



# Kairos

PRISON MINISTRY AUSTRALIA

*releasing lives into the love  
and forgiveness of Jesus*



Newsletter Winter 2011

## Message from our new CEO

The Kairos community in Australia has achieved much since its small beginnings in the 1990's. There are now Kairos Inside Short Courses and Kairos Outside programs held in all the mainland States and in the ACT. We have also started Kairos Torch in two States and we are well into developing a Kairos Outside for Men program.

Over 2000 dedicated volunteers around the country spend countless hours in preparing and delivering the Kairos message about God's love and forgiveness to those in prison, their families, and those who work with them.

Not only that, but there are now opportunities to virtually double the current level of

activity, based on all the great work that has gone before.

So it is an honour and privilege to be asked to undertake the role of CEO for this community of wonderful people, and it is with humility that I offer myself, in God's service and with your help, to try and effectively fulfil the role. Like Sir Isaac Newton I really have the sense that I am 'standing on the shoulders of giants' as I regard the future opportunities lining up for us in this new season.

Thank you for all of your dedicated service in the past, and thank you for your willingness to continue in that service as we grasp both the privilege and responsibility of

our calling, as set out in Mathew 25 v 36 "I was in prison and you visited me".

I hope to be able to meet with as many of you as possible at the National Workshop - "Together, Uniting" - in July, and Vivienne and I will try to get around and meet with as many regional groups as we can in the coming months.

Meanwhile, please pray continually for the work of the ministry and those who we minister to, that their lives will be enriched as they experience God's love for them. Pray also for the Board as it grapples with all of the complexities of such a dynamic organisation, and pray for me, as I gradually assume this challenging new role.

God Bless you and keep you all.

John Bignall [CEO]



## Partner with us to grow Kairos

We thank you for your financial and prayerful gifts. Our last general appeal in December 2010 enabled us to continue to provide valuable assistance to the regions in presenting their courses. The end of the 2011 tax year is fast approaching and it is at this time that the majority of our funds are received. In fact, the extra donations that you make at this time of year represent over 40% of our total yearly donations. Without your continued generosity we cannot operate.

We realise that in the current financial environment it can be a strain on your finances to continue to give but we urge you to consider making a tax deductible gift to the work of Kairos.

Over the past year we have reduced our operating expenses significantly. For example we have only two people employed on a part time basis at our Support Office to provide assistance to all of our regions as well as taking care of the legal requirements which allows us to operate as a charity in Australia. We have been fortunate to appoint a new Chief Executive Officer who will commence

in July. He has taken this position for 3 years on a voluntary basis. Under 5 cents of every dollar donated is directed towards staff costs. Therefore 95 cents in every dollar donation is spent directly on supporting the courses.

Some of the highlights over the past year include:

- The agreement in Queensland for Kairos to expand into all their prisons
- The successful two courses presented in Perth has opened the door to further prisons in WA
- Negotiations under way in SA to expand into other prisons
- Piloting a new course directed to male family and friends of those affected by imprisonment, similar to the one which has operated for over 12 years for females
- The continuation of courses presented to both inside prisons and those affected on the outside.

With the projected expansion over the next year comes the challenge of being able

to support that growth. This is where our supporters are invaluable. Your finances and prayers enable us to continue to bring the love of Christ to those in prison and their families and friends.

Please consider giving generously so that we can partner together in showing that "there is a better way" to juvenile offenders, "you have a choice" to men and women in prison and "you are not alone" to those affected by having someone in prison.

God bless  
Reuben Rattray  
Board Chairman  
Kairos Prison Ministry Australia



I was in prison and you visited me... Mt 25:36

# Bella's Joy

For much of my life, I have struggled with a great deal of fear, devoid of joy and all relationships were badly affected. I could not be honest, and found it impossible to trust. My earliest memories are filled with the pain of rejection. Relationships just didn't work. I had a low opinion of myself, and paranoia would see every conversation as a personal attack. I once made the choice that I would reject others, before they rejected me. However, I still needed to work, bring up a family and deal with people on a day to day basis. I coped, or failed to cope, by becoming addicted to alcohol, prescription medication, cigarettes, marijuana and gambling. I became hard and bitter.

I am the youngest of six children. Although my father loved us, he worked long hours. When Dad was home, he spent all day listening to races. Treatment depended on the results. When he lost, slaps across the face would come out of nowhere. We were poor because of Dad's gambling habits. It meant that we went to school with torn, dirty uniforms and holes in our shoes, which invited bullying.

There were fights involving treatment in hospital. My eldest sister and two brothers were often in juvenile institutions. When DOCS arranged a holiday at Stewart House, a respite care centre run by the Department of Education, it was there that I received my first Bible. Though I was still empty of joy, Jesus was beginning to break into my life.

I started truanting throughout fourth class and ran away from home in fifth. I started smoking and drinking when I was eleven years old.

During the next five years, I lived between the streets, my house, remand centres and girls' homes. Between the age of ten and fourteen, I learned that there were worse predators than children. I was hurt in many ways, and responded by hurting others. I was caught, and sent to Ormond, and later, Parramatta.

I married early and had a son: Robert. He was everything that I wasn't. He was handsome, popular, talented and good at sports. He won numerous trophies for cricket and football, and played the lead in the school play. He was chosen to represent the district, and both teachers and students invited him to parties and camps. I lived through his victories and thrived on his acceptance. His popularity opened doors that were otherwise closed to me.

When he started drinking and ran away

from home at the age of fourteen, I took it as a betrayal of relationship.

The thought never occurred

to me that my drinking may have influenced him to start on a lifestyle similar to mine. I thought he would come home when he realised how hard the world could be, but he didn't. Instead, he went from alcohol, to marijuana. He and his partner had two children by his seventeenth birthday and I was a grandmother at thirty three. They split up, and he met another woman and graduated to heroin. She had three children when they met, and they now have two more. DOCS have removed all of them because of neglect.

Fourteen years ago I was addicted to alcohol, marijuana, nerve tablets, gambling and cigarettes. Until that time, I had never admitted this to anyone, including myself. I thought that because I got drunk one night, stoned the next, and pilled myself out on the third night, I didn't have a problem. I also thought that I had life under control- although I was constantly depressed. I had started to take everything on the one night, and I needed more and more to get to sleep. When I did close my eyes, I would see an evil face leering at me. I was scared to keep on living and scared to kill myself. My addictions were out of control and my family were getting further away day by day.

One night, I was watching T.V., drunk, stoned and possibly on my pills. During the program, I had an irresistible urge to ask God to forgive me. About six months prior to that night, a friend had given her life to Jesus. She was usually an angry, complaining person. When I saw her now, she was totally different- happy and full of joy. Perhaps that meeting affected me more than I knew. I knelt beside my bed, and prayed: "Jesus, I don't know if you're real, but if you are, please take my life. I've made a mess of it. I don't want it any more. You take it and do what you want with it". God heard that prayer and answered it. I have been off drugs, alcohol, pills, gambling and even cigarettes for fourteen years now. Even better, I have a growing relationship with Jesus. This is a relationship that will never be broken.

Since that night, I have started seeing everything in a different light. I have a more compassionate view of Robert, my parents, my siblings, and even myself. With Jesus and the support of the church, I can go on. Somehow, my relationship with Jesus has affected all other relationships. I am no longer frightened to make myself known. I believe there is hope for anyone- including Robert.

Although he is still on drugs, I know there is hope. I believe that Robert knows what God has done for me, and one day, he too might seek a relationship with Jesus.

For me, making friends is still not easy. I am somewhat shy and reserved but I do have a number of healthy relationships. Somehow, the relationship I have with Jesus is teaching me how to rightly relate to others. Furthermore, I am no longer desperate for the approval of everyone. Relationships can now grow at a slower pace. No longer do I pretend that I am someone that I'm not. It takes away the pressure to perform. I'm beginning to accept who I am, and I have learnt how to question my emotions. I know they can often be deceptive. I don't need to look for joy anymore, because Jesus IS the Joy that eluded me.



As a guest and then team member on Kairos Outside I also now have a new family and friends who love and support me.

This joy is available for you too!

## Like to be on a Kairos Inside, Kairos Outside or Torch Team?

A new course has been prepared for those who want to be on a Kairos team but have not been to Emmaus or Cursillo.

**When?** July 29-31, 2011

**Course?** Preparation for Kairos

**Where?** Meroo Christian Conference Centre, Kurrajong [50 km west of Sydney NSW]

**Leaders:** Barbara Ryan and John Starr.

**Cost:** NO CHARGE

*More information call:*

Barbara Ryan

Mobile: 0439 430 053

email:

ryanstar@bigpond.net.au

Unless the Lord builds the house... they labour in vain who build it.. Psalm 127:1

## Don't miss National WORKSHOP - July 15-17

Invitations have been sent to all Regional Committees for the National Workshop July 15th to 17th, 2011. **Have you sent in your application form?**

The venue will again be Ravenswood School for Girls in Gordon, Sydney. The school continues to support the work of Kairos and very generously provides their great facilities to us at no cost. The location works well - easy walking distance to Gordon train station (a blessing for those coming in by plane or country train) and lots of free parking.

Delegates representing each RC will form planning groups discussing and recommending future directions over a range of operational concerns as raised nationally during our visits to each area. The general subject headings cover Communications, Teams and Resources.

An outline of the program has been sent to all regions so that meetings may be held with all your local volunteers to discuss these issues. Your delegates will then be able to speak on your behalf at these sessions.

Our new CEO, John Bignall will make contact with Chairs of all Regional Committees at the workshop and will be setting up a schedule of visits to all regions. The National Workshop will be the first opportunity for most of us to meet John as he takes up his new post at Support Office from July 1.

This workshop is planned to be a time of dialogue to share and learn from others working in the same ministry. We encourage you to be part of this exciting event.

**More Info? Call Joan 02 9683 6096  
or [info@kairos.org.au](mailto:info@kairos.org.au)**

## Hot off the Press - round the traps!

**Queensland** - At #2 short course at Arthur Gorrie it was amazing to see the changes in the inmates during the course. There were even 4 #1 inmates from the first course who assisted in serving on this course, one of whom spoke about changes in his life since he completed Kairos. To see inmates serving each other with the love of Christ reflected the change that occurs as a result of Kairos. Two other prisons have now expressed interest in the Kairos course. Kairos was also privileged to participate in the Chaplaincy In-service Training and talk with chaplains from many of the prisons in Queensland.

**Western Australia** - The #2 short course at Acacia Prison has now been run. It was a great blessing to both the inmates and team with much sharing by the inmates. There are now many inmates attending continuing Journey Program at the prison. Another prison has now expressed interest in having the Kairos course and talks are currently proceeding with a view to having a short course there soon.

**South Australia** - At the most recent Reunion for Kairos Outside, 67 attended including 9 of the 11 guests at the most recent KO #15.

It was most gratifying to see so many past guests at these Reunions. An Essentials of Kairos course is being organised in SA in late June for those volunteers interested in finding out more about Kairos and further involvement in Kairos teams.

**Victoria** - Unfortunately the Kairos Outside for Women in Melbourne is postponed until April next year. The Journey Program at Fulham Correctional Centre continues to grow with now 39 attending on a regular basis. Many of the team have to travel long distances but all agree that it is worth the travel to see the inmates grow in their knowledge of Christ.

**New South Wales** - Inside courses have now been completed for Emu Plains and Dillwynia and again the inmates were changed as a result. Kairos Outside for Women Sydney has just held its 25th weekend and it is now in its 13th year of operation. St Helliers Correctional Centre course had to be postponed because of the sudden death of the Chaplain and our sympathy is extended to his family.

## Joy and blessings at KOWS

After months of planning the day finally arrived and fifteen guests arrived at Merroo for Kairos Outside for Women, Sydney. Many said they were sad, frightened, even uncomfortable when they arrived. By the end of the weekend the theme: Be Filled with His Joy - was evident on all their faces.

It was a great reminder to the team that every detail of the weekend is important and as we are available to God, He changes attitudes and perspectives. Each precious guest went home with renewed hope and tangible agape gifts to remind them the weekend was not just a dream, they were loved and special to God.

## KI Emu Plains - In Christ Alone

At the recent Emu Plains short course one guest really moved mountains to be there.

She was rostered to work in the Prison

Dairy - and rather than miss out attending the Kairos course, she arranged to do the 3am to 7am shift - then she was free to come along. How great is that?

After the "church" talk, a wonderful inclusive dialogue developed. One resident sang: "Who is the church?" and the rest of the residents responded "We are the church". This moved along to "Who is the boss", responded by "God is the boss" and then: "How do we maintain friendship with God" - the response being "In Christ alone".

This dialogue became a mantra repeated frequently with much joy, happiness and enthusiasm. It was a big feature at the closing ceremony. "In Christ Alone" was a favourite song.

All the residents came to the first Journey and were able to invite some friends who wanted to find out what had created such an impact on those who attended the course. There were wonderful testimonies. One lady said she always knew there was a God, but this course had provided the key to meeting Him.

A most happy and celebratory Kairos. Both residents and team were greatly blessed.

Many official guests attended the closing and we give thanks for the powerful witness of these transformed ladies who sang and told of their joy and renewal.

Please pray they will continue to grow and experience God's unconditional love for them in the days ahead.



## Fulham - the power of love

On the final day - two candidates who had been continually antagonistic to each other - got up and hugged.

Every candidate came forward at the closing to talk about their experience. All but one of the candidates returned for the first Journey program

I'm left with three enduring memories



- The depth and frankness of the table discussions.
- How quickly the group developed a camaraderie with a level of trust which enabled the frank personal sharing
- Having men in green standing and praying over you, in their own uninhibited way - is very precious and moving.

## KOWSA 15 going strong

We were delighted to have 11 guests, two of whom had driven themselves all the way from Port Lincoln - a good 8 hour drive - so we took our hats off to them for their effort. These two ladies were so blessed by the weekend they returned to attend our reunion - this time by plane.

Another guest was so blown away by the love she had received - she literally danced in the streets as a result of her joy and enthusiasm.

Two guests, a mother and daughter, shared the experience. The daughter commented she was so pleased she had accepted the invitation to come in person as no description could have done justice to her reality of the weekend.

Yet another guest took the initiative and after the weekend wrote to her nephew from whom she was estranged. We are praying with her that he is blessed by receiving her letter.

## Born Again at Dillwynia

In relation to the short course we had a wonderful week. We started with 18 women but one woman dropped out after the first day. The women were all extremely positive about their experience and God did some amazing work in their lives. One woman said: 'Thank you for helping me find myself again, and for helping me understand more about our Lord Jesus Christ.' Another said: 'The last four days have opened my heart to Jesus. Thank you.' Another said: 'Thank you for the most life changing and the best four days of my life. Thank you for helping me find my way back to the Lord.'

On our first journey program one of the women described how she felt on the inside. She didn't come from a Christian background and said: 'I feel like I have been born all over again.' She didn't know this is how the Bible describes becoming a Christian. Another woman had read the whole of Matthew's Gospel and loved it.

So we praise God for all that He has done and continues to do in the lives of these precious women.

Thanks for your prayer and support.

**Kairos Prison Ministry Australia is an interdenominational Christian ministry reaching out to incarcerated individuals, their families and those who work with them; to bring sustainable meaning and hope in the place of loneliness, isolation and despair.**

### Kairos Outside Weekends for Women

Date	Course	Contact Address	Leader
Aug 26-28	Canberra/Monaro	PO Box 3961 Weston ACT 2611	Meg Fitzgerald
Sept 16-18	Hunter #12	PO Box 221 Kotara 2289	Eunice Aldous
Sept 16-18	Adelaide #16	PO Box 242 Highgate 5063	Mary Howie
Sept 23-25	Wide Bay Capricornia #6	1/77A Walker Street Bundaberg 4670	Vicki Buchan
Sept 23-25	Western Australia #5	PO Box 1359 Joondalup 6919	Jemana Drennan
Nov 5-7	SE Qld #22	PO Box 88, Morningside 4170	Annie Bashford
Nov 18-20	Sydney #26	PO Box 2178 Normanhurst 2076	Cindy Kingdom
Apr 2012	Melbourne	PO Box 1010 Mitcham North 3132	TBA

### Kairos Outside Weekends for Men

Nov 11-14	KO for Men	PO Box 73 Northmead NSW 2152	Greg Clarke
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### Kairos Inside Short Courses

June 20-24	Mid-North Coast #8	PO Box 5065 Frederickton 2440	Romney Newman
June 27- 1	Bathurst #19	PO Box 192 Orange 2800	Evan Harris
Aug 26-29	Parklea #4	PO Box 630 Stanhope Gardens 2768	Rick Earngy
Sept 13-16	Junee #24	PO Box 189 Junee 2663	Alan Crozier
Oct. 11-14	Mobilong #14	PO Box 242 Highgate SA 5063	David Medlock
Oct	Tamworth #7	452 Bridge Road Kelvin 2380	David Arneman
Nov	Arthur Gorrie #3	97a Hillview Rd Mt. Cotton 4165	Bob Joyce
Nov 14-16	Grafton #21	PO Box 1816 Grafton 2460	Maurice Avellino
Nov	Canberra #2	PO Box 176 Deakin West 2600	TBA

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