

Kairos Hope Plans Christmas "Festival of Trees" to Fund Sexual Assault Survivor Advocacy

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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MONROE CITY - Kairos Hope will sponsor their third annual Festival of Trees to raise money for their Christian recovery home for survivors of sexual trauma.

From Nov. 25 through Dec. 2, 2023, people can check out the festival at Henderson Hall, located at 115 1st Street in Monroe City, Missouri. Thirty local businesses and

community members have donated and decorated Christmas trees, which will be sold through silent auction. Raffles, crafts and workshops are also scheduled throughout the week.

“We turn an event hall into Hopeville. It’s our version of Whoville,” said Annette Clark, Kairos Hope fundraiser chair. “It’s fun just being able to let go and have fun. We start it right after Thanksgiving so it kicks off that Christmas season, so all those people are coming in just getting into that Christmas spirit. It just is a lot of fun to see it all come about.”

Clark said that all of the volunteers will be dressed as Whos from Dr. Seuss’s book “How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” and attendees can expect regular visits from the “Green Grouch.” You can see a full schedule of events for the weeklong festival at the [official Festival of Trees Facebook page](#).

A [bath bomb-making workshop](#) is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 27, followed by a [wreath-making workshop](#) on Thursday, Nov. 30, 2023. The festival opens at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 25, 2023. Clark said this will be the busiest day of the week.

“We have a face painter, we have kids’ crafts going on. More of our workers will be there, so there will be more Hopes running around. That’s going to be our bigger day,” Clark explained. “We’re trying to bring that Christmas spirit and get everybody geared up for Christmas.”

All money raised through the auction, raffles and workshops will go to Kairos Hope. This organization offers a residential trauma recovery program, where women who have experienced sexual trauma live at the house completely free of charge. They receive trauma-informed care and counseling with a Christ-centered approach.

“One in four women are going to be sexually assaulted in their lifetime,” Clark said. “Most of those, or a big majority, will turn to self-harm or suicide because they don’t know how to cope and reclaim their life. Kairos Hope is an alternative to that. It is a recovery home. It’s free of charge to the residents that come there. They get individual counseling, group counseling, room and board while they’re there, three squares. If they need a GED, they have help getting their GED. They are shown life skills, how to reclaim their life.”

Clark explained that the name Kairos Hope refers to “when God first meets us as we are.” She began working with sexual trauma survivors after her daughter was assaulted. Her daughter is “wonderful” these days, but she suffered a lot in the aftermath of the assault. Clark hopes to help other women avoid the pain that her child went through.

“If you know four women, you probably know one that has had to deal with it in one way,” Clark said. “I kind of fell into it because my daughter was one of those one in four. So that kind of makes things — it hits home, and to see that there’s hope for them and they’re not having to do the self-harm, the attempted suicides. I’m fortunate that my daughter was spared, but there was the attempted suicide. It is just really heartwarming to see the change as you start seeing them progress through those changes.”

After a woman at Kairos Hope graduates from the program, coordinators still keep in touch and make sure she has a stable living situation, a job, a sponsor and a church. They try to help people through every stage of recovery.

This work is possible through donations and proceeds from the Festival of Trees. For more information about the Festival of Trees, follow their [official Facebook page](#) or stop by the festival from Nov. 25 through Dec. 2, 2023, at Henderson Hall in Monroe City, Missouri. To learn about Kairos Hope, including how to [donate to their mission](#) or [apply for their residential program](#), visit their [official website at Recovery.KairosHope.org](#).