



Called to Heal the Brokenhearted: Stories from Kairos Prison Ministry International

William H. Barnwell

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In this stirring book, William H. Barnwell tells the stories of prison inmates and the Kairos Prison Ministry volunteers who work with them. Set mostly at the huge Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, Barnwell's narrative illustrates how offenders who have done the worst can and do change, becoming model inmates and, if released, productive citizens. The stories also reveal how Kairos volunteers have found healing for broken hearts.

Given that the United States incarcerates more people per capita than any country in the world, reformers are seeking radically new ways to reduce our prison populations. Kairos volunteers and inmates alike have much to contribute to the ongoing reform discussions. Now serving 300 state and federal prisons, 30,000 Kairos volunteers work with 20,000 inmates each year. They take part in long weekend retreats with the inmates and follow up with regular prison visits. Since its beginning in 1976, Kairos has served over 250,000 inmates. Broad-based, nondenominational, and nonjudgmental Christian, Kairos seeks to carry out its slogan—"listen, listen, love, love"—among inmates who have had few to listen to them, and fewer still to love them.

In *Called to Heal the Brokenhearted* are stories of undeniable redemption. They point the way to personal transformation for the inmates and the volunteers. One Kairos inmate speaks of the change this way: he makes guitars out of the good wood "hidden beneath the surface" of throwaway pianos. "I find my work incredibly fulfilling," he says. "I see myself in every piano, discarded by society but redeemed and put to use in a new way."

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