

Dear ministry friends and partners,

My faith, firmly anchored in Jesus Christ, was greatly tested and challenged on the evening of June 10, 2008 while ministering in prison in Angola, Louisiana. That evening, the executive committee of the board of trustees for Koinonia House® National Ministries (KHNM) tendered their conditional resignations, concluding that I as the Executive Director was not in compliance with a directive they had issued. As I think back to that night after receiving the phone call in Angola with this news, and even today, I am thankful to the all-sufficient Word of God (Jesus) who has filled me with fresh living hope in the midst of difficult times here in the ministry of KHNM. In the last couple of months, I have been pleasantly surprised by God's grace as friends and mentors have stimulated, encouraged, and advocated for us to stay in the battle, to hold on with a firm grip to God's promises, and to persevere with fresh joy.

In the weeks since June 10, I have been reminded, deeply challenged, and encouraged by the prophet Haggai to "**consider my ways**" carefully and prayerfully. I have also been freshly reminded by Haggai that God is with me in the storm (1:13) for the single purpose of **stirring His Spirit** (1:14) in me that I may look more like Christ Jesus in order that my own "house" may be rightly anchored at the Cross and in Christ, my eternal cornerstone. My trust in God has increased as He has shown Himself faithful to the fact that when He calls one to Himself and to His Service He will provide.

It is a leader's responsibility to evaluate at all time, and to learn from one's mistakes. At this year's Leadership Summit, Willow Creek Senior Pastor Bill Hybels said several things that helped me evaluate my leadership of KHNM. He challenged me by saying that leaders are to be adding to their vault of wisdom through the decisions they make, especially the poor ones. The other challenge I received was what Pastor Hybels called the tendency for Christian ministries to try to "rescue non-performers." He said that for effective ministry to take place the right persons had to be around the table and at the right position. In my desire to get things done, I have welcomed any person who seemed willing to work. Job descriptions have not always been clearly defined and peoples' abilities have not always matched what was required of them. These factors contributed to the frustrations experienced at all levels of the ministry—by staff, executive director and board.

But, praise God, He is giving us a new beginning! The best is yet to come! We now have a newly defined board with members of our original board, and new commitments to move forward with this much needed ministry. One look at our calendar for the next five weeks shows how we are carrying out our ministry objectives. As commanded by Holy Scripture, KHNM continues to fulfill its unique and urgent mission of biblical discipleship as we love our neighbors coming out of prison by equipping Christians to bridge the gap from prison to the local church in four primary ways:

1. The local Koinonia House® of Wheaton (KHW)
2. The national Meet Me at the Gate® Initiative (MMATG)
3. The local and national in-prison/jail services
4. The Public Education/Awareness of Post-Prison Ministries & Prison Reform