

State Chair's Lookback on 2014

Jim Irwin



During 2014, your State Chair was presented with some Kairos challenges and blest to observe many Kairos successes. During 49 years of practicing my profession (i.e. Petroleum Engineer), I faced similar experiences. One critical piece of information I learned in the 1970's occurred in what we called "Charm School." It was a psychologically driven school to prepare selected candidates to move into management positions. After all those years, I still remember the counsel given me. "There is more than one way to manage a team of people. One must develop a style that is

right and natural for themselves". As a new Christian, I believed Jesus Christ was a better role model than Adolph Hitler. Our Lord led by humility, sacrifice and example as opposed to arrogance, fear and intimidation. We are products of our training and life experiences. In Kairos, we are flawed creatures seeking by His Amazing Grace to fulfill His Great Commission.

In 2013, with our new Executive Director, Evelyn Lemly, several challenges were placed before the states including significant financial reporting changes. Our Board of Directors and Evelyn were uneasy about our ability to successfully withstand perceived audit concerns as appropriate documents/reports were signed and sent to the IRS and state agencies. By law, Kairos was required to file those documents. Also, there was uncertainty over our ability to successfully display compliance with ECFA (Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability) requirements. Those concerns were remedied by early 2014.

Additionally, in 2014, emphasis was placed on personal and operational excellence. As we pursue excellence in our personal spiritual lives (Bible study, application of scripture, and earnest prayer for others), there will be more opportunities to focus on our personal growth and Kairos growth with less opportunity for dissension and division regardless of the reasons or justification.

In keeping with this operational excellence for Kairos, our Board signed the Kairos Covenant Agreement. All other state officers did likewise. In doing so, we gave our word that, to the best of our ability, we would comply with the Kairos procedures and policies, including carrying out the responsibilities of our positions, and ensuring our three programs are conducted fully within respective manual guidelines. It appeared unreasonable to expect State Officers to be responsible for the covenant if the Advisory Councils could not do the same. So each Advisory Council member affixed their signatures to the same covenants.

Program adjustments are difficult and present their challenges. However, we are making progress on our path to excellence. Some volunteer team sizes are increasing with new volunteers. The Darrington Unit voluntarily reduced the number of residents based on team size, and used volunteers as family servants for the first time. Several units came within one or two people of having 44 recommended inside team size to host 42 residents.

We held our first weekend at the Wynne Unit in Huntsville. We expect to have our first weekend at the Terrell Unit near Pearland in late 2015. This was due in part to the Walls and Darrington Units sharing a veteran or two for that new start effort. Steve Newton and the New Starts Sub-committee are seeking veteran volunteers in the East (continued on page 9)

Important websites:

Kairos of Texas: www.kairosoftexas.org

KPMI: www.mykairos.org



Gina Brockmeyer, KPMI Women's Ministry - 2015 An Opportunity for New Beginnings

2015 it is hard to believe another year has passed, and it's hard for me to believe that I have been at Kairos for four months already. As I look toward the future, I am humbled and honored to be leading the Women's Ministry programs at Kairos Prison Ministry International. I know that I cannot accomplish the challenges of this task on my own. First, I need God. I need to have Him at the center of my life. I need to focus on him so that *hopefully* everything I do and say, as I manage the women's ministry programs, will be based on his will. Secondly, I need to be spending time in the word so that all that I do and I say will *hopefully* be based on scripture. Finally, I need our dedicated volunteers who willingly give so much of themselves to this ministry we all love so much.



As we begin 2015, it is a time to re-evaluate and to potentially make some changes to how we are conducting our Kairos programs. Many of our Advisory Councils have new leadership and it is a perfect time to assess our ministry. Just as many of us take a hard look at ourselves at the end of each year, we need to take a hard look at our programs and ask ourselves a few questions:

- Are we striving to minister with a spirit of excellence?
- Are we running our program in compliance with the Advisory Council Operating Procedures?
- Are we running our weekends according to the program manual and within the Kairos Riverbanks?
- Are we being fiscally responsible and following the guidelines of the Financial Practices and Procedures?
- Are we accomplishing the mission of Kairos to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, as well as their families.....?

If your answer to the questions above is yes -keep up the great work. But, if your answer is no or you recognize some areas in your ministry that could use some improvement. **Don't beat yourselves up – Just make up your mind to take the necessary steps to turn your program around. Step out in faith believing, and just watch what God will do.**

It is my prayer in 2015 that we will all strive, as Kairos Volunteers, to serve with a Spirit of Excellence. And in doing so, we will also do the following:

- We will turn our minds and our hearts to God.
- We will strive as we serve to set aside our personal agendas – remembering that it is not about us, but always about the people we serve.
- We will seek God's will for every aspect of this ministry, always keeping Christ at the center of all we do and say.
- We will serve with humility – giving God all the glory, honor and praise for the success of Kairos both publically and privately.
- We will serve obediently – following our program manuals and our other foundational documents, and striving to stay within the Riverbanks.
- And finally, that we will strive to bring Christ's love to the incarcerated, their families, and to those who work with them.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concern you may have. Additionally, please remember to register your Weekends, and pass on all the great things that are being accomplished within your individual Advisory Councils. I enjoyed meeting many of you during my recent trip to the great state of Texas and I look forward to working with you in the future.

Thank you for all you do for Kairos.

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Vance Drum - Director of Chaplaincy, TDCJ



It was a blessing for me to meet with you at your January Kairos of Texas Board meeting! The full house of assembled Kairos folks were dedicated (it was cold and rainy that day)! I was especially impressed with the Kairos New Start Committee, chaired by Steve Newton, and the desire of his Committee to facilitate New Starts, as the Lord provides resources.

I want to thank Kairos of Texas for your desire to bless and help redirect the lives of our 155,000 offenders. Jesus pronounced a blessing when he said, “I was in prison and you came to visit me, [and] whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me.” [Matthew 25:36, 40]

There is new energy and new desire for new Kairos starts in Texas. Praise the Lord. Wynne Unit Kairos #1 was held at this big old Huntsville unit (2,621 men, est. 1939) in November 2014. Recruiting of volunteers is ongoing now at the Telford Unit (New Boston, northeast Texas), the Terrell Unit (Houston area), the Luther Unit (near Navasota), and the Mountain View Death Row Unit (Women’s, in Gatesville). Another unit in the Huntsville area that is a priority for Kairos is the 3,400-man Estelle Unit.

The key to all of these new starts is the prayerful recruiting of volunteers. There are about 23,000 trained, approved and on the TDCJ computer volunteers in Texas. Most of them are religious volunteers, and the Agency is actively recruiting more volunteers daily. About 500 volunteer applications come to TDCJ’s Volunteer Services monthly. Let’s pray many of them are because someone talked about Kairos!

I mentioned to the January KOT meeting about a fairly untapped resource for volunteers—the Tres Dias community, which is part of the three-day movement begun in Spain in 1949, and of which Cursillo and Walk to Emmaus are also a part. My walk in 1987 was at Houston’s Walk to Emmaus #9, but my ministry team experience has been mostly in East Texas Tres Dias. (I also helped as a Spiritual Director with a Tres Dias men’s weekend in the country of Denmark, and attended a Tres Dias International Assembly in Seoul, Korea.) Tres Dias (Spanish for “three days”) began in 1972, and in Texas Tres Dias is a vital ministry which is transforming churches—training leaders—in Texas. Nearly all Tres Dias weekends—men’s and women’s—have 42 participants in each weekend, and normal teams in my experience number 60-70 per weekend.

Tres Dias folks need a ministry outlet! Kairos will bless them, but many do not yet know about prison ministry. We know that prison ministry is not for everybody, but my suggestion is to contact the various Tres Dias communities, and ask to speak briefly at their Sequelas (their quarterly food and training meetings), for 5 minutes or so, about the opportunity and blessing of prison ministry. You’ll find, as you probably already know, that more people than you imagine know someone who is in prison.

The Tres Dias website will provide a wealth of information, with e-mail addresses, but normally not phone numbers. You may contact them by e-mail. Some of the communities in Texas include North Texas TD (Denton area), East Texas TD (north of Huntsville), Southeast Texas TD (Houston area), Heart of Texas TD (south of Dallas), Central Texas TD (Austin area), Trinity Valley TD (north of Palestine), and others. Many are fairly new, in the past 5-10 years. They tend to be energetic and robust, which is one thing I like about them.

Another point I made in the January meeting is that I am so encouraged by the three big entities in Texas which have all come together in the past 3-4 years: The legislature, the Texas Board of Criminal Justice (volunteers all appointed by the Governor), and our TDCJ Executive leadership. All are on the same page, promoting pro-social rehabilitative and reentry programming—especially faith-based programming through the Chaplaincy Department—to help redirect the lives of our offenders. It is truly an exciting time in Texas to be involved in prison ministry!

So effective is this faith-based programming that in the past 20 years, the recidivism rate (return to prison after three years out) has dropped from 75% to the current 22%! While there are no doubt some other factors involved in this dramatic drop, I believe that perhaps the most significant factor is the God-directed programming of which you are a part.

I close by saying there has never been a better time in Texas to be doing God’s work—a real mission field—right here in our own back yard! Ninety-five percent (95%) of all offenders will one day be released back into our communities. Better to have a committed Christian living next door than a more committed criminal.

May God continue to bless Kairos of Texas in all you do for God’s kingdom. If I can ever help you in any way, please feel free to contact me. I am committed to a new day with Kairos of Texas in the TDCJ!

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Ray Sims - AC Coordination Chair



My name is Ray Sims and I am passionate about prison ministry. I see the Holy Spirit work in a mighty way and bear witness to the changes that Jesus Christ makes in so many lives inside the walls. My involvement with Kairos Inside began in 2000, at the Darrington unit, however my first exposure to anything Kairos was as a day servant on a Kairos Outside - Houston weekend in 1999. I later worked three weekends in the early 2000s as part of the kitchen team. What a privilege it was for me, dressed in formal attire, to escort the KO guests to their seats for the Saturday night Agape meal! I witnessed first-hand the effect of what agape love can mean to a human being who encounters so little of it. Additionally, in my early Kairos days I had the privilege of working three Carol Vance Kairos Inside weekends.

I guess the Darrington team is like many other Kairos teams around the state. Our team is composed of a core group of saints who have been serving Christ in this capacity for a long time, many longer than me. Everything we do, we do with a love for Christ, with a love for the men we serve, and also with the icing on the cake of our love for each other. I started in my forties and now am in my sixties, but while I am probably one of the younger Darrington volunteers, our senior member is a wonderful 86 year old lady who happens to be my mother. My wife and sister also are long time participants of the Darrington Kairos team, so I include the entire Darrington team as my family.

Although the Darrington Kairos #1 was not the first weekend held in the state of Texas, it is the longest continually running program in the state. I was privileged to serve as the Darrington Kairos Ad Council chair for the last three years, completing my term in December. The greatest challenge and the cause of the most angst we faced as an Ad Council during that time happened this last year and was over the issue of compliance to the 2011 KPMI Program Manual for Medium/Maximum Security Prisons, the so called "Red manual". Specifically our historical areas of deviation from the manual were: 1) the issues of 1:1 hosting, 2) using Kairos graduates as family servants in lieu of volunteers, and 3) adhering to the three and out rule for team service.

In May, 2014, the Ad Council elected to follow the rule for 1:1 hosting and we also elected to use volunteers as family servants. We looked at the three and out rule as a stretch goal for the future because to do otherwise would prevent us from holding a weekend. In October, for Darrington Kairos 54, we hosted thirty candidates, the first time in our history that we began a weekend with less than 42. Knowing that KPMI would soon be re-evaluating the KI program, and from our position of obedience to these core principals in the manual, we were able to draft a letter addressed to our KOT chair, Jim Irwin. We voiced our strong recommendation that KPMI grant flexibility with respect to the 1:1 hosting ratio. We also recommended the use of Kairos graduates as family servants because of the blessing of serving that our graduates receive. Additionally, we talked about the expense burden that the 1:1 ratio adds to the ministry. Our letter has been forwarded to KPMI and my prayer is that it will make a difference in their deliberation.

I have been more than blessed to serve our Lord through Kairos with the people on the Darrington team. But you can see our challenge; we are aging. We add two or three new people with each weekend, but we struggle in the area of recruiting. As conformation of our willingness to be obedient, yet make our position on these three issues known, for weekend # 54 we were blessed with six new team members. If we enjoyed just a little more of that kind of increase every weekend, the 1:1 hosting ratio would not be an issue. Adherence to the three and out rule would not be an issue. As King Solomon expressed in Ecclesiastes 3, everything has its season. Kairos in Darrington has a season. One of these days it will come to its own conclusion, prayerfully at the successful completion of its mission. But let it not be cut short because we fail in our jobs to bring new people into the ministry we all love so much.

The Lord's Prayer (Author Unknown)

Our Father Who Art in Heaven.

Yes?

Don't interrupt me. I'm praying.

But -- you called ME!

Called you? No, I didn't call you. I'm praying. Our Father who art in Heaven.

There -- you did it again!

Did what?

Called ME. You said, "Our Father who art in Heaven" Well, here I am.. What's on your mind?

But I didn't mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the day. I always say the Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel good, kind of like fulfilling a duty.

Well, all right. Go on.

Okay, Hallowed be thy name.

Hold it right there. What do you mean by that?

By what?

By "Hallowed be thy name?"

It means, it means ... good grief, I don't know what it means. How in the world should I know? It's just a part of the prayer. By the way, what does it mean?

It means honored, holy, wonderful.

Hey, that makes sense.. I never thought about what 'hallowed' meant before. Thanks. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.

Do you really mean that?

Sure, why not?

What are you doing about it?

Doing? Why, nothing, I guess. I just think it would be kind of neat if you got control, of everything down here like you have up there. We're kinda in a mess down here you know.

Yes, I know; but, have I got control of you?

Well, I go to church.

That isn't what I asked you. What about your bad temper? You've really got a problem there, you know.

And then there's the way you spend your money -- all on yourself. And what about the kind of books you read?

Now hold on just a minute! Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of the rest of those People at church!

Excuse ME.. I thought you were praying for my will to be done. If that is to happen, it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it. Like you -- for example.

Oh, all right. I guess I do have some hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I could probably name some others.

So could I.

I haven't thought about it very much until now, but I really would like to cut out some of those things.

I would like to, you know, be really free.

Good. Now we're getting somewhere. We'll work together -- You and ME. I'm proud of you.

Look, Lord, if you don't mind, I need to finish up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does.

Give us this day, our daily bread.

You need to cut out the bread.. You're overweight as it is.

Hey, wait a minute! What is this? Here I was doing my religious duty, and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my hang-ups.

Praying is a dangerous thing. You just might get what you ask for. Remember, you called ME -- and here I am.

It's too late to stop now. Keep praying. (pause ...) Well, go on.

I'm scared to.

Scared? Of what?

(Continued on next page)

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(Continued from page 4)

I know what you'll say.

Try ME.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

What about Ann?

See? I knew it! I knew you would bring her up! Why, Lord, she's told lies about me, spread stories.

She never paid back the money she owes me. I've sworn to get even with her!

But -- your prayer -- What about your prayer?

I didn't -- mean it.

Well, at least you're honest. But, it's quite a load carrying around all that bitterness and resentment isn't it?

Yes, but I'll feel better as soon as I get even with her. Boy, have I got some plans for her. She'll wish she had never been born.

No, you won't feel any better. You'll feel worse. Revenge isn't sweet. You know how unhappy you are --

Well, I can change that.

You can? How?

Forgive Ann. Then, I'll forgive you; And the hate and the sin, will be Ann's problem -- not yours. You will have settled the problem as far as you are concerned.

Oh, you know, you're right. You always are. And more than I want revenge, I want to be right with You . .

(sigh). All right, all right . . I forgive her.

There now! Wonderful! How do you feel?

Hmmmm. Well, not bad. Not bad at all! In fact, I feel pretty great! You know, I don't think I'll go to bed uptight tonight. I haven't been getting much rest, you know.

Yeah, I know. But, you're not through with your prayer, are you? Go on.

Oh, all right. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Good! Good! I'll do that. Just don't put yourself in a place where you can be tempted.

What do you mean by that?

You know what I mean.

Yeah. I know.

Okay. Go ahead. Finish your prayer.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Do you know what would bring me glory? What would really make me happy?

No, but I'd like to know. I want to please you now... I've really made a mess of things. I want to truly follow you.... I can see now how great that would be. So, tell me . . . How do I make you happy?

YOU just did.



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Bob King - Pastor Hill Country Bible Church

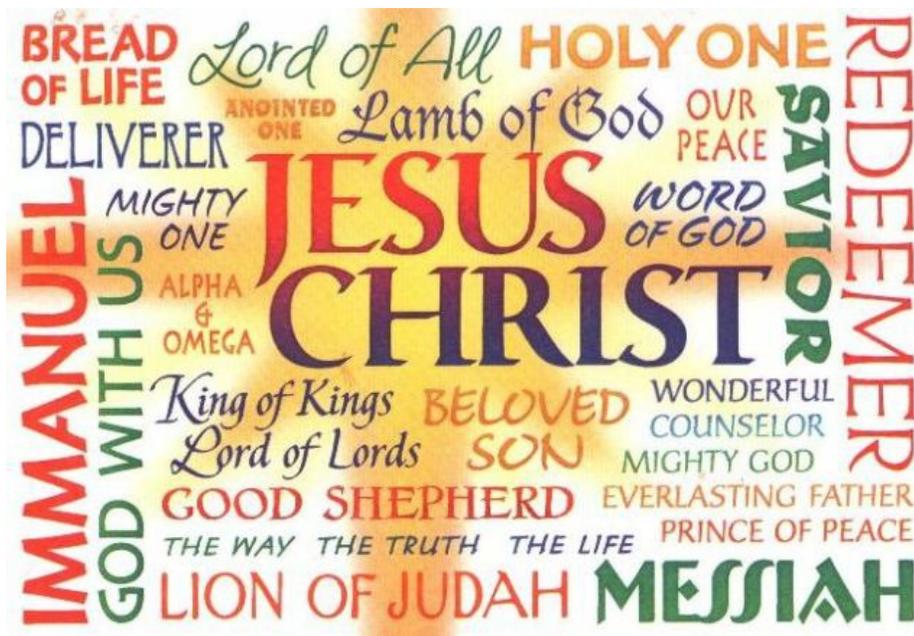
Daniel 10 contains the incredible prophecy of Daniel's 70 weeks of years, which reveals much of Israel's future, including Messiah's triumphal entry, His death, and the covenant "the antichrist" makes and then breaks in the middle of the 70th week. God gave Daniel another vision of a great war that caused him to mourn and left him without strength, pale and helpless. At that point a hand (probably of an angel) touched him and he told Daniel to listen, stand up and not be afraid. Daniel obeyed but bowed his face and was speechless. Then One Who looked like a man (possibly a "theophany" – a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ) touched his lips and caused Daniel to speak.

Three times Daniel called him, "lord" and stated that he was overcome with anguish, was helpless, without strength and nearly breathless. Again this "man" touched Daniel, gave him strength and told him not to be afraid.

Daniel was highly esteemed by God because he was determined to gain understanding of God's plan and humbled himself before God. Do you ever wonder how God sees you? Do you set your mind to gain understanding and humble yourself before God like Daniel? I know I'm still working on those two areas in my life.

Our spiritual strength comes from the Lord. In our worship, in our work, in our homes, in our recreation and in our relationships, today may be the day God says to us, "Child of God, listen to Me carefully (from His Word and in your prayer life), stand up (be ready for action) and stop being afraid. Stop living in worry, in regret, in spiritual cowardice. You are highly esteemed and I am giving you strength to serve Me." Remember what Paul wrote in Philippians 4:13? "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me!"

This is a new day! Humble yourself before God and be strong! It is a day of victory and service for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!



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THINGS LEARNED FROM BEING RAISED IN TEXAS (Author Unknown)

Armadillos sleep in the middle of the road with their feet in the air.

There are 5,000 types of snakes on earth and 4,998 live in Texas

There are 10,000 types of spiders. All 10,000 live in Texas, plus a couple no one's seen before.

If it grows, it sticks; if it crawls, it bites.

'Twiced' is a word.

People actually grow and eat okra

'Fixinto' is one word.

There is no such thing as 'lunch.' There is only dinner and then supper.

Iced tea is appropriate for all meals and you start drinking it when you're two. We do like a little tea with our sugar!

'Backwards and forwards' means I know everything about you!

Djeet is actually a phrase meaning 'Did you eat?'

Smore means "Do you want some more?"

All 'y'all is plural meaning everybody

You don't have to wear a watch because it doesn't matter what time it is. You work until you're done or it's too dark to see.

You don't PUSH buttons, you MASH them.

You measure distance in hours. Like its 5 hours from Houston to Dallas.

You'll probably have to switch from 'heat' to 'A/C' in the same day.

'Fix' is a verb. Example: 'I'm fixin' to go to the store.'

You install security lights on your house and garage and leave both unlocked.

Yes, Friday night high school football games is serious football!

You carry jumper cables in your car ... for your OWN car.

There are only four spices: salt, pepper, Tabasco and ketchup.

The local papers cover national and international news on one page, but require 6 pages for local gossip and sports.

100 degrees Fahrenheit is 'a little warm.'

We have four seasons: Almost summer, summer, still summer and Christmas.

Going to Wal-mart is a favorite past time known as 'goin' to Wally-World.'

A cool snap (below 70 degrees) is good pinto-bean or chili weather.

A carbonated soft drink isn't a soda, cola or pop ... it's a Coke, regardless of brand or flavor.

Example: 'What kind a coke you want?'

Fried catfish is the other white meat.

We don't need no stinking Driver's Ed If our mama says we can drive, we can drive.

EVERYONE can't be from Texas. You might say it's a gift from God!



Praise the Lord

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GOD is
SO GOOD!

Layman's 10 Commandments (Author Unknown)

1. Prayer is not a "spare wheel" that you pull out when in trouble, but it is a "steering wheel" that directs the right path throughout.
2. So why is a Car's WINDSHIELD is so large & the Rear view Mirror is so small? Because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE. So, Look Ahead and Move on.
3. Friendship is like a BOOK. It takes few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.
4. All things in life are temporary. If going well, enjoy it, they will not last forever. If going wrong, don't worry, they can't last long either.
5. Old Friends are Gold! New Friends are Diamond! If you get a Diamond, don't forget the Gold! Because to hold a Diamond, you always need a Base of Gold!
6. Often when we lose hope and think this is the end, GOD smiles from above and says, "Relax, sweetheart, it's just a bend, not the end!"
7. When GOD solves your problems, you have faith in HIS abilities; when GOD doesn't solve your problems HE has faith in your abilities.
8. A blind person asked St. Anthony: "Can there be anything worse than losing eye sight?" He replied: "Yes, losing your vision!"
9. When you pray for others, God listens to you and blesses them, and sometimes, when you are safe and happy, remember that someone has prayed for you.
10. WORRYING does not take away tomorrow's TROUBLES; it takes away today's PEACE.

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Be sure to visit our website at www.kairossoftexas.org. Our webmaster, Bill Darnall, has done an amazing job of putting this all together. The schedule and location for State Board meetings for 2015 are included here. We have a calendar showing when all the weekends will be held. Check your weekend - we depend on you to keep them updated.

On that same website you will find the current state officers, state meetings and minutes, map of state meetings, committees, and when the weekends are to be held. You will also find this current and past newsletters there. If your unit does a newsletter, we would love to add it. There are links to KPMI and TDCJ.

There is information about Kairos Outside, including structure, forms and information, newsletters, and mission field. The minutes for KO meetings can also be found there.

Please take a look and see if we need to change, remove or add anything.

LISTEN
LISTEN

LOVE
LOVE

(continued from page 1)

Texas area to start a program at the Telford Unit in New Boston. Perhaps some Michael Unit volunteers will offer to help. We are targeting the Estelle Unit in Huntsville also for 2016. What an opportunity for a few Huntsville area veterans to consider forming a group. We can start small to establish a presence and allow the limited graduates to make a friend, be a friend, and bring that friend to Christ. In the first half of 2014, Kairos added 19 new Advisory Councils. In the five years ending in 2013, Kairos had added just 18 new Ac's. Are we any different in experiences than the early church in the book of Acts? My prayer is that God will continue to open doors to scatter us into new units and cities.

A final note about 2015. We need to all find comfort in remembering we are a democratically governed ministry with by-laws and elected leaders. We are a ministry that, by federal and state law, is required to operate as a non-profit business. While God is in charge, that should not be used as license to do as we think appropriate. Kairos is a highly structured program. Imagine what would happen if all of the 30,000 international volunteers thought each had the only solution to resolve a given concern and arbitrarily acted upon it? I trust we can all imagine the chaos that would occur. In that environment, would we truly accomplish what we seek to do? I believe God does ask that we submit to one another and to our leadership. All our leaders are volunteers who earnestly desire your prayerful support in 2015. In that way , we will all enjoy a God blest and productive New Year.

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