

# WM learns more of “breaking the Chains”

AGM, Calgary, April 2010

Her name is Natalie.

Daily wrestling out a meager existence for herself and her two children in the slums of Lima, Peru, this young, single, unprotected mom was sexually assaulted. In hospital, vulnerable, in need of money, she met a man who offered her a way out, to work in Canada as a domestic. She wanted to believe he was telling the truth. After he supplied her money, a passport and a fare, she found herself in the Philippines and a deep nightmare began to unfold. Two hours outside Manila Natalie was locked into a hotel room and forced to service 5 -10 men per day. Deeply discouraged and in growing debt to her “helpers” (she owed them for flight, hotel, meals), only allowed to keep 10% of what she took in, she found herself re-directed once more. With another fake passport (which she was instructed to rip up en route so she could claim refugee status) Natalie was finally on her way Canada. But without a passport she landed in detention upon arrival in Canada, waiting for pre-trial. With that came a new threat - deportation – and surely that meant she’d be re-trafficked because now she owed even more money. Discouraged, alone, she found help from a sympathetic border agent who contacted REED and Michelle Miller went to see her, bringing along a translator. The Crown Prosecutor wanted to keep Natalie in detention but REED negotiated for her and she was released under Michelle’s care. Natalie found a new “family” and after some mentoring is living a new life in Montreal, doing quite well. In fact she’s in the process of getting landed immigrant status here in Canada.

## *Our WM Team*



*Judy Nelson, Coordinator*



*Trudy McIntosh, Coordinator*



*Korleen Stapleton, Global Ministry*

*And Lila Freysteinson, Secretary*

**Two great opportunities on our team  
are waiting to be filled :  
Equipping Ministry  
Compassion, Mercy and Justice Ministry**

You can find insights into these positions on our  
**WM webpage, Our Ministries, page 2 on**  
[www.canadacovenantchurch.org](http://www.canadacovenantchurch.org)

Ladies, do you have a heart for serving in either area?  
Or do you know someone whose passion would find  
fulfillment in it? Please contact us at  
[eccwomens@gmail.com](mailto:eccwomens@gmail.com)

## Standing against the flow...



*Michelle Miller*



**Want to dig in further? Check these out...**

[www.canadacovenantchurch.com](http://www.canadacovenantchurch.com)

[www.embracedignity.org](http://www.embracedignity.org)

[www.sharedhope.org](http://www.sharedhope.org)

[www.covchurch.org/women/departamental-ministries/annual-project/break-the-chains-hope-and-restoration-for-freed-slaves](http://www.covchurch.org/women/departamental-ministries/annual-project/break-the-chains-hope-and-restoration-for-freed-slaves)

It was Michelle who told us Natalie's story. The Executive Director of **REED**, Vancouver, BC, was our guest speaker at the AGM. REED stands for **Resist Exploitation and Embrace Dignity**. This group assists in the recovery of women and girls trapped in the sex trade, providing shelter, protection, a new "family" where those rescued can work through the transition into wholeness.

What visuals come to your mind when you hear terms like "human trafficking" and "sex slaves"? Michelle showed us a video and suddenly seeing the faces of the women who were trapped, hearing the fear and despair in their voices challenged my self-protective naivety! Statistics tend to overwhelm me...such as there are 27 MILLION sex slaves in the world. It is estimated that 300,000 girls ages 10-17 are trapped in sex slavery in North America today. I was stunned to learn that this lucrative business surpasses selling drugs or weapons, because "the product" is reusable. For example, once cocaine is sold the sale is final, whereas a 12 year old girl can be sold over and over until she is too old or she is sick. This industry is bringing in a whopping 97 billion dollars worldwide.

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? Is it happening right in our back yard? I live in Sarnia, Ontario, a border city to Michigan, and I'm aware that smuggling of immigrants goes on. Strip clubs exist, adult stores are frequented. Only last week a group meeting was held to raise awareness about this very issue in my hometown.

Are you wondering what's our next step – how can we respond? On the following page you'll find a list of "to do's" – a mix of the ECC website and REED. The video Michelle showed is available on request. One of our women plans to host an evening at our Church, invite the Community and increase awareness. Check out the links on the left for more info...what's prodding your heart? Every small step can make a difference to help "break the chains".

## In the face of Human Trafficking, what can I do?

### Engage your heart in prayer.

- For a heart that is broken by the plight of trafficked people.
- For the trafficked people.
- For organizations working to free them.
- Address the brokenness in your own life
- Pray for the freedom of men and women affected by brothels in your city



### Engage your mind.

- [Study](#) God's Word regarding injustice.
- Select and read a book from the [recommended reading list](#)
- View a movie or host a screening from the [recommended movie list](#)
- find resources above on [www.covchurch.org](http://www.covchurch.org)

*This is the kind of fast day I'm after, to break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts." Isaiah 58:6 Msg.*

### Engage your voice.

- Gather a small group to discuss a book or movie from recommendations listed above.
- Organize a Bible study on trafficking using recommended resources.
- Oppose the legalization (total decriminalization) of prostitution
- Promote gender equality and human dignity in your daily life
- Advocate for just immigration policies and safe paths of migration
- Educate others about human trafficking
- Support the education of women and girls, especially in developing countries



*20 Women from the Canadian Conference are registered for this special gathering of women from around the world... Will you join them? Registration is still open – browse [www.covchurch.org](http://www.covchurch.org) for all the info.*



## Ladies, this is YOUR Newsletter

It's been a few months since you have heard from your Women Ministries Team. Our e-letter editor, JeramieLee is spending time enjoying her baby. I'm in a different season of life – my husband and I are expecting our first grandchild in August. As of this AGM I'm on the WM Team and am happy to keep you updated. I'm planning to send out a letter 6 times a year. And I DO NEED YOUR HELP! Please share your thoughts and questions in response to the projects, events and suggestions communicated in the newsletter. From time to time we'll explore a theme. At all times we'd love to hear your stories.

In JeramieLee's letters she reminded us that we are women mentoring women.

As life happens in your Community, your Church, let us in on it.

You can reach the whole team with one email address: [eccwomen@gmail.com](mailto:eccwomen@gmail.com)

We look forward to hearing from you!!! Trudv McIntosh