



FREEDOM
CHURCH ALLIANCE



IMPACT REPORT

2023

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the Freedom Church Alliance,

Can you believe that in May 2023, the Freedom Church Alliance turned ten? What an incredible journey we've been on together. At times our calling has seemed daunting and even impossible—and it would've been without the power and provision of God. As I reflect on the last ten years, my heart is full of gratitude. I'm blown away by the support of the incredible people who make up the Freedom Church Alliance as well as our anti-trafficking partners. *Because of your support, countless hearts and lives have been touched by the love of Christ.*

In this report, you'll see that God has opened many new doors for us to serve the vulnerable and hurting. With these new opportunities, you have stepped up to the task. *God has provided for us every step of the way, and we want to keep making room for the work He's doing.*

Our hope is this: *There is no heart too broken for God to mend or life too shattered for God to heal. No one—not even the buyer or trafficker—is beyond the hope of the gospel.* Because Jesus changes everything.

Because of the gospel, we can step into the darkness of human trafficking to speak truth and proclaim hope. So, I want to invite you to walk with us into a new decade of bringing the body of Christ together to act justly and love mercy and walk humbly with our God. May He make us even more fruitful together.

Your support is making a difference. I cannot wait to see what good works have been prepared for us to do together in 2024!

With gratitude,

Leigh Kohler

Co-Founder and President of the Freedom Church Alliance

REFLECTIONS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Freedom Church Alliance Family,

It sounds cliché to say, "What a year!" But 2023 was an incredible year. Freedom Church Alliance has experienced tremendous growth, transition, unexpected blessings, new partnerships, and opportunities to expand our reach this past year.

While my role as Director started in 2023, my heart for anti-trafficking efforts and my relationship with Freedom Church Alliance dates back to their inception a decade ago. I served seven years as a Missions Director with one of the first churches to join the Alliance in 2013. Through the original GoBox classes, I learned the gut-wrenching realities of human trafficking, and God stirred my heart to engage and mobilize others in this fight.

As I look back over the last ten years, I see God's provision in so many ways. Houston has become a leading city in collaborative efforts to fight human trafficking. Churches, law enforcement, and ministries have built relationships that are making a greater impact to meet the needs of survivors and address the demand in our city and beyond.

2023 served as a capstone year as we celebrated our decade birthday. Here are some of the highlights: We launched the GoBox 2.0, which has reached nearly 1,200 homes, churches, and organizations in 25 states and several countries. The GoBag Project flourished, and nearly five hundred GoBags were sent out to women and children. This year, the GoBag Project also expanded to serve ministries on the border and shelters that care for unaccompanied minors who have been trafficked or are at risk.

Thank you for joining us in the fight against human trafficking. The Lord has provided through your time, treasure, and talents. I am so grateful to be part of this mission with you. Our team is grateful for you!

With appreciation,

Christa Freyhof

Director of Freedom Church Alliance

WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN 10 YEARS

2013

Initial meeting at Sugar Creek Baptist Church to discuss and pray about the church's role in fighting trafficking; the Alliance began with five churches agreeing to join.



2015

GoBag Program began, where we collected and delivered bags filled with respite care items for survivors who were victims of trafficking recovered through the FBI's Operation Cross Country.



2014

Launched "Strategic Funding" for our partners and gave funding to three local partners: Redeemed, Rescue America, and Elijah Rising.



2016

Launched the City of Defenders Campaign leading up to the Super Bowl to address Demand and Pornography and held a Pastor's Luncheon asking pastors to use their influence from the pulpit to address the issue. At this luncheon the Captain of the Vice Division in Houston told the pastors how much the church in our city was needed to help address the problem of human trafficking.

2017

The Alliance grew to twelve churches strong and hired its first full-time employee; the Houston-based GoBox was launched and education classes for the church were piloted.



2020

Launched “The Church & Human Trafficking” Classes, formerly known as GoBox classes, which were moved online during the pandemic.



2023

Launched the national GoBox, with the goal of being a more interactive experience with a national reach. Expanded GoBag reach to assist with uptick in trafficking due to border crisis.



2019

Six GoBox classes took place throughout Houston; the Alliance grew to 16 churches.



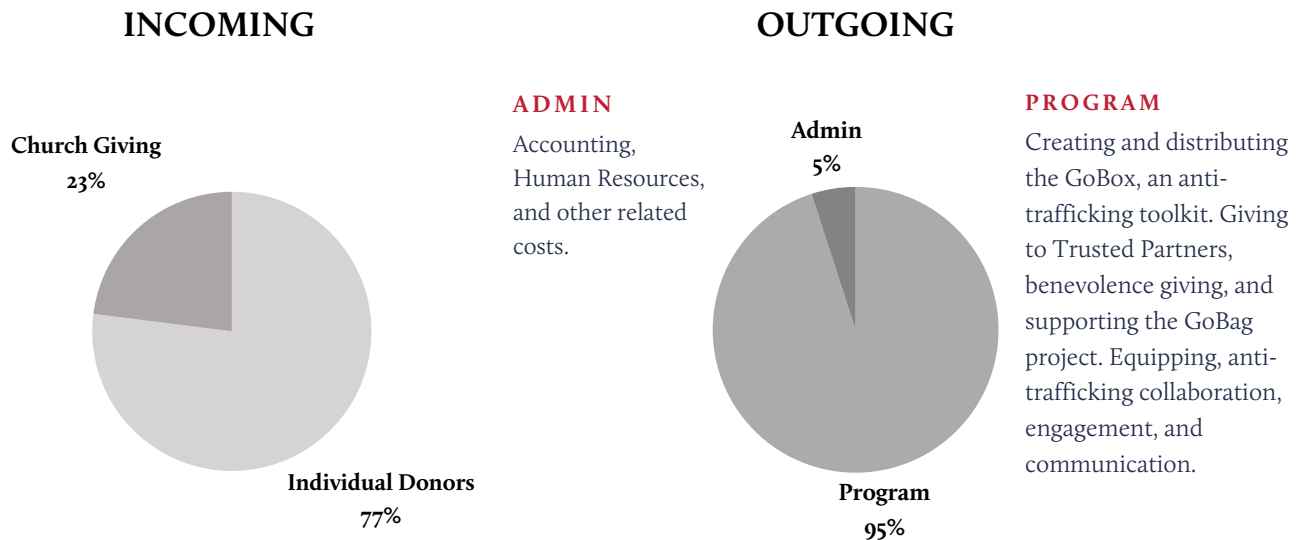
2021

The Alliance continued to grow church partnerships and collectively gave to the full spectrum of human trafficking efforts in Houston.



FINANCIALS IN REVIEW

By joining funds through collective giving, our finances can have a much greater, more sustainable impact. *Your dollars touch the full spectrum of anti-trafficking work: prevention, education, demand, intervention, aftercare, rehabilitation, and legal aid.*



In addition to supporting our Trusted Partners, here is one recent example of how Freedom Church Alliance is meeting ongoing needs for survivors;

Law enforcement made Freedom Church Alliance aware of a five-year trafficking investigation that led to shutting down a trafficking ring that had been running for over twenty years. This investigation *resulted in a major rescue mission in which eighteen survivors, including women and children, took part in the hearing to bring justice.* As a way to provide closure for these survivors, many of them were allowed to attend the sentencing hearing for their traffickers. *Through the help of our church partners and faithful donors, Freedom Church Alliance had the opportunity to fund the traveling expenses for six survivors to be present at the sentencing.*

STRONGER TOGETHER

We are the Body of Christ, actively fighting back against the darkness in Houston. **The church must rise up as a unified, connected body. Fragmented efforts are not enough.**

GIVEN IN 10 YEARS

\$850,000+

Since 2013, Freedom Church Alliance has had the joy of **strategically and prayerfully giving to our Trusted Partners who are collectively providing services to the full spectrum of anti-trafficking efforts.** In addition, we have fulfilled financial requests that have met immediate needs and helped provide support services for survivors.

GAVE

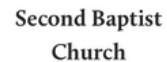
\$81,700

In 2023 through the collective giving of alliance churches along with generous donations, **we were able to give \$81,700 to Trusted Partner Organizations.** These funds go toward their frontline anti-trafficking efforts as they serve in areas of rescue, housing, life skills training, counseling, discipleship, street outreach, addressing demand, and meeting practical and critical needs for survivors.

CHURCHES

23

Freedom Church Alliance **added three new church partners** in 2023. We welcomed Fairfield Baptist Church, Gateway Church, and Crossroads Baptist Church to the Alliance.



GOBAG IMPACT

In 2015, the alliance reached out to various law-enforcement agencies fighting human trafficking to see how we could help. *They told us they tried to provide specific items every time they did a raid to bring a sense of dignity and comfort to the women they rescued.* We saw this as a great place for us to meet a tangible need. So, we put together our first GoBags with those items, and they were used in a raid a few days later. As word spreads, more organizations reach out to us, and the GoBag Project grows. Our Alliance churches and community volunteers continue to be actively engaged in our GoBag Project fulfilling needs for survivors and frontline organizations who are serving the vulnerable.

491 Over all, 491 GoBags were deployed for survivors.

281 281 Border Bags were packed and provided to survivors at the border and in shelters for unaccompanied minors.

210 210 GoBags were packed and provided to Trusted Partners, law enforcement, and organizations fighting human trafficking.

16 Alliance churches packed either GoBags or Border Bags.

NUMBERS:

This past year has been an unprecedented year for GoBags. With the border crisis creating an uptick in human trafficking, Freedom Church Alliance expanded our GoBag Project to reach survivors at our Texas border, calling these our “Border Bags.” *This expansion also included creating GoBags for children and inspired the idea to add bi-lingual Bibles to the bags.*

RECIPIENTS:

GoBags were provided to our Trusted Partners as well as organizations that we collaborate with including the *FBI, Houston PD, Children’s Assessment Center, YMCA, Women’s Center of Montgomery County, Humanitarian Respite Center, and Echo Ministries.*

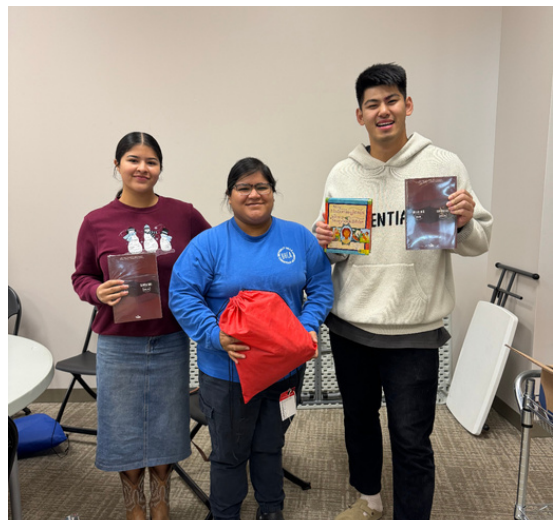
GOBAG RESULTS

One of our collaborative organizations shared that their trauma-informed clinicians sit with survivors, including children, who undergo medical exams after an assault. Their clothing is oftentimes kept for investigative purposes and these survivors leave the hospital in scrubs. This organization learned about the GoBags, and Freedom Church Alliance has been able to provide them with 150 GoBags just since learning of this need in October.

Through the Border Bag initiative, Border Bags were provided to a humanitarian center at the border that is serving survivors or those at risk of exploitation. Freedom Church Alliance also provided Border Bags to Echo Ministries, which is providing services and sharing the gospel with unaccompanied minors in Houston and at the border. Echo Ministries served nearly three thousand unaccompanied minors just over the Christmas season.

EXTENDING OUR REACH

Let me briefly shed light on the recipients. **We're heading to the Mexican and American border to share the gospel and deliver these much-needed GoBags to individuals in desperate need of love.** Many of them are facing incredibly challenging and hopeless situations and have endured unimaginable hardships. Your gift not only refreshes them **but also shows the love of God and offers hope through Jesus Christ.**



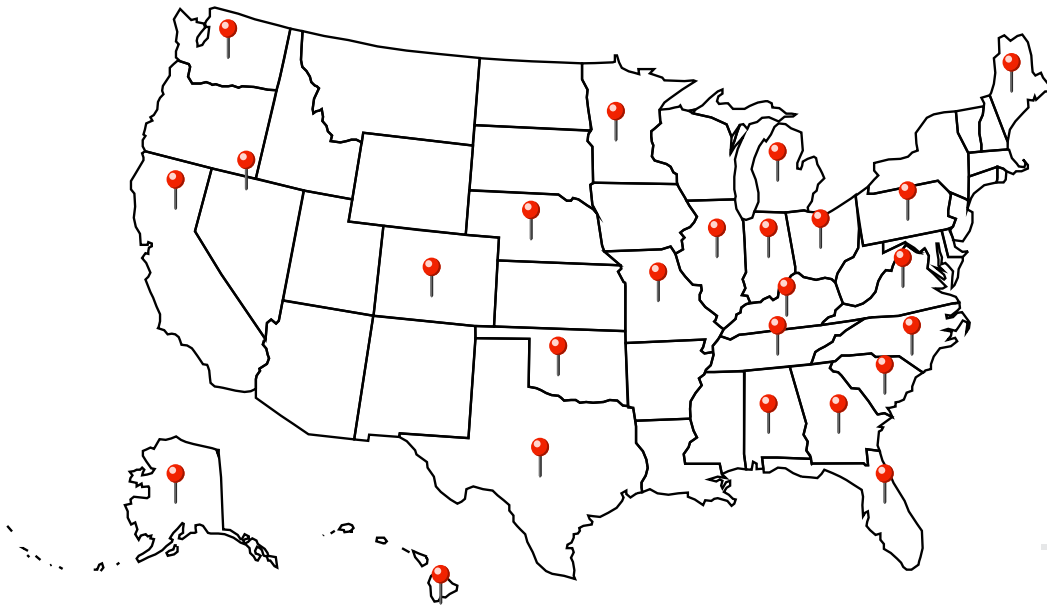
This year, we've worked with over five thousand teens in shelters for unaccompanied minors, representing countries such as Guatemala, Venezuela, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Cuba, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Haiti, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and the democratic republic of the Congo and others.

On behalf of people from around the world, thank you for embodying Christ's love. Please keep them in your prayers.

— Mateo with Echo Ministries

THE GOBOX

The GoBox is a tactile, immersive experience that gives churches and individuals everywhere a holistic education about trafficking and practical next steps for getting engaged.



THE GOBOX REACHED 25 STATES

“The content, the details, the photographs are done with survivors in mind who are worthy of something beautiful. The GoBox restores dignity to survivors.”

-Ruth, GoBox Participant

In January, 2023, we celebrated the launch of our new GoBox containing the book, The Fight for Freedom.

- **Reach**
 - GoBox 2.0 has already reached 1,122 households, churches, and organizations in over 20 states and several countries.
- **Train the Trainers**
 - Train the Trainers was launched out of the desire for churches to equip their leaders to provide education and awareness on the topic of human trafficking to mobilize the church to give and serve in anti-trafficking efforts. Several churches including Bayou City Fellowship, Gateway Church, Christ the King, and Fairfield Baptist have launched classes within their churches this year.
 - Churches use the new online leaders guide to take groups in their church through the material.

IMPACT QUOTES

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

On behalf of the entire team at Rescue America and the survivors that we serve, we are so grateful for our partnership with Freedom Church Alliance!

2023 was a record breaking year for us in so many ways. We saw 225 survivors exit the life and enter their healing journey. Part of the reason for this record breaking volume was our launch of 26 new Outreach Hub operations. **In 2023, our Outreach Hub partners called nearly 39,000 victims to share hope and love!**

None of this would have been possible without partners like FCA who come alongside and gird us in this fight! We need more organizations like them in the United States.

Adrian Olson, Chief Operating Officer
Rescue America

THE GOBOX

“The GoBox was an incredibly hope-filled tool that transformed our congregation. It exposed us to the difficult subject of human trafficking, and then it revealed ways to join with groups fighting to eradicate trafficking. Learning about ministries that were fighting the demand, educating the community, directly intervening, and helping in restorative efforts allowed people to get involved quickly. Our hearts were broken, and our church responded! Thanks for helping us to be more like Christ!”

Chris Harrison, Pastor at First Athens

CHURCH PERSPECTIVE


The Freedom Church Alliance has had such a monstrous, growing, and wide-reaching impact that those of us who were there in the early days can only lift our hands in praise. **God has done far more than anything we could have imagined.**

The impact of the Alliance on me is that, simply, I cannot know and do nothing. My involvement within the Alliance is born out of my knowledge of the atrocities of human trafficking. Furthermore, trafficking work has allowed my wife and me to be present and aware in our neighborhood.

That work has led me to make sure my church was involved and that people in our congregation took action as well. And now, we are involved in fighting alongside two frontline organizations.

Andrew Johnson, Pastor at Neartown Church





I immediately saw the potential of having a collective group of churches unified in the mission to fight trafficking in Jesus's name. I think there were six churches around the table in that first meeting, and that number continued to grow over the years.

*Coming together in agreement to learn, plan, prepare and, most of all, turn to the Lord in prayer is to invite the Lord into a fight that would otherwise be unwinnable. **That is the crucial role FCA contributes to the Houston anti-trafficking community.***

Joe Madison
Founder, Demand Disruption

*For me, the Alliance has been more than a ministry. **It's like-minded people whose hearts have been broken with the reality of this heinous sin and come together under the cross of Jesus and the mercy and grace of God to fight, pray, love, and encourage.** It has been a sanctuary and bulwark for me when other areas of my ministry were uncertain and tempestuous. It has been a continuous and true north, unchanging in goals and purpose when other directions were uncertain. It has been home.*

Scott Heitschusen
Pastor of LifeBridge Community Church

NOTE FROM A SURVIVOR



“My name is Sarah, and I’m not sure if you are the one who is in the Fight for Freedom book, but I wanted to send you an email about how your story has impacted me. **Through reading your story, I realized that I too am a survivor of familial trafficking.** My father trafficked me at an early age, and while I thought it was just sexual abuse, I realized through your story it wasn’t just sexual abuse. There is more of a name than sexual abuse that can be used to label the pain that happened to me, and that term is familial trafficking.

What I loved so much about your story is that it captured the pain that I’ve felt all these years that very few will ever understand except for those who have lived it. I have felt so alone all of these years. I have been stuck in self-harming and struggled with an eating disorder, and to be fully transparent, I found no purpose in life and daily contemplated suicide.

And then my friend gave me a GoBox, and I read your story.

I have a newfound hope that healing from this level of pain is possible and can lead to a beautiful life. You seem to be thriving. I made an appointment with a counselor and started doing EMDR to work through my trauma. **Thank you for showing us that this healing is possible. More than that, thank you for showing us that our God hates what happened to us so much that it cost Him His own Son to pay for the sin done to us.** Please never stop sharing your story. There are more out there like us. Your bravery is courageous.”

-Sarah, Survivor

We’ve given you dates and figures, and quotes from our partners, but this survivor’s testimony shows the purpose of our work lived out. **If you’re wondering what kind of personal impact your giving makes: this is it.** Thank you again for your support and partnership!





"Provide justice for the needy and the fatherless; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute. Rescue the poor and needy; save them from the hand of the wicked."

Psalm 82:3-4



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