



September 25, 2020

## Save Our Children

Most things in this world are more complex than we want them to be, while others are simple and insidious. Human trafficking is both. There is a complex reality of disenfranchised youth that touches on runaway children, the foster care system, realities faced by LGBTQ+ youth, and calculating traffickers. There is often no large conspiracy; just the desire to completely control another person and make money off of them. Over the course of history, humans have been sold again and again.

There is a popular hashtag going around the internet: #saveourchildren. [Save the Children](#) is an organization that has been operating for over 100 years to give “children in the US and around the world a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm.” This hashtag is being hijacked by an outside group that describes the human trafficking of children as connected with a vast trafficking ring that targets children and is run by either celebrities, politicians, or both.

The agencies and organizations that do the hard work of combating human trafficking and rescuing victims [do not welcome this narrative](#). When well-meaning people

unintentionally spread falsehoods about human trafficking, it prevents people from learning about the real signs of human trafficking, how traffickers groom their victims, and how we can combat it. It is not always women and girls, it is not always about sex, and it is not about taking victims far away.

Trafficking occurs in all countries when people, both children and adults, are isolated, coerced, and exploited. This includes homeless youth who trade their bodies for food and or shelter. Trafficking meets a demand for us to have free labor, cheaper goods and services, as well as the specter of the very real commercial sex trade.

The reality is that the vast majority of trafficking victims know and trust their traffickers. The traffickers listen to their victims, gain information, and use gifts to reward and reinforce their trust before controlling them with isolation, fear, and psychological manipulation. Most trafficking victims are not bound or locked inside but cut off from everyone else. While some don't know where to get help, others know life could be worse and count the blessings of food, warmth, and sporadic human connection as worth the cost.

Jesus challenges us: "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves." (Matthew 10:16) This means that when we are confronted with an issue like human trafficking, we do not just blindly go along with whatever group is making the most noise, but listen to the stories of victims, learn the signs, and know what to do when a trafficking situation is seen.

Listening to stories like [Karley Church's](#), who spoke at TEDxOshawaED last year.

[Learning the signs](#) such as:

- Being spoken for by someone else and conversations being monitored
- Lacking control of money and/or documentation
- Avoiding or fearing authority figures
- Malnourishment
- Owing debts that are too large to pay
- Living in over-crowded or isolated conditions

Actions like knowing the number of the National Human Trafficking Hotline (1-888-3737-888) where victims can reach out and find the help that they didn't know existed from people who will help them find their voice and reclaim their self-worth and dignity are important.

Looking for education and training specific to your field like [Truckers Against Trafficking](#), who are, "raising up a mobile army of transportation professionals to assist law enforcement in the recognition and reporting of human trafficking, in order to aid

in the recovery of victims and the arrest of their perpetrators.” Or, [training](#) for a healthcare context provided by the hotline.

We are “wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16) when we find ways to become the solution to the problems of this world. We are wise when we engage the complex reality of human trafficking with [the tools](#) that we have at our hands and join with those who are already doing the good work of combatting human trafficking, advocating for laws to protect the victims, and working with the victims to rebuild healthy relationships and a hopeful future. When we recognize that we must surround children and youth with a network of people who care about and listen to them, and teach them to build healthy relationships before traffickers build harmful ones, our wisdom has led us to the ounce of prevention that is better than a pound of cure. This is more than simply sharing a hashtag; it is sharing in the transformative work of the Holy Spirit in the world to restore the broken and uplift the downtrodden.

Pastor Justin Smoot (he/him)

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## Communion Pick Up Time Change

Communion Pick Up will now be taking place at **11 am to 1 pm** on **Saturday, September 26**. If you are coming to pick up communion for the livestream service, make sure to keep this in mind. The location for pick up is at the north entrance.

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**YOUR GIFTS  
RETURNED TO  
GOD**

\$467,414

**MINISTRY  
COSTS FOR  
SAINT ANDREW**

\$482,018

**Spending Plan  
Snapshot:**

**August 2020**

**GIFTS GREATER  
(LESS) THAN  
COST**

\$ (14,604)

**SPENDING PLAN  
PROJECTION  
THROUGH JULY**

\$ (31,949)

## August Spending Plan Snapshot

YTD offerings through August 31 are down \$42,963 from the 2020 Spending Plan and down \$24,819 from last year. Continued reductions in spending have kept expenses \$60,308 less than what was planned.

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## An Update from Crossways Camping Ministries

Fall is a beautiful time at camp! Come and enjoy a Fall Color Hike at Waypost on October 3, plan a trip to see progress at the lodge at Imago Dei Village, or find your way to a Fall Color Hike at Pine Lake Camp on October 10. Consider joining in the 20 Hours Outside challenge, or share your time with camp by volunteering to rake or serve. Don't let fall pass without making a stop at your favorite camp to see the seasons change. Coordinate your visit with the site director or register for one of our events at [CrosswaysCamps.org](https://CrosswaysCamps.org).

## Plan to Gather Weekly Update: 9/23/2020

For now, Saint Andrew remains in Phase One of the Plan to Gather. As soon as there is a consistent downward trend, we will move forward to Phase Two.

### SALC COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 9/23/2020

Date	Burden #	Trajectory	SALC Status
9/2	53	No change	Phase One
9/9	63.1	No change	Phase One
9/16	101.7	Increasing	Phase One
9/23	236	Increasing	Phase One

**Current Burden Status: High**

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