

Kairos

PRISON MINISTRY AUSTRALIA

*releasing lives into the love
and forgiveness of Jesus*



Newsletter Winter 2012

Message from our CEO

Here we are, half way through the year already! Sometimes it feels like we are running on the spot and getting nowhere, so these newsletters are a great opportunity to step back and look around at how far we have come. It is truly wonderful to be able to report that we are a growing ministry.

Through the hard work and faithful, prayerful, obedience of a great many people over a considerable period of time we will this year run new Kairos Inside short courses at the Port Augusta Prison in South Australia, Correctional Centre at Wolston, Dawn De Loas Correctional Centre (part of the Silverwater complex) in Sydney. In addition there will be two new Kairos Outside for Women groups running their first weekends this year in North Queensland and New England in New South Wales. And we will run another Kairos Outside for Men weekend in Sydney. Praise God!

So, really, this is a very busy year.

In April, I had the privilege of meeting with around 20 Kairos volunteers who have taken on some of the leadership roles in the organisation, and spent the weekend discussing the ministry and the many challenges we face this year and looking into the future. We will shortly be able to share with you some of the outcomes, after we have analysed all that was discussed and formulated practical responses.

In the last Newsletter I wrote about the passion and compassion of Kairos volunteers and I have continued to be confronted by that great compassion that Kairos volunteers show in their lives, and choose to live out through the Kairos ministry. In thinking about this I was reminded of some of the writings of Neil Cole in his book "Organic Church" and in particular the passage in Matthew Chapter 9 v 36: "When He saw the crowds, He was deeply moved with compassion for them, because they were troubled and helpless, like sheep

without a shepherd."

Neil Cole makes two points:

- 1) The Greek word translated here as compassion really refers to a physical, gut response, and
- 2) The scriptures tell us that God intentionally placed us in certain relational contexts by His providence. This puts the responsibility on us to see the people in our lives as there by design, and challenges us to take advantage of opportunities to share the kingdom of God with them.

Most of us are surrounded daily by crowds of people who do not have Christ in their lives, yet we walk through life without feeling it in our guts. Why? Because we don't see them as Jesus does.

It is comforting to know that in the midst of our hectic lives, Jesus can understand and empathise with us, however, when Jesus saw the crowds he had gut wrenching compassion.

When I'm busy I tend to run past other people

without a second glance. I get frustrated at slow cars in front of me, queues and traffic jams. Obstacles to my progress.

But Jesus didn't see the crowds as an obstacle to his mission, he saw them as his mission, and he FELT compassion for them. FELT compassion is a clue to the depth of his caring.

So now we can perhaps start to understand what compassion is NOT:

- Compassion is not mere sympathy. It is not just feeling for your pain.
- It is not empathy - putting yourself in someone else's position.
- It is not agreement - being politically correct at the expense of being Biblically correct.
- It is not pity. Pity leads to despair; compassion leads to hope.

Someone has said pity weeps and walks away; compassion comes to help and to stay.

Pity often produces the tears that keep us a safe distance away from another person's problem.

Pity observes; compassion involves.

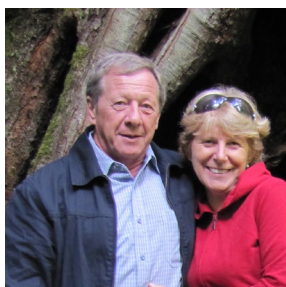
Thank you for your compassion towards those imprisoned, both on the inside and the outside.

On a more practical note, the Board has decided that, come what may, we will vacate the Parramatta office by June 30th. We still continue to look for suitable alternative accommodation within Correctional Services or other government facilities, or through our church contacts, as well as commercial leases, however, so far without success. So please continue to pray for our future accommodation, that wherever the Lord wants us to be will be revealed to us in due time, in His special time.

Thank you for all of your support.

God Bless you all.

John Bignall CEO



Thank You!

We sincerely thank you for your support in prayers, volunteering and financially. As it is tax time, a donation slip is enclosed. More details on the back page.

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

Great Response from Resident



Excerpt from a letter to Mid North Coast KI, from a resident who took part in the short course, June 2011.

"All of you guys have a special place in my heart, I feel that without you all I would never have found my faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I am not just saying that either, I am stating a true fact. I was so lost in a dark hole and I really didn't care anymore as I felt that I was alone and that no-one cared. Then by experiencing Kairos and the friendship, love, joy, faith and forgiveness that you showed

and gave me, opened up a whole new world to me.

You will never realise just how much you all have impacted my life and the faith and joy you all have given me. I can never thank you enough.

I am still reading my Bible every day and my faith is growing and growing. I find some things still get me down but then I go back to the Gospel and I cheer up. Its amazing how God has made me feel at peace."

FULHAM VIC #13

Kairos #13 was recently held at Fulham prison in Sale Victoria on the 1st – 4th May. We were privileged to have 14 guests attend the course as well as five helpers who had participated in earlier Kairos courses.

Although Fulham was experiencing some union unrest and random strike action, God richly blessed us, and the turmoil had no effect on the course whatsoever.

Sharing by the guests at the closing was

very encouraging and it was evident that God was and is still working in the lives of those who participated – and as one of the leaders commented "The Holy Spirit can be very subtle in how he achieves his way with us and I had a great sense of him working his gift of grace and mercy during our time at Fulham"

We value your prayers as we continue to share with these residents and others who come along to the journey program.

STOP PRESS!

KPMA Treasurer

Position still open!

If you know anyone who would be interested, please contact the CEO

johnbignall@kairos.org.au or

Tel: 02 9683 6096

KI ACACIA #3 WA

"It's the best thing I ever done!" This was the assessment of Acacia Prison's "Kairos 3" by one of the men who took part. He said this when he dropped in to see me in my office this morning. He added, "I'm really looking forward to the followup program...."

Acacia's 3rd short-course took place from May 7- 10th (inclusive). And what a truly remarkable program it was! 18 prisoners participated, and 17 visitors from "outside".



In many ways, it was an answer to prayer. Quite a number of these guys have never experienced genuine community before, and it's not something that's readily available in the prison environment. I believe that "Kairos" is a profound influence in the lives of some of these men - seeds are sown which may later be extremely fruitful.

I'm intensely aware that some of the team had to take time off work to be here - also that others travelled long distances, and that almost all took two weekends away from home in order to train and prepare for this venture. I am grateful for all their efforts, and I look forward to "Kairos 4" in a year's time....

A chance encounter

Sometimes God blesses us by allowing us to see the fruit of our commitment.

When two KI Canberra volunteers were in the visitors' centre at the Alexander Maconochie Centre a few weeks ago waiting for the chaplain, a guy came up to and greeted one by name and reminded him that he had met him at a short course at Goulburn (probably #13 or #14) and that, as a result, he resolved to go straight.

Hallelujah! May God add his blessing to this previous resident's resolve.

NEW KO North Qld!

At last, after forming an ad hoc committee three years ago, North Queensland is to host their first Kairos Outside for women weekend in July (6th 7th 8th). There are two correctional centres in North Queensland, one in Townsville, and the other at Lotus Glen on the Atherton Tablelands. These centres cover an area North from Bowen to the Torres Strait (1300kms) and west to Mt Isa

(1000kms), with many inmates coming from very isolated areas. This makes it very hard for families with a loved one behind bars. Some of our committee travel 400 kms to attend a meeting.

We have had great support from our Southern Queensland counterparts who are leading us through our first weekend. Kairos Outside North Queensland #1 will be held at Kennedy,

half way between Townsville and Cairns. At our end, Gwen Thomas, our Chair, has been very active in "getting it all together" and she is ably supported by the team.

We would value your prayers before and during the weekend. Many of us are entering uncharted waters, but I am certain that all who participate will be richly blessed.

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

Maddy's Story

Hi, my name is Maddy and I would like to tell you about how going on a Kairos Outside weekend has changed my life.

After finishing Year 12, I did a course in Child Care and worked looking after children for a while before some things happened and my life took a downhill spiral as I got involved with drugs and alcohol. I came to Canberra four years ago to enter detox and try to make a fresh start but it didn't work out very well for me. After I was asked to leave, I found myself homeless for over a year, sleeping in parks and behind hedges as well as staying in refuges around the city before I was able to get my own flat in 2009, where I have lived ever since. It was during this time of being homeless that I found a church where people cared for me and they didn't mind that I had

drifted away from going to church as I did when I was younger.

I live with depression but when I went on the Kairos Outside weekend it made such a big difference in my life. Being part of KO really brightens me up. I go to the coffee groups as often as I can and love going to the reunions too. The best thing about being part of the KO community is meeting new people and not being lonely anymore. The best part of the weekend was feeling accepted and of course all the lovely gifts – it was like all my birthdays and Christmases came at once. It has been especially nice to have people ring me up on my birthday and I enjoy talking to them and try to encourage them too.

Since doing the KO weekend, I have started going to the Australian Catholic University

where I am doing a course in Liberal Studies with some other ladies from KO. We are presently studying Shakespeare. I find it hard but am determined to persevere with it. As well as going to uni I go to two churches where I receive support and help others, do some volunteer work as well as minding a small child each week. I have an active social life - life is looking up and feels good.

Thank you to everyone in KO, for those who help on the weekend and to those who show they really care about me each week. Long live Kairos Outside!

Kairos Inside PSDG Coordinator



Well, some say in front of every good man is a good woman! So our new Kairos Inside PSDG Coordinator Ken Moore is hiding behind his helpmate... so we welcome them both! Ken will be assisting Kairos Inside teams to assimilate a new manual and finding ways to support and encourage teams in their task of bringing Christ to residents through the Kairos programs.

What can I do?

- Find out how to become more involved with Kairos by contacting John Bignall [02 9683 6096] or johnbignall@kairos.org.au
- Join the Kairos Prayer Network (email prayer@kairos.org.au)
- Consider a financial contribution.

Mid North Coast journey rocks!

We have been truly blessed by involvement in the journey program since the short course in June last year

We are delighted to see some men who have done a Short Course elsewhere regularly attending on Mondays. More recently we have around 9-10 and the numbers have been as high as 14.

There has been some great sharing and some special moments often following great talks by team members. The singing has been great with residents turning off the CD so we can sing unaccompanied on occasion.

The Christmas journey was very special with one resident who has not been to Journey speaking encouragingly of the importance of the Kairos visits to the goal. We had a special letter from a Short Course resident telling of the peace and love he received at Kairos and of his growing faith as he reads God's word each day. He spoke of the dark hole he was in prior to Kairos and how his whole view of life has changed. Praise God for what he does through those letters, prayers and acts of Agape to other residents.

The willingness of team members to

be so readily involved is a blessing and the commitment of Graeme Bell our Chaplain can never be underestimated.

Thank you, Graeme, from all of us. Graeme has made our entry into the goal so much easier.

Please continue to pray for the men who are regulars, that their influence will continue to affect others. As James, a resident has said, he can at this stage only believe what he sees and he has seen great changes in the men who are involved with Kairos.

Praise God!

Emu Plains KI #19

What a great God we have. His name is to be praised as He went before us preparing the way and the hearts of the girls who came for the four days.

The first day had a few hiccups with the girls arriving an hour late. Time only seems to matter to humans, as God had His time and plan for the day, and surprise, surprise, we were able to make up time.

The team fellowship was supportive and also filled with laughter. The food provided was exceptional and enjoyed by all.

We were surprised to hear the church bells ringing on the Thursday evening while we were holding our night meeting. This was the first time that we had stayed at Castlereagh Academy. Hence the meeting was perhaps not as long as expected, but all areas were covered.

Team members were given lessons on ringing the bells and were able to put into practice what they learnt. Great fun.

Invited guests were unable at the last moment to attend the Closing Ceremony.

Again, this was in God's plan and the sharing by the girls filled our hearts with joy, as they testified what the 4 days experience meant to them.

I continue to stand in awe and wonder at what a great God we have, who walks beside us each step of the way when we step out in ministry for him. Praise Him. I am filled with awe and wonder at what He did and continues to do in Kairos.

Praise Him!

God is Blessing Mobilong

We are still praising God for the KI #15 with 23 guests at Mobilong SA. There was some powerful sharing and encouragement at the first journey. Some men who had not shared during the short course stood up to the microphone and testified to the changes in their lives since those 3 ½ days. There is a strong core group of transformed guests who willingly encourage and build up those who are new to this journey. This is where we all witness the work of the Holy Spirit in action.

A strong commitment has been made by new team members to the Journey program and future Kairos Courses. These men were impacted by the uniqueness of this ministry and their contribution brought a freshness and energy to the team which blessed us all.

The outside support team was a large and happy family full of joy and prayer for each act of service and support of those who went inside each day. The unity and fun they injected uplifted us morning and night and an excellent relationship of trust was established.

The Closing Service took an unexpected turn when we learned of the arrival of the 34th Governor of SA, His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin John Scarce AC CSC RANR and his entourage. Added to this was the Mayor of Unley, local MP, Ian Schneider Principal Chaplain, Prison Chaplaincy Services and Dept For Correctional Services as well as DCS Dept heads, Chief Executive Peter Severin, Executive Director Custodial Services David Brown and the new General Manager of

Mobilong Claire Parkinson. The Governor spoke generously to the men and was received well by them. It was his first visit to a SA Prison and we are grateful that he honoured our program by attending.

Kairos Inside Mobilong #15 was a disciplined and obedient team who were good and faithful servants.

We believe Kairos was well presented to the dignitaries and officials who attended and gained the confidence of the new Manager who observed it closely. In the final song, all the men who were guests stood unprompted with hands held high and sang Amazing Grace; it was something to behold.

To God be the Glory!

Thank you to all our supporters

Kairos is blessed with many supporters through prayer, volunteering and financial donations. Without them Kairos could not operate. KPMA wish to thank each one of you for all that you do for Kairos.

The 2012 tax year ends on 30 June and we seek your donations. These directly assist us to open new opportunities to bless those

affected by incarceration and their family and supporters. We realize many are not in a position to give financially and we do not ask you to donate. Others have been blessed financially and we ask you to consider a donation at this time. Donations over \$2 received prior to 30 June are tax deductible.

Over 98% of all our expenditure is directly

related to presenting programs both inside jails and to the families and supporters through outside programs. Less than 2% is incurred in meeting legal requirements for the Australian operation.

Receipts for all donations to 30 June will be mailed during early July.

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.

Course	Program	Contact Address	Leader
Kairos Outside Weekends for Women			
15-17 June	Melbourne #8	c/- 149 Raglan St St Kilda East 3181	Sandra Stork
7-8 July	Far North Qld #1	28 Couper Street Mareeba 4880	Gwen Thompson
27-29 July	North Coast NSW #5	PO Box Woolgoolga 2456	Christine Redpath
3-5 August	Canberra-Monaro #13	PO Box 3961 Weston 2611	Sandy Moore
14-16 September	Hunter #14	PO Box 221 Kotara 2289	Vicki Harding
2-4 November	Riverina #6	PO Box 189 Junee 2663	Deborah Brown
2-4 November	SE Queensland #24	PO Box 88 Morningside 4170	Pam Tupe
16-18 November	Wide Bay Capricornia #7	1/77A Walker Street Bundaberg 4670	Glenda Craig
23-25 November	Sydney #28	PO Box 2178 Normanhurst 2076	Ruth Chaffer
Kairos Inside Short Courses			
2-6 July	Wolston #1	8 Malcom Street, Beachmere, 4510	Greg Trost
21-24 August	Junee #25	PO Box 189 Junee 2663	Brian Grewal
24-27 August	Parklea #5	PO Box 630 Stanhope Gardens 2768	Rick Morris
TBA September	Port Augusta SA #1	PO Box 242 Highgate SA 5063	Peter Dick
2-5 October	Mobilong #16	PO Box 242 Highgate SA 5063	Timothy Minehan
12-16 November	Grafton #22	PO Box 1816 Grafton 2460	John Bradshaw

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