

# St. Luke's New Coffee Project: Good Coffee for a Good Cause

by Janet Harris and Dave Duba



FAIR TRADE



Look for the label!

Around the world coffee and fellowship come together where we share community. A warm pot of coffee is often the centerpiece of fellowship hour and other gathering. Now, it is a new way we can help people in need.

Coffee lovers now have reason to celebrate! Delicious Fair-Trade coffee, tea and cocoa are coming to St Luke's for fellowship hours and home use that will directly support St Luke's Youth and World Mission projects. The UMCOR Coffee Project is a United Methodist Committee on Relief program linking congregations with small coffee farmers and their families through fair trade.

It is a new way to help people in need while enjoying delicious coffee. We can reach out to our neighbors overseas with the things we purchase as well as the offerings we give. In addition, for each case of coffee, tea or cocoa purchased through the project, Equal Exchange makes a contribution to the UMCOR Small Farmer Fund which further supports coffee farmers and their families.

Coffee is big business — it's the second most heavily traded commodity in the world. But for the majority of small coffee farmers, the benefits are small. The chain of events that leads from the coffee farm to your cup is long and expensive, often leaving the farmer with very little to live on. Most small coffee farmers live in isolated communities in some of the poorest countries in the world. They usually sell their coffee through middlemen, known to Latin American farmers as "coyotes." With world prices in constant flux and coyotes offering the lowest price possible, farmers never know how much they'll get for their crops.

Some 20 million people near the equator depend on coffee for their livelihood. In their struggle just to make a simple living, the producers of a rich crop are often trapped in poverty. Fair Trade is a viable solution to this crisis, assuring consumers that the coffee we drink was purchased under fair conditions. To become Fair Trade certified, an importer must meet stringent international criteria; paying a minimum price per pound of \$1.26, providing much needed credit to farmers, and providing technical assistance such as help transitioning to organic farming.

UMCOR partners with a fair trade organization, Equal Exchange, to follow these standards on 100% of its coffees. Through its Interfaith Coffee Program, thousands of places of worship have become involved in fair trade, helping small farmers build a better life for themselves and their families.

Look for the new "St Luke's Café" in Fellowship Hall and enjoy good coffee for a good cause. A frequent-purchase punch card will be available at \$10 for 15 cups or individual cups for \$1 (a much better price than Starbucks). Additionally, available in Fellowship Hall will be a coffee store staffed by our youth selling 12oz. bags of coffees, tea boxes and cans of cocoa to benefit their mission projects. So do your coffee shopping at St Luke's and you'll be building a better world one sip at a time.

Starting  
January 8, 2006  
we will have  
**Fair Trade coffee**  
available during  
fellowship hours  
Sunday morning.

Café volunteers are  
needed to assist  
one Sunday every  
other month.  
To lend a hand,  
contact  
Dave Duba at  
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*fellowship & mission*