



Newsletter

Fall 2009

Advance Kairos Training

As an upcoming leader I had the opportunity to attend Advanced Kairos Outside Training (AKOT) with six other participants from North Carolina. The training was amazing and I am so grateful I had the opportunity to attend with fellow North Carolinians from the east and west along with other trainees from the surrounding states. The three most important things I learned from AKOT: The program, relationship with Christ, obedience. All three lessons coincide.

I have been working in the Kairos Outside ministry for a couple of years. I cannot begin to say what I have learned about ministry, the men and women who are involved in the program and our guests. I have been fortunate to work with wonderful leaders and people knowledgeable not only about the ministry but about the prison system and how it impacts families. AKOT really opened my eyes on the finer points of the program by explaining each facet of the program and why each step is important. The Kairos Outside manual is our instrument to carry-out the plans of the ministry and each question was answered and every concern was noted by our instructors.

Our instructors emphasized how Jesus Christ is the center of ministry. He is the core foundation and we acknowledge we are nothing without him. By professing his God head we gather together in

the body of Christ ecumenically to minister to those who hurt, who are confused and who may have never heard of Christ or have never had a positive experience in connection with Christ. We are called to serve, just as Christ served others. Christ set the example and we are to follow.

The third and one of the most important aspects of AKOT I learned is obedience. We have choices. We can do or do not. As followers of Christ we understand our choices have consequences. Kairos is Christ led; however, it is an organization which has structure. This structure is documented in the Kairos Outside manuals. As part of the training, it is a requirement for Kairos Outside team members to read, study and understand the manual. The manual provides the guidelines and structure the ministry must operate in order for the ministry to be effective and to provide the maximum participation from the community.

AKOT provided a list of actions/areas which are flexible within individual organizations and which ones were concrete and must be followed according to the manual. I am thankful for the inspiration God has given Kairos leaders for a ministry with purpose and I am cognizant and responsible for the knowledge and guidance that was provided at the training.

I strongly encourage anyone working in Kairos Outside to attend the training. I promise it will be an enriching experience and I pray I will continue to serve and grow in Christ by its direction.

Kairos Outside of North Carolina
Demonstrating God's grace and love through
Christian support for women who have loved
ones who are or who have been incarcerated

Carolyn Loncosky

Kairos Outside #1 of Western North Carolina, September 2009

We are happy to let everyone know that we now have Kairos Outside in Western NC – to add to the weekends in Eastern NC each year. We had Kairos Outside #1 this September in Western NC, which we believe will help us to be a support for the women in this area, especially now that Kairos Inside is getting ready to have their 3rd weekend this October at the Marion, NC facility in this WNC area. As a continuing ministry we are now in both areas of NC and it is evident that Kairos Outside is an important part of the big picture of the Kairos Prison Ministry.

As leader of Kairos Outside #1 of WNC, it became clear by the end of the teaming process that the Lord knew all who would be part of the team, which was one of the best teams I have ever worked with! Everyone worked together for the same purpose – for the Lord's glory and for the guests. As the weekend unfolded, there was peace, grace and God's Agape love flowing in each thing we did or spoke with one another. All of the guests have complimented their team contacts, saying they felt welcome and comfortable beyond what they ever expected!

Here are some of the things that our guests shared at the end of the weekend:

- I never thought I would go away with all the love, support, and joy that has filled my heart. There are no words to describe the great way we were met and treated so kind.
- Didn't really know what to expect, but it was an awesome experience. All my needs were met.
- Almost everyone who spoke had at least one point that pertained in particular to me, and anything that related to experiences with an incarcerated loved one and God's guidance and help in those times was helpful.

- I just love to hear the speakers and all the things they have been through and knowing many are right where I am.
- The fellowship from the team and guests showing love and care – the workshop giving life experience situations outside the ministry, release emotions of feelings, sorrows, fear, lifting the heavy burden in my heart.
- There was so much love with all and the leader at my table was like meeting a sister I was yet to meet.
- I came to learn and gain insight, but I learned much, much more.
- Found new friends and shared God's love. There was so much of each talk that is a part of my life, it is like this weekend was made just for me.
- We were very comfortable in our table family and formed a special bond, and now we are prayer partners.

The prayers of the community, and the angels helping behind the scene were felt in our hearts and we thank everyone who participated in some way. We are thankful to the Lord and to all involved.

Even after the weekend and back in our homes, the Agape love continued for the guests of Kairos Outside #1. We had a couple of guests who had some car problems going home. The Kairos Outside community quickly put God's Agape love into action and attended to the needs of these guests. It is so awesome to me that so many were willing to help in this matter. This was a true testimony of many working together to help each other when in need. We can truly say "We are Family"!

It has been an honor to be part of this continuing ministry, and we thank everyone for their prayers and encouragement. As we continue to be involved in this ministry and one another's lives, I look forward to seeing everyone again soon.

In Christ's Love,
Carol Liptak
Leader WNC KO#1

Message from Paula

Advisory Council Chair for Eastern North Carolina

I did something in April that I've never done before and I won't have to do again for 10 years. Do you know what I did? Tetnus shot? No. I got my passport!! Why did I get my passport? In addition to it being handy to have, I had to get my passport in order to attend the Kairos Prison Ministry International Summer Conference. The conference was held in St. Catharines, Toronto, Canada.

Karin Gougeon and I attended the conference. While there we met Kairos volunteers from all over the world. There were volunteers from the United Kingdom, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Canada and of course, the United States. It was very interesting talking to volunteers from all over and hearing about the challenges and praises they are experiencing.

So what else did we do there? We arrived on Tuesday and got settled in. On Wednesday, we attended the Kairos Outside committee meeting. While there, we learned about changes and discussed issues that affect Kairos Outside.

On Thursday, Karin, Alexis (Karin's granddaughter) and I went sight-seeing. I saw Niagara Falls for the very first time. What a breath-taking sight it was!! To see the Falls and their great power was amazing! We also visited a small touristy town called Niagara on the Lake where we went shopping in several small shops.

Friday and Saturday were filled with attending various sessions for Kairos volunteers. We attended a session

about having balance in your life led by Jo Chapman. While volunteering in the ministry is important, it can also lead to burnout if your life is not in balance. Jo's whole premise is that all aspects of your life need to be balanced in order for you to be your best at whatever it is you are doing. If your life isn't in balance then something in your life is being neglected. Are you balanced?

Another informational session I attended was Volunteer Recruitment led by Mike Springer. Mike gave a blueprint of a plan on how to recruit more people to work in the ministry. Mike left me with lots to think about and to discuss with the Advisory Council when we meet.

I also learned about new initiatives that Kairos is involved with. These include mentoring for children of inmates, a Kairos Outside Torch for children of inmates, and an aftercare/reentry program for Kairos Inside graduates. Wow the ministry is growing in ways I hadn't imagined!

The Kairos Summer Conference isn't just for Advisory Council members or future leaders. It's for any Kairos Inside, Outside, or Torch volunteer that wants to learn more about the ministry and meet other volunteers. Next summer the conference will be in San Antonio, Texas. I'm thinking about doing a road trip. Anyone want to come with me?

Paula McLamb Olds

Visit Us Online!
www.kairosoutsidenc.org

Get Involved!

Team Volunteer. Working a team requires members meet for 36 hours to prepare for a Kairos Outside Weekend. Members share their special talents – musical, spiritual, social – with Guests and each other. The process begins with a volunteer application, which is submitted to the council and leaders of upcoming Weekends. Leaders begin choosing their team many months in advance, so becoming a Team Volunteer can take a long time because of all the planning involved.

Angel Volunteer. “Angels” are special volunteers who work behind the scenes during a weekend. They help prepare Guest quarters, set up tables and chairs, clean, cook, run errands, set up luminaries and pray during the weekend. We also need help with Guest transportation during weekends. This is a wonderful opportunity for college and high school students, and youth groups who need service hours.

Prayer Partners. In Kairos Outside, we depend on God to make things happen, so we recruit volunteers to pray for us from start to finish

Agape. Agape is a sacrificial “love” that takes many forms. It could be prayer or working as an angel. Or it could be making little gifts such as bookmarks or food, for our Guests on the weekend. It could also be a “green agape” - a financial gift that is tax deductible.

Waa Hoo! What a Ride!

A Kairos Outside Weekend is like riding a roller coaster– screaming, excited, anticipating, and having to be pushed a bit by friends to even get on the ride! Carol Liptak lead us in the expectations of an exciting ride and we could see God’s Spirit working through her. We excitedly and hesitatingly took our places on the ride. Friday evening we spent getting to know each other, beginning that long uphill climb, anticipating the first big drop. By Saturday with the first drops through, we felt God’s Spirit in all that we did. The talks bonded us together on this ride, knowing we all shared so many pains and disappointments and joys. Chapel was to catch our breath and join God for the next hill. The guys’ elegant supper on Saturday was the knowledge we were on the right ride and the end was in sight. Saturday night skits were comic relief. Sunday was the fireworks going off as you crested on the last drops of the roller coaster as we laid flowers on each of the ladies’ bed. Many remarking that they “had never had fresh flowers” or “more flowers they had gotten in their lifetime”. Letter time was the last drop completed. Their faces as they read their loved one’s letters or even a picture was a special time. We felt joy and reverence as we were allowed to share in this moment with them. Home stretch is in sight as they received their crosses and shared their comments with us.

And as we all got off the wonderful ride, we hugged and laughed and cried – no longer strangers but new friends all touched by God’s great love. We were glad we took this ride, God! Wah Hoo! What a ride!

From a First Timer
Elsie Callahan