



Human Trafficking



Addressing violations of human rights

“My only mistake was having a dream,” says a Filipino teacher who desperately wanted a better life for her children, a life she thought would begin with a teaching job in America promised by a recruiter in the Philippines.

A 20-year veteran teacher in the Philippines, Ella (not her real name), visited the local office of a recruiter she found through an Internet search. This recruiter promised Ella the moon and promised it quickly. Then, over the next several months, he convinced her to pay a series of fees—processing fee, service fee, housing fee, and an embassy interviewing fee.

Ella didn’t have the money for all these fees, so she took out high-interest loans to cover them. She also took a 40-day leave of absence from her school to be with her children, thinking she was leaving soon to teach in America.

As it turns out, this recruiter had made the same promise to hundreds of other teachers, each of whom he cheated out of \$10,000 to \$15,000 for nonexistent jobs in the US.

This is a side of human trafficking we don’t hear much about, yet the lure of a better job is a common tactic used worldwide, says mission co-worker Rebecca Lawson. Becca helps PC(USA) partners in the Philippines develop and nurture relationships with nongovernmental and social service organizations. At the grassroots level, Becca assists the church in its advocacy efforts for the human rights of all Filipinos.

Working with others, the church engages in issues such as poverty, stewardship of creation, forced migration, the rights of indigenous peoples, gender justice, and unjust land development.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering inspires the faith needed for forgiveness and reconciliation and equips and connects Presbyterians to respond to cultures of violence, including our own.

“God has called us to announce the good news for the poor and release to the captives,” Becca says. “At the same time, the poor, marginalized, and oppressed summon us to live and act in solidarity with them.”

The Peace & Global Witness Offering is used to expand global witness while maintaining Presbyterians’ longstanding commitment to working toward peacemaking and reconciliation, especially in cultures of violence. Congregations and presbyteries keep 25 percent of receipts for peace and witness ministries of their choice and send 50 percent to the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

Please give generously to the Peace & Global Witness Offering to help address violations of human rights.