

WEEK ELEVEN

The Presbyterian Coffee Project



Coffee is big business, but for the majority of coffee farmers the benefits are small. The chain of events from the coffee farm to your cup is long and expensive, often leaving the farmer with very little to live on. Most coffee farmers live in isolated communities, in some of the poorest countries in the world. They usually sell their coffee to middlemen, known to the farmers as "coyotes."



Co-op farmers in Nicaragua. Photo by Equal Exchange

With world prices in constant flux and coyotes offering the lowest price possible, the farmers never know how much they'll get for their crops. But there is an alternative: fair trade. Fair trade shares the bounty of the coffee with those who grow the crop, helping them build a better future for themselves and their communities. Through fair trade, farmers earn a fairer share of income, have access to services that are otherwise unavailable, and gain long-term trading partners they can trust.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) and Fair Trade

The Presbyterian Church (USA) is committed to fair trade standards as defined by TransFair USA. Voting delegates at the 213th General Assembly (2001) passed a resolution concerning fairly trade coffee and tea as well as organic sugar.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) co-sponsors the Presbyterian Coffee Project with Equal Exchange, an employee-owned certified fair trade company which purchases 100% of its coffees and teas according to fair trade standards. Equal Exchange was founded in 1986 to create a new approach to trade, one that includes informed consumers, honest and fair trade relationships and cooperative principles. Equal Exchange accomplishes these goals by offering consumers fairly traded gourmet coffee and tea directly from small-scale farmer cooperatives in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Its Interfaith Program links faith and fair trade, providing educational resources for congregations.

The Presbyterian Coffee Project is part of a new PC(USA) initiative called **Enough for Everyone: Global Discipleship**. Programmatic entities sponsoring this initiative include the **Presbyterian Hunger Program, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, the Social Justice Program Area, the Women's Ministries Program Area** and **Presbyterian Women**.



Thought for the Day:

Sunday: Equal Exchange shares risks with farmers by offering advance credit to co-ops for their coffee. This provides the farmers with funds between harvests – money for farm improvements, seedlings, and training, as well as family expenses, medicine, clothing and school supplies.

Monday: Equal Exchange works with farmer co-ops that emphasize organic and shade grown agricultural. By growing coffee under a canopy of fruit and shade trees – the traditional way of growing coffee – farmers preserve vital habitat, not only for local wildlife, but also for thousands of migratory birds.

Tuesday: Fair Trade helps build pride, independence and community empowerment for poor communities in the Developing World.

Wednesday: With each cup of coffee, your congregation or organization supports small farmers through Fair Trade – but you also help support special development programs that assist their communities.

Thursday: Don Miquel Sifontes from El Salvador says, "we used to live in houses made of corn husks. Now we have better work, better schools, homes of adobe, and a greater brotherhood of decision-makers."

Friday: Rosario Castellon from Nicaragua says, "it is very important for you to know that fair trade leads to better roads, better health and better lives for farmers, not just in Nicaragua, but around the world."

Saturday: Gabriel Ulomi of Tanzania says, "by drinking a cup of fairly traded coffee, you're giving small farmers in poor countries an opportunity to plan their own futures."

Getting Involved

What your church can do:

- ◆ **Serve fairly traded coffee and tea** at church events and during fellowship hour, and make it available to members for home use.
- ◆ **Offer gift baskets** of fairly traded coffee and tea for new members, as Christmas presents, or on other occasions.
- ◆ **Design fund-raising projects** in your church offering fairly traded coffee and tea.
- ◆ **Provide local businesses with information** about offering fairly traded coffee and tea.

For more information:

Contact the Presbyterian Hunger Program
Log onto: www.pcusa.org/pcusa/wmd/hunger/coffee
Receive the **FREE!** PHP brochure "**Good Coffee for a Good Cause.**"
It explains the Presbyterian Coffee Program in detail.
Call the Presbyterian Marketplace at **800/524-2612**
and ask for **PDS# 74360-01-316**

or

Contact Equal Exchange
Log onto: <http://www.equalexchange.com/interfaith>
(On this site you will also find out how to bulk order coffee & tea)
You can also call them at **781-830-0303 x228**
Ask for the Presbyterian Coffee Project Ordering Form

