



Wednesday Prayer

3rd Sunday after Epiphany – Set the Prisoners Free

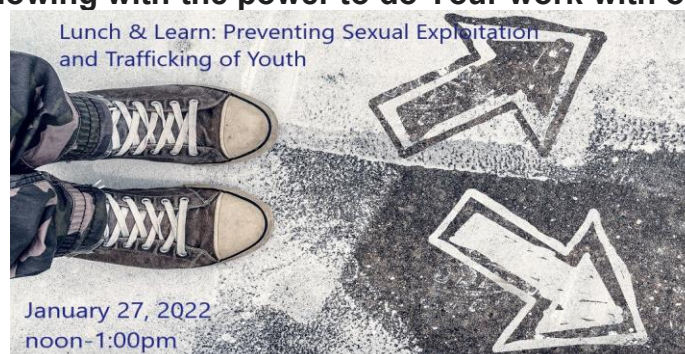
“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor...to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18-19

I once knew a teenaged girl who suffered from very low self-esteem. When this girl was young, nobody had heard of the Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACE’s study, which measures potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood. But if the scale had been around a long time ago, this girl could have checked a lot of the boxes: parental neglect, violence in the home, alcohol addiction, mental health issues, separation of the family, adult responsibilities as a youth, to name a few. The higher the number of ACE’s this young girl experienced, the more vulnerable she was for a prolonged exposure to “toxic stress.” She believed she was destined to feel helpless, hopeless, and unloved for her whole life. She seemed determined to live a self-fulfilling prophesy of shame, guilt, and anguish. This girl could easily have fallen prey to a sex trafficker. She would have loved the attention and the compliments and the gifts the predator would have given her to suck her into the scheme. It’s really amazing that this girl was **not** the victim of a “seller of souls,” but she still suffered from deep depression and poor judgement long into her adult life. I know, because that young girl was me.

Luke records that Jesus stood up in the temple in Nazareth and read Isaiah 61:1 for me. Accepting Christ as my personal Savior caused me to hear God speaking clearly to “the poor,” those of us who **know** our humble state before Christ and readily accept God’s perfect love and abiding grace. Every day as a child of God, I am freed from the “prison” of my poor self-image. It is Christ’s enduring love for me that heals my “blindness” to what my life might have been and helps me see that I am no longer “oppressed.”

January is Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month. Join me and others who strive to support youth and make a difference in our communities. Register for a virtual [Lunch & Learn: Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Youth](#) to hear from a panel of six LSS leaders from across Minnesota sharing the work being done with youth in our communities.

Jesus, fill us to overflowing with the power to do Your work with our precious youth!



Written by Meg Corrigan, Christian author, speaker and survivor. Visit www.MegCorrigan.com.