Fair Trade:  
Commerce with a Conscience

Bringing Together the Core Concepts of Social Justice:  
* respect for human dignity  
* environmental sustainability  
* a way out of poverty  
* promotion of the common good  
* global solidarity

TO: Pastors and Staffs of La Mesa Churches  
FROM: La Mesa Fair Trade Steering Committee  
RE: Promotion and Support

We are appealing to faith-based communities to get involved in the Fair Trade movement by spreading the word among local congregations that Fair Trade is about economic justice, human rights, and responsible stewardship of the earth. All that is asked is that consumers purchase and use products that carry the fair trade certified label.

In doing so, we are enabling the marginalized and vulnerable in impoverished areas of the world to better their lives and to become self-sustaining. Fair Trade standards include fair prices paid to producers, fair wages for workers, strict environmental criteria, and support for community development.

We are asking that you and your staff consider informing your congregation about Fair Trade. In addition, it would benefit the promotion of Fair Trade if certified coffee could be served at your functions. Fair Trade coffee can be purchased through local stores such as Sprouts, Target, Costco, Trader Joe’s, Vons and more.

Information is enclosed which highlights the advantages of Fair Trade as a way to alleviate poverty, human trafficking and bring about a more just society. Your review of the material would be very much appreciated.

We thank you, in advance, for giving your attention to this important matter. Please contact us if you have questions and/or if you would like us to meet with you.

Contact Information:  
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TAKE SLAVERY OUT OF SHOPPING

The relationship between our everyday purchases and modern day slavery seems improbable. But the connection is very real. It just remains hidden from public view.

In poor regions of the world impoverished families are targeted by traffickers with promises of a better life for their children. Unsuspecting parents give up sons and daughters who end up in forced and abusive work situations on farms, factories and brothels.

A look inside the chocolate industry illustrates the problem. Cocoa beans, from which chocolate is manufactured, are encased in heavy pods that hang from trees. Their harvest is back-breaking work for adults; brutal for children. Yet 284,000 children, 64% of whom are under 14 years, work in forced and abusive conditions on cocoa farms in West Africa. An investigative report details 13 hour work days on the plantation – filled with harsh physical labor, punctuated by beatings, and ending with a night of fitful sleep on a wooden plank in a locked room filled with other slaves. Most of the 15 billion dollars of chocolate that we consume in the United States each year is tainted with this forced and abusive child labor.

Parallel stories of both child and adult exploitation are found in the supply chains of coffee, tea, sugar, bananas, jewelry, clothing, and the list goes on.

But it doesn’t have to be this way. Fair Trade, the business model that monitors and assures that small producers are treated with dignity, is changing the lives and futures of millions of small farmers, producers and their children.

Fair Trade confronts poverty and trafficking in three ways.

Prevention. Assuring decent wages for parents, along with funds set aside for community development (schools, clinics and the like), Fair Trade stands as a powerful antidote to the lure of a ‘better life elsewhere’ that is held out by traffickers.

Enforcement Fair Trade certification is sought by businesses wanting to maintain market share. This certification is given for a product only if a business cleans up its act and enforces policies that eliminate forced or abusive labor in the supply chain.

Rehabilitation. Fair Trade Cooperatives provide safe haven and dignified work to victims rescued from brothels and other situations of exploitation.

Thanks to informed consumers, Fair Trade is the fastest growing segment of the retail economy. We have the ability to break the chains - simply by relentlessly pursuing Fair Trade at every opportunity.

ASK FOR FAIR TRADE. BUY FAIR TRADE.

YOUR GUARENTEE THAT IT’S FAIR TRADE & SLAVE FREE
ABOUT FAIR TRADE

Fair Trade is a sustainable business model that incorporates principles that respect small producers and protect the environment. By contrast, “business-as-usual”, in a quest to maximize profit at any cost, often engages in practices that exploit workers and the planet. Fair Trade defends the dignity of workers, combats poverty and preserves nature. Fair Trade gives consumers an opportunity to live in solidarity with farmers and small producers throughout the world.

FAIR TRADE PRINCIPLES

✓ Fair prices and wages for farmers and workers.
✓ Safe working and living conditions
✓ Environmentally sustainable practices
✓ Investments in the local community
✓ Gender equality
✓ No forced of abusive labor (child or adult)

When a product meets these standards, as verified by independent inspections, a Fair Trade Certified logo is placed on the package. Over 1,000 products now carry a Fair Trade logo.

YOUR GUARANTEED THAT IT’S FAIR TRADE

Fair Trade is endorsed as a means for sustainable development (it’s not a hand out) by Catholic Relief Services, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops and by all major religions in the United States.

People of good will have made Fair Trade the fastest growing segment of the US economy.

More information:  crsfairtrade.org
                            fairtradeusa.org
                            fairtradeamerica.org
Fair Trade Campaigns is excited to announce Fair Trade Congregations, a recognition for congregations and other communities across religious faiths who demonstrate a commitment to Fair Trade. In our globally connected world, equitable stewardship of the planet and its resources, economic justice and fair treatment of those less fortunate are an extension of our worship and relationship to God.

Fair Trade Campaigns is a diverse group of inspired activists, socially responsible businesses and communities of faith. We are committed to raising awareness among our fellow community members that decisions about where we spend our dollars have ramifications that echo across continents, countries, and communities. By initiating a system of recognition for congregations, we seek to engage communities that have been at the forefront of the Fair Trade movement since its inception – communities of faith.

To be recognized as a Fair Trade Congregation in the U.S., the following criteria need to be fulfilled:

- Incorporate Fair Trade into the social teachings of the congregation. From drawing parallels to scripture and teachings to demonstrating how Fair Trade ties into the core values of your faith, educate members of the congregation as to how purchasing Fair Trade empowers them to live their religious tradition. Use the multitude of pre-existing resources from many religious traditions, or develop the method that best speaks to your congregation.
- Replace goods purchased by the congregation with Fair Trade products where and when they are available. Consider both food and beverage items like coffee, tea, and sugar, communion wine, kosher products, as well as artisan and craft products such as tea pots, kitchen items, worship vestments, decorative items and others.
- Incorporate Fair Trade products into any pre-existing events (such as holiday sales and festivals) or organize public events during Fair Trade Month (October) and on or around World Fair Trade Day (mid-May). By reaching outside of the congregation to the larger community you are able to inspire and motivate other consumers to make a difference!

To get started making your congregation a Fair Trade Congregation, contact Billy Linstead Goldsmith, National Coordinator, Fair Trade Campaigns at: blinsteadgoldsmith@fairtradetownsusa.org or 267-886-9990. More resources are available at www.FairTradeTownsUSA.org/organize/resources/.
As described in the document titled, ‘Fair Trade Congregations Fact Sheet’, a Fair Trade Congregation campaign is meant to drive awareness and understanding of Fair Trade into the spiritual and community fabric of a place of worship. In addition, it is important to provide members of the congregation’s community the opportunity to make a difference with their purchases by providing Fair Trade products. There are three goals that a congregation must achieve to be designated as a Fair Trade Congregation as outlined below. Upon earning Fair Trade status, a congregation is required to submit a report at the end of each year summarizing the activities and efforts made that year in order to maintain their status as a Fair Trade Congregation.

1. Incorporate Fair Trade into the social teachings of the congregation

From drawing parallels to scripture and teachings, to demonstrating how Fair Trade ties into the core values of your faith, the first goal is to educate members of the congregation about how purchasing Fair Trade empowers them to live out their religious tradition. Use the multitude of pre-existing resources from many religious traditions, or develop the method that best speaks to your congregation.

**Getting Started:** Begin by looking into how you and others feel that Fair Trade expresses your faith and values. If you have already spoken to, and gotten interest from leaders in the congregation, that is great. If not, thinking about it ahead of time makes it easy to have the conversation. Consider the different ways in which you can meet this goal. Is there a Sunday school equivalent at your place of worship that could enable the children in the congregation to learn about Fair Trade? Is there a time of year when the inclusion of Fair Trade in a sermon could be particularly meaningful? Many faith communities have an adult forum or speaker opportunities. Fair trade can also be lifted up in discussions of related issues: human trafficking, immigration, human rights, and poverty. These are just some ideas among many that you can find on our resources page. The minimum number of activities to complete this goal is **two with two per year** required thereafter.
Pointers: When getting started, it is a great idea to form a team. These campaigns can be done by one person, but as the goal is to reach the entire congregation and beyond, work to bring more people into the effort. Many congregations have a ‘social justice committee’. Others have a few people who help coordinate events, or curriculum for youth. These are all great people to engage within the congregation who may be excited to work on Fair Trade.

Have Fun: Don’t be afraid to get creative with sharing your vision and inspiration! A great way to get others interested is to host a coffee or chocolate tasting, or a film screening. Think about how you can bring Fair Trade to others in the congregation in a way that gets them excited about the effort!

2. Replace goods purchased by the congregation with Fair Trade products where and when they are available

Consider both food and beverage items like coffee, tea, sugar, communion wine and kosher chocolate, as well as artisan and craft products such as teapots, kitchen items, worship vestments, decorative items and others.

Getting Started: The first step in getting Fair Trade products into the congregation is to understand what is purchased. Look to the administrative staff and the congregation’s leadership to help collect that information. Many congregations serve coffee and teas with sugar after services. Others have cookies, candy bars and other sweets. Once you know what the products are, the next step is to identify alternatives that are competitively priced. There are links on the resources page to help with that. In addition, look to what is being used to serve these products. Many of the members of the Fair Trade Federation have Fair Trade, handcrafted tea sets, cups, mugs, linens and other artisan products that are both beautiful and make a huge difference in the lives of those who produce them. Make sure that there are ways for members of the congregation to know that what is being served is Fair Trade. Use signs to point out the commitment of the congregation. The minimum number of products is two with a goal of adding more each year.

Pointers: There are many ways that organizations in the Fair Trade movement have worked with communities of faith over the years. Many companies and organizations have special Fair Trade programs that help link congregations with products at a discount. Others have their own, branded coffees or other products from the national level. For example, Catholic Relief Services has their own coffee that can be sourced by communities of faith. These organizations and companies can be great resources in your effort.

Have Fun: There are really great ways to get the congregation excited about these products. In the ‘Pointers’ section above, signs are mentioned. This can be a great, fun activity for anyone of any age in the congregation. Use downloaded images, create signs of your own and think about how you can tell the story of the products. You can also make selecting the new products a fun experience. Hold a tasting of several different coffees, teas, chocolates, etc. and have the participants vote on their favorite. Use that vote as the way to decide on which to order.
3. Incorporate Fair Trade products into any pre-existing events

Events are a big part of most congregations (such as holiday sales and festivals). There are also opportunities to organize public events during Fair Trade Month (October) and on or around World Fair Trade Day (mid-May). By reaching outside of the congregation to the larger community you are able to inspire and motivate other consumers to make a difference!

**Getting Started:** Look at the calendar of events for your congregation and determine which could naturally fit Fair Trade in as a component. Many congregations hold holiday sales, fundraisers, participate in festivals, etc. Try to start by picking one or two and meet with the person or group organizing it. Start by offering to help and explaining how you would like to see Fair Trade included. For fundraisers, just like ordering products for internal use, there are many organizations and companies who offer Fair Trade certified products as fundraisers. Unfortunately, it is difficult to verify that much of the chocolate sold in mainstream fundraisers was not picked by forced labor or child labor. Bake sales are common as well with congregations. Use Fair Trade ingredients like chocolate or sugar and make sure that those who are supporting you by purchasing these delicious treats know that they are buying Fair Trade. Once you have had a few successes with bringing Fair Trade into a pre-existing event, you can consider if you want to organize an entirely new event focused on Fair Trade.

The minimum number of events that include Fair Trade to complete this goal is **two**.

**Pointers:** Start with an event that you can join! This is very important. You want to get some experience with event organizing, and also to build up interest in Fair Trade throughout the congregation. As people become more familiar with Fair Trade, and you begin working with a team, it may make sense to build a new event from scratch, but it is recommended to start by joining.

**Have Fun:** Think creatively about how you can incorporate Fair Trade. Holiday sales are a wonderful opportunity. There are so many amazing artisan products that can be acquired. Delicious products from coffee to tea to chocolate, quinoa and rice, olive oil and sugar: the list is impressive! In the resource section you will see companies like Ten Thousand Villages who have entire programs for festival/holiday sales. Congregations have raised thousands of dollars through these programs and also make it easy to tell the stories of the artisans, farmers and workers behind these products. Outside of sales, you can do film screenings, link with a Fair Trade Congregation in another country, network with other congregations in the area to collaborate. There are as many fun ways to celebrate Fair Trade as you can imagine!
Fair Trade in your Congregation

The following is a just an initial list of online resources for bringing Fair Trade into your place of worship. It is a collection of faith/denomination-specific resources, as well as companies who have faith-initiatives and product availability. As you move through your campaign, be sure to record any new activities, ideas and successes, and other resources that you have found so that we can add them to our resources and empower even more congregations to engage with Fair Trade.

**Judaism**


**Catholicism**


**Presbyterian**


**Lutheran**

Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade: [http://lwr.org/getinvolved/fairtrade](http://lwr.org/getinvolved/fairtrade)

Resources from LWR: [http://lwr.org/site/apps/ka/ec/catalog.asp?c=dmjJKiOYJgI6G&amp;b=8297945&amp;en=8gLNJvOrG8KOV0rFdlQjSMrHeKmJZ0D7IjJZOeJbL0K8PMHuH&amp;CategoryID=921344](http://lwr.org/site/apps/ka/ec/catalog.asp?c=dmjJKiOYJgI6G&amp;b=8297945&amp;en=8gLNJvOrG8KOV0rFdlQjSMrHeKmJZ0D7IjJZOeJbL0K8PMHuH&amp;CategoryID=921344)

**Methodist**

United Methodist Committee on Relief Fair Trade: [http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Programs/Global-Development/Fair-Trade/Fair-Trade](http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Programs/Global-Development/Fair-Trade/Fair-Trade)

**Islam**


**United Church of Christ**

Understanding Fair Trade: [http://www.ucc.org/justice/coffee-project/understanding-fair-trade.html](http://www.ucc.org/justice/coffee-project/understanding-fair-trade.html)
Reformed Church in America
Synod Position on Fair Trade:  https://www.rca.org/sslpage.aspx?pid=3840

Episcopal

Mennonite
Mennonite Central Committee Fair Trade Coffee Project: http://washington.mcc.org/advocate/coffee

Unitarian Universalist
UU Service Committee Fair Trade: http://www.uusc.org/fairtrade

Fair Trade Products for Congregations
Equal Exchange: http://equalexchange.coop/programs (scroll to the bottom of the page for the inter-faith program)
Trade as One: http://tradeasone.com/
Fair Trade Films

**After the Harvest** (2010)
Addresses food security issues for small scale coffee families in Latin America during ‘thin months’ following harvest. Running Time: 20 minutes (view/download film at [http://aftertheharvestorg.blogspot.com/p/film.html](http://aftertheharvestorg.blogspot.com/p/film.html))

**Ants That Move Mountains** (2005)
A short film about the Nueva Vida Women’s Sewing Cooperative in Nicaragua, showing how true cooperation can lead to sustainable employment and empowerment of all sides. Running Time: 15 minutes (free at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP-WywAyc6E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP-WywAyc6E))

**A Powerful Noise** (2009)
Three vastly different lives share in common their ability to overcome gender barriers and seemingly insurmountable odds to claim a voice in their societies and bring lasting solutions to their communities. Running Time: 80 minutes (available online at [http://www.apowerfulnoise.org/](http://www.apowerfulnoise.org/))

**A Thousand Fibers: Binding Together through Fair Trade** (2009)
Explains how Fair Trade works in the world of commodities (coffee and chocolate) as well as handicrafts. Running Time: 33 minutes (purchase from [Partners for Just Trade](http://www.partnersforjusttrade.org/hl/d/sp/i/6871/pid/6871))

**Banana Split**
Examines the historical, social, economic, scientific and environmental aspects of banana production. Running Time: 47 minutes (free viewing at [http://vimeo.com/17275072](http://vimeo.com/17275072))

Lays out the background of the “coffee crisis” to communicate the relationships that exist through Fair Trade among the parties involved in coffee production. Running Time: 56 minutes (available at [http://www.oddogdocumentaries.com/vid_bsc.html](http://www.oddogdocumentaries.com/vid_bsc.html))

**Black Gold** (2005)
Follows Tadesse Meskela on his mission to help the 75,000 struggling coffee farmers in Ethiopia. Viewers will learn about the powerful international trading systems. Running Time: 77 minutes (may be ordered from [http://www.blackgoldmovie.com/](http://www.blackgoldmovie.com/))

**Buyer Be Fair: The Promise of Product Certification** (2006)
Explore how conscious consumers and businesses can use the market to promote social justice and environmental sustainability through product certification labeling. Running Time: 56 minutes (order from [http://www.buyerbefair.org/index.html](http://www.buyerbefair.org/index.html) or contact dfunkhouser@fairtradusa.org)

**Calcutta Hilton** (2005)
A true story focusing on the women of Sonagacchi red-light district. The Fair Trade company Freeset manufactures and exports jute bags, creating sustainable business and providing women with the option of leaving the sex-trade. Running Time: 23 minutes (may be from [http://www.calcuttahilton.com/DVD.htm](http://www.calcuttahilton.com/DVD.htm))

**Chocolate Country** (2007)
Presents the town of Loma Guaconejo where, if the farmers can attain organic certification and market their product directly to the U.S., they may be able to turn the system to their favor. Running Time: 30 minutes (order from [http://www.chocolatecountryfilm.com](http://www.chocolatecountryfilm.com))

**Coffee With the Taste of the Moon** (2005)
The viewer is educated on the powerful and promising sustainability efforts of the rapidly growing Fair Trade and Organic movements in the coffee market. Running Time: 30 minutes (contact the [Organic Consumers Association](http://www.organicconsumers.org/films.htm#5) for the film at [http://www.organicconsumers.org/films.htm#5](http://www.organicconsumers.org/films.htm#5))
Explains to U.S. consumers how Fair Trade offers hope and dignity to farmers across the globe and choices to shoppers who care. Running Time: 13 minutes (available online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FChptLZTh3I&feature=channel_video_title)

Fair Trade: The Story (2006)
Produced by Fair Trade USA, this short film provides an excellent overview of Fair Trade certification- how it works, what it does, and what it means to producers around the world. Running Time: 8 minutes (viewing online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NhQJrz-aDfi&feature=player_embedded)

Journey through Northeastern Thailand, this film documents the benefits of putting people at the center of trade and shows how their environments, their health, and their way of life have improved in recent years. (view online at http://www.engagetheworld.org/GrainsofChangeVideo.html)

Just Coffee (2006)
Follows coffee from a fazenda (farm) in Brazil to mass retailers in the US and Europe. This film is excellent for anyone interested in gaining a deeper and more transparent view of the coffee production and consumption chain. Running Time: 20 minutes (order by contacting Luke Upchurch at lupilchurc@consint.org)

Maquilapolis (2006)
Documents the stories of a few Mexican women working in one of Tijuana’s maquiladoras, multinational-owned factories that came to Mexico for its cheap labor. The film demonstrates how organized workers can successfully demand that laws be enforced. Running Time: 68 minutes (available for purchase online at http://newsreel.org/video/MAQUILAPOLIS)

A fair trade organization that has been working with Maya weavers in Guatemala since 1989, weavers speak about the positive ways in which Fair Trade has impacted their lives. Running Time: 30 minutes (may be viewed in 4 pts. at http://www.mayanhands.org)

Pa Pa Paa (2005)
Recommended for its appeal to audiences of all levels, explains how cocoa is harvested, traded, processed and retailed. Running Time: multiple running times (available to order from http://www.papapaa.org/ks2/index_5.htm)

Stolen Childhoods (2005)
Is the first feature documentary on global child labor. It features stories of child laborers around the world, told in their own words. Running Time: 89 minutes (may be purchased from http://www.stolenchildhoods.org/)

The Dark Side of Chocolate (2010)
A useful film for revealing the horrors of child labor and trafficking in West African cocoa farms that supply major corporations and brands. Running Time: 45 minutes (order from Green America http://www.greenamerica.org/programs/fairtrade/MovieScreening.cfm)

Traidcraft In Bangladesh (2007)
Discover the impact of Fair Trade and how it has empowered communities, contributing to women claiming their own voice, and improving overall quality-of-life. Running Time: 9 minutes (free viewing at http://www.traidcraft.co.uk/buying_fair_trade/fair_trade_in_action/bangladesh_video1.htm)

The Price of Sugar (2007)
Shows the efforts to bring Fair Trade to Haiti and exposes the conditions of developing countries without Fair Trade practices. Raises key questions about where the products we consume originate and at what human cost they are produced. Running Time: 90 minutes (inquire for group screenings at http://www.thepricofsugar.com/about.shtml)

Follows the story of three established, long-term partnerships between artisan groups and the fair trading group Ten Thousand Villages, showcasing how partnerships like this offer sustainable employment, economic opportunity and hope for developing communities. Running Time: 17 minutes (may be ordered from http://www.mbicresources.org/resourcecentre/ResourceView18/1270)
Kelsey Timmerman
Where Am I Wearing
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYAGodTjM_Y
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHev86ELF2w

Alta Gracia
http://altagraciaapparel.com/change-lives.php

Alta Gracia is currently sold on over 800 college campuses around the country.

http://sendaathletics.com/our-story/

Fair Trade Soccer Balls

The story of chocolate from the Diocese of Orlando, Fl
http://vimeo.com/20074856