

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Human Trafficking Learning Series
session 6

Human Trafficking: Responding to Our Call



*"Consider it. Take counsel. Speak out."
-Judges 19: 30b*

Hello Interested Lutheran Leader!

Welcome to your final session of the ELCA Human Trafficking Learning Series, **“Human Trafficking: Responding to Our Call.”** We hope your first five sessions went well and we are thrilled that you are continuing to study human trafficking. Remember, this resource is intended *for Lutheran high school-aged young people* and is **designed to be led by a Lutheran high school-aged young person** or an adult.

As a reminder, you don't have to be an expert to lead. The directions are clearly written out so all you have to do is read the tasks from this guide, keep time and facilitate good discussion when needed.

This session is meant to be very flexible. The goal is to provide time for your group to review, make connections and come up with an action plan so that the work and learning can continue. We hope to offer some guiding ideas, but ultimately you know your group best. You may want to take longer than an hour for this session. You may also want to incorporate some social time as it might be your last meeting. Be creative and have fun!

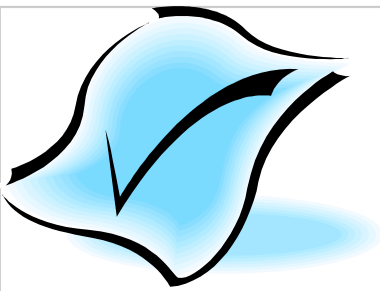
We will continue to include some of our tips and suggestions for how to best facilitate learning in boxes like this.

As always, we give thanks for your continued interest and commitment to educating others about human trafficking. By raising awareness and engaging in thoughtful dialogue and learning, you are helping to *educate* for justice, *advocate* for change and *lead* into the future! If you have questions, and/or would like to share feedback and success stories, please email justiceforwomen@elca.org. We'd love to hear from you!

Keep up the good work and service!

In one hour, learners will have...

- Summarized and discussed the previous sessions
- Connected our previous learning with the ELCA Social Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Applied the Social Message to their context and created an action plan



Learning Leader's Checklist

Suggested Prep Time: 1 hour

Your part as the learning leader, teacher and facilitator begins here. Being prepared is the easiest way to enhance the learning! Check off the boxes on this checklist to make sure you're ready.

Materials

- Writing utensils/markers
- Watch, clock or timer
- Copies of the ELCA Social Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation (may be printed from www.elca/justiceforwomen or www.elca.org/What-We-Believe/Social-Issues/Messages/Commercial-Sexual-Exploitation.aspx; hard copies may be ordered for ten cents each at http://resources.elca.org/showall-Products-Social_Issues.html)
- A ball of yarn
- Large easel pad with sheets of paper for posting information and recording action ideas
- Tape
- Group norms, Bible verses, key trafficking facts from session 1, trafficking definition and key signs of identifying from session 2 or other helpful materials from previous sessions written on large paper to be hung around the room

Preparation Tasks (see back of packet for necessary information sheets)

- Write and hang sheets with previous session information on the wall
- Set up room to accommodate a circle of people
- Print or order copies of the ELCA Social Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Make sure you've read through entire session and know what's coming up!

You may consider taking more than one hour for this session



Let's get started!

From here on, everything written is intended to be read aloud except for text located within brackets or orange boxes, which are notes for you.

Opening Hymn

[Time: 2 minutes]

[Selection is from “Evangelical Lutheran Worship” (ELW). For more options, try the justice, peace and community in Christ sections of the hymnal.]

We will begin with the hymn “Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service” ELW 712.

Opening Prayer

[Time: 1 minute]

Remember to keep close track of time so that the session moves along.

Let us pray:

God of all creation, we pray that all those in bondage one day know the freedom that you desire for all. We seek to serve you and each of our neighbors compassionately and humbly, easing burdens and making change where we are able. We give thanks for the knowledge and growth that these sessions have provided and hope that we might leave here today with a clear sense of our justice-seeking path. In your uniting name we pray, Amen.

Learning Objectives

[Time: 1 minute]

Today's session will run a bit differently than the previous five. Rather than several learning tasks, the hour will begin with a large group review and then most of the hour will be spent in small group work.

By the end of today's closing session we will have:

- Reviewed and discussed the previous sessions
- Connected our previous learning with the ELCA Social Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Created an action plan



Warm-Up: Review and Discuss the Previous Sessions

[Time: 10 minutes]



We have covered a lot of ground in the last five sessions! Today, we'll begin with a warm up that will allow us to return to some of that important content. In a minute, I'll ask that we all sit in a circle *[if you aren't already]*. Once in the circle, I will read a short paragraph about the previous sessions. I'll provide further instruction after I've read the paragraph.

What questions do you have? *[pause]*

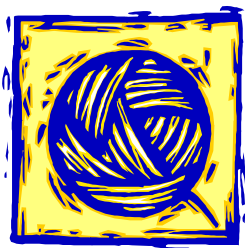
Okay, let's get started. *[learners move]*

As I read, feel free to close your eyes or leave them open. Try to recall your thoughts and feelings during each session. *[pause for a moment, when learners seem ready, read the following]*

Read slowly and clearly, allow learners time to process.

Over the past five sessions, we've learned about the horrible reality of human trafficking. In our first session, we learned that people are used as commodities all over the world. Our Christian faith gave us hope, however, as we discussed Bible verses like Galatians 5: 13-15, which reminds us that we are all called to freedom and only through love should we be slaves to one another. This verse, as well as our knowledge of God's love for us and in turn our calling to love each and every one of our neighbors, compelled us to continue to learn about human trafficking and what we can do. Session two brought more understanding of the scope of modern-day slavery. Through real, powerful stories we learned that there are many, many ways that fraud, force and coercion are used to entrap individuals. In session number three, we discovered and discussed how it feels to be vulnerable and how traffickers might capitalize on vulnerabilities. This session helped us to see the larger constellation of injustice that creates the space for human trafficking. When we work to address hunger, poverty, marginalization of minorities, warfare, homelessness, gender discrimination and other difficult issues we indirectly work to end trafficking. Sessions four and five brought the discussion closer to home as we explored the ways that our lives intersect with labor trafficking and sex trafficking. It may have been uncomfortable to learn that goods we purchase may be connected to slave labor, or that the images we see in the media may play into the demand for sex trafficking. We found hope, though, in the fact that we can use our consumer power for good, to demand that the products we use have clean supply chains. We can also challenge images and stereotypes of women and men in the media to help change societal perception. As you think about the last five sessions, what pieces stood out for you? What surprised you? What upset you? What made you hopeful? Have you done anything different in the past few weeks, or started any conversations about trafficking? What happened? What is the one thing you wish everyone in the world knew about human trafficking?

Think about those last few questions. In a minute, I'm going to toss this ball of yarn to one of you. When you catch it, say something about the past five sessions. You might talk about one piece that really stood out for you. You might just say one word about how you're feeling. You could also talk about one thing you've done or plan to do to address human trafficking. If you are uncomfortable sharing, you may simply say pass. Once you've shared, hold on to the yarn and toss the ball to someone else who has not yet spoken. You may toss it to anyone in the room, except those sitting directly to either side of you. The purpose of this exercise is to review with one another and to see what pieces have been most important to our particular group. This will help with the remainder of the session.



What questions do you have? [pause]

Okay, I'll begin.

[share a thought, grab the end of the yarn, then toss the ball to someone else. Once everyone has shared you will have created a web of yarn. Hold on to the web and continue]

Thank you all for your thoughts. As you can see, we've created a pretty complicated web. It is true that human trafficking is difficult, messy, multi-faceted and requires a lot of untangling. During the rest of this session we will use an ELCA social message to help us do just that as we make specific plans to move forward.

Study Session: Connect learning with social message and create an action plan

[Time: 35+ minutes]

Much of the rest of our time together will be spent in small group study. In a minute, we'll break up into groups of three or four. I'll hand each group a study guide. For the next half hour or so, you'll read the social message and work through the guide with your group. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions provided, they are merely meant to provoke reflection and discussion. The final section of the study guide will help your group come up with some concrete action goals. At the end of the hour we'll come back together as a large group to share some of our ideas for action.

What questions do you have? [pause]

Great, let's get into groups!

[hand out copies of social message and study guides (found on pg. 8)]

Depending on your learners, you might ask that they create their own groups or you might count off.

If you have a smaller group (six or fewer), you might consider working through the social message as one group.

Remember to keep an eye on the time! Let learners know when half of the time has gone by. After 20 or 25 minutes, make sure learners have begun the “action” section.

****There is a lot of potential for deep discussion from this study guide. You may consider taking more than one hour for this session.****

Thank you for your great discussions, let’s come back to the large group now and share some of our ideas.

Closing: Create a group action plan

[Time: 9 minutes]

Which group would like to share first?

[as groups share, write down their responses on paper up front. If there are repeats, mark them with a check mark or other indication that they’ve been shared more than once.]

You all have come up with some fantastic ideas. Now, which of these might we start with?

How you create your group action plan is completely up to you! You might ask for volunteers to take the lead on certain projects. You might also pick one thing that the group really wants to do and focus on that. You might even create a timeline for the next year. You and the other learners know what will work in your context better than anyone!

I think we have a really great plan, everyone! Thank you for your work today and throughout this whole series. It’s clear that we’ve all learned a lot and are now better equipped to respond to our call to end human trafficking. We’re all ready to be leaders!

Closing Prayer

[Time: 1 minute]

Let’s end our time together with a word of prayer:

God of light and life, continue to open our hearts and minds as you have over this series. We are ever grateful that we’ve been able to grow together with hopes of making the world more whole. As we go forward, we keep the images of your suffering children, our suffering neighbors, with us and ask that you guide our feet as we work to address that suffering. Human trafficking harms all of us and we pray for deep, meaningful, societal change. Help us to remember to rejoice in the goodness of successes and to continue to strive for more until all are treated justly. In your name we pray, Amen.

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ELCA Social Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation

A Study Guide

Part 1: Read the introduction (page 1)

1. Commercial sexual exploitation is not exactly the same as human trafficking, but human trafficking is definitely a part of commercial sexual exploitation. In what ways is the call from the ELCA to combat commercial sexual exploitation the same as our call to combat human trafficking?
2. What might you add to the introduction if this were a message on human trafficking (including both labor and sex trafficking)?

Part 2: Read "The System of Sexual Exploitation"

1. Think about this section with reference to our previous five sessions. Where do you see pieces that relate to our learning? Is there any new information?
2. Why do you think it is so important to emphasize the whole system involved in exploitation? It may help to think about our previous sessions.
3. What might you add to the analysis of the system were this message to focus on trafficking and include labor trafficking?

Part 3: Read "A Tangled Web"

1. How would you describe "social sin." How does this term relate to the previous sessions?
2. How are people used as objects in both labor and sex trafficking?
3. The commodity described in this section is sex. What else is treated as a commodity in human trafficking?
4. How might you think of "lust" in relation to labor trafficking? In what ways are we manipulated and enticed to want more and more products? How does this affect our relationships with God and one another?
5. Think about power, deceit and misery as described in the statement. What are your reactions to these descriptions? In what ways are they apparent or not apparent in human trafficking?
6. Some evil is very apparent in human trafficking. In what ways is it hidden and harder to recognize?

Flip to the back to make an action plan!

Part 4: Read “Arenas for Action”

1. How is this section (and the message as a whole) informed by Lutheran theology? In what ways does our faith uniquely provide a basis for action? How else does your faith compel you to work against human trafficking?
2. In what ways have our sessions already helped you respond to this call for action? In what ways does your congregation already live out some of these suggestions?
3. Using the statement and your knowledge from our sessions, create an action plan for your youth group and/or congregation.

Helpful Hints for Action Plans

- Try coming up with one idea for each section (equip the saints, explore the law’s role, etc.).
- Make a list of ways your congregation or community is already helping and think of ways you can add to those efforts.
- Split action ideas into categories (e.g., individual, as a congregation, as a youth group, as a community, at school, etc.)
- Write down every idea that comes up and pick your favorites later.
- Think about places where you might be able to start a conversation or mention human trafficking. Awareness is always the first step!
- Use the social message and your ideas about what it means to be a Lutheran to think of how your congregation’s faith can inform action.
- No idea is silly! Small actions make a BIG difference, so be as creative as you can!

Great job! Now you’re ready to put your plan in motion!

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

*Produced by the ELCA Justice for Women Program,
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