



# *Kaitrin's Korner:*

## *A Letter from AWO Executive Director*

2023 has been a year of BUILDING on A Way Out's thirty-one-year foundation as we press into the Lord's vision for our future. We continue to conduct outreach twice a month to venues known for sexual exploitation and by years end will have shared over 2000 bags and roses with dancers in strip clubs and those being prostituted in motels and on the streets of Memphis. We've also prayed for over 70 people in vulnerable situations. The girls we're encountering are getting younger and younger and we've seen increased levels of control by pimps on the streets who are watching as we attempt to get a helpline number into their hands. We've helped several make the brave decision to exit the sex industry through our outreach efforts and we continue to build strong relationships with dancers, many of whom have been in the industry for years. Through consistency, we've built relationships with dancers, managers, and bouncers and prayers are now regular occurrences right in the strip club dressing rooms while tears are falling. Several have begun texting our helpline and we're praying for continued breakthroughs in their lives. We are incredibly thankful to all the churches, businesses, and individuals who have donated and made the bags and baked goods we share as a bridge to step into their world. We look forward to continuing to partner in 2024 to reach our city!

We also continue to provide residential care in Memphis' only completely Christ-centered trauma-informed residential program for human trafficking survivors built by our beloved Carol Wiley who went to be with the Lord this year. 10 women were served in our residential program this year so far, with two being in their 2nd year of sobriety and freedom from the sex industry! One is employed and one is applying for college and will also begin applying for employment. The 10 women served attended over 1500 hours of Bible-based classes and church attendance, received 1100 hours of services (mental health counseling, doctors' visits, etc.), and we've traveled over 5,800 miles transporting our beloved survivors in the residential program to appointments and through our outreach efforts! All this has equated to salvations, baptisms, and changed lives! What a joy to witness miracles every day!

As if all of this was not enough, we were honored to host 45 volunteers from 15 different states and Canada from Eight Days of Hope (EDOH) who came for 10 1/2 days and built our first facility at our campus. We had a land dedication with the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, local pastors, and leaders and also a groundbreaking ceremony with graduates, current women, and the CEO of EDOH. We're almost 99% complete with our first facility where our social enterprise businesses will hire the women in our program to make and sell products. We have so much to share about all God accomplished this year (including the beginning of equine interventions and our first annual Sporting Clays Tournament) and thought it best to give you a glimpse through pictures of all you have helped partner with us to accomplish to the glory of God!

A Way Out Ministries exists to combat sexual exploitation, inform citizens of the harms of pornography, and rescue and restore the exploited.



# Karen Found A Way Out

I was born into a dysfunctional, alcoholic, abusive, and addictive home. I suffered neglect and was left in charge of myself and my younger siblings much of the time. We moved around the United States throughout my childhood. At the age of 11, I was lured, abducted, raped, and released. This began a life of terror, darkness, lies, and secrets. Much to my shame I took refuge in a gang. I became promiscuous and ran away. I found myself being sexually assaulted, exploited, and a jaded young girl.

Looking for a way out of my dysfunctional home and succumbing to my first trafficker at the age of 15, I moved in with a man 10 years my senior, whom I later married at the age of 16. I became addicted to alcohol, cocaine, and marijuana. Realizing I had married into the cartel, I prayed for Jesus to save me. I became pregnant with my first child at 18. My sobriety was intermittent between pregnancies. I lived a life on the fence, having 3 more children. I desperately wanted out of the life I was in, dependent on pain pills and crack. As a mother of 4, I lost my husband and my father to drugs and alcohol related deaths within 2 years. Unable to care for myself or my children, I lost everything.

Addicted and broken, I was desperately seeking relief. I ended up being held hostage, kidnapped, and trafficked at gunpoint. Once again, I found myself in the same situation deeper and darker than before. I expected to die. I didn't want to live. I prayed I would die and that Jesus would save me. I've tried to do this on my own. I've tried to "fix" me. I've pretended well, tried to look the part, and acted the part. All to recreate my life. I failed over and over on my own.

Ever since I was rescued from my hopeless life of toxic coercion, depending on self, men, and this world, I have found A Way Out. Or I should say, A Way Out found me. Now I have new hope, new life, real help, real love, real family, and all my needs met. I have Christ. I am His beloved. My relationships are being restored. I am safe. I have a choice. I have a name. I am God's beloved. I am forgiven, I am redeemed.

*-Karen*

*We are so excited to report, Karen has applied to college and also the American Association of Christian Counselors Certified Mental Health Coach First Responder Training Program where she was accepted and received a \$2,400 scholarship!*





# Our Year in Pictures: each one worth a thousand words!



Land dedicated in January where our board, staff, pastors, and leaders prayed and put scripture under the foundation



Foundation Poured!



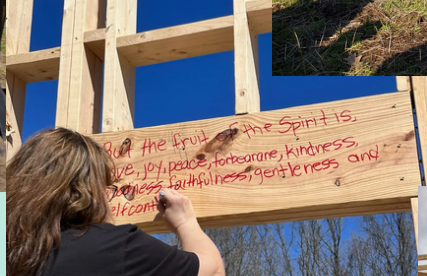
THANK YOU Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes CEO and community leaders!



THANK YOU Eight Days of Hope!



Groundbreaking and Scriptures written by survivors on framing



The end of FIRST DAY of building is to the left!!!



Our facility is called The Ark! Can you see why?

# MERRY & BRIGHT





5,000 foot workstation facility where women will be hired to make products in trauma informed environment



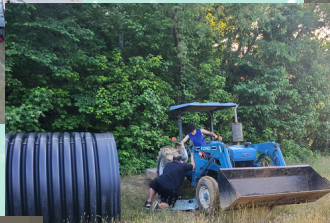
Above: septic was installed and well drilled



Above: we've hosted hundreds of teams at The Meadow who have volunteered hundreds of hours!



Prayer time below with women at The Meadow



2000 ft of road including culvert with 3000 tons of limestone donated by Fossett Paving!



Our ladies are so creative and crocheted so many beautiful items!



Roses and bags shared during outreach



Organizing our clothing closet!

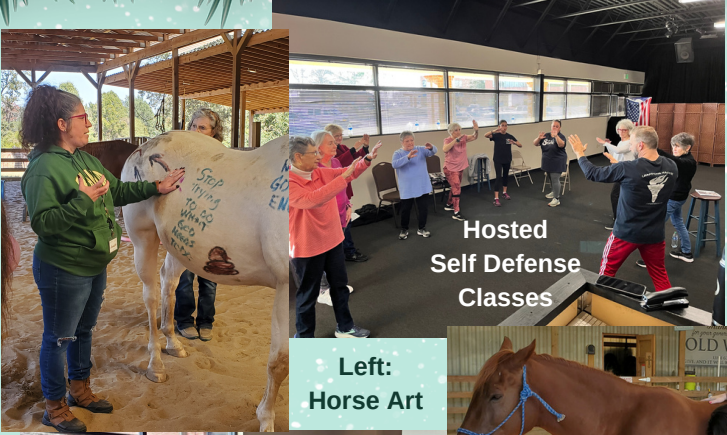


We are so grateful for the churches and businesses who sponsored and made outreach bags for dancers





2 baptisms in 2023!



Left: Horse Art



Hosted Self Defense Classes



Above: team certified in Faith Based Equine Assisted Learning that women experienced



First Annual Sporting Clays Tournament Fundraiser



Ladies went on a plethora of outings and fun activities and products sold at several markets this year.



Above: 2023 Staff Retreat! Level Book developed and implemented



Pastor Jeff after Painting



Aubrey and Mike working at the Meadow

# Volunteer Spotlight!

We truly have the best volunteers who make it possible for us to impact lives eternally. While it's hard to choose just a few, every year we like to honor several volunteers and this year we'd be remiss if we didn't highlight Pastor Jeff Gautney, Aubrey King, Mike Vanderford, Jerome Gilland and the entire Gateway Baptist Church. These men and their church have volunteered THOUSANDS of hours at our new campus including painting 5,000 square feet, installing our railing, doorknobs, bushhogging, and much, much more.

Aubrey and Mike do odds and ends for several hours every single day at The Meadow and we are eternally grateful. They have become like family and their church has truly adopted us. We were blessed to even host volunteers for a great serve day where they left our campus spotless and donated and made outreach bags that we gave to those being sexually exploited. THANK YOU!!!





A Way Out Ministries,  
formerly Citizens for Community Values of Memphis  
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*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year from  
A Way Out Ministries!*



*Therefore, the Lord himself will give you  
a sign: The virgin will conceive and give  
birth to a son and will call him*

*Immanuel.*

*-Isaiah 7:14*