

CONVERSION PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT: Heartlight Ministries in TX  
By Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE (<https://www.cope.church> ) Dated: 2/9/22

The HEAL Mission of COPE has received 24 separate complaints from individuals and families alleging coercive thought reform, labor trafficking (forced uncompensated labor under duress/threat of punishment), held incommunicado (censored/restricted/monitored mail/communications with outside world), humiliation, one survivor reported to the HEAL Mission via e-mail “I suppose I should start from the beginning. I was admitted to Heartlight against my will at age 15 because I was flunking out of school due to depression because of molestation from my stepfather. The first house they put me in was called South House. The first thing I noticed is that the staff members weren't much older than the residents. They showed cruel favoritisms and even hazed us one night by blindfolding us, walking us through the property, and smashing all kinds of food (eggs, breadcrumbs, etc.) in our faces and hair. This might not sound like a significant complaint, but I was in a situation where I was being bullied by other residents and had nowhere to turn to because I was being bullied by staff. Another resident was especially targeted as well. Staff and residents alike would sabotage our chores and hide things in our belongings so that whatever privileges we had to look forward to, were taken away and we would be forced to do manual labor in orange jumpsuits as if we were prisoners,” unprofessional staff/leadership, one parent reported via e-mail to the HEAL Mission “I Just went got my 14 year old daughter from Heartlight Ministries in Hallsville, TX. The two months she was there was one disaster after another at the cost of \$23,000. The program is built on smoke and mirrors. If you would like information on our experience please feel free to contact me. I have a very interesting recording from Mark Gregton the founder from a phone call I had with him when asking why horror movies were being shown, why my daughter wasn't attending school yet, why she wasn't being counseled by a licensed therapist etc. etc. i was met with condescending remarks . They are so unprofessional,” ineffective, another parent reported via e-mail to the HEAL Mission “Our son spent 18 months at Heartlight, the program was totally ineffective. We noticed that quite a few parents "Pulled" their kids from the program far earlier than the plan called for. We were never sure why. Were there things going on there we need to know about? We spoke to him via phone each week and he never mentioned any abuse. Before he went to Heartlight we established a 'code word' that he was to mention if they were abusing him, he never mentioned the word and has not said that anything bad happened to him since he has returned home. Since he left Heartlight, he has experimented with drugs and alcohol, flunked out of High School. Has more issues now than before he went there,” false advertising/fraud, abuse, sexual orientation conversion therapy, and bullying at Heartlight Ministries. Some of these complaints are referenced online and others remain confidential and on file with the church. With the intention of providing an opportunity for closure, clarification, and potentially peace, on 2/1/22 Rev. Angela Smith invited Heartlight Ministries victims (families and survivors) as well as staff whistleblowers to provide a guest sermon. That invitation read thus:

"Dear Heartlight Ministries Survivors and Families,

Heartlight Ministries is on the HEAL Mission watch-list (of fraudulent and abusive

programs) and enrolled in the COPE Conversion Program based on your reports to the HEAL Mission alleging fraud, abuse, and/or other violations. You can learn more or refresh your memory at <https://www.heal-online.org/thelist.htm> and/or <https://www.heal-online.org/heartlight.htm> .

The HEAL Mission and COPE Conversion Program (for Conversion Programs) has updated our protocols to provide entities populating the watch-list and/or enrolled in the COPE Conversion Program three ways off the watch-list or out of the program. Death and/or closure remains one way after which they will be buried at <http://www.beyondbusiness.net/youarenext.htm> with the others who didn't make it off the list or reform in time. Programs enrolled in the COPE Conversion Program/placed on the watch-list are also eligible for graduation if they meet the minimum Honesty In Marketing Standards described and/or provided via hypertext link at <https://www.cope.church/standards.htm> . The third option is merciful release. Merciful releases are determined by date of last directly reported to the HEAL Mission complaint (date of incident(s) of abuse), whether those incidents occurred prior to when by custom or law the requirement to retain such records has expired, and whether Sponsors (you) are actively participating or maintaining interest in holding your program accountable.

The most recent complaint the mission received on Heartlight Ministries occurred in 2017 (if you were abused later than that then you did not include the dates of your enrollment when you contacted the HEAL Mission). The custom is to retain such records for 10 years in Texas. So, the requirements for merciful release have not been met. This is an invitation for you to provide a guest sermon no later than Wednesday, February 9th, 2022 at 8pm Pacific if you believe Heartlight Ministries should remain on the watch-list beyond December 31st, 2027 (a progress report will be posted in lieu of a guest sermon beginning February 9th, 2022 through December 31st, 2027 if a guest sermon is not provided by the deadline). For sermons (including guest sermons), see <https://www.cope.church/sermons.htm> and for progress reports see <https://www.heal-online.org> . Here's how to participate:

1. In the body of an e-mail message write out your complete sermon and include answers to the following questions:

Did you report fraud or other unlawful actions to the proper authorities? If not, why? If so, what happened with the reports? (So, 2 part question)

Why do you believe Heartlight Ministries should remain enrolled in the COPE Conversion Program?

2. Send that guest sermon to me at [rev@cope.church](mailto:rev@cope.church) with your first and last name (full) and notify me if you wish for your contact information to be included or for all feedback to be handled by the mission and/or church. Your full first and last name will be shared along with your sermon as written and provided by you. It will be posted as a Guest Sermon at <https://www.heal-online.org> , <https://www.heal-online.org/heartlight.htm> , and <https://www.cope.church/sermons.htm> .

If no one provides a guest sermon and there are no new complaints received by the HEAL Mission of COPE by December 31st, 2027, Heartlight Ministries will be mercifully released.

Thank you in advance for participating. And, please learn more about how to value your contributions at <https://www.cope.church/givetoday.pdf>.

In Solidarity,

Rev. Angela Smith  
HEAL Mission National Coordinator/Founding Mother of COPE"

Now, there was a vote on whether Heartlight Ministries should remain on the watch-list initiated on April 7th, 2020 where all Sponsors of that program's placement in the COPE Conversion Program were invited to participate. The majority voted against merciful release or the equivalent at that time. HEAL Mission and the COPE Conversion Program recognize participation in the vote in April as recent enough participation even if Sponsors prefer more time to consider, write, and/or provide any guest sermon. While we understand this may be disappointing for Heartlight Ministries, it is the hope that this progress report helps explain the reasons for the continued enrollment/placement in the COPE Conversion Program. Additional or continued participation by Sponsors, including providing guest sermons or participating in future votes will impact whether or not the program qualifies for merciful release or remains enrolled. Lack of participation by Sponsors where all other criteria for merciful release are met, will result in merciful release of the program.

Similar invitations will be going out to all survivor/victim/whistleblower e-mail lists and their respective programs placed on the watch-list. It may take some time to get through the entire list especially if enrollments pick up. But, we are working on it and everyone can submit Feedback at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> at any time regardless of position regarding program placement or enrollment.

To close, I remind everyone that there are remedies at law. Labor trafficking, rape, fraud (misleading marketing/false advertising), false imprisonment, kidnapping, battery, assault, and any crime or tort you could name are actionable at law. The HEAL Mission of COPE is prepared to assist all victims by providing reporting resources and information for the sake of justice and we appreciate all Sponsors who selflessly contribute content for the sake of informing the public to help those exercising due diligence avoid becoming a victim. Reporting Guide Available at: <https://www.heal-online.org/report.htm> and <https://www.heal-online.org/heartlight.htm> .