



Christ
House

HEALING AND HOPE FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

VOLUME XXXVII, NO. 3 | FALL 2022

Day by Day

Celebrating 30 Years of the Kairos Program



Kairos House
1995



Kairos House
2022

This September, we celebrate 30 years of our Kairos Program. What began as apartment units spread out across the neighborhood, transformed into Kairos House – a 37-unit apartment building located half a block away from Christ House. Originally built in 1920, the building for Kairos stood vacant for years before Christ House purchased it and began renovations in 1995. What was once a deserted building is now full of life, community, and healing; it is now what our Kairos

Permanent Housing Residents call home.

The Kairos Program was initiated in 1992 as a way to meet the increasing demand for permanent housing among people experiencing homelessness with chronic illnesses in Washington, D.C. Kairos Members receive case management, addictions counseling, and pastoral support. For primary care, Kairos Members are connected with the same provider they had at Christ House. Kairos House is staffed with a program

director, housing coordinator, addictions counselor, medical care coordinator, and pastoral counselor, who all help to create a holistic support team which aids the residents' recovery process. Over the years, Kairos House has served as a home for more than 210 men.

Kairos is a Greek word referring to a unique time in people's lives when they are presented with an opportunity for major change. If you have had the privilege of getting to know any of our Kairos Members... (continued)



The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive and compassionate care for people experiencing homelessness with acute medical needs in DC and to offer assistance in addressing the critical issues to help them break the cycle of homelessness.

you would know that they have overcome an abundance of obstacles in their lives. When describing finding Christ House and being connected to the Kairos Program, many will talk about a new life, a new beginning, or renewed hope.

We spoke with Lawrence, a Kairos Member since October of 2008 (he remembers the day well). Before finding Christ House, he says “I was at my bottom and knew the only way to go was up.” When he was in the VA hospital and the staff asked if he knew about Christ House, he said no. As soon as he arrived at Christ House, he says it was “the beginning of the change. I started doing the New Day [Recovery] Program, AA/NA meetings four times a week. I wanted to get closer to God.”

When asked about the community at Kairos House, Lawrence shared: “[When I got there], I found out everybody welcomed me with open arms. House meetings, getting to know people. If you need something...people are looking out for you. We are assigned a mentor when we get there. It just became a

brotherhood. It was the best decision I’ve ever made in my life.

Over the years, the sad part about it is because of our age we lose friends to illness. That’s when you really see the love you have for each other... people helping each other. You can’t have nothing better than that.

I get a lot of encouragement from guys in the program. You see the change and growth in the people. You love to see people change for the better.”

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Another unique aspect of the program is the way in which Kairos Members give back to the community. Through the volunteer program, Kairos Members lead Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings, accompany Christ House patients to outside medical appointments, help in the kitchen, run patient activities, and more. We spoke with Clyde, a Kairos Member since

2015, about the ways in which Kairos Members often support patients at Christ House.

“When I see other guys [at Christ House] having difficulties...I remember I was just like them, so I try to help them navigate the situation and I have empathy because I was the same way.

When you come off the streets, you’re going to be very apprehensive at first.

Serving meals, I like that because I get a chance to see patients and say I was the same way. Show patients compassion. When you show [compassion], you find you have a certain type of quality you didn’t know you had. Once you receive compassion from people you show compassion to, it’s just overwhelming love.”

The structure of the program functions so that Kairos Members not only receive support from our staff, but they also receive support from one another, and learn to support themselves. Clyde shared even though he will still go through hard times on occasion, “I know how to navigate it with the tools they give me here. There’s always somebody to talk to here.”



**Kairos Lobby
1995**



**Kairos Lobby
2022**

Expressing Gratitude

Thirty years ago, our founders had a vision for a spiritual recovery program for patients with chronic illnesses, and created the Kairos Program. After seeing the progress of Kairos Members, Christ House purchased and renovated a home for the program, and 26 years ago, Kairos House opened.

It is truly a privilege to work with the men in our Kairos Program. We will always be grateful for their community, and we will always be dedicated to supporting their recovery journeys.

“I would just say to everybody who decided to create this wonderful blessing of a place for people in need and to keep this place going for 30 years...thank you. There’s no words to express all the positives they’ve done. There’s only one place like Kairos. I will always be grateful for the vision that God gave them.”

– Lawrence, Kairos Member

“Sister Marcella once asked me what was the most compassionate experience I’ve had here. When I first got here, I had no coat, nothing. It was September and it was getting cold. I remember a staff member gave me a coat. I held on to that coat like Linus held on to his blanket. I was so mad when it wore out. It reminded me of the warmth I had received.”

– Clyde, Kairos Member

Providing Protection through Vaccinations

As the temperatures begin to drop, cases of the flu tend to go up. At Christ House, we encourage patients to stay up to date on their vaccinations and we answer any questions individuals may have about vaccines. While our nursing staff administers flu immunizations, our clinical staff have also been working to schedule COVID-19 booster appointments for patients at local clinics.

Individuals living on the streets or in congregate settings can be particularly susceptible to contagious illnesses such as the flu or COVID-19, which is why being up to date on immunizations is so important for the population we serve. Administering vaccinations is a small, but crucial service we are proud to provide here at Christ House.



Speaker Series on Homelessness & Health Care: A Conversation with Kelley Reed, MSW

This year, Christ House is hosting a virtual Speaker Series on homelessness and health care featuring former Year Long Volunteers (YLVs). These informative sessions are open to the public and are a chance to learn more about homelessness and health care.

Kelley is the Director of the Kairos Program, Christ House's long-term addictions recovery community for men suffering from chronic illness. Kelley began her social work career as a case management YLV in 2014. At Christ House Kelley learned about the complex systems on which patients rely, and she gained valuable experience assisting patients in navigating those systems. Kelley uses the training she received at Christ House, as well as her experience providing psychotherapy and case management services across a variety of settings, to help the Kairos members maintain healthy, sober lives.

A recording will be available on our website after the event: www.christhouse.org/events/

Interested in sponsoring a Speaker Series event in the future? Reach out to our development team: development@christhouse.org or 202-328-1100.



**Speaker Series on
Homelessness & Health Care**



Kelley Reed, MSW
*Kairos Program Director
at Christ House*

**Thursday, September 29th
6PM EST via Zoom**

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