

Opening Music: 'Beautiful African Song' 3 mins 55 secs

Welcome words: Good morning & welcome everyone, whether you are here in this building or joining us on Zoom (wave) or watching online later. You are welcome, whether a regular attender, a few times visitor, and especially so if you are a newcomer. Whatever you bring in your heart: whether you come in sadness, joy or out of curiosity, whatever your faith or none, you are welcome!

This morning we are celebrating Fairtrade Fortnight which starts tomorrow, 21st September and runs until 4th October. This year's theme is "Do It Fair – for people for Planet and for Fair Pay", and we'll hear about personal experiences of some FT growers from various countries. Our opening music was African, because much FT tea, coffee and cocoa, as well as other Fair Trade foodstuffs, is grown in various African countries. Our reflective music is also African music, although FT tea is also grown in India, and lots of FT coffee is grown in South American countries. We'll also include two short videos widely available on the FT website.

All FT growers around the world are our neighbours, albeit at a distance. So, before we start, please turn to your near neighbour, and introduce yourself. If you are on Zoom, maybe you'd like to greet one another via the Chat box, and if you are able, go bring a tea bag from the kitchen for later in our service.

Chalice Lighting: We begin as is our custom, by lighting our Chalice as a symbol of our free religious faith. Those who are with us on Zoom may like to light a candle with us now:

Words for Chalice Lighting:

We light this candle to remind ourselves of the light of conscience that exists in every person, leaving us without excuse for ignoring the plight of those who are less fortunate than ourselves.

May our worship this morning enlighten us about humanity's needs, and may we become inspired to give light to the dark corners of our world.

Opening words: from Leviticus 19:13 and 25:14,17 (New International Version – UK)

"Do not defraud or rob your neighbour...." "Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight...." "If you sell land to any of your own people or buy land from them, do not take advantage of each other. ... but fear your God."

I Invite you to join in singing our first hymn, the words will appear on the screen, but if you prefer to use a hymn book, its no 128 in the purple book

1st Hymn: Purple 128 'Our World is one world'

Our world is one world:
what touches one affects us all –
the seas that wash us round about,
the clouds that cover us,
the rains that fall.
Our world is one world:
the thoughts we think affect us all –

the way we build our attitudes,
with love or hate, we make
a bridge or wall.

Our world is one world:
Its ways of wealth affect us all –
The way we spend, the way we share,
Who are the rich or poor,
Who stand or fall?

Our world is one world:
just like a ship that bears us all –
where fear and greed make many holes,
but where our hearts can hear
a different call.

Tune: 'Chernobyl' Cecily Taylor b.1930 Arr. Richard Graves, 1926 – 2002

Words Cecily Taylor b. 1930

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Prayers:

1...We hold in our thoughts and prayers, all those of our church community, all those of our families and friends and our neighbours in the wider community who are in need of solace.

For the sick, may there be healing and strength.

For the distressed may there be peace and tranquility of spirit.

For the embittered may there be reconciliation and a new beginning.

For the despairing, may there be faith and rekindled joy

For the fearful, may there be courage and unquenchable hope

For the poor and oppressed, may there be better times ahead

With trembling hands we reach out to all our neighbours, those near by or afar, who are suffering in any way.

May love and life flow out through us to restore, to relieve and to re-create ...**AMEN**

Prayers: 2...Adapted from a prayer by A.Powell Davies

When we give thanks for what is given to us and not to others, let us remember to pray softly, for there will be many who overhear.

Let conscience search our gratitude!

This bounty did not come to us because, more than others, we are deserving.

Spirit of Truth, rebuke us until the needy multitudes press upon our thoughts and prayers,
These are our brothers and sisters! We are all part of one global family. In our gratitude,
help us to remember the many who will overhear...**AMEN**

It has become a custom to have a story at this point in our Service. Initially this was for any children who might join us, but even if there aren't any, the grown ups enjoy a story too! So we continue this tradition, and today we are having two stories! Firstly a video briefly explaining about Fair Trade, followed by the true story of one African person living and working in a FT Co-operative.

Hymn 4 Story: Short video: Fair Trade and Framers

2 min 51 secs

1st Story: Teresa Wairimu's story - Peace of mind through childcare (Fair Trade flowers, worker's rights and environmental care)

Teresa works at. It is a Kenyan owned company . located on the shores of Lake Naivasha it was established in 1969 and is one of the most well respected and renowned flower farms in the world, due to its corporate social responsibility, concern for the environment and steady growth in production.

Robust environmental criteria require irrigation with reduced water consumption, strict waste management and respect for biodiversity. Highly toxic pesticides and GMOs are prohibited.

With just under 5,000 workers, Bohemian Flowers farm produces an impressive 350 million stems per year. Being part of Fair Trade requires the firm to have a negotiated collective bargaining agreement for better terms and conditions than the national minimums and the general flower sector. The agreement includes fair working conditions, fair pay and worker's rights.

At Bohemian Flowers, the workday starts early. Yet for mothers like Teresa, there is comfort in knowing their babies are safe, well-fed, and taken care of in a crèche funded through Fairtrade Premium investments.

A small sign at the entrance reads 'Toa viatu' (remove your shoes). Outside, shoes of all sizes line up, marking the entrance to a place of care. Inside, lullabies and laughter fill the air. With three children to raise, the crèche gives peace of mind to Teresa Wairimu Kinyua.

For Teresa, the Fairtrade Premium has touched every part of her family's life. Her eldest receives a bursary, her second child benefits from a school feeding program, and her youngest is cared for at the crèche.

Her routine includes dropping off her child at the crèche, where caregivers ensure proper care, meals, and hygiene. "I am comfortable knowing my child is safe."

The crèche, run by six caregivers, provides essential care from 5:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. If a child falls ill, the crèche quickly informs the parent and provides medical support if necessary.

Half of Bohemian Flowers employees are women. Head of HR, Lorin Kimunyu, says: "Mothers returning from maternity leave have one hour per day to breastfeed their children up to 10 months, and they're paid for eight hours even if they work for seven. The crèche boosts productivity and peace of mind."

The community could only afford these improvements thanks to the Fair Trade Premium.

2nd Hymn: Purple 84 'Justice for persons'

Justice for person and for different nations,
respect the diverse species in our care,
community of life in earth sustaining,
love for this planet which we all must share.

Compassion is the strength of love and sympathy
letting us share another being's pain;
creature or human, loving friend or stranger,
love for each other is the whole world's gain.

Wisdom is insight clear, precise and thoughtful,
searching for truth and human love refined;
guidance from past, made ready for the future
by the best reasoning of the human mind.

Integrity, with honour and uprightness:
these are the qualities which form and make
women and men, the people for tomorrow,
those who serve others for another's sake.

Justice, compassion, wisdom and integrity,
these are the virtues which our poor world needs.
They'll flower tomorrow, fruit in glorious splendour,
If we today go out and plant the seeds.

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Music: 'Georgina' © David Dawson 2009. Used by permission.

We will now see a video about Climate change and how FT Premium enables people living combat the challenges of Climate Change. This will be followed by the story of a Colombian banana grower, and then a tea plucker from southern India, as real life examples of how the FT premium is helping their communities.

Hymn 5 Video on Climate Change and FT

3 mins 55 secs

<https://youtu.be/0xQP6tVlcxg>

2nd Reading: Ever's Story

Ever lives and works on a banana plantation, in Colombia where rising temperatures have made working conditions more intense, while prolonged drought disrupts the delicate balance banana plants need to grow.

7 Questions with Ever:

Tell us about yourself,?

"My name is Ever Antonio Flores Muñoz... I've been working here for 10 years... I work as an Environmental Monitor here on the farm."

What does your work involve?

"Well, as an Environmental Monitor I'm always doing the rounds, checking the wild areas... and also the green ground cover... because the idea is to have an area fully covered with green vegetation."

What matters most to you in your life?

"Well, I've got two daughters... and thanks to the job I have, I can provide them a better quality of life."

How do you protect nature on your banana farm?

"We've created wildlife corridors for the animals... where they can roam across the entire farm... even to the neighbouring farms. We've also got a nature reserve... roughly between 20 and 25 hectares... and thanks to that reserve we've got various animals living there. We've got a living water source... water springs emerge from that area... it depends on those 20–25 hectares of forest we've got up there... These trees have been here for years, protecting all of this."

What changes have you seen in the climate?

"Well, the climate over the past 10 years has changed quite a lot... it's getting much hotter... we have to take more breaks because of the temperature, it's really intense."

What worries you most about the future?

The biggest challenge we're going to face is drought, because it's going to affect all of us — our workers, colleagues -everything will be at great risk, and our wages will decrease.'

How is Fairtrade supporting you and your work?

"Thanks to Fairtrade... we've got that support that allows us to have areas for our animals... and they support us with the ecological farm project... I've seen losses in other places due to flooding and strong winds, and thank goodness we've got these 20 to 25 hectares of protected forest that protect us from those impacts — whether it's wind or heat'

'Fairtrade teaches us how to manage the waste... so it can be used again.... Since the Sustainable Banana Programme started, we've got plants with more vigour and larger bunches, which allows us to sustain our livelihoods."

Saritha's Story

Ms Saritha Kumari has worked as a Tea Leaf Plucker at United Nilgiri Tea Estates in South India for seven years. Originally from Jharkhand, she moved south to the estate with her baby daughter, determined to find steady work and a better future for her family. 'If we hadn't come here, we wouldn't be able to educate our children properly... back home]in the village, no one studies – there are no facilities,' she explains.

Life at the tea growing estate has brought real change for Saritha's family. Both her daughter and son now attend school, with tuition, uniforms, and meals all provided for free.

The Fairtrade Premium funds a daily school bus, which means her children can travel safely to school – especially important in a rural area where wild animals like bears and tigers are a real risk. 'These days, if there were no bus, we'd be scared—so many wild animals like bears and tigers are coming out of the forests. They're even attacking people. So if there were no bus, how would the children get to school?' she says.

Saritha is deeply proud of her children's ambitions, lighting up when she talks about their dreams: 'They say they'll become doctors and police officers... we couldn't do it, but if they do, wouldn't that be good?'

Saritha has worked hard to create a stronger and more resilient home for her family. With support from Fairtrade Premium funds, her household now has clean water, reliable electricity, and secure rooms – essentials that make daily life healthier and more comfortable. The Premium has also provided practical items like a water filter, cookers, cupboards, and a mixer – helping Saritha to make her daily routines safer and more manageable.

These improvements have meant that she has been able to save money, invest in her family's future, and even support relatives back home. 'We've been able to build proper rooms at home. We've even bought a vehicle, and we're able to send some money back home to our mother,' she shares.

'Here, education is free, we're saving money, and the company has given us rooms and free electricity too. Water is also free here, so we feel good staying here. That's why we've been here for so long—seven years.' Through her determination and hard work growing tea, Saritha is building a safer, brighter future for her family.

Spoken Meditation: 'On Tea'

Following a suggestion on the FT Fortnight website, from Peter Graystone. You should have all been handed a teabag when you came in – its a Fair Trade tea bag, of course! And for our friends on zoom, if you have brought one in from your kitchens, you can join in with this one!

Sit comfortably holding your tea bag look at its shape ... run your fingers over it, feel the texture of the bag and little bulge made by the leaves inside the bagsniff the aroma of tea,

Pray for all who have grown, picked and transported the tea – and for justice in the tea trade over all.

'Brew it fair' Tea Reflection This reflection was inspired by some lines in the Fairtrade Foundation's 'Brew It Fair: The People behind the Tea':

With 19 years of experience as a Tea Leaf Plucker, Ms Vijaya Kumari has experienced the difference Fairtrade makes on her estate. This includes achieving one of her most important aims: providing a better education for her daughter than the one she received.

'My parents couldn't afford to let me study beyond 14 years old. Nowadays, girls should study. We want them to take their life in their own hands and take care of their future'. Vijaya has been able to educate her two daughters using the Fairtrade Premium. Each child received funding for their education from the age of six, an amount that increased all the way up to college. Vijaya has been happy to see one daughter become an engineer, and the other a nurse.

You switch on the kettle,
Open the cupboard,
Reach for the box
Where the tea lives
And pick out a tea bag
To toss into a mug.

A simple gesture ...
That mirrors a worker's
As she plucked tea leaves
In South India's hills
And tossed them deftly
Into her basket

Looking forward to evening
When she would return home
And her daughters would tell her
About their school day:
The lessons they'd learned
Their ambitions, their plans

Which you helped them realise
When you chose Fairtrade
A simple choice
That linked you,
Though you would never see them,
To millions of children's dreams.

Reflection: CCOW. Find more Fair Trade reflections and prayers at www.ccow.org.uk

May our hearts be filled with the Spirit of Love and Peace, now and for evermore **AMEN.**
A short silence, approx. 1 minute

Interlude : 'The Sun is coming' 4 mins 20 sec

ADDRESS – ‘Do it Fair– for People, for Planet and for Fair Pay,’”

“Our world is one world:
Its ways of wealth affect us all –
The way we spend, the way we share,
Who are the rich or poor,
Who stand or fall?”

These words from our first hymn this morning, seem so appropriate for a Service celebrating Fair Trade.

As mentioned earlier, tomorrow is the first day of this year's Fairtrade Fortnight. Why are we talking about Fairtrade in church? I hope this is a little clearer after hearing some of those real life stories about how FT has improved the lives of people living and working in FT communities in various countries. We heard about some of Fairtrade growers, and the challenges they face.

In the Old Testament, we read that Moses was given a set of rules by God. They cover many different things, including laws to protect poor people and foreigners

In our opening words, from Leviticus 19:13 and 25:14,17 “Do not defraud or rob your neighbour....“Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.....“If you sell land to any of your own people or buy land from them, do not take advantage of each other. ... but fear your God.” And similarly, from Deuteronomy Chapter 24:14-15 (New International Version) "Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns. Pay them their wages each day before sunset, because they are poor and are counting on it”

Well intentioned as it was, this law would have been hard for many of the people living when this was written, over 3,000 years ago, to follow. The farmers who had to pay the wages to the labourers were often very poor themselves. Although it would have been hard, the rules that Moses wrote down said that treating everyone fairly, whatever your differences, was an important part of serving God.

We humans have been trading throughout our history, long before formal money was invented. The first trading was most likely simple swapping or bartering. If someone had something another person needed or wanted, they might be persuaded to handed it over in exchange for something they wanted from the other person. Maybe a small piece of meat was exchanged for some sweet berries, or a place nearer the campfire. However simple trading started, everyone's life was a little better. Trading involved cooperation, and a partnership that helped both parties. Its true today. Without trade, we could not eat bananas, drink coffee or buy flowers for a special occasion for example. Without trade, many jobs would simply not exist.

But trade has always been a tough business, and modern trading is complicated, involving hard fought negotiations. No one wants to come out with a bad deal. (We've all heard more than enough about that recently!) To be successful in trade negotiations, you need to be strong, economically and politically.

So, when trading with poorer communities around the world, we need to consider two questions. • First, who has the power? • Second, how do we see those we trade with? as opponents and competitors – or friends and partners?

Every product we buy has a story – of the people who grew it, picked it, stitched it, or packed it. But not every story is fair. Everything we buy in the UK should guarantee fair pay, safe working conditions, and care for the environment. But businesses that put profit over people and planet are still the norm. The true cost of cheap food and drink is often paid by the people behind it, and now the climate crisis is also putting them and their livelihoods at risk. By 2050, its estimated, up to 50% of coffee-growing land could be lost to climate change, yet the people who grow it are being left to face this alone. It shouldn't be on them to fix a crisis they didn't cause.

This year the Fairtrade Foundation asks us to ***'Do it Fair– for People, for Planet and for Fair Pay,'*** when out shopping, whether its buying staples like tea coffee, bananas, maybe flowers for a special occasion, or items for longer term use, like clothing, jewellery, soft furnishings.

In the first video we saw how growers and workers on Fair Trade farms and co-operatives benefit from receiving a guaranteed minimum payment for their crops, a price which remains stable whatever the vagaries of the market, so they can budget, secure in the knowledge that they can pay for all life's necessities. Communities receiving the FT premium choose how to spend it in the way to best meet that community's unique needs. Luke Metto spoke about learning how to manage the effects of climate change, including planting trees, so important for this and future generations.

Another important aspect of the work Fair Trade groups and Co-operatives do, is in the field of gender equality for pay and conditions. Worker's health, rights, fair conditions and fair pay are so important to all workers, and the training FT offers has enabled and supported Frida Kidenya, Rahel Mhabuya and other women to take control of their own lives, to manage their resources and develop the ability to make decisions and given them confidence to act on them. Now they are able to take up leadership roles in their community and farming organisations, which benefits the whole community.

In the second video, and in Ever's story, we learnt and saw how Fair Trade enables them to undertake training to live better lives, whether its living more independently or dealing with the challenges of Climate Change. This is a concern which is only going to increase over the years ahead. Any measures they can put in place with FT help, will ultimately benefit us all.

One very important issue not mentioned directly in these stories, but touched on in our closing video, is that of child labour. There are very strict conditions attached when conferring FT status on any community – children of school age are not allowed to work or be taken advantage of in any way. They must attend school and have time afterwards to do homework and also enjoy being children! Children are encouraged to stay on for further education too, as for their own future benefit and that of their communities. This applies to all FT communities around the world. Teresa, Ever and Saritha all mentioned in their stories about wanting the best for their children, like parents everywhere, and FT is helping them achieve this.

Whichever organization buys the coffee, cocoa or other crops, ultimately it is the consumer of the finished product, of the coffee, packet of tea or sugar, bar of chocolate, flowers, or other items, who has the power over farmers in Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, South India, South America, or wherever, through that trading relationship with them. They grow the food that we eat, the bar of chocolate we enjoy on the bus or the bedtime cup of cocoa in our living rooms in Plymouth. Is this trading relationship a fair one, a relationship of neighbourly concern, neighbourly love even, for that geographically distant farmer neighbor? It can be if the producers enjoy FT status.

So, what is **our** role in all this? *We* have the power of our wallets or purses. *We* have the power to refuse to accept trade which exploits others. *We* can choose to buy in ways which are fairer to the growers, and so help to rebalance the scales of trade.... By doing that, we are helping our far away 'neighbours' – one could say we are loving our neighbours as ourselves? And what's in it for us?

Emotional and spiritual benefits, a nice warm glow from thinking we've 'done our bit' today? Well, there are other "rewards" too! Remember Sidie and Ever, living in different continents but equally concerned about the effects of Climate Change, and the uncertainties growers like them are facing. If farmers don't have the money to invest in adapting to climate change, then their crops become harder to grow and more expensive. The money and the training from Fair Trade enables them and growers like them to make those adaptations. Paying fair prices to farmers **now** keeps **our** shopping bill down in the future! In our interconnected world, we cannot isolate ourselves from the damage we do to others. Our World is one world, what touches one affects us all.

So lets '**Do it Fair**' and choose to buy Fairtrade so that all the people we've seen and heard about today, and many thousands more like them, get a fair price for their crops, be they cocoa, tea, coffee, bananas, fruit, or cotton to name but a few.

Mary tells me that the Fair Trade symbol which we recognize is used in UK only. The World Fair Trade organisation and also British Association of Fair Trade Stores.

We can raise awareness about Fair Trade: tell people about our Wednesday Cafe mornings, where we serve FT tea, coffee and hot chocolate.

We can try to learn more about fair trade and its impact on producers, and share this knowledge with others, and advocate for fair trade practices in local businesses and institutions.

We can engage on Social Media to share information about Fairtrade Fortnight, fair trade choices, and the impact of fair trade on communities.

So what can each one of us here do **today**? Buy Fairtrade items for everyday use, and for gifts and special occasions. There is a chance to do so this very day! Mary is here with a selection of FT goodies in the hall. Do go and look – and spend! Over a FT Coffee. These gifts not only delight the recipient but also support fair trade producers.

> We can pray that a spirit of fairness, compassion and kindness will "come on in" and help us make a fairer world. So lets 'Do it Fair' not only this week, but all the weeks of every year!

> We can sign the petition calling on the government to pass a new law that would ensure all businesses address human rights abuses and climate damage behind their products.

Over 70% of shoppers in the UK think that businesses should be doing more. Fairtrade is calling on the government to pass a new law that would ensure all businesses address human rights abuses and climate damage behind their products.

So, together, we can demand rules that make every business take responsibility. Together, we can level the playing field. Together, we can be fair to people and the planet.

Your voice does matter! Add yours today, by signing the petition.

I'll leave the closing words to Traorè Awa Batiba: a cocoa grower on Côte D'Ivoire She is now the director of her co-operative, overseeing over 2,300 farmers. She said, "I love Fair Trade so much. It is the future for cocoa farmers around the world like me, and I hope that customers will buy more Fair Trade certified products to keep helping us. I thank you all for that and I hope that Fair Trade will save our planet too"

3rd Hymn Green125 'One Human Commonwealth'

Let freedom span both east and west,
And love both south and north,
In universal fellowship
Throughout the whole wide earth.

In beauty, wonder, everywhere,
Let us communion find;
Compassion be the golden cord
Close-binding human kind.

Beyond all barriers of race,
Of colour, caste or creed,
Let us make friendship, human worth,
Our common faith and deed.

Then east and west will meet and share,
And south shall build with north,
One human commonwealth of good
Throughout the whole wide earth.

Words: Jacob Trapp . Used by permission.

Music: 'Gerontius' John Bacchus Dykes, 1823 -1876 CM

Closing Words:

Our worship time today has finished, but our Service is not over: it has only just begun!
We cannot solve all of the world's problems, but may we be more aware
of suffering, poverty and injustice and each do what we can, to 'Do it Fair' in whatever
small ways we can, to bring a better life to those who work so hard
to produce those goods which bring a better life to us. *AMEN*

Extinguish Chalice

Closing Music/Video : 'Fair Trade – I should Cocoa!'

3 mins 38secs