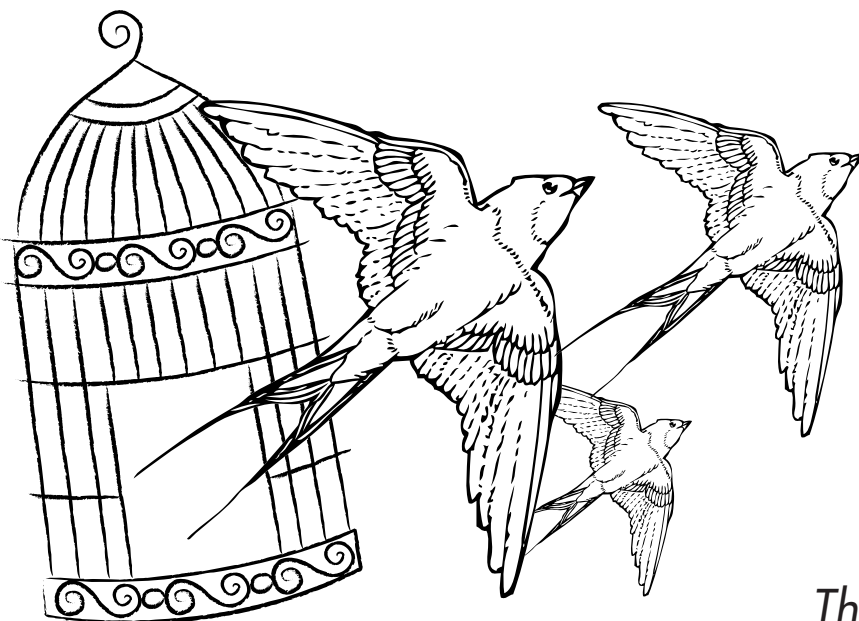


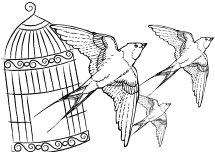
A HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESOURCE FOR YOUTH GROUPS

by ^{the} **préscha**
initiative.

*This is a five-part bible study on the issue of justice and human trafficking.
We recommend you undertake one study a time with your youth group.*

<i>Study One</i>	<i>God's heart for the oppressed</i>
<i>Study Two</i>	<i>Justice and the heart of God</i>
<i>Study Three</i>	<i>Jesus and justice</i>
<i>Study Four</i>	<i>Us!</i>
<i>Study Five</i>	<i>Human trafficking</i>





Study One: Exploring the heart of God

key question

What is God's heart for the oppressed?

The key portion of scripture addressing this question is Isaiah 61:1–3. Isaiah served as a prophet in Judah from 740–681 BC. In this book, he calls the nation of Judah back to God. He prophesies the judgement of God over a people who honoured Him with their lips but whose hearts were corrupt. The result of both Israel and Judah's disobedience was captivity by a foreign nation. Isaiah also speaks comfort to God's people, reminding them of God's love and forgiveness. It points them towards the future coming of the Messiah.

In these passages we get a glimpse of God's heart for his children in captivity

Isaiah 61:1–3

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted,
**to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,**
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendour.

Israel and Judah eventually end up in captivity by the Assyrians and Babylonians, all because of their unwillingness to listen and respond to God's warnings through prophets like Isaiah. What other reasons lead people to be:

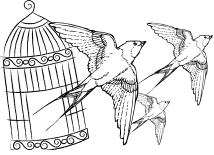
- » Broken hearted?
- » Held captive?
- » Grief-stricken?

It's amazing to realise that God longs to see all his people freed from what binds them — irrespective of whether our captivity is self-induced or not.

What other events or stories in the Old Testament help us understand God's heart for the oppressed?

One example is the Hebrew's deliverance from Egypt: The Hebrews were slaves to the Egyptians for 400 years. The Pharaoh, King of Egypt, oppressed them cruelly during this time. They cried out for God to deliver them.

From this passage, what things have we learned are close to the heart of God?



Exodus 2:23–25 (NLT)

²³ Years passed, and the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. ²⁴ **God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise** to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵ He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.

Exodus 3:9–10 (NLT)

⁹ Look! The cry of the people of Israel has reached me, **and I have seen** how harshly the Egyptians abuse them. ¹⁰ Now go, for I am sending you to Pharaoh. You must lead my people Israel out of Egypt."

Psalms 12:5–8 (NLT)

⁵ The LORD replies, "**I have seen** violence done to the helpless, and **I have heard** the groans of the poor. Now I will rise up to rescue them, as they have longed for me to do."
⁶ The LORD's promises are pure, like silver refined in a furnace, purified seven times over.
⁷ Therefore, LORD, **we know you will protect the oppressed**, preserving them forever from this lying generation,
⁸ even though the wicked strut about, and evil is praised throughout the land.

What was God's response to the slavery of his people?

God saw the oppression of his people and heard their cries for help.

activity

Write each heading on a separate piece of A3 paper:

- Our school
- Our city
- Our nation
- Our families

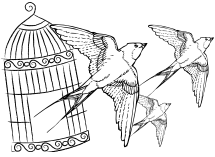
Answer the question "In what ways are people held oppressed in...?" Discuss as a group.

Often when confronted with injustice, society looks the other way, it pretends to not see and hear, but we serve a God who chooses not to turn a blind eye at the face of oppression. Our challenge is to do the same.

What is a way you have been choosing to turn a blind eye this week? How do you think God would have preferred you to respond in that situation?

closing prayer

God, thank you that you are a God who sees our pain and hears our cries for help. I pray that you would help us to be a community who sees and hears the pain of others the way you do.



Study Two: Justice and the heart of God

key question

What place does justice hold in the heart of God?

Isaiah 61:8

For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing.

In the last study we explored God's heart for the oppressed — that we serve a God who sees and hears the oppression of his people. In this study we learn that he doesn't just see and hear, but he is a God who longs to intervene.

Ask the following questions. Write down the thoughts and ideas on a piece of paper.

» **What is justice?**

The dictionary states: It's the upholding of what is right, especially fair treatment for all people.

» **What is injustice?**

The dictionary states: It is a violation of another's rights or of what is right.

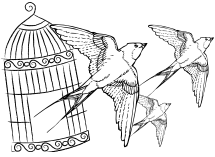
» **What are some examples of injustice in the world today?**

Some ideas for this may be poverty, child abuse, people being bullied at school, people being taken advantage of or tricked, people getting away with cheating on school exams etc.

activity

Split into four groups and give each group one of the following injustice scenarios

<p>Bullying Tom is in year 9 at high school and a ginger (he has red hair). Year 11 boys start teasing him every day when walks to school. They call him horrible names, throw stones at him and mock him in public. Tom gets really depressed and hates going to school.</p>	<p>Poverty Maggie grows up in Uganda in a poor village. When she is 12 years old, both of her parents die from HIV AIDS. She has to stop going to school and work in the fields to provide food for her two younger siblings.</p>
<p>Cheating Scott is really intelligent. He studies really hard in his spare time and is likely to be awarded dux of his college in year 13 and win scholarships to university. His main rival, Jake, finds and photocopies the exam transcript for upcoming exams. He then goes and finds out all the answers to questions. At the senior prize giving, Jake wins dux and all the scholarships as a result of his cheating. Scott is devastated.</p>	<p>Trickery Neary is from a poor village in Cambodia. One day her distant cousin offers her a job as a receptionist for a petrol company in Malaysia where he works. Neary takes the job immediately as the pay sounds fantastic and she thinks she can send back money to her family. Once she gets to Malaysia, her passport is taken off her and she has to work 14 hour days sewing in a factory receiving only \$10 a day.</p>



In groups, answer the following questions:

Question	Example answer for bullying
Why is this injustice?	People should not be teased, beaten up or bullied at school.
Who is the victim of the injustice?	Tom.
Why are they the victim?	Because kids are being mean to him.
What rights are violated?	He's being treated like he's different to everyone else, being hurt because people are throwing stones at him, and he's being publically humiliated.
Who is the perpetrator (offender)?	The year 11 boys.
Why does this injustice happen?	No reason other than Tom having ginger hair.
What needs to happen to stop this injustice?	Teachers told about it, friends standing up for Tom etc.

Ask students to work through the other scenarios in a similar way.

Why do you think justice is so close to the heart of God?

In what ways does God display his justice in the bible?

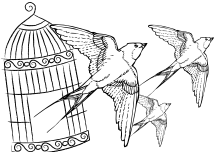
What injustices was God seeking to address in Isaiah 61:1-3?

What injustices are close to your heart?

In small groups, discuss the injustices close to the hearts of your youth. Spend time praying for these situations. Discuss in your small groups how these injustices could be addressed by individuals in your youth group or by the group as a whole.

closing prayer

Thank you that you not only see and hear the oppression of your people, but you are a just God who longs to intervene on behalf of the helpless. Open our eyes to the injustices around us. Help us to be a community that chooses not to turn a blind eye in the face of these injustices, but instead, be spurred into action.



Study Three: Jesus and justice

Jesus came to reveal the father-heart of God — a heart full of love and compassion for the oppressed and a passion for justice. At the start of Jesus' ministry he stood up and publicly declared his mission statement. He did this by quoting these words:

key question

How did Jesus show God's heart for justice?

Luke 4:14–21 (NIV)

Jesus rejected at Nazareth

¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵ He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.

²¹ He began by saying to them, **"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."**

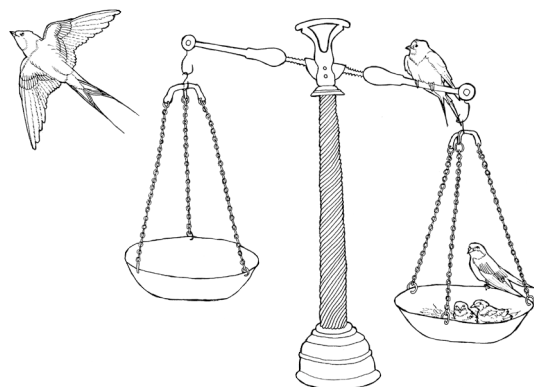
Why do you think Jesus chose to read this passage of scripture?

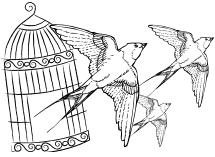
What do you think Jesus meant when he said, "today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (v.21)?

What injustices were occurring in Jesus' day?

Examples:

- » Israel was under the rule of the Roman Empire.
- » Women were seen more as possessions than people. They had no rights and no access to God.
- » Samaritans were seen as scum and were despised by Israelites.
- » Pharisees held the monopoly on God. They overburdened and judged people with strict rules and regulations.
- » Slaves were used as property of rich people. They were given no rights or privileges of their own.
- » People with leprosy or other health problems (lame, mute, deaf, etc.) were outcasts in their society and it was believed that they deserved their fate because they had been sinful.





how did Jesus respond to these social injustices?

In small groups, give each group one of the following portions of scripture. Ask each group to answer the following questions. Discuss as a whole group at the end.

- » **What is the injustice?**
- » **Why is it occurring?**
- » **What is Jesus' response?**
- » **What is the result?**

John 9:1–7: Jesus heals a man born blind

John 8:1–11: Jesus forgives a woman caught in the act of adultery

John 4:6–10: Jesus and the woman at the well

John 5:1–8: Jesus and a lame man

John 2:13–17: Jesus cleansing the temple

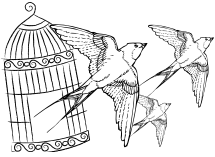
While addressing and correcting social injustices, Jesus gravitated toward the most vulnerable people in society: widows, children, the poor, the blind, the deaf, prisoners, the demon-possessed, lepers, and prostitutes — those who were suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He came alongside them and with words and actions revealed to them God's heart for their spiritual, physical and emotional wholeness.

What injustices are ignored or regarded as acceptable in our culture?

If Jesus lived in our time, who would he be getting alongside in our society? How should Jesus' heart for justice affect the way we live our lives?

closing prayer

Thank you Jesus that you chose not to turn a blind eye at the injustices around you. I pray that you would give us the courage to do the same even if it means going against the majority.



Study Four: Us!

We have learned that the words spoken in Isaiah 61 reveal both the father's heart for justice and the mandate of Jesus' life. Now we will look at what God requires of us, his followers. To help us out, we turn back to Isaiah.

key question

How can we show God's heart for justice?

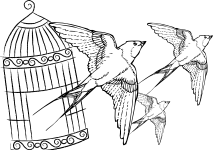
How do you think we can show God's heart for justice to our world?

God's people came to view religious rituals such as fasting and temple visits as evidence of true devotion to God. Through Isaiah He set them straight and explained just what true devotion should look like.



Isaiah 58:1-10

¹ "Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast.
Shout aloud! Don't be timid.
Tell my people Israel of their sins!
² Yet they act so pious!
They come to the Temple every day
and seem delighted to learn all about me.
They act like a righteous nation
that would never abandon the laws of its God.
They ask me to take action on their behalf,
pretending they want to be near me.
³ 'We have fasted before you!' they say.
'Why aren't you impressed?
We have been very hard on ourselves,
and you don't even notice it!'
"I will tell you why!" I respond.
"It's because you are fasting to please yourselves.
Even while you fast,
you keep oppressing your workers.
⁴ What good is fasting
when you keep on fighting and quarrelling?
This kind of fasting
will never get you anywhere with me.
⁵ You humble yourselves
by going through the motions of penance,
bowing your heads
like reeds bending in the wind.
You dress in burlap
and cover yourselves with ashes.
Is this what you call fasting?
Do you really think this will please the LORD?
⁶ "No, this is the kind of fasting I want:
Free those who are wrongly imprisoned;
lighten the burden of those who work for you.
Let the oppressed go free,
and remove the chains that bind people.
⁷ Share your food with the hungry,
and give shelter to the homeless.
Give clothes to those who need them,
and do not hide from relatives who need your help.
⁸ "Then your salvation will come like the dawn,
and your wounds will quickly heal.
Your godliness will lead you forward,
and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind.
⁹ Then when you call, the LORD will answer.
'Yes, I am here,' he will quickly reply.
"Remove the heavy yoke of oppression.
Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumours!
¹⁰ Feed the hungry,
and help those in trouble.
Then your light will shine out from the darkness,
and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.



according to these verses, what does God consider true and false worship?

Proverbs 31:8–9 (NLT)

⁸ Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed.

⁹ Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice. What are some practical ways we can apply these verses to our lives?

Micah 6:8 (NIV)

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God

Isaiah 1:17 (ESV)

Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

What are some practical ways we can apply these verses to our lives?

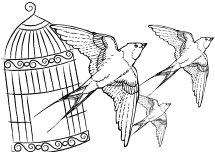
The bible is really clear that as followers of Christ we are required to put feet on our faith. He longs for his children to choose not to turn a blind eye in the face of injustice. He wants us to invite Him to break our heart with what breaks his.

When confronted with the enormity of this task it is easy to feel overwhelmed and not know where to start.

Romans 8:11

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

We need to be reminded that the same God that empowered Jesus is available to empower us to be His hands and feet in a broken world. It is him working through us which enables us to live such counter-cultural lives.



Here are some examples of people who pursued justice and change in their everyday lives. Break up into five groups and read the following stories. Encourage them to consider the following questions:

- » **What is the injustice?**
- » **How did they address this injustice?**
- » **What would have been the personal cost?**

William Wilberforce

William was really young when he decided that slavery should be abolished. At the time, African men and women were being sold to white European people and treated as property. They would often have to work seven days a week, with no break, and they were often severely punished when they made mistakes. William encouraged people to not put sugar in their tea because sugar was made by slaves who worked at sugar plantations. His idea went viral and people stopped supporting the industries that black slaves were working in. This was one of the many ways William stood against slavery

Bobby, Loren, and Jason from Invisible Children

Invisible Children stumbled upon a situation in Gulu, Uganda, where thousands of kids were being abducted by Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army. They could have kept enjoying their trip around Africa, but they were convicted to tell the story of these children in America. As a result of their efforts, there is now an international arrest warrant out for Joseph Kony by the International Criminal Court. Invisible Children have also set up many projects that support young Ugandans so they can receive an education.

Philippa Braddock

Philippa was always given \$10 to buy her lunch one day of every week by her parents. Philippa decided instead of buying her lunch she would save the money. She put the \$40 a month she saved toward sponsoring a child to go to school in Vietnam. Philippa loved knowing that she was helping a girl of a similar age to herself have an education and hope.

Sam Johnson

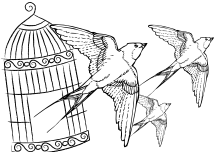
Sam was just a regular Canterbury university student until the February 2011 earthquake hit. In response to the quake, he set up a Facebook group called the Student Volunteer Army where he rallied students together to do community service.

Emily Canner

Emily was at a school where everyone picked on a girl called Molly. The norm at school was that if you associated with Molly you were ostracised by everyone else. Emily befriended Molly even though by doing this she was considered an outcast by her friends. However, it only took a few short weeks until Emily and Molly were considered cool people to hang out with and embraced back into the main group of friends.

closing prayer

Lord God, help me to be someone who seeks justice and encourages the oppressed. Help me to find people I can help and things I can change in my everyday life. Show me, lead me and guide me to be an instrument of hope and love to people less fortunate than me.



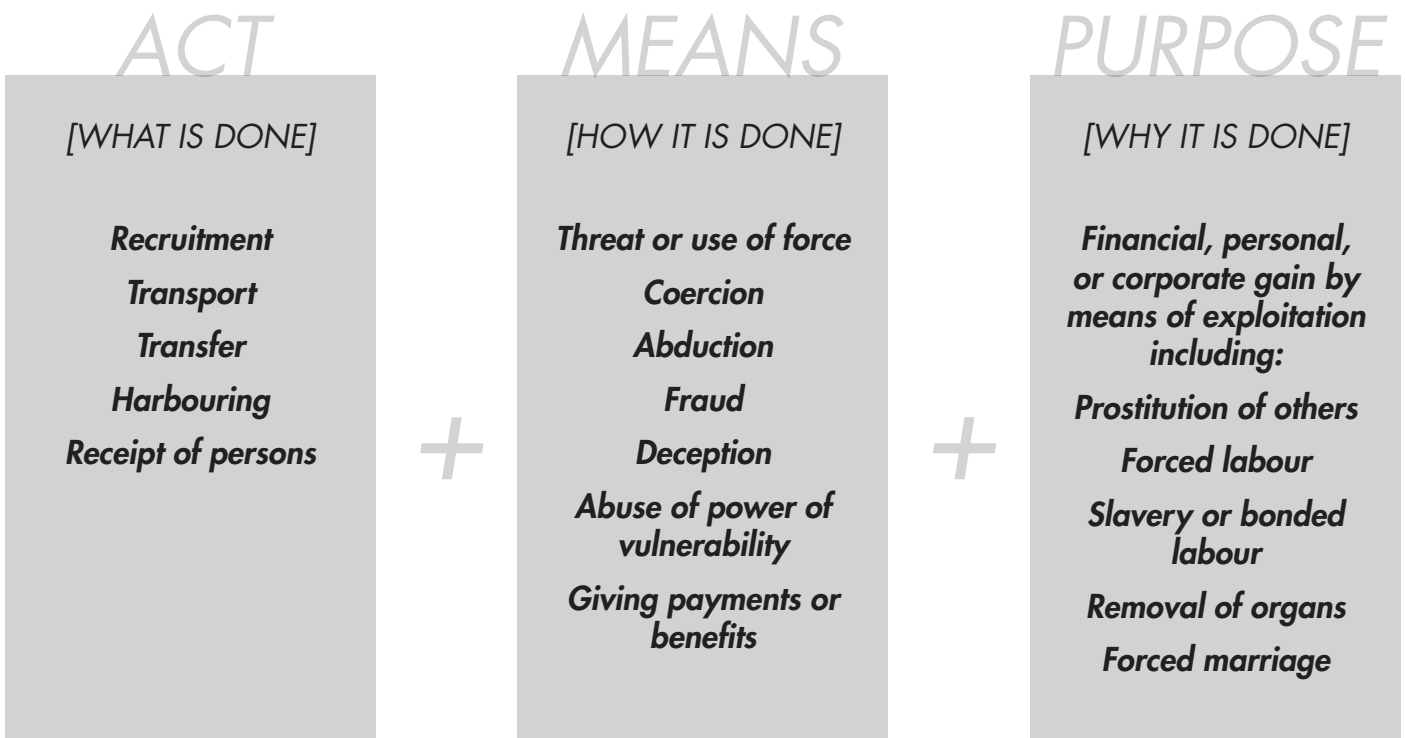
Study Five: Human trafficking

This study can be read in conjunction with Préscha’s human trafficking resource for high schools for more detailed information. This can be found on our website: www.prescha.org.

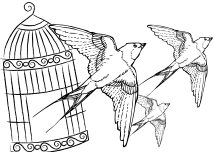
The international legal definition of human trafficking is:

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 or 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.¹

Put simply, human trafficking is:



¹ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Article 3(a)



facts

- » Twenty-seven million people are enslaved in various forms of sexual and labour exploitation, more than at the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade. – Kevin Bales (President of Free the Slaves)
- » There are more than one million children entering the sex trade every year and that approximately 30 million children have lost their childhood through sexual exploitation over the past 30 years. – UNICEF
- » According to the U.S. Department of State, 50% of trafficking victims internationally are under age 18. (Amnesty International)
- » More than 80% of trafficking victims are female. (Amnesty International)
- » Overall, approximately 80% of trafficking involves sexual exploitation, and 20% involves labor exploitation. (Amnesty International)

Please consult the “**what can I do?**” section of Préscha’s human trafficking resource for more information on what you can do to help combat human trafficking in New Zealand and overseas.

Find the verses we have looked at throughout this whole bible study. Use the prayer points below and the verses in the previous studies to pray for:

- » The victims of human trafficking
- » Human trafficking in New Zealand
- » An end to human trafficking

Do not despair but **PRAY** that God will intervene. We have learnt from this study that God **SEES** and **HEARS** the suffering of his children. Through His Holy Spirit living in us, **WE** can be instruments that bring about change in the lives of people who are oppressed and enslaved.

prayer points

The victims of human trafficking

- » An end to their exploitation and abuse
- » People and organisations to partner with them and help them get out of their situations
- » The social and cultural norms that got them into their exploitation (e.g., their gender, poverty, the fact they were raped and lost their honour, trickery, abuse, broken homes and families, demand for sex, etc.)
- » Training and employment opportunities with good and decent pay
- » Medical treatment
- » The restoration of honour, dignity, and worth for each victim
- » That each victim would find a personal relationship with God

New Zealand

- » Victims of human trafficking in our country
- » Sex workers in New Zealand who may not be working because of their free choice
- » Organisations working towards the elimination of human trafficking in New Zealand, e.g. The Préscha Initiative, ECPAT Child Alert, Hagar.

An end to human trafficking

- » People to rise up and demand that human trafficking be stopped
- » An end to social norms, such as pornography and prostitution, that fuel demand
- » Strong laws that criminalise human trafficking and also provide strong protection for victims
- » World leaders and other people in strong positions to not tolerate human trafficking