

[Human trafficking](#) thrives in darkness, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ is always a movement toward light.

The Ultimate Assault on the Image of God

Across our nation and around the world—including here in Georgia—men, women, and children are bought, sold, coerced, and exploited. Human trafficking is not only a crime; it is a profound assault on the image of God. In the first chapter of Genesis, we are told that every human being is created in God’s image. To traffic a person is to deny that holy truth. It is to reduce a beloved child of God to an object, a commodity, a means to someone else’s profit or pleasure.

Living Our Baptismal Covenant to Respect Human Dignity

As Episcopalians, we renew in our Baptismal Covenant the promise to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” Human trafficking places that promise before us with urgent clarity. Respecting dignity is not an abstract spiritual idea; it is embodied work. It means seeing the vulnerable teenager not as a runaway but as someone’s cherished child. It means recognizing the migrant laborer not as invisible, but as a bearer of God’s own breath.

Hearing the Cry of the Oppressed: When Christ Is Trafficked

Scripture tells us that God hears the cry of the oppressed. In Exodus, God says, “I have observed the misery of my people . . . I have heard their cry.” The story of salvation begins with God’s refusal to ignore suffering. The Church is called into that same holy refusal. We cannot look away because it is uncomfortable. We cannot assume it is someone else’s problem. Christ himself was trafficked by systems of power—betrayed for silver, handed over, stripped, and treated as disposable. In every exploited body, Christ suffers still.

Living Sacraments of Hope: How to Support Human Trafficking Survivors

Yet ours is not a faith of despair. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Wherever survivors find safety, wherever laws are strengthened, wherever communities learn to recognize the signs of exploitation, resurrection is at work. Ministries that provide shelter, legal aid, counseling, and advocacy become living sacraments of hope—outward and visible signs of God’s inward and spiritual grace.

Prayer is essential, but prayer must open our eyes and move our feet. We can educate ourselves and our congregations about human trafficking, honoring how we are each created in the image of God. Support local organizations that walk alongside survivors. Examine how our own consumption habits may contribute to systems of exploitation. And above all, we can cultivate communities where vulnerability is met with protection rather than predation.



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