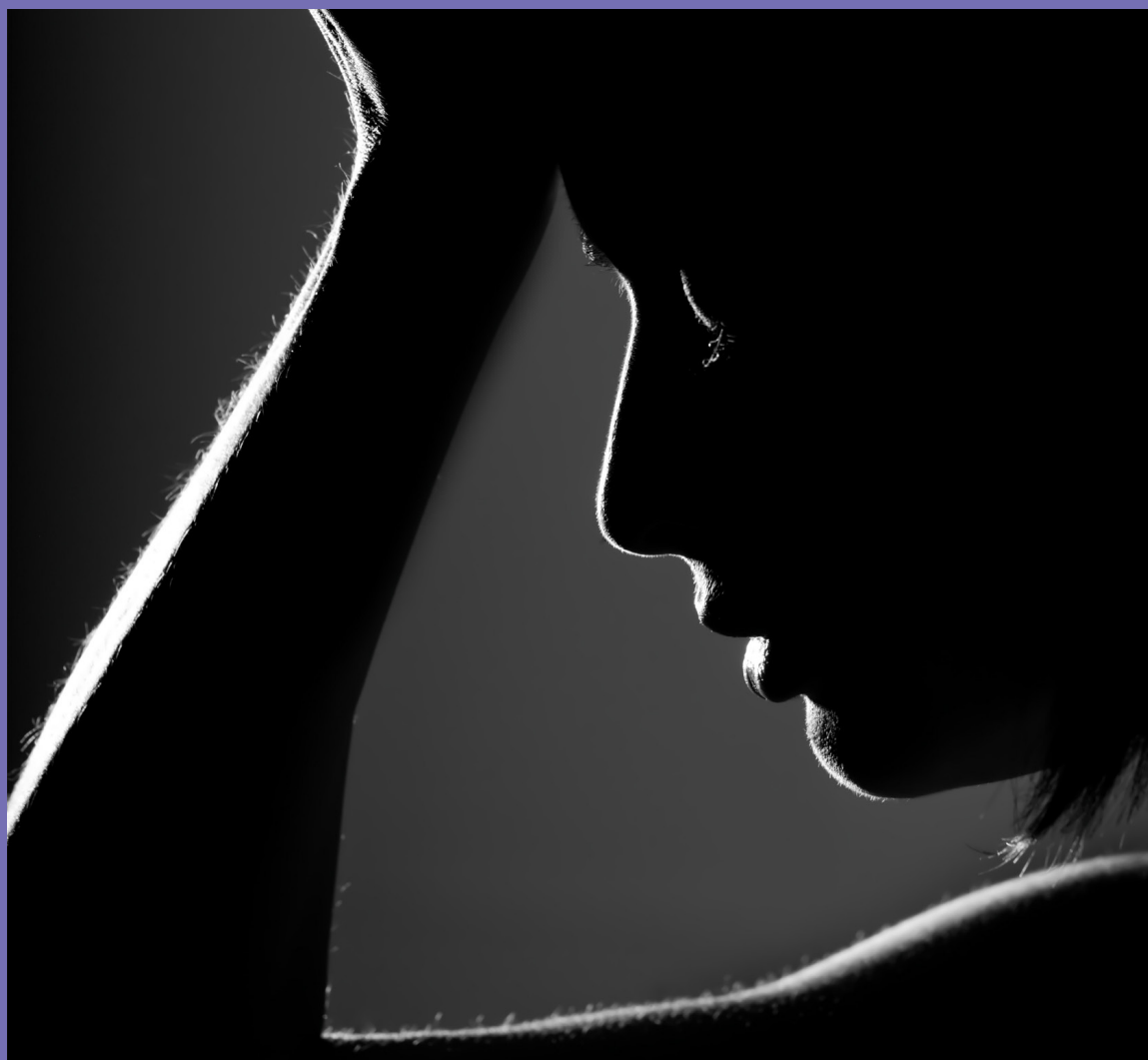


# Human Trafficking: Preventing, Protecting, Prosecuting



United  
Methodist  
Women

FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION

## United Methodist Women Work to End Human Trafficking

*by Susie Johnson, executive secretary of public policy for the Women's Division*

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United Methodist Women is resolute in its stance against the exploitation of the helpless and those who are forced to submit to civil injustice as a result of their basic needs or position in society. United Methodist Women has been active in fighting human trafficking for more than a decade. More than 27 million people internationally have fallen victim to human trafficking, and the epidemic has become the second largest criminal activity behind the sale of illegal arms. As advocates for social justice, United Methodist Women will continue to work for the rights of those exploited by this cruel trade and end this all-too-prevalent form of modern-day slavery.

In 1998, Dr. Laura Lederer initiated America's first systematic examination of global commercial sexual trafficking and labor bondage when she began the Protection Project at Harvard University. From the outset, United Methodist Women has been closely involved with the project, seeding its formation with a grant. In 2000, the project moved to Washington, D.C., and worked closely with the United Methodist Women Washington Office of Public Policy to heighten attention and national advocacy on the issue. Dr. Lederer later joined the U.S. Department of State to monitor and report on trafficking in persons and build anti-trafficking legislation.

Human trafficking preys on the helpless and those who do not have an outlet to speak out. For this reason, United Methodist Women has continuously fought to raise awareness of this modern-day slavery and give those subjected to its bondage a voice. Through resource distribution and education, United Methodist Women has helped promote legislation that combats human trafficking. Specifically, in 2008 United Methodist Women joined others around the nation to advocate for passage of the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, which President George Bush signed into law as H.R. 7311 (110th). The bill "authorizes appropriations for fiscal years 2008 and through 2011 for the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, to enhance measures to combat trafficking persons, and for other purposes."

Though government pressure is an effective means of combating human trafficking, United Methodist Women has also called its members to action. In 2008, the Women's Division Board of Directors affirmed an anti-trafficking resolution of the National Council of Churches and directed staff to develop program responses that result in justice for those violated by trafficking. Furthermore, in 2009 United Methodist Women took a direct, hands-on approach with its Train-the-Trainer program. United Methodist Women social action coordinators partnered with a national mission institution and trained members to recognize, report and care for women and children who have been subjected to the social injustice of human trafficking. After convening this educational forum, United Methodist Women has reached out to victims and anti-trafficking allies, helping them to break the chains of repression and suffering. On Human Trafficking Awareness Day in January 2011, the United Methodist Women website was turned into an interactive, informational slideshow dedicated to raising awareness of human trafficking. The United Methodist Women Twitter and Facebook accounts also dedicated the day to sharing information on human trafficking, garnering Web coverage from other United Methodist agencies, an increase of 700 active users on our Facebook page and 30 new Twitter followers, including certified accounts for Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison and Texas Representative Ken Marchant, who were targeted because Texas was the state in which the Super Bowl was held in 2011.

By joining the global movement to end the complex web of sexual slavery, prostitution and labor bondage, United Methodist Women continues to be at the forefront of the fight against the exploitation of the world's most helpless.

## United Methodist Women in Action Against Human Trafficking: Launch of Human Trafficking Team

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In August 2009, United Methodist Women embarked on a mission of learning, sharing, and policy action on the issue of human trafficking, a criminal act of violence that impacts women and children throughout the United States and the world. The training event was convened by the Women's Division Washington Office of Public Policy and Hands That Heal.

Twenty-five conference social action coordinators and a National Mission Institution representative gathered in Atlanta, Ga., at the Candler School of Theology for two and a half days of intensive education and the launch of the United Methodist Women Human Trafficking Team. The program was designed as a train-the-trainer opportunity whereby participants made a commitment to share what they learned with their churches and local community. Participants would be the first ripple in a widening circle of public actors to stop human trafficking. To date, almost 9,000 people have become aware of this issue through the direct action of a team member.

The section on Christian Social Action also initiated this train-the-trainer project to inspire and help all United Methodist Women members to take effective action in their communities. During the training, representatives from local service provider programs, mayor's office, and local and federal law enforcement agencies provided a broad context.

Atlanta was chosen because of the activism of its mayor and to creatively challenge Atlanta's position as a leading center for trafficking in the United States. Two additional United Methodist Women members have joined the team, and each person has developed an Action Plan to heighten awareness about the issues of human trafficking within their conferences and to combat human trafficking at the state and national level. United Methodist Women members are working with policymakers and collaborative groups to advocate for the prevention and protection of those who are trafficked and for the prosecution of the perpetrators of this crime.

### Help the Team

Contact your social action coordinator or mission team to arrange for an education forum on human trafficking or call the United Methodist Women Washington Office of Public Policy at 202-488-5660 to identify a program facilitator.

The Washington office, working with the Women's Funding Network, has provided each human trafficking team member with a toolkit and action guide to establishing a service center in your community to stop the sexual exploitation of children. A Future. Not a Past. (AFNAP) is looking for institutional partners that will dedicate staff and resources to ending prostitution in your community. Contact AFNAP at 404-224-4566 or by e-mail at [Kaffie@afuturenotapast.org](mailto:Kaffie@afuturenotapast.org).

Report any suspected incident of human trafficking: **You can help someone.** Call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888 or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE.

## What is Human Trafficking?

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The plight of human trafficking is not only one of the world's most prevalent forms of criminal activity but arguably the most degrading, preying on the helpless members of society. Throughout the world 27 million people are trafficked, and reports indicate that more people are victims of labor trafficking than for commercial sex. Women and children represent 80 percent of those affected by this complex web of bondage that robs them of their youth and dignity. The Trafficking in Victims Protection Act of 2000 defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons" as the following:

- Labor trafficking: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.
- Sex trafficking: The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years.

Human trafficking is a crime fueled by global poverty, inadequate education and opportunity, ethnic discrimination and societal inequity between men and women and by the demand for cheap labor and cheap sex. It is a crime that transcends cultures, class and geography.

Human trafficking is a modern day form of slavery. Victims are subjected to force, fraud and coercion for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labor. Several factors exacerbate the conditions that lead to victimization, including lax law enforcement, weak or nonexistent United Nations legislation, migration and proximity to international borders. In addition, where violence in the community or the family is endemic, the flight of women and girls opens them up to possible exploitation. The experiences of those who are trafficked are best viewed not as an event but as a process of physical, emotional and psychological abuses. The sexualization of female children and global messaging that debases and devalues women and girls contributes to the culture of impunity that tolerates sexual exploitation. For men and boys too, vulnerabilities stem from poor education, conflict and ethnic targeting.

Though many may believe it to be unthinkable, human trafficking is prevalent in the United States. One all-too-common story, shared by Grace Khang on NBC's Today Show in December 2007, involves a woman named Katya (not her real name) and the import of internationals to serve as sex slaves. Katya, a university student from Ukraine, had accepted a summer job placement in Virginia Beach. After landing in New York City, she and her friend were met at the airport by two men holding signs with the girls' names on them. The men, helpful and reassuring, informed Katya and her friend that they had been reassigned to Detroit. After arriving in Detroit the men took away the girls' passports and were provided with seductive clothing and a job at a strip club to "pay the men back." While at the club, the girls were forced to work long hours and meet a quota of \$1,000 per day. For over a year, Katya was made to perform sexual acts for both the patrons and her captors, all while being imprisoned through threats of violence toward her and her family. If it weren't for the efforts of a courageous individual who recognized her plight, Katya could still be imprisoned.

Trafficking in the international sex trade is widespread, but the majority of those enslaved are prisoners of labor bondage. Yesenia M., a young woman from Mexico, was brought to the United States at age 17 to work as a babysitter. One day while Yesenia was working at her family's grocery store, a man complimented her for her professionalism and offered her a job taking care of his two children in the United States. Her family agreed that this was a good opportunity for her. Her travel was arranged, and she arrived in the United States and began work cooking, cleaning, bathing the

children, washing laundry and doing yard work. Yesenia did not have her own room, and she had little time to rest. The job was very different from what she expected. She was not paid for her work, and she was not allowed to speak to anyone outside of the family. Yesenia also endured sexual abuse and rape. Yesenia eventually befriended a woman at church who helped her escape from her trafficker (from [www.NYC.gov/html/endht](http://www.NYC.gov/html/endht)).

Human trafficking not only targets internationals, but it also ensnares American citizens. The story of Tina Fundt, founder and director of Courtney's House ([www.courtneyshouse.org](http://www.courtneyshouse.org)), offers a telling example of how deception and coercion are used to trap individuals who would be trafficked. At age 14 Tina dated an older man who showered her with compliments, gifts and promises. After six months of dating, she was coerced into running away to join the man's family in Cleveland, Ohio. Upon arrival, she soon realized that the "family" was actually three other women who worked for the man by selling their bodies. Threatened and severely punished if she did not meet her "quota," Tina eventually escaped and serves as an example of how false pretenses are often the bait used to enslave women.

In 2000, the United Nations adopted the Palermo Protocol, also known as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, as an international standard to combat trafficking as a crime. More than 117 countries, including the United States, have signed on. During the same year, the U.S. Congress passed the trafficking in Persons Protection Act. Forty-five states have specific human trafficking laws, and 40 states have statewide interagency task forces to coordinate victim assistance and data collection. But more needs to be done. Legislative activity, though important, can only do so much. It takes a vigilant and discerning outlook from all citizens to recognize the horrific act of trafficking and thus attempt to stem the tide of this most demeaning industry.

# Human Trafficking Fact Sheet

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*But this is a people robbed and plundered, all of them are trapped in holes and hidden in prisons; they have become a prey with no one to rescue, a spoil with no one to say, "Restore!"  
Who among you will give heed to this, who will attend and listen for the time to come?  
—Isaiah 42:22-23 (NRSV)*

Human trafficking is a crime. United Methodist Women from across the nation have joined this sacred mission by taking a stand to prevent, protect and prosecute those impacted by this trade in human beings that occurs everywhere in the world. Through education, partnership and action, United Methodist Women are working with faith representatives, elected officials and other community groups to build awareness and ignite flames of hope for those who are trafficked.

—Susie Johnson  
Women's Division Washington Office of Public Policy

## What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery, and is the second largest criminal industry in the world after drug trade. The United Nations (U.N.) Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines human trafficking as the recruiting, transporting and harboring of persons by use of threat, force or deception for the purpose of exploitation. Traffickers take advantage of vulnerable persons with false promises or physical abduction, forcing them into contract slavery, forced labor and sexual trafficking.

## Worldwide statistics

According to the U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, the number of adults and children currently in forced labor, bonded labor and forced prostitution is 12.3 million. Worldwide, 1.8 per 1,000 persons is a victim of human trafficking, increasing to 3 persons per 1,000 in Asia and the Pacific. Sixty-two countries have yet to convict a trafficker under the U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, and 104 countries have yet to establish laws or regulations regarding human trafficking.

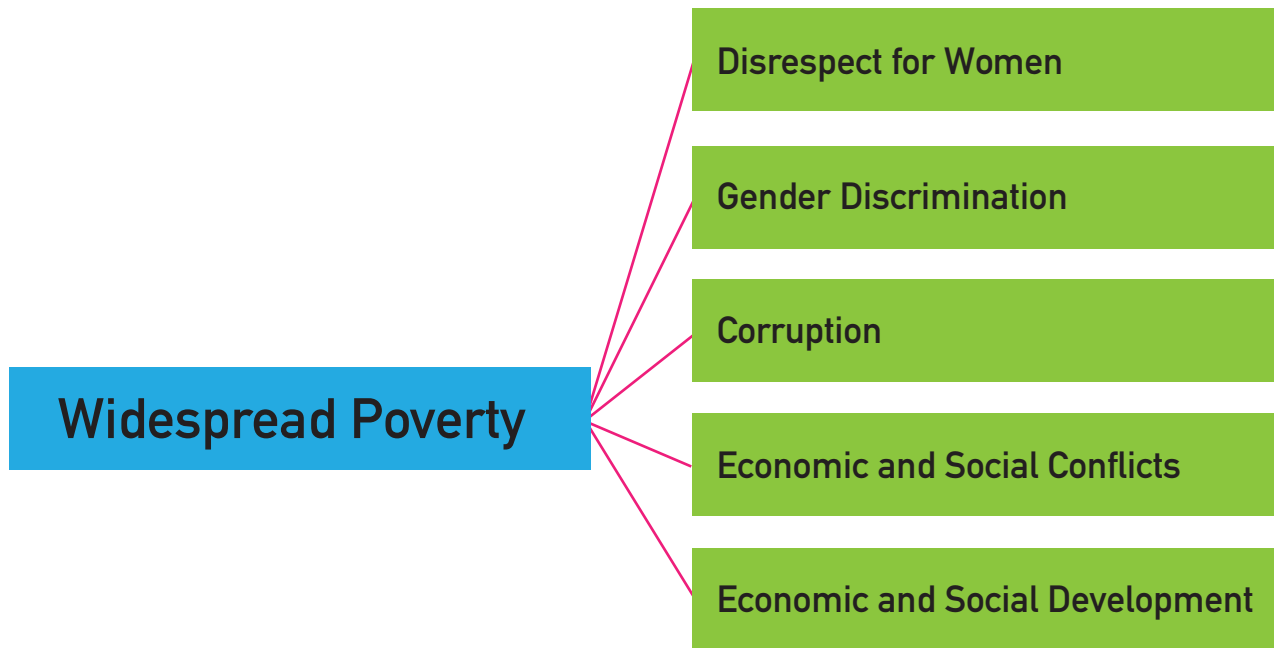
## U.S. Policy

The U.S. Department of State publishes the Trafficking in Persons Report annually. It reports the efforts of 175 countries to combat trafficking in persons and is used by the U.S. government to build worldwide partnerships in ending modern-day slavery. It can be found at [www.state.gov/g/tip](http://www.state.gov/g/tip). In 2000, U.S. President Bill Clinton signed and the U.S. Senate ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. This is also known as the Palermo Protocol. It can be found at [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org).

## Why it happens

Our current global economic system continues to reward wealth and exploit the poor. Sexual trafficking is connected to the feminization of poverty. Seventy percent of the world's poor are women and girls, most of whom live in developing countries with limited options available to them.

Women comprise 56 percent of the 12.3 million trafficked adults and children according to the Trafficking in Persons Report.



## Where can victims be found?

Male and female victims of human trafficking can be found in all types of establishments and locations, in rural, suburban and urban settings in the United States and worldwide. You’ll find victims on the streets, in houses, in trailers and on farms. Victims of human trafficking can be landscaping and agricultural workers, panhandlers, day laborers, factory and sweatshop workers, hotel workers, and housekeepers. Victims are exploited by the service industries in restaurants, bars, strip clubs, nail salons, and similar businesses. You’ll find many victims on “adult services” Internet sites; the commercial sex industry relies heavily on human trafficking victims. Prostitutes, strippers, escorts, and workers in massage parlors, brothels and for phone chat lines are often victims. Right now traffickers in many American cities are exploiting workers and sexually abusing women and girls.

Industry	Job
Factories/manufacturing	Garment industry: sewing, assembling, pressing and packing apparel
Food processing	Slaughtering, preserving, canning and packing goods for distribution
Commercial sex industry	Street prostitution, escort services, phone lines, massage parlors, residential brothels, strip clubs, Internet sites
Agriculture and farms	Farmworkers, fieldworkers, landscapers
Restaurants and food service	Bussers, dishwashers, kitchen staff, wait staff, cooks
Peddling/begging	Street panhandling and peddlers, traveling sales crews (magazines, beauty products, cleaning products, etc.)

Industry	Job
Hospitality	Cleaning staff, restaurant workers, bell staff, marketing staff, maintenance staff casino workers
Beauty	Nail salon worker, hair salon workers
Other	Construction workers, day laborers, gas stations, forestry, entertainment and tourism, elder care facilities

Information compiled from the Polaris Project ([www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org))

## Why help?

The *2008 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* ¶161 states that United Methodists “deplore all forms of the commercialization and exploitation of sex, with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. To lose freedom and be sold by someone else for sexual purposes is a form of slavery, and we denounce such business and support the abused and their right to freedom. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible” (p. 104).

The *2008 Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church* Resolution 6023, titled “Abolition of Sex Trafficking,” declares, “Therefore, The United Methodist Church, through education, financial resources, publication, lobbying, and the use of every relevant gift of God, shall join in the active battle against the modern-day enslavement of humans for commercial sexual exploitation.”

*Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.*

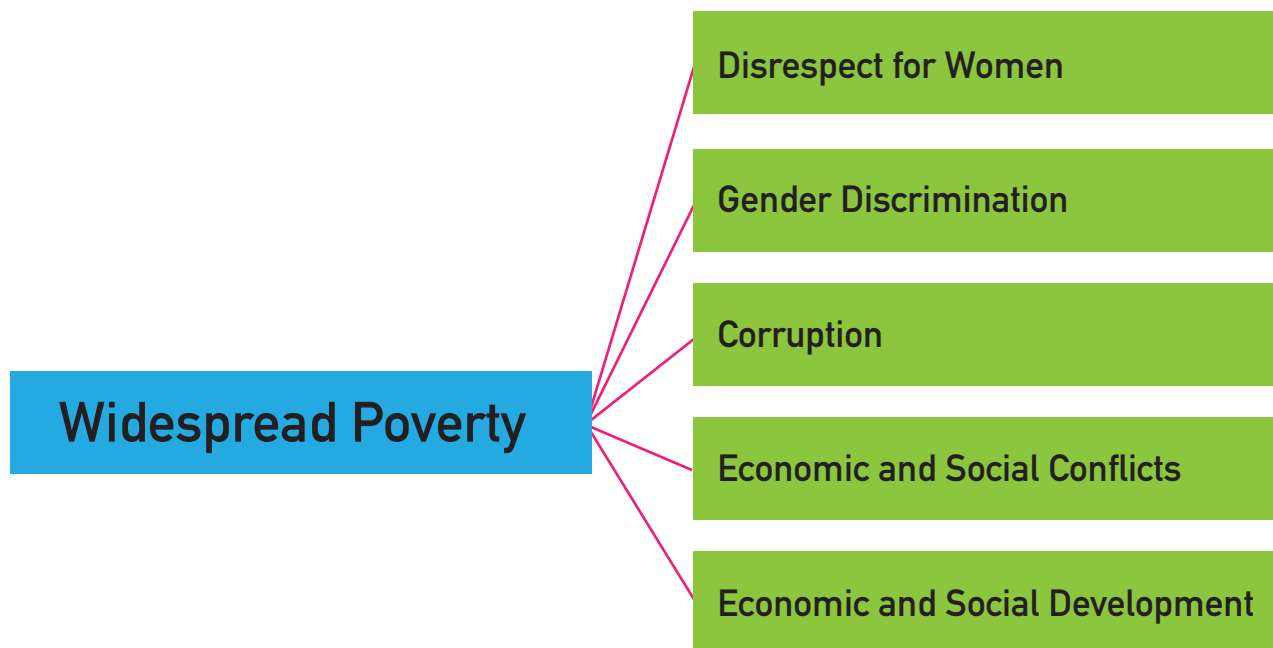
—Psalm 82:3-4 (NRSV)

## How to spot human trafficking

- Victims of human trafficking often live on or near their work premises, often with a large number of occupants in a small space. Bouncers, guards, guard dogs or barbed wire may be present. Many victims live in isolated areas.
- Victims lack of private space, personal possessions and financial records and are kept under surveillance or are escorted by an employer when they are out in the community. The trafficker may act as a translator.
- The victim may be branded or have other scarring indicating ownership. Victims are often malnourished and may show signs of rape, sexual and physical abuse, posttraumatic stress and poor psychological health, and have sexually transmitted diseases or other untreated medical problems.
- Brothels often contain barred windows, locked doors and electronic surveillance. Women do not leave the house unescorted, and men come and go frequently. Large amounts of cash and condoms are usually present, as is a customer receipt book.
- For more information on how to spot trafficking, visit the Los Angeles Metro Task Force on Human Trafficking at <http://lapd.phantomdesign.com/resources/report.cfm> and [HumanTrafficking.org](http://www.humantrafficking.org): [http://www.humantrafficking.org/combat\\_trafficking](http://www.humantrafficking.org/combat_trafficking).

# Root Causes of Human Trafficking

Our current global economic system continues to reward wealth and exploit the poor. Sexual trafficking is connected to the feminization of poverty. Seventy percent of the world's poor are women and girls, most of whom live in developing countries with limited options available to them. Women comprise 56 percent of the 12.3 million trafficked adults and children according to the Trafficking in Persons Report.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- United Methodist Women all over the country can join together to stop modern-day slavery. Your unit can host an education forum to help educate others on the realities of human trafficking. Call the United Methodist Women Washington Office of Public Policy at **202-488-5660** to identify a program facilitator. Invite local law enforcement agencies, friends and other faith-based and humanitarian groups to your program.
- Contact your local law enforcement agency about human trafficking in your community. How does your local agency prevent and prosecute trafficking? Are there safe houses, legal or translation services, medical or counseling services to assist victims of trafficking in your community? How can you help? Tell us what you learn at [umwanet@unitedmethodistwomen.org](mailto:umwanet@unitedmethodistwomen.org).
- Watch for signs of trafficking. Be aware, and report possible trafficking to local authorities and the U.S. Department of Justice 1-888-428-7581. Share the signs of human trafficking with youth groups and other groups in your church and community. Create a community task force. *Victims don't usually identify themselves.*
- Buy fair trade. Know where the products you buy come from and how they are made.
- Support education and business opportunities for women and girls.
- The United Methodist Women website ([www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org)) provides many tools for your use, including human trafficking Bible studies, action alerts and a PowerPoint presentation as well as downloadable fliers and materials from its Intercept Human Trafficking campaign.
- For immediate help, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline at **1-888-373-7888**. You can also call the Ninline at **1-800-999-9999** or the National Domestic Violence Hotline **1-800-799-SAFE**.

For more ways to help, visit  
United Methodist Women:  
[www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act)

## How Do We Respond to Human Trafficking?

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As United Methodist Women members, we are called to action to eliminate the devastating industry that is human trafficking. Historically, we have strove for equal rights and social justice, and nowhere are these ideals more violated than by this form of modern-day slavery. Because this crime affects the most helpless members of society, there is often no outlet for those being victimized. Because the duties forced on the trafficked individuals inhabit the most private areas of daily life, such as domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, abuses often go unnoticed by larger society. Therefore, as Christians attempting to promote progress, we must take an active and all-encompassing approach to ending these atrocities. Specifically, through education, advocacy and the formation of partnerships, United Methodist Women can independently foster change and collectively help to facilitate the cessation of human trafficking, both domestically and internationally.

### Education

Education is crucial in halting the flow of women, children and men into forced bondage. It is through education that we can elicit the most direct influence in the fight against human trafficking. In many cases where those entrapped achieve freedom an outside observer has recognized the signs of oppression and aided the individual, either through risky liberation or contacting the proper authorities to induce action. Central to both efforts is recognizing when a person is or has been trafficked and is in subjugated relationship. To this end, United Methodist Women have and will continue to reach out to its members to spread awareness of the plight of human trafficking and instruct willing individuals on how to identify forced servitude. This proactive measure, which has already educated almost 9,000 people through our Train-the-Trainer Program, will continue to be an essential aspect of United Methodist Women's effort to end human trafficking.

### Advocacy

Just as work on the individual level is immensely important, so is the work against human trafficking in the broader political sphere. International work to end human trafficking is still relatively new, spanning little more than a decade. As a result, legislation is still being shaped to deter the exploitation of so many. To this end, United Methodist Women has sought to influence legislation that enhances how national and state governments perceive and address human trafficking. United Methodist Women has already been active in this process, supporting H.R. 7311 (110th) to combat illegal trafficking in humans. We cannot stop here, however, as more must be done to effectively contest those who seek to take advantage of the most helpless members of society.

### Partnerships

The third way in which United Methodist Women can stand up against human trafficking is through the formation of partnerships that can collectively bolster the fight against this atrocity. By forming these interconnections, financial and logistic resources can be amassed and utilized to their fullest extent. It is through cooperation that we can best work to curtail the flow of humans across borders or within the United States. By partnering with groups such as Courtney's House, which helps women and children recover from the horrors of sexual exploitation, United Methodist Women has influenced the fight on its most personal level. Coalition building is therefore paramount in deterring those who traffic in the lives of individuals who often have little recourse or self-determination as a result of their enslavement by others.

## Human Trafficking Faith Imperative

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As people of faith, we are called to aide the most helpless among us. As Jesus notes in Matthew 25:40 “just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” The moral imperative Jesus provides applies directly to those suffering from the bondage of forced labor or sexual exploitation as a result of society’s iniquities. Specifically, human trafficking is a widespread social injustice leading to the exploitation of many women and children as a result of their social status. It is when we acknowledge the immorality associated with trafficking, recognize its presence and seek to liberate those ensnared that we truly gain virtue in the eyes of the Lord.

Our Christian faith calls on us to actively seek justice for those in bondage. When considering the plight of human trafficking, which is predominantly associated with the third world, we must not only have empathy but seek to vindicate those in shackles. Luke 4:18-19 states:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.*

It is through assistance to the most needy that we truly walk in the path of Jesus Christ. We therefore are morally obligated to assist those who, for whatever reason, have fallen in the trap of forced servitude. By viewing our faith through this new lens we can reshape our concepts of mission.

Finally, as United Methodists, virtue is of paramount significance. Historically we have sought to actively promote virtue in society and right social inequality. Our outlook must consist of both inward reflection and outward achievement. Thus, we are called to take action against moral injustice, as declared in Habakkuk 2:2:

*Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that the runner may read it.*

This verse, when considered within the context of the book’s focus on social iniquities and God’s justice, implores us not to stand idly by as society’s misfortunate are being exploited. We must speak out and bring awareness to these abuses. United Methodist Women views this call to action as a justification to mobilize against one of the world’s most prevalent forms of human degradation. It is a moral obligation to fight against the fastest growing criminal industry and stem the constant imprisonment of God’s children.

## What You Can Do to Help End Human Trafficking

Who is our neighbor? Who am I a neighbor to? What can I do?

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1. Know the facts about human trafficking. Start with the United Methodist Women's human trafficking fact sheet and explore some of the other sources available on the United Methodist Women's website: [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act/trafficking](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act/trafficking). Understand that this is just a tiny drop from an ocean of information and trafficking activity.
2. Raise awareness of human trafficking by sharing what you learn with all women, especially those who are vulnerable to being trafficked.
3. Learn about your state laws and the federal William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008. For Internet searches, type in your state's name and "human trafficking laws" to find this information.
4. Advocate for serious penalties that are enforced for traffickers along with services to assist the rescued victims.
5. *Rescue missions are not something you can do.* Talk with local and regional professionals who are in a position to identify victims to get the rescue process underway. Ask if they have been trained to identify and assist anyone they suspect of being trafficked. Talk to health care professionals, social services professionals and law enforcement professionals.
6. Find out if there are any shelters for victims who are rescued and need to go through legal and reintegration processes. They do exist—but don't expect to get an address or even a town name. Offer to collect and provide needed supplies for daily life and hygiene.
7. Keep learning about trafficking, its victims and its survivors. Don't support businesses that you know are a part of human trafficking.
8. If you come in contact with a victim of human trafficking, call **the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888 OR the Nineline at 1-800-999-9999**. Some states recommend that you call your local law enforcement and/or the district attorney. Do both.

# Stories From the United Methodist Committee on Relief Armenia's Anti-Trafficking Project

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## Ending Human Trafficking, One Life At A Time

By Isabella Simonyan

Alisa (not her real name) fell prey to a human trafficker in her hometown in Armenia. She was just 20 years old and the single mother of a nine-month-old baby. The trafficker forced Alisa into prostitution by threatening to kidnap her young child if she did not do as he said. He kept her enslaved and took all the money she made.

Alisa felt isolated and without recourse, her only defender the grandmother with whom she and her child lived. She was one of the more than 12 million people around the world who today are trafficked into forced labor, bonded labor, or forced prostitution.

One night, more than a year after Alisa's ordeal began, she happened to catch on a television news ticker the hotline number for a human trafficking prevention program. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which runs the program, invited anyone in need to call for information and assistance. Alisa wrote the number on the palm of her hand. It seemed to her a sign, a chance to change her awful life.

When Alisa finally called the hotline, she was identified as a victim of human trafficking and promptly referred to UMCOR's shelter. Police officers arrested the trafficker.

She was safe. But now she had to deal with the trauma with which her experience had left her. Alisa found it impossible to speak, eat, or sleep, haunted as she was by her nightmarish life. She was unable to interact properly with the child she loved so much and remained fearful that the child would be taken from her. She felt desperate; the light in her eyes seemed to fade.

### **Safe Haven and a New Life**

The shelter's psychologists worked with Alisa to awaken in her the will to live. They spoke to her about how much her child needed her for support and for the child's own future. Eventually, Alisa began to feel better, to eat, and even to cook. She started to speak and interact with the child, and, ultimately, the nightmares left her.

With medical attention, Alisa's physical health began to improve, and she was able to take care of her child on her own. She participated in culinary courses. The possibility of finding a job and supporting her child and grandmother brought the light back into her eyes.

Soon Alisa will leave the shelter, and when she does, she will take with her the memories of kind people, good treatment, and new skills and knowledge that will help her rebuild her life.

Alisa escaped a life of slavery thanks to UMCOR Armenia's Anti-Trafficking Project. While the problem of human trafficking seems overwhelming, the project's staff focuses on each person in need who comes to them for help.

### **“A Single Starfish”**

In this way, they say, they are reminded of the story “A Single Starfish” by anthropologist Loren C. Eiseley. In it a little girl is faced with the overwhelming problem of how to help thousands of beautiful starfish that have washed up onto the seashore. She tosses one after another back into the sea to save them, but many more remain.

A man approaches the child and says, “Little girl, why are you doing this? Look at this beach! You can’t save all these starfish. You can’t begin to make a difference!” But the child just picks up another starfish, and, hurling it into the ocean, responds, “Well, I made a difference to that one!” Inspired, the man joins the girl in her effort to help the starfish.

Read more about UMCOR’s Anti-Trafficking project at [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org), and visit United Methodist Women’s human trafficking web pages at [www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act/trafficking](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/act/trafficking). Learn how you can help.

*Isabella Simonyan is a program officer for UMCOR Armenia’s Anti-Trafficking Project. She works with survivors of human trafficking and their families as well as with police and other counterparts.*

## Refuge For Survivors Of Human Trafficking

By Judith Santiago

Anahit (not her real name), 24, lived in a small town in Armenia. She has no parents, only a sister and a brother who migrated to Russia in search of employment. Like her siblings, Anahit was also in need of work, but due to difficult socioeconomic conditions in Armenia, local jobs were scarce. Anahit was persuaded by some acquaintances to travel to Dubai where she could work as a housemaid. In pursuit of this opportunity, Anahit left her home with hopes of a promising future.

Shortly after arriving in Dubai, Anahit connected with her prospective employers who made luring promises for work and success. Her newfound opportunity quickly spiraled into a hellish nightmare. Anahit was forced into prostitution, through one of the most lucrative traps in the world—human trafficking.

For Anahit and others like her, hope for a better life is tragically deferred. Thankfully, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Armenia’s Anti-Human Trafficking Project, with funding support from the Dr. Edward C. and Georgina Perkins Fund of the United Methodist Church, shelter services are provided to rescue and offer refuge to survivors of trafficking like Anahit.

UMCOR is encouraging United Methodists to remember trafficked survivors everywhere. Please share information to eliminate forced labor and involuntary servitude or consider taking up a special offering to restore and heal those traumatized by human slavery.

### **Harsh Realities**

An estimated 2.5 million people around the world are forced into unpaid labor including sexual exploitation. The majority of trafficked survivors are between 18 and 24 years of age, and an estimated 1.2 million are children, according to United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking. Traffickers around the world make about \$31.6 billion each year. The trafficking industry is profitable because little start-up capital is needed and prosecution is relatively rare. For every 800 people trafficked, only one person is convicted, according to the U.S. State Department.

Anahit's yearlong ordeal involved intense psychological trauma and physical violence. When the police conducted a raid in Dubai, Anahit was deported back to her home. Anahit returned to Armenia very ill and depressed and her sister came to care for her.

### **Hope Restored**

UMCOR Armenia's comprehensive anti-trafficking programming played a key role in Anahit's reintegration back into society. After learning about her situation through a referral by local police, an UMCOR social worker and psychologist visited with Anahit to discuss options for recovery. Anahit stayed in a shelter and received UMCOR assistance, including much-needed medical attention and treatment. An UMCOR psychologist worked with Anahit to help her overcome the trauma she endured by helping her learn specific coping strategies. This helped her regain trust in other people while building her self-esteem. In addition to the medical and psychological care, Anahit also received a nourishing diet in a warm, safe and loving environment.

"Our shelter program is a truly comprehensive solution for those wounded by traffickers," says Kathryn Paik, program officer for UMCOR's Europe-Asia office. "They not only receive physical and psychological healing but are also supported and encouraged through vocational training opportunities, significantly reducing their chances of being re trafficked."

Today, Anahit's is taking active steps toward a brighter future. She is participating in manicurist training provided by UMCOR and is one of the best students in her class. Professional skills training including culinary arts and hairdressing help students enter the work field and live a life independent of trafficking predators.

### **UMCOR Armenia**

In partnership with the United Nations Development Program and in coordination with the Government of Armenia, UMCOR Armenia's anti-human trafficking program provides those who have been trafficked with a safe environment and reintegration back into society. UMCOR combats further human trafficking by training border guards through U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs on how to detect and assist populations at-risk for trafficking, operating a telephone hotline for people to get more information and conducting public education and outreach activities.

*Judith Santiago is the Project Manager for UMCOR Communications*

## Trafficking Survivor Rediscovered A World Of Beauty

By Isabella Simonyan

Mariam (not her real name) was just 15 years old when her parents married her to a man 20 years her senior. She worked day and night, a servant to her husband's extended family, and was not allowed to sleep until her husband came home. He was connected to a world of crime and did not usually arrive before five or six o'clock in the morning. Mariam then would rest for an hour or two and start the same routine all over again.

After two years of marriage, Mariam gave birth to a child, but the baby died at the hospital. At about this same time, her husband was imprisoned for theft. She sought refuge with her family, but they were a traditional Armenian family and refused to take her back. At just 17, she was left to fend for herself.

Then Mariam met some people who offered her a well-paying job as a waitress in a Moscow café. She accepted. It turned out, however, that they did not send her to Moscow but to the United Arab Emirates, where they attempted to force her into prostitution. Mariam refused and was beaten many times.

Seeing that her resistance could not be broken, Mariam's captors threw her out of a third-story window. She broke a vertebra, and her hands and legs were temporarily paralyzed. She received no medical attention and was bedridden for two months.

When the sensibility returned to her hands and legs, Mariam was sent without a passport or any other documents to Kazakhstan. There, she was met by a man for whom she was forced to work as a housemaid for the next six years. When she finally managed to escape, she was arrested and deported to Armenia.

Police in Armenia identified Mariam as a survivor of human trafficking. They referred her to a shelter run by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR). Although her stay at the shelter was voluntary, Mariam seemed unreachable. Her hard life had left her feeling isolated and distrustful.

The shelter's psychologists, who used a variety of rehabilitative approaches, helped Mariam to once again find meaning in her life and faith in her future. She received medical attention, especially for her back, and recovered physically as well as emotionally.

Mariam embraced her new start in life. She took vocational courses in floral design and discovered a new world of color and beauty; the progress of her art reflected the progress of her recovery. With legal assistance, she got a new passport. Moreover, the shelter staff had approached her family and worked with them, and they came to accept their lost child.

The process of Mariam's rehabilitation and reintegration into society was a long one, but successful. Time has passed, and Mariam has remarried and is going to have a baby.

*Isabella Simonyan is a program officer for UMCOR Armenia's Anti-Trafficking Project. She works with survivors of human trafficking and their families as well as with police and other counterparts.*

## Films and Books About Human Trafficking

Name	Price and Availability	Synopsis
Bought & Sold (1999)	\$20.00 <a href="http://www.witness.org">www.witness.org</a>	This film is an investigation into the trafficking of women in Russia, featuring interviews with mafia members, traffickers, trafficked women and groups working to provide services to trafficked women.
Call + Response (2008)	\$20.00 (“Home Screening Kit,” including DVD) <a href="http://www.callandresponse.com">www.callandresponse.com</a>	An introduction and exploration of the modern global slave trade with commentary from prominent cultural and political figures in the US.
Cargo: Innocence Lost (2008)	\$159.99 <a href="http://www.cargoinnocencelost.com">www.cargoinnocencelost.com</a>	A documentary that explores how sex trafficking has become a \$9 billion a year industry in the United States, including interviews from victims’ advocates and from some of the victims themselves.
Dreams Die Hard (2005)	\$10.00 <a href="http://www.freetheslaves.net">www.freetheslaves.net</a>	A look into the modern slave trade in the United States, told through the stories of domestic servants and farm laborers.
Highway Courtesans (2005)	\$29.95 <a href="http://www.wmm.com">www.wmm.com</a>	This provocative coming-of-age film chronicles the story of a bold young woman born into the Bachara community in Central India—the last holdout of a tradition that started with India’s ancient palace courtesans and now survives with the sanctioned prostitution of every Bachara family’s oldest girl (synopsis from <a href="http://www.wmm.com">www.wmm.com</a> ).
I Am Slave (2010)	Screenings available in the United States for schools, universities, nonprofits and churches. Prices vary.  <a href="http://www.aifilms.com/mainsite/slave.html">http://www.aifilms.com/mainsite/slave.html</a>	12-year-old Malia is kidnapped during a raid on their Sudanese village. Sold into slavery, she spends the next six years working for a Sudanese family before being sent to work in London. Stripped of her passport and living in terror of what might happen to her family should she speak out, Malia is trapped in an unforgiving, alien environment. Despairing of the life to which she has been condemned, she calls on her strength to make a dramatic escape back to Sudan and to the father who never gave up hope she was alive and who never stopped searching for her (synopsis from <a href="http://www.aifilms.com">www.aifilms.com</a> ).
Lives for Sale (2006)	\$19.95 <a href="http://www.livesforsale.com">www.livesforsale.com</a>	An investigative documentary that looks at harsh realities of Mexico–U.S. immigration and the growing illicit trade in human beings.
Not for Sale (2007)	\$19.95 <a href="http://www.notforsalefilm.com">www.notforsalefilm.com</a>	This international documentary, filmed on five continents, explores the role activists play in ending human trafficking.

<p>The Peacekeepers and the Women (2003)</p>	<p>Price varies. www.wmm.com</p>	<p>Winner of the Arte-Documentary Award for Best German Documentary, this chilling investigation examines the booming sex-trafficking industry in Bosnia and Kosovo and boldly explores the disturbing role of the United Nations peacekeeping forces and the local military in perpetuating this tragic situation (synopsis from www.wmm.com).</p>
<p>Performing the Border (1999)</p>	<p>Price varies. www.wmm.com</p>	<p>This imaginative, experimental work investigates the growing feminization of the global economy and its impact on Mexican women living and working in the area. Looking at the border as both a discursive and material space, the video explores the sexualization of the border region through labor division, prostitution, the expression of female desires in the entertainment industry and sexual violence in the public sphere (synopsis from www.wmm.com).</p>
<p>The Price of Sex (2010)</p>	<p>Price varies. www.wmm.com</p>	<p>An unprecedented and compelling inquiry into a dark side of immigration so difficult to cover or probe with depth, this film sheds light on the underground criminal network of human trafficking and experiences of trafficked Eastern European women forced into prostitution abroad (synopsis from www.wmm.com).</p>
<p>The Price of Sugar (2007)</p>	<p>Screenings available in the United States for schools, universities, nonprofits and churches. Prices vary.  www.thepriceofsugar.com</p>	<p>This Oscar-shortlisted documentary tells the story of modern slavery in the Dominican Republic, where Haitian immigrants are lured across the border and into indentured servitude on sugar plantations.</p>
<p>Remote Sensing (2001)</p>	<p>Price varies. www.wmm.com</p>	<p>By using the latest images from NASA satellites, the film investigates the consequences of the U.S. military presence in South East Asia as well as European migration politics. This video-essay takes an earthly perspective on cross-border circuits, where women have emerged as key actors and expertly links new geographic technologies to the sexualization and displacement of women on a global scale.</p>
<p>The Silent Revolution (2005)</p>	<p>\$10.00 www.freetheslaves.net</p>	<p>A short documentary film about a small group of stone breakers held in slavery in northern India and their successful efforts to win freedom.</p>
<p>Spare Parts (2003)</p>	<p>\$11.97 www.filmmovement.com</p>	<p>Embittered widower Ludvik spends his nights transporting illegal refugees in his van from Croatia, across Slovenia and into Italy. The young and inexperienced Rudi acts as his helpmate. Together they become a well-trained duo that almost every night conveys "spare parts" to Italy. The story of their illegitimate exports into Europe ends tragically, for everyone (synopsis from www.filmmovement.com).</p>

Stolen Childhoods (2005)	\$25.00 www.stolenchildhoods.org	Stolen Childhoods is the first feature documentary on global child labor ever produced. The film features stories of child laborers around the world, told in their own words. It shows best practice programs that remove children from work and put them in school so that they have a chance to develop as children and also have a chance of making a reasonable living when they grow up (synopsis from www.stolenchildhoods.org).
Trading Women (2003)	\$49.95 www.der.org	An exposé of trafficking of women in Burma and Thailand and its relationship to the illicit opium trade.
Very Young Girls (2007)	www.gems-girls.org/shop	Very Young Girls is an exposé of the commercial sexual exploitation of girls in New York City as they are sold on the streets by pimps and treated as adult criminals by police. The film follows barely adolescent girls in real time, documenting their struggles and triumphs as they seek to exit the commercial sex industry. The film also uses startling footage shot by pimps themselves, giving a rare glimpse into how the cycle of exploitation begins for many women (synopsis from www.gem-girls.org).
Writing Desire (2000)	Price varies. www.wmm.com	Ursula Biemann's WRITING DESIRE is a video essay on the new dream screen of the Internet and how it impacts on the global circulation of women's bodies from the third world to the first world. This tape will promote lively discussion on third world women, the sex industry, mail order brides, racism and feminist backlashes in the West, and on women's sexuality, desire, and new technologies.
Books		
Title/Author	Publisher/Price	Synopsis
<i>Forgotten Girls</i> Kay Marshall Strom and Michelle Rickett	InterVarsity Press (2009) \$16.00	All over the world, women and girls face starvation, displacement, illiteracy, sexual exploitation and abuse. These pages hold their stories of deep pain and suffering, inspiring courage and incredible hope.
<i>Girls Like Us</i> Rachel Lloyd	HarperCollins (2011) \$24.99 (hardcover)	A deeply moving story by a survivor of the commercial sex industry who has devoted her career to activism and helping other young girls escape "the life."
<i>The Road of Lost Innocence</i> Somaly Mam	Random House (2008) \$15.00	Recounting her childhood experience of being sold into sexual slavery and shuffled around Southeast Asia for a decade, Somaly Mam's life story illustrates triumph over unthinkable adversity.

<p><i>The Slave Next Door</i> Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter</p>	<p>University of California Press (2010) \$16.95</p>	<p>This book explains that slaves are all around us, hidden in plain sight; the restaurant dishwasher, the man sweeping the floor of the local department stores. Weaving together a wealth of voices this book is a call to action to finally bring an end to this horrific crime.</p>
<p><i>Sold</i> Patricia McCormick</p>	<p>Hyperion (2008) \$8.99</p>	<p>Though desperately poor, 13-year-old Lakshmi's life in a small village in Nepal is full of simple pleasures. When a monsoon washes away the family's crops and Lakshmi's stepfather says she must take a job as a maid in the city to support her family, she is glad to help. Then she learns the unthinkable truth: she has been sold into prostitution.</p>
<p><i>The True Cost of Low Prices</i> Vincent Gallagher</p>	<p>Orbis Books (2006) \$15.00</p>	<p>As transnational corporations increase profits by reducing costs, laborers in Latin America, Asia, Africa and here in the United States work long hours but remain poor, hungry and subject to abuse.</p>

## BIBLE STUDY

### What We Can Learn From Daniel

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by Marva Usher-Kerr, executive secretary of membership and leadership outreach for the Women's Division

Daniel 1:1–7

*In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods. Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court. Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.*

Daniel is well-known in the scriptures as the leader of a group of young slaves including Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah and himself. His tale is one used over and over to teach young children about faith and strength. Daniel's courage to stand up and be himself against pressure to change has inspired many of us who have faced the same pressure.

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah were abducted from their homeland of Judah. Because they were children of royalty and priests, the slave traders felt that the young men were the best of the chattel and forced them to be "gilded slaves"—trained to serve in the service of the kings. Though in the company of royalty, they were still not of the conquerors' blood and were therefore considered expendable.

According to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, adopted in 2000 and entered into effect in 2003, trafficking in persons is considered

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (Article 3a)

If Daniel and his friends lived in this day and time, they be would considered trafficked persons.

Usually the focus on trafficking centers on women and children, and on sex trafficking, and many such cases do occur. However, labor trafficking and trafficking of men also occurs, and to a higher degree. This is the case with Daniel and his friends; males can also be caught in the web of slavery and exploitation.

Daniel 1:8–10

*But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master. The palace master said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king."*

This passage speaks to the victim, the oppressors and those of us who want to help victims. For the victim, Daniel is a shining example of inner fortitude:

- Although his situation was dire and there was no hope of return to his homeland, Daniel managed to maintain his personhood despite danger and pressure from outside forces.
- He kept his heart, body and mind fixed on the laws that his God had placed on his life.
- He never lost faith.

Daniel 1:11–16

*Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: "Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations, and deal with your servants according to what you observe." So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.*

This passage speaks to the perpetrators.

Here the guard was given a path to aid those who were under him and he took that chance. As advocates for the victims, we need to provide venues that will allow the Holy Spirit to step into the lives of those who have wounded others and renew their minds.

Where is the Word for us? Our duty is harder as those interested in fighting against this evil. What we take away from these passages is that we are called to be the hands and feet of the God that Daniel believed in so strongly. We as advocates need to support ministries that empower victims and help them recover their dignity. In some cases, we need to stand as role models, and in other cases we need to break systems of injustice for these victims.

## Study Questions

- Considering what you know about Daniel and the others, what do you think they truly felt about their situation?
- Sometimes we want to do things our way when it comes to conflict. Do you feel that Daniel was right in his approach with the guard?
- Where do you see yourself in this story?
- Do you believe that you could have done the same in Daniel's place? Why or why not?
- What lessons are learned here?
- Although the Holy Spirit is not spoken about outright, where do you see the Holy Spirit here?

# Human Trafficking Skit

## Rescuing Joanna

Concept by Rosa Bernard, Indianapolis Conference United Methodist Women

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*Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood,  
will we be saved through him from the wrath of God.*

—Romans 5:9

### Scene

Characters (five)

Five chairs

Altar: White cloth, Bible, Christ candle, globe of the world, *Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church*, flowers (silk) in colors of the United Methodist Women

### Characters

Joanna: Rescued victim

Roberta: Advocate

Sergeant Chan: Police officer

Doctor Martinez: Medical doctor

Leah: Social worker

### Background Information

#### Rescued Victim

Needs of the victim: Safe housing, medical help, protection, counseling, resources (training for jobs, life skills, etc.)

#### Advocate

- What is human trafficking? Power, money, modern-day slavery.
- How can we help train communities? Churches and other organizations, raising awareness, networking with other organizations and interfaith groups.
- What are the resources? Trafficking in Persons Report ([www.state.gov/g/tip/](http://www.state.gov/g/tip/)), Polaris Project ([www.polarisprojects.org](http://www.polarisprojects.org)), individual state laws and policies, United Methodist Women website ([www.unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org)).

#### Police Officer

- Know the statistical facts, national and international.
- Explain what a misdemeanor and what a felon is.
- Explain laws against restraining and abuse.
- What happen to criminals committing human trafficking?

#### Doctor

- Is second to law enforcement in assisting victim.
- Coordinate and provide care.
- Show compassion and provide a nonjudgmental response.

#### Social Worker

- Counsel and assist in locating resource to assist victims as needed.
- In some cases will assist in locating interpreters if there are language barriers.
- Show compassion, understanding, concern, open listening.

## Finding Resolution

- Place chair in the middle of semicircle.
- Victim sits in the chair, and the other four actors place a piece of rope around him or her.
- Each actor takes turns, taking each piece of rope off the victim and saying a brief prayer for the victims of human trafficking.

## DIALOGUE

JOANNA

When I was 15, I was having problems at home and at school, so I ran away. I didn't have a plan, so I went into the city. I soon realized running away had been a mistake. I didn't have enough money for food or a place to sleep. I was scared, but I couldn't go back home. I couldn't face my mom and stepdad, or return to that abusive situation. I stayed in the bus station that night because I didn't know what else to do. The next day I met this guy. He wasn't much older than me, and he had also left home. He said I could hang out with him and get off the street. He got me something to eat. He was nice. He introduced me to some other kids, and to this older guy, who took me in. Then my life really turned into a nightmare.

Beholden to the man for food and shelter, I lived in indecent places, and my body was used, abused, transported and controlled. Sometimes I even wondered where the next meal would come from and how I would keep my body clean. I had no self-esteem, dignity and was shown no mercy. I lost hope and direction. I felt I deserved this life.

Rescued, I had counseling and was given medical treatment and a safe place to live. I eventually learned to not be afraid and to trust others. I was shown compassion, and I prayed. My social worker and I found a place where I received job training and life skills training, and went back to school. I recuperated and helped other victims to realize that they are whole persons who should not be controlled by another human.

ROBERTA

As an advocate, I work to make others aware of human trafficking and the struggles of victims. I network with churches and other community organizations. I use Facebook, Twitter and the United Methodist Women's social network at [umwonline.net](http://umwonline.net) to inform and stay informed. I've read the U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report. I write to state and national representatives and senators. I tell the stories of victims.

SERGEANT CHAN

I listen to the victims of human trafficking. I help to eradicate pimps and Johns. I work to arrest those who traffic persons for labor. I listen to young girls, boys, women and men. Make sure your community has a human trafficking task force, and make sure local law enforcement is enforcing anti-trafficking laws. I use my authority to protect the victims, not blame or criminalize them. I follow through on investigations of child abuse and exploitation.

## DOCTOR MARTINEZ

One of the first things I saw was that Joanna was traumatized, nervous, anxious and fearful. I screened and treated her for sexually transmitted diseases. The nurse calmed her down and showed her compassion and respect. Joanna thanked the nurse for showing that she cared for her as a person.

## LEAH

As a social worker I treat victims with respect. I listen, get them medical help and find shelter. I continue my relationship with them and offer follow-up counseling and mentoring for however long the victims need it. I help victims to adjust back into society by taking classes and teaching them not to give up on themselves. I welcome them back into the community and teach them structure and accountability.

## Closing Prayer

It was you God! It was you who started us on a new journey of life, and we thank you. We thank you for your comfort, compassion, kindness, and hope. We thank you for being a healer and touching us with love, faith and joy. Thank you, God, for courage to do your will. Help us to do justice for all victims and weave us together so that we might do your will. Help us to love and support victims. Help us to reach out and understand their sorrow. Show us how to forgive and forget. It was you who gave us aspirations. Thank you for guiding all victims around the world to a new beginning. And in your name we pray. Amen.

## Action

- Read *The Road of Lost Innocence* by Somaly Mam with Ruth Marshall, *Half the Sky* by Nicholas D. Kristoff and Sheryl WuDunn, *The Slave Next Door* by Kevin Bales and Ron Soodalter, and *Sold* by Patricia McCormick.
- Visit your state capitol and speak to your senators and representatives in person.
- Visit [unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org) often.
- Write an article about human trafficking for your local newspaper editor or for the online groups at [UMWonline.net](http://UMWonline.net).
- Work with ecumenical organizations.
- Coordinate with local law enforcement.
- Understand modern-day slavery.

## Voices of Human Trafficking Team Members

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I think that United Methodist Women members are the only ones who enter in when no one else wants to be involved. What I have found over the past year is that fighting human trafficking is difficult, to say the least. What we can do is raise awareness. The biggest hurdle is to get people involved.

—**Rachel Bachenburg**  
Missouri Conference

I've changed a lot ... everybody who I see I just talk to them about human trafficking to let them know what's going on. You'd be surprised at how many women aren't aware.

—**Rosa P. Bernard**  
South Indiana Conference

We have children being sold and rented daily, and it's a form of modern day slavery. We can help children and get them out of this lifestyle. We can save their souls and spirits. I believe we want to make people whole again. It's part of our purpose. I am able to recognize the red flags of trafficking. I know the risk factors. I spend more time with our young girls in church, mentoring and teaching them.

—**Janice Elmore**  
Kansas West Conference

I think two things: If you can get the info to United Methodist Women members, they can easily and quickly and very effectively disseminate the info to their communities. Historically they have done a superb job raising awareness and training and trying to solve issues. I think it is imperative for people to educate themselves on this issue. It has changed me.

—**Kim Jenkins**  
Executive Director, Open Door Community House, Columbus, Ga.

This is one of the most serious issues that we have today, deep violation of human dignity and human rights because the victims—and they are victims—are controlled, beaten down, and, from my understanding, even when they are rescued there is a long a road ahead of them.

—**Brenda Moland**  
Rocky Mountain Conference

It's a human rights issue as well as civil rights. I believe that United Methodist Women has a history of not looking for the easy things to support but really taking on those issues that people are uncomfortable with. ... We as United Methodist Women members need to look at this issue for what it is.

—**Brenda Lopez**  
New England Conference

At first I didn't want to get involved, even though I was social action coordinator, because it seemed too big and too burdensome to my spirit. I couldn't do anything. But now I feel empowered, and though I can't help 27 million people, maybe I can impact one person.

—**Anna Noble**  
California–Nevada Conference

First of all I, it was new to me, I didn't realize, I was like a plant inside a nursery. It just opened my eyes. I realized there is a lot of work to be done. Really a lot of us, including myself, say we are Christian, but just in the head, not much action. We really have to get involved.

—**Grace Pyen**  
North Georgia Conference

Because as United Methodist Women members we are women of action and we speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. I've become more aware of the situation, whereas I was not aware before. It has really hit home for me.

**—Rita L. Smith**

Northern Illinois Conference

It involves other people and children of other lands, but I think the thing that brings it home is the number of kids being placed in slavery. Awareness—I think that I didn't look closely enough at things happening, and now I look at them and I see them from a different viewpoint.

**—Lee Thornton**

Texas Conference

Over the past year or several years, I think I have become more passionate about helping people in these situations. I feel more determined to put an end to this.

**—Tien Vo-Doan**

California-Pacific Conference

It allows us to serve others by raising awareness by educating people and letting them know that no matter where we are that children, women and men everywhere are being coerced into this type of organized activity. It's just not right. Everybody is entitled to certain human rights that we take for granted.

**—Tara Wilson**

West Ohio Justice Fund

It is vital for us to make others aware of this activity, which is on such a broad scale here in the United States and around the world. It has broadened my knowledge of those who are not in this of their own volition. The children used in this inhuman way is a heartbreaking story, as are the huge numbers who are used as pawns by heartless individuals for their "pleasure" or greed.

**—Helen Jo Satterwhite**

New Mexico Conference

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Your gift to United Methodist Women project #3021325 will support the ongoing work of the United Methodist Women's Human Trafficking Team by covering presentation-related travel expenses, grants to organizations and research development!

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