

## Listen, Listen, Love, Love

*Kairos* is one of the Greek words for “time” and is the name of a prison ministry that takes God’s Special Time into medium and maximum security prisons across the country and around the world. The purpose of Kairos is to build Christian communities inside prison walls. The motto is Listen, Listen, Love, Love. Kairos teams are trained to do just that. We don’t ask questions. We don’t try to convert. We listen and we love.

Taking Kairos inside the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women (NCCIW) in Raleigh, or any other medium/maximum security prison for men or women, is carefully planned and organized. After more than 30 hours of training, the four days inside the prison usually begin on Thursday when the team meets the residents for the first time, late in the afternoon. We mingle, have refreshments and introduce ourselves. At about 7:00 p.m. the residents and those from the free world go their separate ways until the next morning.

On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday we are seated at round tables with six residents and three team members in each “family”. Usually there are from five to seven tables. Several talks are given each day and all have a prepared outline to be followed. During talks the taking of notes is encouraged because after a brief time of meditation the table families hold discussions and share reactions to each talk. On Sunday afternoon there is a closing service. It is open to friends and family of the team and others who are not related to any of the residents. All visitors must be approved in advance. New Kairos team members often begin by observing a closing.

When people agree to serve on a team they also agree to go to the prison at least six times in the following year for two hour gatherings with many of the Kairos sisters inside. There are also **two day events** scheduled in January and June in which team members and Kairos graduates participate.

### How can you help from home?

Going inside a prison is not something most people from the outside world are comfortable doing, but most Christians do welcome the opportunity to serve from home as they remember the words recorded in Matthew 25:36 – *I was in prison and you visited me.*

1. Each team member is expected to raise and contribute a minimum of **\$150** to the ministry to cover expenses. The residents are fed their meals by KAIROS during this event. The meals are cooked off-site and brought inside. There are also snacks and drinks provided regularly. **We always welcome a few bags of M&Ms or pretzels.** At closing the residents will often say that they came to Kairos for the food and stayed for the love. If you wish to make a financial contribution to Kairos you can write your check to SUMC with Kairos indicated and deliver it in the regular collection or to the church office or to Fran Henderson. Be sure to specify Kairos since SUMC has more than one prison ministry. Financial contributions can be made at any time.
2. There is extensive **prayer support** surrounding a KAIROS event. Hundreds of people agree to pray during the weekend. Names are placed on colored strips of paper and

made into a chain that encircles the room. White links are used to indicate KAIROS sisters or brothers on the inside that are in prayer during the weekend as well. Names of prayer warriors are collected for the April and the October events, usually within about two weeks of the weekend.

3. You can make a **poster** or **banner**. These can be of any size and might include a familiar scripture or Christian design. Nothing “preachy” please. We need to send “God loves you” messages.
4. Children are encouraged to make **placemats**. These should be hand drawn and colored using only crayons or markers. They may be signed with the child’s first name and his/her age. 8 ½ by 14 is a good size but nothing will be refused. This is a good project for a Sunday School class. A placemat decorated with the scribbles of a 2 year old is appreciated. Some of these ladies have 2 year olds at home and are touched by “baby art”.
5. Adults and children may write **notes or letters** to the ladies participating. If you are interested in writing please contact Fran Henderson at [fhenderson@ec.rr.com](mailto:fhenderson@ec.rr.com) or call her at 910-326-5706 for more information.