



FOOTPRINTS

NEWSLETTER

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Executive Director Albert Pugh to attend Kairos at St. Clair Prison October 26-29

Kairos Prison Ministry International, Inc. (Kairos) is a lay-led, interdenominational Christian ministry in which men and women volunteers bring Christ's love and forgiveness to prisoners and their families.

The word, *Kairos*, is a Greek word meaning in "God's Special Time" or in the "Fullness of Time," indicating an opportunity for our participants and guests to reconsider their life choices.

The Kairos programs take the participants on a journey that demonstrates the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ. Kairos Prison Ministry is Christian in nature, although no religious affiliation is necessary to be a participant.

The programs involve a structured model that includes the weekend experience, followed by guests or participants gathering regularly for accountability, support, and prayer.

Executive Director Albert Pugh will be going into St. Clair October 26 -29, 2023. Albert is very excited about going back into where he was once incarcerated and serving on the Kairos #71 team. If you remember Albert's Testimony from the July issue of Footprints, Albert said this:

"I heard about a ministry called Kairos and decided to sign up for this weekend event because they bring good food, cookies, coffee and lemonade. When I was released back to general population I signed up and was chosen to go. It was during that weekend, that I experienced the love of God in an overwhelming way!

Afterwards I knew 2 things:

- *That God is real. I had prayed before and was raised to believe, but He was never real in my life before this! I had done these things for selfish reasons.*
- *God loves me.*

I wasn't able to make a commitment at the time, but 6 weeks later, the words I heard that weekend still burning in my heart and mind, I knew I needed to talk to God. I needed to explain to Him all the reasons I could not become a Christian in a maximum-security prison. Just like Moses, I gave God my long list of reasons, yet after our talk, all these things didn't seem to matter, and I made a commitment to Christ on December 31, 1984.

For the next 25 years I studied and literally experienced Romans 12:1,2 where Paul said. "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom. 12:2 NRSV).

We rejoice with Albert as he goes back into St. Clair as a living testimony and true demonstration of the awesome love of God. Let all God's people say together, Hallelujah!



ALBERT PUGH

CREAA Executive Director



The Bryan Clay House

Our transitional home is not a handout, it is a hand up, and a way forward for those that truly want to re-start their lives. Our first Board of Directors meeting was held October of 2017. From that first board meeting we have not stopped, opening our first transitional home for men in Cullman, Alabama on April 1, 2018.

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The Life of a CREA Board Member

How did you become involved with CREA and the Bryan Clay House?

I have had a longstanding relationship with Mr. Albert Pugh, the Executive Director. My initial encounter with him was in 1996 when he was involved in the KAIROS prison ministry program. Bob Burgess and Dr. George Lyrene, fellow KAIROS members, invited me to an event at the St. Clair Facility where Albert was based. This marked the beginning of my involvement with what later developed into CREA and the Bryan Clay House. The entire KAIROS team supported Albert's release and shared his vision of establishing a place like the Bryan Clay House. We were all familiar with Fresh Start Ministry, similar to CREA today, which guided our understanding of Albert's program, aligning with its current form.

What is your vision as Chairman of the Board and as a CREA Board Member for furthering the mission for the men at the Bryan Clay House?

As Chairman of the CREA Board and a member, my vision involves continuing to reach out to those in greatest need, addressing the inherent inequities within the system that hinder recovery and full reintegration into society. I'm committed to aiding young men aspiring to transform their lives by providing ongoing support in their faith journey. Considering our current property, I envision potential partnerships with local medical institutions to offer mental health care. Additionally, I aim for CREA to transition from short-term assistance to a more sustained approach, fostering lasting change and forward-thinking among those in need. Our Board is composed of diverse backgrounds including a doctor, retired school principal, financial expert, and retired probation officer. While acknowledging gaps in our expertise, our primary focus presently is community education and overcoming obstacles.

What opportunities do you see for the community and others to become involved in the Bryan Clay House?

Numerous opportunities exist for the community to engage with the Bryan Clay House. Reflecting on our shared humanity, we must ask ourselves if we're exhibiting Christ-like love and contributing positively. Recognizing that these men will eventually be part of our lives, we should embrace the communal duty to assist them. Our personal contributions may vary, but the profound impact on us while helping these men is undeniable. Although not every participant succeeds on their initial attempt, the Bryan Clay House offers a space to rebuild confidence and character, pivotal to achieving success.

What would you want others to know about the Bryan Clay House?

The Bryan Clay House stands as a vital community resource for anyone, including those in our own families, who find themselves on the wrong path in life. We are dedicated to uplifting and empowering individuals within our community, fostering character and self-assurance where and when it is needed most.

REV. JAMES C. FIELDS, JR.
Chairman -CREAA Board of Directors

Jacksonville State University

Bachelor's in Law Enforcement/Sociology

United States Marine Corps

Father of 7 Grandfather of 13

Alabama Department of Labor for 28 years

Elected to the State of Alabama House of Representatives from District 12

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_C._Fields

2023 Labor Day Weekend Boston Butt Sale was GREAT SUCCESS!



Over labor Weekend this year, CREA was able to sell 45 Boston Butts and 20 Slabs of Ribs. A huge thank you to William Griggs, who did a fantastic job cooking the Boston Butts and Ribs. They were so good!

CREA wants to thank everyone who donated or bought a Boston Butt or slab of ribs. Through your generosity, CREA was able raise over \$1600.00 that went towards our much-needed roof repairs. Thank you to Bullard Roofing who did a great job repairing our roof a few weeks ago.

Be on the lookout for our next Boston Butt and Rib Sale next year on Fourth of July Weekend 2024!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

★★ LABOR DAY WEEKEND ★★

CREAA
CREAA.NET

Annual
Boston Butt & Rib Sale

Boston Butt: \$40

Slab of Ribs: \$45

Delicious!

Deadline to order: August 28, 2023

PICK UP: 9/2/23 9am - 12pm
391 County Road 1139 Vinemont, AL

Proceeds to benefit
CULLMAN REENTRY ASSISTANCE
& THE BRYAN CLAY HOUSE
(Thank God for their support!)

ORDER NOW:
Email us! info@creaa.net
Call us! 206-841-1926

CREAA



If you want to be encouraged, the Bryan Clay House has a PRAISE REPORT!

Just recently, two of our graduates over the last year, Adam Martin and Jerry Grant, stopped by the House to say hello. Both Adam and Jerry are thriving after graduating and moving on after completing the program. It was great to hear how God is continuing move in their lives and see first-hand the seeds that were sown fell on good ground. Adam and Jerry both shared how their time at the Bryan Clay House helped them get back on their feet and helped prepare them for the successful life they are living now. Praise the Lord!

Current Ministry Needs

- ⇒ Replace Field Lines
- ⇒ Roof Repairs
- ⇒ Pressure Wash House
- ⇒ Repaint House
- ⇒ Replace Flooring in downstairs bathrooms
- ⇒ Take out carpet and replace flooring upstairs
- ⇒ Replace twin beds in Sanctuary
- ⇒ Replace Chester drawers in Sanctuary
- ⇒ Replace stove with Commercial Stove in Kitchen
- ⇒ Landscaping needs: replace flowers and shrubbery outside, add mulch
- ⇒ Clear Land and add dirt to future building sites
- ⇒ Build wood benches around three crosses in the side yard for outside worship services

Grants and Donors

Grants and donations are the financial backbone for any non-profit organization. We here at CREAA are primarily self-sufficient, but we also need financial support for our daily operations. And, we have never been short in meeting our needs. This is because of all of you who have supported our mission. We want to give a special thanks to everyone out there who has supported these young men and our mission. When a community supports a mission like this one, you support the men who use us for support. This also helps in fighting crime and recidivism. When a donor gives to a ministry like this they are directly involved in a societal solution to homelessness and incarceration.



Manager Seth Johnson of Tractor Supply Company with new BBQ Grill graciously donated to the Bryan Clay House.

Thank you,
Tractor Supply Company!



J.F. Ingram State Technical College Hosts Job Fair at Limestone Prison on July 20, 2023



On July 20, 2023, Executive Director, Albert Pugh, and Program Director, John Means attended the Job Fair hosted by J.F. Ingram State Technical College. It was a great opportunity to meet the students and graduates of the college and talk to them about the Bryan Clay House and what it offers. One of the graduates recently is now a resident of the Bryan Clay House and has been a great addition to the House.

We have also been invited to the upcoming Job Fair that J.F. Ingram State Technical College will be holding at Fountain Prison in Atmore, Alabama on Thursday, October 26, 2023. We are looking forward to another opportunity to meet the graduates and students at Fountain.



Meet Our New House Manager

KELLY RITTENHOUSE



Before you became the House Manager, you were once a resident at the Bryan Clay House. What was your experience while being a resident at the Bryan Clay House?

I experienced freedom, but in a structured environment that helped me begin to take steps forward instead of backward. I also found a brotherhood, who shared my triumphs and my struggles and walked with me through them. I was also impacted by a caring staff, who were not only concerned about my well-being, but also helped me set realistic goals and plans that were both attainable and achievable.

And now that you are the House Manager, how has that experience shaped how you do things now?

It has kept me mindful of others and that I want to help others as they have helped me. I will not forget all that God has done for me; nor will I take for granted the grace and mercy He has shown me and has brought me to this next chapter of my life. It is very important to me that I share this hope in my daily life, so that I can be an example to others that God does not give up on His people. I am living testimony that God is faithful and that He is always in pursuit of His people. I was once one of those lost sheep that the Bible talks about and I am so glad that He left the ninety-nine to come rescue me. How could I not also have that same heart for others, especially for the men at the Bryan Clay House? This is why I do what I do now.

What are your responsibilities as the House Manager?

I am responsible for the overall running of the House and the upkeep of the outside property. One of my main duties is to work hand in hand with the residents, to encourage them, to challenge them, and to do my best to do everything I can to help them be successful. I oversee the weekly church and group meetings, assist with the orientation for new residents, keep track of our bed roster, and oversee our drug screening for all residents. I work very closely with the other staff members to ensure that the House runs as smoothly as possible. There are a lot of moving pieces, so I am grateful for both the staff and the residents. We are all working together to make the Bryan Clay House a good place for men to move forward.

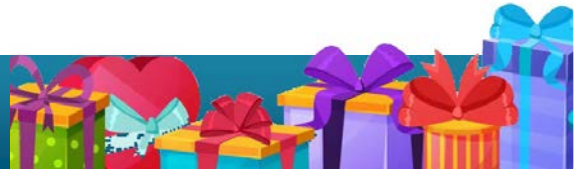
What is the one thing that you often share with the residents of the Bryan Clay House?

The one thing that I share with them is to not give up. Things may not always turn out like you want them to, but if you keep pushing your way through, you will eventually get your breakthrough. I would not be where I am today had I given up. I have had to press my way through some things to get to the other side, and I am so glad I did. It was worth the struggle!

And what would you want others to know about the Bryan Clay House?

At the Bryan Clay House it is like an extended family. When the men get off work, they can come to the House to a hot meal and fellowship with the other men in the House. They work hard each day; and though their days can be challenging, it is comforting to be able to look around you and see that you are not alone. That is what I want people to know about the Bryan Clay House. You are not alone.

BIRTHDAY BASH



On August 8 2023, St. Andrews held a birthday bash for the residents of the Bryan Clay House. It was a great time filled with great food, great fellowship, and a great celebration for everyone. Thank you to St. Andrews and to all who made this event a huge blessing! We are looking forward to Christmas!



CREAA gets Chicken Coops



Plans are underway to have our own fresh egg supply at the Bryan Clay House. This week we were able to purchase two chicken coops and once we get them in place, we will be able to get some chickens to have our own fresh eggs. We are excited about all that God is doing in this season.

Max is excited too, but he just had to rest for a while...

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: 2a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; 3a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; 7a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace"

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)



For Everything There is a Season

As we leave the summer season and come full blown into this fall season, I am reminded of the passage found in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven..." I don't know about you, but I have been experiencing a season change as well as my time for every matter under heaven. In the last month, I have experienced many changes taking place in my life where I am having to discern what time it is. I have been asking myself, is it a time to be born, or a time to die? Is it time to plant or a time to pluck up? Is it time to mourn or time to dance? What time is it in my life Lord?

It has definitely been a time of deep reflection for me. Last month, at the age of 86, my father went to be with the Lord. My father was one of those people who just knew how to do a number of things. Needless to say, my father was my personal fountain of knowledge when I wanted to know how to do something. I was always amazed how my father could build anything, fix anything, and put it back together better than it was before. He never looked at a problem as something that was unsolvable. He loved the challenge of figuring out how to overcome the problem and then finding, and often times, building the solution.

I remember growing up my dad found uses for things that other people would normally just discard. I can't remember exactly where he got it from, but being the innovative thinker that he was, he took an old refrigerator and converted it into a smoker. I have many fond eating memories of hickory smoked chicken that just melted in my mouth!

Another fond memory I have is watching my father rebuild old cars. One of my favorite cars that my dad restored and completely rebuilt, was a 1965 Porsche 912 during my teenage years. I am not exaggerating when I say, that it was a thing of beauty when he finished. In fact, after much begging and pleading, he let me drive that Porsche to my junior prom. And I promise you, that you couldn't tell me that I wasn't hot stuff driving that car!

Unfortunately for me, I just was not born with this knack of being able to build anything, fix anything, and put it back together better than it was before. As much as my father would have liked me to, I just do not think this way. But what I did inherit was his dogged determination to never look at a problem as something that was unsolvable or could not be overcome. I love the challenge of figuring out how to puzzle out a problem and then finding a solution.

Which brings me to the point I want to make in this article. I really don't mind being in this season and time, puzzling out where the Lord is leading me. I know that He is the ultimate wisdom giver, who is always able to make a way, when there seems to be no solution to the problem. I am confident that the Lord will give me direction. I am confident that the season and time I am in is in God's perfect timing and in accordance with His plans and purposes for my life. I am also confident that the wisdom and determination the Lord and my dad have imparted into me will continue to inspire me to overcome and find a solution to anything I am confronted with. And lastly, I am fully persuaded that I will see my dad again and that my dad is in heaven soaking up knowledge in the everlasting arms of his heavenly Father, who is the Ultimate Wisdom Giver. And so, my brothers and sisters, I want you to know that I have puzzled out what time it is for me. **IT IS TIME TO DANCE!**

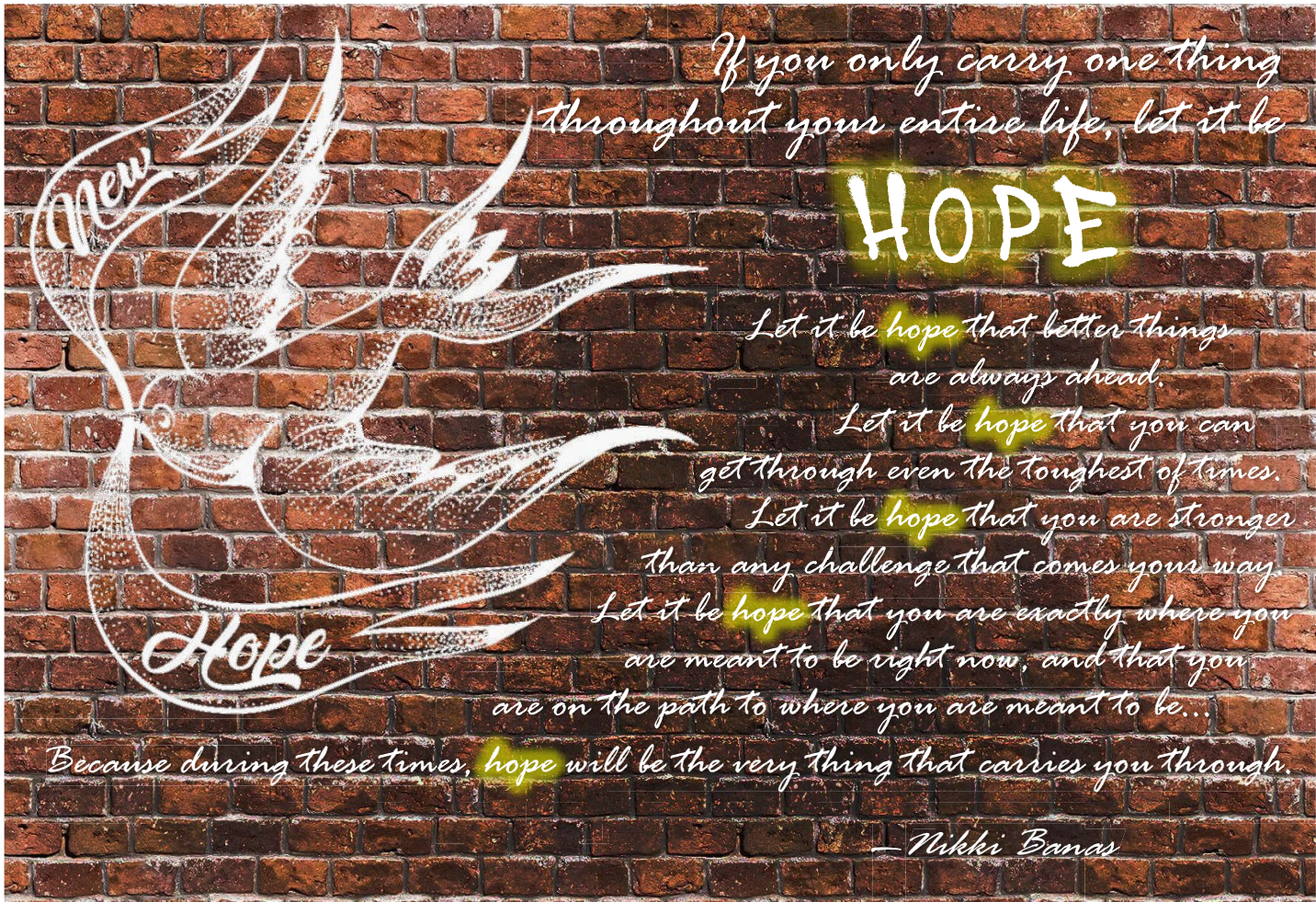
In Jesus' Name. And all God's people say together, "Amen".



Buddy's ready to dance, what about you?



JOHN MEANS
CREA Program Director



If you only carry one thing throughout your entire life, let it be

HOPE

Let it be hope that better things are always ahead.

Let it be hope that you can get through even the toughest of times.

Let it be hope that you are stronger than any challenge that comes your way.

Let it be hope that you are exactly where you are meant to be right now, and that you are on the path to where you are meant to be...

Because during these times, hope will be the very thing that carries you through.

— Nikki Banas



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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