

2015 Annual Meeting – Fair Trade Resolution – Additional Resources

FAIR TRADE PRINCIPLES:

Purchasing Fair Trade Certified products supports commitment to the following Fair Trade principles:

- Guaranteeing a fair price that covers the cost of production plus allows the farmer to provide the basics for his or her family. If the world market price goes up, the fair trade price also goes up. If the world market price goes down, the fair trade price stays the same.
- Eliminating the middle men so the purchasing company pays the farmer directly, meaning that more money goes to the farmer.
- Providing credit and low interest loans so the farmer can get out of the cycle of poverty and stay out.
- Using sustainable farming practices and growing organically so the farming communities have clean air, water, and land and the consumer has a high quality, healthy product.
- Prohibiting slave or child labor so children can go to school and have an avenue out of poverty.
- Encouraging diversity of crops and new businesses so the farmers have other income to fall back on when weather or pests ruin crops.
- Guaranteeing safe working conditions and prohibiting use of dangerous chemicals.
- Forming coops so farmers have control over work decisions and learn leadership skills.
- Adding a social premium to the price of the product that the coops save to invest in their community. The social premium is used for projects like digging wells for clean water; providing electricity; building schools, medical clinics, hospitals or roads; hiring teachers; providing scholarships for students or health care for workers; helping families start new businesses; providing technical training in organic, sustainable farming practices.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: www.maftii.org (our local Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative), www.fairtradecampaigns.org (has a category for Congregation Fair Trade campaigns with resources and actions congregations have taken), www.fairtradeusa.org (website for the Fair Trade Certifying organization), www.fairtrade.net (*Fair Trade International, the international fair trade certifying organization for farmers*) and www.fairtradefederation.org (*the fair trade business federation that lists all the fair trade businesses that sell fair trade products*).

NEXT STEPS FOR LOCAL CHURCHES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW THE CONFERENCE CAN ACT ON THE FAIR TRADE RESOLUTION

I would like to mention the activities that our church [First Congregational UCC, Mankato] has done to become a Fair Trade Church as an example of what other churches can do.

- We started in 2012 having a Fair Trade service on Fair Trade Day, around the second Sunday of May. We would love to share our Fair Trade worship service resources.
- We also started celebrating Fair Trade month in October by having some kind of Fair Trade activity after the service. We would show a Fair Trade film and make desserts with Fair Trade ingredients or have a Fair Trade chocolate tasting.
- We set up a rack selling Equal Exchange and Divine Chocolate Fair Trade products.
- We use Fair Trade coffee, tea and sugar at the church for all events.
- The beginning of December we hold a Fair Trade bazaar with Fair Trade products from SERRV or 10,000 Villages, alternating years.
- We have lesson plans for teaching Fair Trade in Sunday school on Fair Trade Day and month.
- There is a Bible study you can buy from Partners for Just Trade called "Fair Trade: Using Our Purchasing Power for Justice and Hope" (40pp), available for \$6.00. The website is www.partnersforjusttrade.org.

The Fair Trade congregational campaign website www.fairtradecampaigns.org has more resources. Churches register with this campaign site as they become declared Fair Trade churches and share their events as well as resources.

Our Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative (MAFTTI), a non-profit Fair Trade advocacy group, started with Mankato churches getting together to plan activities around Fair Trade. 10 churches have representatives that meet a couple of times a year and volunteer at many local Fair Trade events during the year. This is part of what could be a wider outreach mission for other church communities wanting to promote Fair Trade. Refer to the website www.maftti.org for the activities MAFTTI is involved in.

An article in the Minnesota UCC newsletter could explain Fair Trade, how UCC beliefs support Fair Trade practices, resources that are available for churches to start supporting Fair Trade, and the actions needed to become Fair Trade churches. UCC churches that are already integrating Fair Trade activities into their churches could communicate what they are doing and be contacts for other churches wanting to promote Fair Trade.