



**FAIR TRADE  
CAMPAIGNS**

# Fair Trade Congregations

## TOOLKIT

A Fair Trade Congregation campaign is meant to incorporate 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 choices by providing Fair Trade products for sale and consumption. There are three goals that a congregation must achieve to be designated as a Fair Trade Congregation as outlined below. After earning Fair Trade status, a congregation is asked to submit a report at the end of each year summarizing efforts made to continue its commitment to Fair Trade.

### 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.

**The minimum number of activities to complete this goal is two, with two per year required thereafter.**

**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, poverty, environmental sustainability, and gender equality. If your congregation has a bulletin or newsletter, include information about Fair Trade in those communications. These are just some ideas among many that you can find on our resources page.



**Pointers:** When getting started, it is a great idea to form a team. These campaigns can be driven by one person, but as the goal is to reach the entire congregation and beyond, so it's beneficial 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 with you 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, wine, palms, and kosher chocolate, *as well as* artisan and craft products such as teapots, kitchen items, worship vestments, decorative items, and others.

**The minimum number of products to complete this goal is two, with a goal of adding more each year.**

**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 tea, along with sugar and other sweeteners, after services. Others have cookies, candy, and other sweets. Once you know what products are currently purchased, 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 at 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.

**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](#) works with coffee partners to make Fair Trade coffee available for 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 'Getting Started' section above, signs are mentioned. Creating these signs can be a 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!

**The minimum number of events to complete this goal is two, with two per year required thereafter.**

**Getting Started:** Look at the calendar of events for your congregation and determine which could naturally include Fair Trade 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 for fundraisers. Bake sales are also common within 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.

**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 included in sales, as well as delicious products like coffee and tea, chocolate, quinoa and rice, olive oil, and sugar: the list is impressive! Companies like Ten Thousand Villages have entire [programs for festival/holiday sales](#). Congregations have raised thousands of dollars through these programs, and these events also make it easy to tell the stories of the artisans, farmers, and workers behind the products. Outside of sales, you can host film screenings, connect with a Fair Trade Congregation in another country, and 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 list of just a few of the many online resources available to help you bring 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. Click the links in **teal** below to find out more.

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.

### Catholicism

- [Fair Trade resources for Catholic Churches](#)
- [Print/Downloadable Materials](#)

### Episcopal

- [Episcopal Relief & Development Fair Trade](#)

### Islam

- [Islamic Relief Worldwide](#)
- [Islam and Fair Trade](#)

### Judaism

- [Fair Trade Principles and Jewish Values](#)
- [Classroom Resource](#)
- [Fair Trade Products for Jewish Worship](#)

### Lutheran

- [Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade](#)
- [Resources from Lutheran World Relief](#)

### Mennonite

- [Mennonite Central Committee Fair Trade Coffee Project](#)

### Methodist

- [United Methodist Committee on Relief Fair Trade](#)

### Presbyterian

- [Connecting food, poverty, and faith](#)
- [Fair Trade products and companies](#)

### Reformed Church in America

- [Synod Position on Fair Trade](#)

### Unitarian Universalist

- [UU Service Committee Fair Trade](#)

### United Church of Christ

- [Understanding Fair Trade](#)
- [UCC Coffee Project](#)

### Fair Trade Products for Congregations

- [Equal Exchange](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page for the inter-faith program)
- [Trade as One](#)
- [Fair Trade Product list](#) (a list of common Fair Trade products from Fair Trade Campaigns)