is considered a success. He has a realistic hope for the future.

The Candidates come from a World of few decisions, idleness and boredom. His world is characterized by loneliness, boredom, and virtually no privacy. His world is a cold place of inhumanity where he strives to maintain his sanity. He exists. He is a homeless displaced person. He has no wife and is separated from whatever family he has left. He is unloved, uncomfortable, forced to eat bad food, sleep on bad beds, and is continually bombarded with disrespectful, degrading, foul language. His is a negative, depressing, homosexual, abnormal environment. For him, time stands still. He is considered a failure. He has little hope or an unrealistic hope for the future.

Their two worlds meet at a place out of time called Kairos. It is truly a miracle as their two worlds meet. Except for a timeless place called Kairos they wouldn't and couldn't. For the candidates and the team, from Friday through, there is no past. There is no future. There is only NOW as each participant is visited by I AM, the eternal timeless Word of God, Jesus Christ.

This is not to say each and every candidate becomes a follower of Christ or a committed Christian during the weekend. Many volunteers expect them to, but I believe this is generally a false expectation. Unless the team is informed about the world from which the prisoner comes, and the baggage he lugs to the family table, its members will carry with them unreasonable expectations and inaccurate assessments of the inmates, of their world, and of the weekend.

I would undoubtedly still be locked up in prison today except for Kairos. I would still be serving out my 99-year sentence. I owe my freedom to Kairos. It is an understatement to say I love Kairos. My weekend gave me hope and began a process that would eventually set me free inside the fences. And I believe I hit the streets sooner because of my Kairos Weekend and the Christian lifestyle it started.

I recently visited with two prisoners who agreed with me. They each served a lifetime in prison. One served 42 years straight up and the other 33. They shared my strong sentiments for Kairos. They told me through tear filled, grateful eyes that their Kairos Weekend was the most important weekend of their lives. They said it started a process, a change, a faith that ultimately set them free from prison. But they said it took several years for Kairos to really sink in and take effect.



# FROM THE HEART OF A FIRST TIME KAIROS VOLUNTEER

by Keith Whited first time volunteer on Connally #17

When Danny asked me to write an article, he joined a number of people who asked me what I experienced at Kairos 17. Seasoned Kairos people want to know how I liked it and what it was like to be a new member. Friends want to know what it was like to be in prison and what the Kairos program really did. Frankly, I am still sorting it out, but I will try to gather a few thoughts.

I was drawn to this ministry by a presentation by Danny at church. I was impressed by the recidivism rate improvement and the quote from Matthew 25:36, admonishing people to visit prisoners. During the presentation, Eileen, my wife, touched my arm and said "you would be good at that." I doubted her judgment, but I was interested. I thought that I would like to attend a closing and started to attend Kairos gatherings with that in mind. Somewhere I realized I had gone too far and was on the team, and that was OK. I was already developing a love for the team members, and I began to feel that God wanted me to go, not stall. I still wasn't sure whether I was feeling called to do this or if I just wanted to be a "good person". I also carry some reservations about dramatic conversions, but I decided to go with the flow and see what would happen.

Entering the prison, I found the facility and officers less intimidating than expected. The big surprise came when we were exuberantly greeted by the assisting inmate stewards which are Kairos graduates. These men were filled with the Holy Spirit and they wanted only to help us, their good friends, to reach other inmates. The inmate attendees soon arrived, and I found that concerns about my motives were not an issue. I really was not concerned with me. Our table leader guided us and God worked. I just wanted to support the men at our table as they sought to find a better way through faith in Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They were all that mattered. When a young man at our table took the microphone at closing renouncing the hatred that had consumed him and tearfully proclaimed his determination to follow Jesus, tears came to my eyes. Yes, it was dramatic, but he had wrestled with his decision for three days and he now had a community in prison to support him. I still get choked up thinking about it!

I got a special privilege while I was there. I was one of three volunteers selected to hand out cookies to the general population throughout the prison unit as they came out of chow. I handed out hundreds of bags and shook hundreds of hands. There really are no words. We gave them a blessing and a big treat but we received hundreds of blessings in return. I even got a Muslim blessing.

Was it worth it? Of course! The negatives were that it was time consuming, it was exhausting, and we sat more than I am used to. The positives were too numerous to mention. Ask my wife, I have talked of little else these last few days! **Praise God.**

