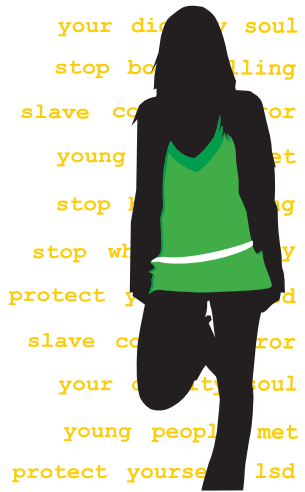


Human trafficking, modern-day slavery, is the second largest and fastest growing illegal trade in the world where people are in bondage through fraud, force, or coercion. Today, people are mobilizing to fight this destructive, pervasive, criminal industry.

### Who is involved in trafficking and why?

#### Trafficked People

- People of every age, gender, ethnicity, and class from any country can be trafficked.
- Vulnerabilities like poverty, gender inequality, lack of education, racial and ethnic discrimination, and armed conflict are contributing factors.



#### Traffickers

- People of every age, gender, ethnicity, and class from anywhere can be traffickers. Anyone who recruits, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains a person through fraud, force, or coercion is a trafficker.
- High profit, desire for control, and low risk of legal repercussion and prosecution permits this illegal industry to flourish.

#### Consumers

- People of every age, gender, ethnicity, and class from any country can be and are connected to trafficking.
- People place high demand on inexpensive goods (i.e., food, clothing) and services (i.e., housekeeping, childcare) and may unknowingly contribute to the demand for human trafficking.

# Justice for Women

Office of the Presiding Bishop

Evangelical Lutheran  
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Chicago, IL 60631  
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Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

[www.elca.org/justiceforwomen](http://www.elca.org/justiceforwomen)

# Justice for Women

## Human Trafficking: A Faith Response



Educate.

Advocate.

Lead.

[www.elca.org/justiceforwomen](http://www.elca.org/justiceforwomen)

# What does Lutheran theology say about human trafficking?

## Bondage

*As Lutherans, we believe that we are in bondage to sin evident in things done and left undone, and we cannot free ourselves. God condemns trafficking, because it creates barriers between God and creation.*

- **The bondage of things done** - Real people are bound in mind, body, and spirit and reduced to and viewed as commodities to be bought, sold, and broken. Some oppress the vulnerable while others willingly ignore and suppress the problem.
- **The bondage of things not done** - Through complacency and lack of knowledge, people unknowingly can contribute to and fuel the sin of human trafficking.

## Freedom

*As Lutherans, we believe that we are freed from bondage to sin because we all are redeemed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In response to being justified by grace through faith, we are called to the hope and promise of God's rule.*

- **The redeeming power of Christ and the call to care and action** - Whether broken in mind, body, or spirit, broken through perpetrating trafficking, or broken in complacency, we are set free in Christ to work for the deliverance of people trafficked, those who traffick, and those who unknowingly participate.
- **The dignity of a person** - Because we are redeemed, we see the image of God in ourselves and others, as people deserving respect, compassion, and care.

## Examples of ELCA Responses

### Justice for Women ([www.elca.org/justiceforwomen](http://www.elca.org/justiceforwomen))

Learn more about the root causes of trafficking, including patriarchy. Additional information and resources are available.

### Corporate Social Responsibility ([www.elca.org/corporate](http://www.elca.org/corporate))

Learn how the ELCA works with corporations to address the issue of trafficking through human rights policies as well as employee training.

### ELCA Advocacy Offices ([www.elca.org/advocacy](http://www.elca.org/advocacy))

Connect with advocacy offices at the international, national, and state levels that monitor legislation and policy and advocate for just laws.

### Women of the ELCA ([www.womenoftheelca.com](http://www.womenoftheelca.com))

Learn more specifically about commercial sexual exploitation and connect with a Women of the ELCA unit in your area.

## Educate yourself.

- **Learn more about human trafficking.**
  - *The Polaris Project* ([www.polarisproject.org](http://www.polarisproject.org))
  - *Free the Slaves* ([www.freetheslaves.net](http://www.freetheslaves.net))
- **Visit these United States government websites and read about their efforts.** The U.S. Departments of State (Trafficking in Persons Report), Justice, Health and Human Services (Rescue and Restore), Labor; also Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
- **Research trafficking in your area.** Find out about local trafficking laws, rates of prosecution, and occurrences in your community.



**12.3 – 27 million: people trafficked worldwide**  
(U.S. State Department and Free the Slaves)

## Advocate for justice.

- **Post the National Human Trafficking Resource Center phone number, 888.3737.888** (toll free) in your church building, restrooms, schools, day care centers, restaurants, and other community spaces. If you suspect trafficking or want more information, call or email [NHTRC@PolarisProject.org](mailto:NHTRC@PolarisProject.org).
- **Write a letter to the editor.** Pick a specific story about trafficking from your community and write a letter to the editor about it. Include why and how your faith calls you to action.
- **Contact your local and state legislators and law enforcement.** Advocate for stronger prosecution for perpetrators, additional services for victims and survivors, and training for law enforcement in your community.

**\$32 billion: total market value of illegal human trafficking**  
(United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)

## Lead in your community.

- **Connect human trafficking to your life and share your discoveries.** Know where your food comes from and your clothing is made. Talk to your family about sexual exploitation. Think about how your profession and daily interactions relate directly and indirectly to trafficking.
- **Empower a young person.** Encourage a young person to lead the Justice for Women program series on human trafficking designed specifically for youth at [www.elca.org/justiceforwomen](http://www.elca.org/justiceforwomen).
- **Work with others in your region, synod, or congregation to raise awareness and to prevent and end trafficking.** Encourage adult forums, book studies, prayer and preaching on human trafficking and justice.

**70 – 80%: trafficking victims that are women and girls**  
(U.S. Department of Justice)