











Fair trade, coffee and Unitarian Universalists ... a great mix!

Unitarian Universalists value the interdependent web of all existence, and acknowledge that the choices we make in our daily lives affect thousands of people across the United States and internationally. In this spirit, UUSC has partnered with Equal Exchange since June 2001. Equal Exchange buys its coffee directly from farmers following the standards and principles of fair trade, ensuring that low-income farmers earn a fair, living wage.

Building partnerships for justice

According to the Fair Trade Federation, fair trade is an equitable and fair partnership between marketers and producers. Fair trade standards require:

-  Paying a fair wage in the local context.
-  Offering employees opportunities for advancement.
-  Engaging in environmentally sustainable practices.
-  Being open to public accountability.
-  Providing equal employment opportunities for all people, particularly the most disadvantaged.
-  Providing healthy and safe working conditions within the local context.
-  Providing financial and technical assistance to producers whenever possible.
-  Building long-term trade relationships.



With this project, something as simple as the cup of coffee we drink at our social hour becomes an opportunity to put into practice the Unitarian Universalist principles, “to affirm human dignity” and to “respect the interdependent web of all existence of which we are all a part.”

*Michael Arnott
First Unitarian Society
Newton, Mass.*

Harvesting benefits

UUSC members and supporters, and other UU congregation members want to put their values into action. Now, with the UUSC Coffee Project, it is easy to do. The coffee business is a vital target for fair trade practices. Most coffee farmers are small landowners or tenants living in poverty while growing one of the richest commodities in the world. Commodity traders rely on price fluctuations to make their money, and those fluctuations

mean that farmers never know how much they will get for their crops. In order for coffee to come to market, it passes through the hands of processors, creditors, exporters, brokers and other handlers before it is sold in stores or cafés. Even when coffee prices are high in the United States, farmers rarely reap the benefits.



Fair trade vs. conventional coffee chain. *Courtesy of Equal Exchange.*

Equal Exchange buys coffee directly from farmer cooperatives so that the benefits of trade go to farmers. When congregations purchase coffee through the Equal Exchange Interfaith Coffee Program, UUSC receives a percentage of the proceeds. In turn, UUSC uses these funds to support human rights initiatives or projects in the coffee growing regions. One current project supported by UUSC is a women’s leadership training program at the Manos Campesinas cooperative in Guatemala.

Purchase fairly traded coffee, tea and cocoa

Your congregation can order fair trade coffee, tea and cocoa to benefit the UUSC Coffee Project directly from Equal Exchange. Coffee may be purchased by the pound in whole bean or ground form.

To contact Equal Exchange:
 Equal Exchange Interfaith Program
 50 United Drive
 West Bridgewater, MA 02379
 774.776.7366, ext. 228
 interfaith@equalexchange.com
 www.equalexchange.com

Be certain to say that UUSC sent you!



Women’s leadership training session at the Manos Campesinas cooperative.

Interested in learning more?

For updated information on the UUSC Coffee Project and advocacy ideas to promote fair trade, visit: www.uusc.org/coffeeproject or send an e-mail to coffeeproject@uusc.org.



Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

“The Power of You & You”

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