



Freedom 8848 2024 in Review: Annual Report

August 2025

Contents:

Letter from Leadership:	2
Community and Educational Events:	3
Appreciation evening.....	3
Lanea Schroeder Fund.....	3
E-learning launch.....	3
Partner seminar: IJM Canada.....	4
Partner Seminar: HER Victory.....	4
Seminar: Ally Global Foundation.....	4
Everest Freedom Challenge	5
Impact	7
Decision to move towards independence	9
Change of leadership	10
Looking Ahead: Goals for 2025	10

Letter from Leadership:

Freedom 8848 celebrated our fifth anniversary in 2024. As we reflect on what we accomplished this past year, it seems appropriate to note how our organization has grown and matured since our initial start in 2020. Our mission to equip people to fight sex trafficking through awareness and fundraising has remained our cornerstone. This year we had the opportunity to host several educational seminars to the public to teach them about the problem of sex trafficking, what our partners are doing to fight it, and how they can also get involved. We also launched an online e-learning program to provide information to Everest Freedom Challenge climbers to equip them in their fundraising efforts. And for the first time the Everest Freedom Challenge sold out and was at maximum capacity with 30 eager participants raising funds for Her Victory and International Justice Mission. In the autumn we also made the decision to move forward in becoming an independent organization, parting ways with 4th Musketeer Canada. Our organizational leader Judd Lee also passed the torch to Rembrandt Vlasblom. These achievements demonstrate our ongoing growth and dedication to the fight for justice.

Our Mission: To equip people to fight sex trafficking through awareness and by fundraising to tangibly support our partner organizations.

Our Vision: To end sex trafficking in our world.

Community and Educational Events:

Appreciation evening

We began the year by organizing an appreciation evening for everyone who has been part of the groundswell since our official launch in February 2020. This was an opportunity to celebrate and honour everyone who has joined us in our efforts to fight against sex trafficking in our unique way by climbing mountains. We could not do what we do without partner organizations on the frontlines preventing trafficking, rescuing victims, and restoring survivors. We could not continue to support their vital work without climbers willing to advocate and fundraise for them, and climb thousands of steps to make a difference. The many volunteer crew members who transport climbers safely, cook for them, replenish their supplies, cheer them on and care for all their needs, guide and assist them on the mountains, and lead worship are also crucial for success and integral to the community of care that has developed around the Everest Freedom Challenge. We celebrated our community with a free dinner, musical entertainment, and multi-media presentation to thank them.

Lanea Schroeder Fund

This year we launched the Lanea Schroeder Fund to help cover the registration cost of up to three passionate Everest Freedom Challenge participants who couldn't afford the registration fee. Lanea Schroeder was a force to be reckoned with. Her strength was legendary and a sight to behold. She had a hard time not running up mountains, setting records that stand to this day, finishing all 9 peaks of 8848 in record time with a smile on her face.

As strong as Lanea was physically, it was her faith in God and her love for others that truly defined her. She was the first climber outside the core leadership team to sign up for the Everest Freedom Challenge. All we said was "Let's climb the equivalent of Everest to bring freedom to those trapped in trafficking" and she was there. If she could use her talents to help others she would, whether it was climbing mountains, leading snowshoe trips with survivors, or leading youth. If an opportunity to serve came her way, she took it.

Tragically, we lost Lanea in a mountaineering accident in 2022. Her loss leaves a massive hole in our community that will never be filled. We wanted to honour Lanea's memory by offering a bursary in her name to a climber who exemplifies her heart for God's children. The funds were given to three participants who wrote to us explaining their financial need and their interest in raising funds to help our partners fight sex trafficking.

E-learning launch

This year we launched an e-learning suite to equip Everest Freedom Challenge climbers prior to the event. Using Teachable, we put together a course that provides information about sex trafficking both in Canada and around the world, the work HER Victory and IJM are doing to

prevent trafficking, rescue victims, and restore survivors, tips and strategies for fundraising, and physical training information for the event. Participants had to complete the course before they were able to launch their Fundrazr campaigns to begin raising funds. We wanted to ensure they were knowledgeable in how they spoke about our partner organizations during their fundraising and were well-prepared for the Everest Freedom Challenge.

Partner seminar: IJM Canada

Robin Padanyi from IJM Canada led our partner seminar in April and it was well-attended. He is a fantastic speaker with a huge heart for justice and his passion certainly motivated those in attendance. He spoke about how IJM operates by restoring broken justice systems where the poor are oppressed so that not only are victims rescued from sex trafficking and perpetrators convicted, but many millions more are protected from potential exploitation as the justice system starts to function on its own. The first partner hike of the season also had an excellent turnout with past, current, and prospective climbers who all participated in meaningful conversations while enjoying the mountains.

Partner Seminar: HER Victory

Jacque Meyer the Founder and Executive Director of HER Victory (Healing, Exit, Restoration) and case worker Kateira lead the partner seminar in May. Those in attendance learned all about how HER Victory forms relationships with women in Calgary who are sexually exploited and trafficked, meeting them where they are at without judgement and helping them to exit. HER Victory is positioned along Calgary's last prostitution stroll and their resources include shower facilities, free clothing and toiletries, social workers and counsellors, and access to medical assistance. By attending to their basic needs the servant-hearted love of Christ is shown to these women so that they realize their worth and dignity.

Seminar: Ally Global Foundation

The June seminar was hosted by Ally Global Foundation, specifically their Makwa Dodem program founders who help to prevent sex trafficking in Canada by partnering with Indigenous communities. While we are financially supporting IJM Canada and HER Victory this year, we wanted to give Ally a platform to share their prevention work here in Canada. Makwa Dodem is an Indigenous-led initiative that partners with Indigenous community members to empower youth and help to prevent human trafficking. Although Indigenous females make up only 4% of Canada's female population, they make up 50% of reported cases of trafficking. Recognizing the unique needs in each Indigenous community, as well as the strength of their cultural values, resiliency, and identity, Makwa Dodem partners with community members to develop a prevention strategy unique to their context. The founders of Makwa Dodem, which means "Bear Clan" in Ojibwe, are proudly from the Bear Clan themselves and see the importance of including multi-generational partners, cultural values, and heritage in order to empower youth at risk with a sense of identity, worth, and value. As a fairly new organization, they shared about all they have accomplished in the past year and their goals for the future, and we are so excited to

cheer them on and see how God leads their work. They also shared about the work of their parent organization in Cambodia and Nepal, Ally Global Foundation, which is a Canadian organization working in the prevention and restoration space.

Everest Freedom Challenge

The Everest Freedom Challenge was held from August 14 - 18, 2024. This was our fifth annual Everest Freedom Challenge, and for the first time in our history we sold out our registration for 30 spots! Two climbers had to cancel for various reasons, but the remaining 28 raised a total of



\$170,185, the most we have raised so far in the history of the Everest Freedom Challenge.

Climbers ranged in age from 17 to over 70. Most were from Alberta, but we had some out of province climbers who traveled here from BC, Saskatchewan,

Manitoba, and Ontario. Despite rain, sleet, and even snow on some of the summits the morale and enthusiasm of the climbers could not be dimmed, with everyone achieving the peaks that they set out to do. We were thankful there were no injuries, although we had a physiotherapist, a medical doctor, firefighter, and a massage therapist on crew who were kept steady stabilizing

knees and ankles and ensuring everyone was in as good a shape as possible to keep pushing each new day.



We are incredibly thankful for each

member of our crew who volunteer their time and efforts to support the climbers and ensure they have everything they need. Roles that were filled include a logistics and safety coordinator, basecamp coordinator, several basecamp crew members keeping everyone fed with delicious hot meals, trailhead hosts, speaker hosts, a media team, worship leaders at camp, and shuttle drivers. Each of these crew members play a vital part in building the encouraging and celebratory atmosphere for climbers at the Everest Freedom Challenge. We are so grateful for their care and commitment.

We are thankful for Rafter 6 Ranch who hosted us at their group campsite for the Everest Freedom Challenge. It is an ideal location in Kananaskis for getting to our hikes early in the morning and a great home base for tired climbers to return to for dinner and worship later in the evening. Thank you Rafter 6!



This year
\$140,000 was
split equally
between IJM

Canada and HER Victory. This was raised by the 28 climbers and over 803 individual donors who sponsored them. Thank you everyone for your help to prevent trafficking, rescue victims,

and restore
survivors.





Impact

Our mission is to equip people to fight sex trafficking through awareness and by fundraising to tangibly support our partner organizations. Not everyone can work on the frontlines rescuing victims, convicting perpetrators, or walking with survivors in restoration and healing, but we can tangibly support those doing this difficult and holy work. Here is a summary of how our efforts this year through the Everest Freedom Challenge has helped our partners, in their own words:

A message from HER Victory:



Gratitude: With the help of partners like Freedom 8848, we have been able to expand our reach and continue supporting women on their journeys to healing and independence. Your climb truly makes a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Program Launch: In the coming year, we are thrilled to open our new community living program for women escaping exploitation. This initiative provides a safe place to heal, Christ-centered programming, trauma counseling, life skills training, and a supportive community to help women rebuild their lives. House name TBD - stay tuned!

Continued Impact: This year alone, we've had nearly 3,000 moments of care with women experiencing extreme hardship, offering basic needs, advocacy, and compassionate support through our onsite outreach. This includes:

- 2,586 women seeking help and assistance to outreach facility
- 2,489 care packages given out
- 465 women who received safe showers
- 549 exploited women received case management and addictions referrals
- 260 exploited women received assistance to shelters
- 38 women assisted in exiting the sex trade
- 233 exploited women connected with and assisted in prison
- 133 women received crisis/trauma counselling
- 207 women connected with who are currently working in illegal massage parlours
- 169 visits to illegal massage parlour

A message from IJM Canada



IJM

An IJM rescue mission in partnership with law enforcement costs an average of \$10,100 CAD equivalent. This is for the entirety of the operation including investigation, rescue, and follow up. On average, 2 - 4 children are rescued per operation. Therefore, to help visualize our tangible impact, in 2024 we helped to fund 7 IJM rescue operations and helped to free approximately 20 children out of sex trafficking.

Here are some further details from IJM Canada's work this year:

This past year, IJM has put an emphasis on pushing tech companies to implement software and other policies to help remove child sexual abuse material on their platforms. We need to stop this material from circulating so that survivors can live without the worst moments of their lives being shared online.

On the financial side, IJM has been working with financial regulators, like Canada's FINTRAC, to develop child sexual exploitation indicators to enhance detection, reporting, and disruption of this crime.

In November 2024, IJM digital investigator Bill Maddox presented at an Ontario Provincial Police conference about IJM's work fighting child exploitation. Two police officers came up to us afterwards to say they were working on cases that involved child victims in the Philippines and wanted to connect with IJM. We're praying for more connections between IJM and law enforcement here in Canada as we work together to protect children from this terrible crime.

Thank you, Freedom 8848, for joining us in that good work!



Here are some incredible measures of success as recorded in IJM Canada's Impact Report for the fiscal year of 2024:

- Rescued 10,569 children, women, and men from violence
- Restored 246 survivors to safety, stability, and strength
- Restrained 2,583 suspected perpetrators of violence
- Trained 44,333 justice system officials, NGO staff, and community members to recognize and respond to violence
- Convicted 3,222 traffickers and abusers in local courts

Decision to move towards independence

At our annual leadership retreat in November we reflected upon the year and discussed our goals for improvement moving forward. We determined that for the sake of our continued growth and maturity as an organization it was time to become independent of the 4th Musketeer. The origin of Freedom 8848 can be traced back to the 4th Musketeer's Xtreme Character Challenge (XCC). This is a 4 day wilderness adventure for men held in various locations around the world, in this case the Alberta Rockies. Here participants are challenged to live their faith to the fullest and fighting for Justice is integral to this. We are extremely grateful for the support 4M has provided over the years and we look forward to a continued close partnership in the fight for Justice in the future.

Change of leadership

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Judd Lee for leading our team since its inception as Freedom 8848's Site Coordinator. Judd has decided to step into another role with Freedom 8848 and has passed the torch to Rem Vlasblom, another founding member of Freedom 8848 who is well known for blessing the team with logistical abilities as the self-described "trail nerd" and his dry humour. We pray that both of these men continue to give of their talents and energy faithfully and joyfully to Freedom 8848's vision to end sex trafficking in our world.

Looking Ahead: Goals for 2025

- Increase fundraising targets and participant capacity for the Everest Freedom Challenge.
- Expand e-learning and seminar offerings to the wider public, further educating people about sex trafficking.
- Deepen our relationships with partner organizations to support them in any further areas they may need.
- Strengthen our support for survivors—locally and globally—via strategic collaboration.

Thank you to all supporters, partners, climbers, and volunteers for making 2024 such an impactful year. Together, we are moving closer to a world free from trafficking and exploitation.