

Fairtrade Fortnight, 22nd Feb to 7th March 2021

The following is about the Fairtrade theme and what you might do in your churches or any other organisations you are involved with.

The first section could provide the material for a Newsletter article.

Then there are some suggestions for how you could get involved with virtual events in Fairtrade Fortnight including some worship materials.

A prayer is also attached.

This year's Fairtrade Fortnight is "Fairtrade, the Climate and You"

Climate Change

The aim of the Fortnight is to highlight the growing challenges facing farmers and workers in the communities with whom Fairtrade works. The climate emergency has already caused changing weather patterns, heatwaves, droughts, wildfires and floods which have destroyed harvests. Plants like coffee and grapes are getting harder to grow as the temperature rises, and many are affected by crop diseases.

As well as the impact of the changing climate, COVID 19 has had a huge impact. People who grow and make products for the UK have been particularly hard hit – reduced orders have meant produce has gone unsold and wages unpaid. Millions of farmers growing coffee, tea, cocoa and bananas for the UK have seen their incomes fall, and are struggling to feed their families and send their children to school. Fairtrade Co-operatives have played a vital role in helping their communities cope with the emergency.

Many farmers do not have the resources to invest in new more sustainable crops or cultivation methods; but Fairtrade can help.

Fairtrade

Fairtrade farmers earn more thanks to the Fairtrade price, and the Fairtrade premium enables them to adapt to change – investing in more resilient crop varieties and cultivation techniques.

Fairtrade is about treating people fairly and ending the exploitation of some of the poorest people in the world. They need fair prices and an income which is enough to cover their basic human needs, like a nutritious diet, children's education and healthcare. The low prices they get mean they are struggling to survive. With Fairtrade help they are better able to meet their everyday needs and deal with the challenges caused by the climate emergency.

Covid-19 has shown us how inter-dependent we are globally, and the climate emergency is doing the same. We have to work together. There are plenty of ideas on the Fairtrade Fortnight website <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/> which includes a page on resources for churches

You

We can all help in several ways:

- By choosing products with the Fairtrade Mark, we can directly help farmers to care for their families and farm their land sustainably. The Mark guarantees that the producers are paid a

fair price, get money for their community and that a range of standards are met including sustainable farming methods.

- Our choice of Fairtrade sends out a message that we want an economy that is fair for producers and consumers, that respects people and nurtures the resources of the earth rather than exploiting them to maximise profits at any cost,
- Changing our lifestyles to consume less of the products that cause climate change,
- Talking with others in our communities about what we can do together

So, could you, in your churches, share the stories of the people who grow our food? There are lots of short videos on the Fairtrade Foundation website. This one is a useful introduction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xQP6tVlcxg&t=3s>

Maybe you could include one or more of these in a virtual coffee morning or as part of worship, in whatever way you are doing that in these difficult COVID times.

Worship Resources

New worship resources have been published on the Fairtrade Foundation Website: a pre-recorded ecumenical service of worship for Fairtrade Fortnight, curated by Kevin Snyman of URC Commitment for Life, with contributions from Fairtrade Supporters and churches. This is available as a 27-minute video, or as a Word document; two of the hymns are available as separate videos, as is the sheet music of one of them. The videos are great for sharing online.

The link to access all these resources is <https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources-library/current-campaigns/fairtrade-and-the-climate-crisis/ecumenical-service/>.

There are also worship resources about climate change on The Climate Coalition website here: <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/resource> (See also the prayer below)

Other Activities

The South East Hampshire Fairtrade group (of which Fareham is a part) is hosting a Zoom event on Monday 1st March at 6.30pm. Adam Gardner from the Fairtrade Foundation will be speaking and answering questions. To join, book your place here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/climate-fairtrade-and-you-tickets-140578583327>

The Fairtrade Foundation will be hosting an online festival bringing together schools, universities, businesses, supporters, campaigners and farmers from across the world to choose the world they want.

[Join the online festival](#) Sign up today and they'll send you all the latest news as more exciting events are confirmed. You can expect to find fascinating and fun events featuring all parts of our global Fairtrade community, including Fairtrade farmers and workers, other climate campaigners and of course the amazing grassroots network.

Join in with the online Festival and find out more. Or encourage young people to share their vision of the world they want to see.

Then demand action on the climate emergency which is already ruining so many lives, especially in the poorer countries. See the Climate Coalition website <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/>

Find out more go to [http://www.campaign.exchange/fairtrade fortnight](http://www.campaign.exchange/fairtrade%20fortnight)

For more about getting involved locally go to www.fft.org.uk

Worship material from The Climate Coalition

Commit to pray for our world

Invite everyone in the congregation to show their love for God's creation by committing to pray for our world and all those whose lives are currently impacted by climate change, and for guidance for our leaders as they make decisions to end the country's contribution to climate change.

A prayer based on Psalm 102:25

*'In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.'*

Loving God, thank you for the gift of creation. As we experience each day, may we take time to wonder and give you thanks. From each sunrise to every sunset, in every season, and with every breath, may we celebrate our home in creation, and the glorious gift of life.

As the climate changes through our lifestyles, give us compassion to care deeply that people are suffering now, from drought, flood, wildfires and terrible storms. Give us the imagination to see that many species, and future generations are in peril and may never know the beauty and diversity of creation that we enjoy.

Give us passion to act now, to pray for the changes needed within our communities, our churches, our nation, and among the nations, for climate change to be brought under control.

Guide us Lord, and guide our leaders, to act as you would have us act.

May our prayers and our actions flow from our love for your creation, in all its beauty and diversity, a longing for justice for the poor, and our commitment to all future generations of your children on this Earth.

Amen.

Source: Contributions to worship resources from

