

# Church Action Guide

## Fairtrade Fortnight 6-19 March 2006 and Beyond

### MAKE FAIRTRADE YOUR HABIT

Fairtrade Fortnight is an opportunity to remind everyone in our churches about Fairtrade. Buying Fairtrade products is a commitment everyone can make to challenge unfair international trading rules. **50% of shoppers now recognise the FAIRTRADE Mark** and with the increased awareness of issues surrounding trade, aid and debt following Make Poverty History, 2006 is an ideal opportunity to tell consumers of what Fairtrade means to the 5 million people – farmers, workers and their families – who benefit from Fairtrade. This is why the theme for Fairtrade Fortnight 2006 is **MAKE FAIRTRADE YOUR HABIT**. We want everyone to regularly buy a range of Fairtrade products and adopt a **Fairtrade lifestyle** in order to bring even greater benefits to farmers and workers around the world.



A growing number of churches are making the connection between trade and poverty and committing to use Fairtrade items including tea, coffee, sugar and biscuits. Buying products with the FAIRTRADE Mark:

- Guarantees farmers a fair and stable price for their products
- Guarantees extra income for farmers and estate workers to improve their lives
- Guarantees a greater respect for the environment
- Guarantees farmers a stronger position in world markets
- Guarantees a closer link between consumers and producers.



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**'Bringing Hope and Justice'**

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in 2006 and Beyond!**

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to MAKE FAIRTRADE YOUR HABIT**

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# Bringing Hope and Justice



## For Coffee Growers

Fairtrade guarantees a better deal for smallholder coffee growers who struggle with fluctuating world coffee prices often below the cost of production resulting in an unstable market without a guaranteed income. Victor Perezgrovas, General Manager of Union Majomut coffee co-operative in Mexico, says:

*"It is difficult to survive in the neo-liberal model but Fairtrade has given us the capacity to work within this system... The minimum price has covered costs of production and allowed us a dignified life. It has helped us invest in other areas such as organic so we can get a higher income. It has given us the opportunity to get finance where previously we were unable. As we are small farmers who are organised and thinking about the future, the social premium has enabled us to invest in social programmes."*

Fairtrade presents a positive alternative for coffee co-operatives. Every Fairtrade product bought provides producers with a sustainable and stable income.

*"Fairtrade is a different relationship between producers and consumers who are both looking for a long term relationship. We are committed to providing products of the best quality – total integrated quality which also covers the quality of the environment and the quality of life for smallholders,"* says Victor.



## For Tea Farmers

Fairtrade tea farmers who are members of the Small Organic Farmers' Association (SOFA) in Sri Lanka now receive a stable income as well as a social premium that they can use on community projects.

Mr Wijethilleke is a tea and spice farmer and member of SOFA. Before Fairtrade, he struggled to make an income from underproductive tea bushes and small enterprises such as poultry farming. It was hard to gain enough money to keep his four children in school or pay for health care. But things have improved since SOFA started selling to Fairtrade seven years ago. Through his role on the committee that decides how to spend the social premium, he is empowered to make decisions that benefit the whole community. For example, he is proud of the computer training project which will give young people a better chance of finding a good job.

SOFA is now training farmers to diversify into other export crops such as peppercorns, vanilla and cloves. The income from Fairtrade provides small loans to help farmers establish these projects. The Fairtrade social premium is also used to provide expensive agricultural tools such as forks, hoes and pruning knives.

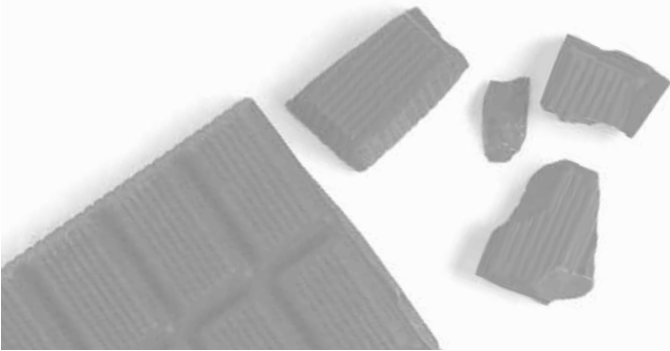
Selling to the Fairtrade market means that Mr Wijethilleke and other farmers have a stable income and can plan for the future in difficult times where unemployment is rising and markets are unstable. He hopes Fairtrade will be able to fund more training programmes, particularly for young people, in the future.



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# Making Poverty History in 2006 and Beyond!

The 2005 Make Poverty History Campaign focused attention on the key issues of trade, aid and debt in a momentous year when Britain hosted both the G8 Ministerial Meeting and the EU Presidency. UK campaigners united with hundreds of thousands across the world to demand justice for the world's poor. As a founding member of the Trade Justice Movement and Make Poverty History, the Fairtrade Foundation believes that both the scale of public concern and the dramatic growth in sales of Fairtrade products are sending a strong message to governments to put trade justice at the heart of trade negotiations and policies. Steps were made in 2005 – but it is still not enough. We must continue to buy Fairtrade and pass on the Fairtrade habit to others in our churches and communities, in order to benefit more and more producers – paying them a fair price, allowing them to invest in their communities and giving them a stronger voice in world markets. The poor of the world do not need charity, they need justice. Fairtrade enables producers to lift themselves out of poverty. This is just part of the solution. Campaigning for trade justice is the further step we need to take:

- **Go to [www.tjm.org.uk](http://www.tjm.org.uk) to take action with members of the Trade Justice Movement**
- **Send a letter to your MP protesting about the unfairness of trade rules. See [www.tjm.org.uk](http://www.tjm.org.uk) for ideas**
- **Request a speaker to talk about Fairtrade and trade justice or find out about becoming a speaker yourself by contacting Traidcraft's Speaker Scheme - [www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources\\_speakers.htm](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources_speakers.htm).**

## Worship Ideas

### Readings

On building good lifestyle habits – Philippians 4:8-9

On responding to injustice – Proverbs 31:8-9, Isaiah 58:6-7, Micah 6:8, Zechariah 7:9, James 2:15-16

### Further Ideas:

- **Organise a church service with a Fairtrade or trade justice theme. Ask someone in your congregation or from a charity or organisation that you support to give a talk, perhaps based on the reflections on page 4**
- **Perform a drama or sketch to illustrate unfairness in trade and how Fairtrade helps. CAFOD, Christian Aid, Tearfund and Traidcraft have some useful resources**
- **Introduce songs and hymns with the theme of justice**
- **Attach symbols such as packaging of Fairtrade products or pictures of producers onto a world map and pray for the countries and people involved in Fairtrade.**

### Prayers

Where our habits have reflected our sin and not your love,

*Have mercy, Lord - forgive us our sins.*

Where we seek help to form habits that conform to your ways,

*Grant us grace, Lord - your will be done.*

Where new habits of righteousness transform unjust structures,

*We praise you, Lord - your kingdom come!*

*Source: Christian Concern for One World.*

Grant us, Lord God, a vision of our land as your love would make it:

– a land where the weak are protected, and none go hungry or poor;

– a land where the benefits of civilised life are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;

– a land where different races and cultures live in tolerance and mutual respect;

– a land where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.

And give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

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For more ideas see: [www.fairtrade.org.uk/get\\_involved\\_ideas\\_for\\_churches.htm](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get_involved_ideas_for_churches.htm).

# Readings and Reflections

## First Sunday of Fortnight

- *Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16*: God promises the seemingly impossible to Abraham
- *Psalms 22:23-end*: Praise for the Lord who hears the cry of the poor
- *Romans 4:13-end*: Abraham's faith: 'Hoping against hope, he believed...' (v18)
- *Mark 8:31-end*: Jesus' way will challenge established powers. Following Jesus requires tough choices but is the way to life.

'Faith is trusting in spite of the evidence and then watching the evidence change,' writes Jim Wallis ('Faith Works – Lessons on Spirituality and Social Action' SPCK).

Reversal of expectation, commitment, choice and the fact that faith and action go together are themes running through these readings. Following Jesus is costly yet, in God's curious economy giving is receiving and blessing comes in the most unlikely circumstances.

The Fairtrade story echoes these truths: an alternative trading system which blesses both producer and consumer, challenges the status quo and which has grown dramatically from the seed of an idea, a hope, to become an established, major reality – a growth achieved by individuals believing, making choices and taking action.

## Second Sunday of Fortnight

- *Exodus 20:1-17*: The Ten Commandments
- *Psalms 19 or 19:7-end*: The law is meant to bless
- *1 Corinthians 1:18-25*: Christ turns everything upside down. God chooses ordinary people to change the world
- *John 2:13-22*: Jesus drives out the money changers who desecrate what is holy in exploitative control of the market and pursuit of profit.

The commandments would be a source of blessing today if their call to respect life and personhood were taken seriously. Instead, economic dogma is pursued regardless of the consequences to poor people, seen in the forcing of free trade on poor countries as a condition of aid or debt relief. Unfair trade rules rob people of both dignity and livelihood and the earth is exploited and worked to exhaustion. But there is an alternative. Fairtrade restores dignity and respects both people and the environment; the campaign for trade justice aims to enshrine these principles in new trade rules. Anger is not often seen as a virtue, but it can signal that something is wrong and act as a spur to corrective action. In God's upside down kingdom it is ordinary people who are the movers and shakers – our choices and our actions can change the world.

*Source: Elizabeth Perry, World Development Representative, Bath and Wells Diocese*

## Further Actions to

# MAKE FAIRTRADE YOUR HABIT

- Have you become a Fairtrade Church yet? See [www.fairtrade.org.uk/get\\_involved\\_church.htm](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get_involved_church.htm) for details
- Organise an event to promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight: see the Fairtrade Fortnight Action Guide and [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) for more ideas. Use your church notice board to promote Fairtrade and Fairtrade Fortnight
- Encourage all external users of your church facilities to use Fairtrade products. Ensure that all groups understand the reasons why you have chosen to offer products with the FAIRTRADE Mark
- Increase the range of Fairtrade goods that you use in your church. Did you know that Fairtrade sugar now comes in convenient individual sachets. Source them from [www.traidcraftshop.co.uk](http://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk)
- Encourage people to make dishes from Fairtrade products when there are events such as "Bring and Share" meals. There are now over 1,000 Fairtrade products available through retail and catering outlets so there are plenty to choose from. Check out the Fairtrade Foundation's website for a full list: [www.fairtrade.org.uk/products.htm](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/products.htm)
- Promote Fairtrade at your Churches Together meetings to encourage other churches to be involved in Fairtrade
- Offer to serve Fairtrade tea and coffee in local community groups such as Mother and Toddler Groups, uniformed organisations (e.g. Brownies, Scouts) and school Parent Teacher Association events
- Work towards becoming a Fairtrade Diocese, District, Synod etc. Goals and suggestions can be downloaded from the Fairtrade website: [www.fairtrade.org.uk/get\\_involved\\_church.htm](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get_involved_church.htm).

## Contact us:

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Tel: 020 7440 7676. [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)

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