



## Recovery & Community During the Pandemic

When COVID-19 struck in the spring of 2020, Jeremiah was not alone. Living in the Kairos permanent supportive housing community, he shares that even during quarantine he felt unity with his fellow program members: “This is our family here – Christ House and Kairos members.”

Jeremiah has been a part of the Kairos community for over five years after originally coming to Christ House for a liver biopsy. He shares, “If I’d have left after the liver biopsy I wouldn’t be here. They gave me a start.” His mother and father passed away many years ago, and Jeremiah says, “I wasn’t at either funeral because I was out in the street drinking. They tried to find me but couldn’t. I didn’t want to be found.” Jeremiah’s sister has a birthday party coming up: “Now that I’m back with my family things are alright. I thought they had something against me for doing what I did. I had a lot of harm in my life, but God has been good.”

Before the pandemic, Kairos Members lead and hosted four weekly Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings. Some Kairos



**Kairos Program Director Kelley Reed (left) stands with Addictions Counselor John Bush (right) outside of Christ House.**

Members such as Jeremiah also attended meetings outside of Kairos. “I was getting in at least seven meetings a week. [Christ House had] good meetings. Big crowds back there in the dining room. People from the street came in, too. Those were good meetings.” Once the pandemic hit, the structure of Kairos shifted for the safety of the

community. Kairos Members had AA/NA meetings via the telephone and Zoom, and eventually in-person at Kairos House with limited capacity. When asked about adjusting to the new format of AA meetings, Jeremiah says, “I’m in recovery, and a meeting is a meeting however it is. It was different, and everyone ...



The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive and compassionate health care to sick and homeless men from the District of Columbia and to assist them in addressing critical issues to help them break the cycle of homelessness.

(continued)

adjusted very well. That's the program kicking in." The Kairos program shifted in other ways during the pandemic as well. "It felt like I entered the role when there was a lot of transitioning. COVID-19 was happening, but the recommendations were constantly changing," says Kelley Reed, who started as the Kairos Program Director in April 2021. Kelley's role is multifaceted but in many ways centers around interpersonal relationships, "I'm the rule enforcer but also the person

that tries to build community, facilitating events and checking in on people." She meets with the Kairos Leadership Group weekly where the team shares upcoming announcements, and concerns. These meetings are an opportunity "for us to keep a pulse on the community" as well as "empowering individuals to make changes as they see fit." Despite the challenges, Kelley shares, "I came into a really strong team. Gloria, [Clinical Support Coordinator at Kairos House], helped me stay abreast with all things COVID-19 related."

When asked about how they have managed throughout the pandemic, Kairos Members, patients, and staff alike seem to share a theme in their responses: community support. "All of us have been through this thing together. We've been tightly knit even with the pandemic," says Jeremiah. "Everything has been easy for me since I've been here... Christ House took care of me and it's been great. Pandemic or no pandemic we're one for all and all for one."

*\*This Kairos Member's name has been changed for privacy.*

## Meet Charles: Christ House's Chaplain

This July marked one year since our Chaplain, Charles, arrived at Christ House. Charles was born and raised in DC. Before going to seminary, he worked in various roles -- musician, criminal defense investigator, and eventually VP of finance after receiving his MBA from Georgetown University. When he began to feel a different calling, he left his job and reflected on what he wanted to do next. After a period of discernment, he decided to go to seminary where he graduated in May 2020.

Being the Chaplain at Christ House has provided Charles with his first full-time ministry opportunity, and his time here has affirmed his call to ministry. His previous work in hospice care grants him a familiarity with and understanding of working in an in-patient setting. When he first arrived at Christ House, COVID-19 restrictions had stopped most of the church

services and made connecting with others more difficult. Charles has worked around these challenges by utilizing more inviting body language, smiling with his eyes, and talking with patients outside in our courtyard.

While Charles enjoys the process of preaching and preparing for a service, his favorite thing about his position is talking and spending time with patients.

Throughout Christ House's facility the Kairos Gospel Choir can be heard singing and playing instruments. With Charles's help, the group has recorded several a cappella videos which staff and patients were able to enjoy during the holiday season. We are grateful for all of Charles's contributions so far and appreciate all he does for our patients and staff.



Charles playing the piano in the Dining Room at Christ House

# Staying Involved This Summer

## We're Hosting a Chicken Drive & a Virtual 5k!

### Summer Chicken Drive

At Christ House, an important part of the care we provide is to serve nutritious meals to our patients three times a day. The cooks in our kitchen are dedicated to ensuring that everyone is well-fed and well-nourished as they continue to heal. Our kitchen receives generous donations from local markets and grocery stores in order to serve healthy meals for our patients. However, this month we are running low on chicken and are hoping for some support!

If you are willing and interested in providing a meal to someone in need, we are asking for chicken in nearly any form, either frozen or fresh. This includes the whole chicken, broken down – including breasts, drumsticks, thighs, or ground meat. We kindly ask that no feet or innards are donated. Please feel free to stop by and drop off your donation at our front desk during regular business hours.

Alternatively, you can contact our Community and Volunteer Engagement Manager, Hannah Stanke ([hannah.stanke@christhouse.org](mailto:hannah.stanke@christhouse.org)), to arrange a local drop off. This is a great and meaningful way to support Christ House patients – by providing the primary ingredient for a delicious meal.

### Compassion in Action Virtual 5k

We also encourage you to get involved in our first Virtual 5K! What is this event? It's a 5K your way! Walk, run, bike, swim, or scooter with friends to raise funds and awareness for Christ House's essential mission.

We invite you to participate wherever you are between August 20th and August 22nd. **Please scan the adjacent code to learn more** and feel free to reach out if you have questions.



We are very grateful for all you do for Christ House and hope you will consider supporting us through this summer's food drive or virtual 5k!



# Leave a Legacy of Healing and Hope

As we continue to see and feel the impacts of the pandemic, we know that our mission here at Christ House will continue to be essential in the years ahead. One way you can continue to support comprehensive and compassionate care for people experiencing homelessness is to include a gift to Christ House in your will, trust, or estate plan. Setting up or revising your will or trust helps you care for your loved ones and the causes that are important to you. Christ House can also be named as an organizational beneficiary of your donor-advised fund (Tax ID Number: 52-1362103) through your IRA or life insurance policy.

If you'd like to learn more about the ways you can create a long-term plan to support healing and hope, please visit <https://christhouse.org/donate/planned-giving/>. Your legacy gift will be used thoughtfully and efficiently for the greatest possible impact in the lives of patients here at Christ House.



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