



GLOBAL MINISTRIES
COUNCIL OF
THEOLOGICAL
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CLASS OF 2009-2010

Be a Global Mission
Church

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Global Ministries Council of Theological Students Newsletter 2009-2010

Spring 2010

Be A Global Mission Church

DID YOU KNOW...

At General Assembly in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 29-August 2, 2009, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) passed Resolution No. 0916: *Be A Global Mission Church*.

In summary the resolution states:

The General Assembly claims the church's core identity as a global mission church and calls on the church to live out this commitment in all current and future mission priorities.

The General Assembly calls upon congregations and regions to implement the process detailed in the *Be a Global Mission Church* program from Global Ministries.

The General Assembly calls for a commitment to hear the cries of people around the world; reach out and respond with grace; and proclaim the joys as well as denounce the suffering of God's people.

The resolution, having passed, requires congregations, area ministries, and regions to actively think about and respond to what it means to be a Global Mission Church. To read the resolution in its entirety go to: <http://www.disciples.org/GeneralAssembly/ResolutionsandBusinessDocket/0916/tabid/513/Default.aspx>.

DID YOU KNOW...

At General Synod in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 26-30, 2009, the United Church of Christ passed the Resolution: *A Call to Be Global Mission Churches in the United Church of Christ*.

In summary the resolution states:

The General Synod promotes and encourages all settings of the church to claim and implement the Global Mission Church designation.

The General Synod invites all settings of the United Church of Christ—National, Conferences, Associations, and local churches and all age groups of the church to utilize assessment and implementation resources, such as *Be a Global Mission Church*.

The General Synod declares itself a "Global Mission Church" and recognizes such designation as one of the priorities of the church and encourages all settings of the United Church of Christ to claim the identity of being a Global Mission Church

The resolution, having passed, requires congregations, associations, and conferences to actively think about and respond to what it means to be a Global Mission Church. To read the resolution in its entirety go to: <http://www.ucc.org/synod/resolutions/g27/global-mission-church.pdf>.

Be A Global Mission Church
and
IMMIGRATION

Receiving—Lori Heutmaker, United Theological Seminary
Sending — Robert Van Ess, Eden Theological Seminary
Committing — Sarah Wolford, Yale Divinity School

Receiving on Our Shores

Lori Heutmaker, United Theological Seminary

When first asked what it might mean to “receive” through mission experiences, thoughts may turn to responding to purpose or call, personal fulfillment, or the joy of being the “hands of Christ” moving in the world. These are all right and wonderful reasons for engaging in mission opportunities, but there is a challenge to take one step further. As churches and youth groups throughout the UCC and DOC take up the mantle of being Global Mission Partners, there is another way in which to engage locally in a global concern. What if we, as churches and citizens of the United States, were to view our immigrant populations as missionaries in our midst? What if congregations agreed as partners to also “receive” the hopes, dreams and struggles of people’s lives from abroad? Much of our immigrant population today are living in their own Diaspora, separated perhaps for the balance of their lifetimes from their homelands, families, religions and cultures. There is much we stand to gain from these unofficial missionaries in our midst.

Minnesota is currently home to an estimated 60,000-75,000 Somali refugees; many having come to Minnesota as a secondary migration from another state, with the majority settling in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area (Greeson, Veach, & LeRoy, 2001; Minnesota Foundation, 2004).

These numbers are in dispute, for there is confusion over first versus secondary migrations, but also communication gaps exist between government census agencies and actual immigration status of some Somali people. Wherever the numbers fall, there remains a large immigrant community consisting of people in search of employment, housing, and education that need assistance in adjusting to life in the snowy Upper-Midwest. This presents local congregations with the opportunity to share in the full missionary experience of receiving, while providing partnership and critical presence right in their own backyard.

The theology surrounding a partnership that could benefit those of us that are local as well as our immigrant populations can find roots in Paul’s letters. Global Ministries outlines Paul’s

use of *koinonia* in Philippians as the prime example. He states, “I thank God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for you, because of your **sharing** in the gospel from the first day until now.” (Philippians 1:3-5, NRSV) That sharing can be interpreted as fellowship, a close mutual relationship, participation, sharing in partnership, contribution and gift—all attributes foundational to the Christian community. Many Somali have landed in Minnesota after fleeing a country that has experienced nearly twenty years without a recognized government, a place from where statistically 1 million of the 7.7 million residents have fled. Those who have fled suffered from clan warfare, displacement, and hunger—arriving in the United States with only hope in their bags. Our sense of mission partnership can create the hospitality a new arrival most desperately needs.

There are many physical needs, but being called as a partner presents specific ways to connect. This is our time to step forward and do the deep listening to a war ravaged people. This is our time to step forward and pray across religious boundaries, accepting all of God’s children in the myriad of ways in which we are formed. 81% of Somali immigrants are Muslim which allows our Christian communities to learn and grow through open dialogue. The outer basic needs can be met through a variety of ways, but the inner needs, perhaps deepest needs of immigrants to be seen, heard, and understood are critical when navigating a new culture. Our continued critical presence provides space to discern where the deepest needs of the community rest. A full 51% of respondents in the Wilder study felt that while keeping their culture and language alive in their family was important, it was just as important to become as “American” as possible. Native Minnesotans need only look to their own Scandinavian or German heritage to see where they have blended traditions of old into a new way of experiencing a new culture. This is deep in the Minnesota psyche and a important place for us to reach out and receive their stories.

Missionaries in Our Midst

Robert E. Van Ess

One may ask: What does scripture have to say about how we as Christians choose to enter into the numerous debates about the *status* of illegal immigrants in our country? The United States is in this debate the guardian of a well spring of privilege and opportunity that if you are on the outside looking in may very well appear to be the Promised Land. A Promised Land where this opportunity and privilege is seen as the journey into a new life where what hangs in the balance is more than the mere *status* of one's citizenship, but the very *fate* of your entire family. A look at the roles and responsibilities of the manifestations of justice, righteousness and shalom in the Latter Prophets and Writings reveals the universal reach of God's message of inclusion and diversity embraced through scripture and the ever evolving understanding of the character of God by humanity. Apparently the love of God is not restricted by the borders of any given country.

"The book of Isaiah...is a meditation...about the destiny of Jerusalem *into* the crises of exile and the promise of Jerusalem *out* of exile into new well-being."^[i] A sense of well-being and deliverance from judgment into the promise of hope and salvation through God's forgiveness that evolves out of the Former Prophets literature to encompass all nations. Looking at the book of Isaiah we can identify this book as a collection of writings from three different perspectives.

First Isaiah ends around 701 BCE and concerns itself with a perspective that is looking towards the exile that is to come.^[ii] Within First Isaiah is what is known as the "oracles against the nations" which can be found in chapters 13-23. "The pattern for this genre of text is the naming of a number of nation-states and the pronouncement of a prophetic lawsuit against them, thus insisting that even non-Israelite peoples are fully subject to the rule of YHWH and are under judgment when they do not conform to that rule."^[iii]

This portrayal of God and God's will being concerned with all of humankind and not just the people of Israel is another major theme in the Latter Prophets.^[iv] The developing theme here associated with the "oracles to the nations" in the Latter Prophets is that the God of Israel is not just concerned with righteousness and justice in order to realize a realm of peace for Israel alone but for all of creation. "The Latter Prophets regularly contain 'oracles against the nations' (Isa. 13-23; Jer. 46-51; Ezek. 27-32; Amos 1-2; Obadiah; Nah. 1-3; Zech. 9)...could well be labeled 'oracles against Israel and Judah.'"

Heutmaker, cont. from page 3

We are called as Christians to create communities rooted in love and justice, regardless of political values or ideals. To recall Jesus' mission as explained in Matthew 25:40, ". . . 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me,'" is an invitation of our bodies to cleave to those who stand in need of our gifts. We can open our hearing, renew our sight, and reach for compassion by baring ourselves as a needy people. A Somali proverb teaches us: "If people come together, they can even mend a piece of the sky." Let us, as U.S citizens, receive the gift of our immigrant peoples, for the beauty and diversity that they bring, and for the stories of our partners on this planet.

1 www.somaliactionalliance.org

2 *Telling the Story: A Handbook for Ministries and Mission Interpreters in Disciples Regions and UCC Conferences.*, Module 3, 1.

3 Paul Mattesich and Kate Parry, *Speaking for Themselves: A Survey of Hispanic, Hmong, Russian, and Somali Immigrants*, (St. Paul: Wilder Foundation, 2000), www.wilder.org/research/reports.

4 *Ibid.*, 9.

5 <http://givemn.razoo.com/story/Somali-Action-Alliance-Educationfund>

[v] The condemnations against the nations are nothing that the nation of Israel itself was not guilty of in the eyes of the prophetic texts. “The oracles against the nations are balanced by the bulk of the prophetic books which are against God’s own people.” [vi] The fact that the text has the prophetic voice reaching out to the nations of the world reveals that God’s message and will revealed in the prophetic call to awareness and action was also available to the world. “Given the final form of the Latter Prophets, headed by the book of Isaiah, the ‘oracles against the nations’ might be better understood as ‘oracles about the nations’—that is, as testimony to God’s world encompassing claim.” [vii]

This “world encompassing claim” can be further supported in scripture by looking at Isaiah 2:2-4:

In the days to come the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth instruction and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. (NRSV)

These synchronic readings of the Latter Prophets reveal that the call to action contained within the writings is one that calls the nation of Israel not to be in relationship with God and God’s will separate from the world but to be in relationship with God and God’s will as it is also in relationship with the world. We can see that in its final form the Latter Prophets bear a repetition of witness of God’s judgment and promise for all of humanity; a pattern of judgment and promise that is inclusive and embraces diversity by its application of reconciliation and restoration to all the peoples of the earth in relationship with God.

A revelation born out of a study of the Latter Prophets and Writings is the discovery that there has been reflected in the scriptures a shift in our collective understandings of the character of

God. When considering the changing role of God in scripture we find:

The Lord God has an honored place in the narrative, but he is now a motivating force rather than an actor. His “precious thoughts,” so cherished by the Psalmist and linked by the Psalmist to the Lord’s still-remembered and acknowledged role as the master of the physical universe, are objectified and placed in the possession of every member of the community. [viii]

As we consider the major theme of justice, righteousness and shalom within the Former Prophets and Writings we are able to see how in scripture there is a transformation in thought that takes the responsibilities of achieving this triune ideology that runs in tandem with the biblical writers understanding and perception of the characteristics of God. As the scripture moves from the Royal and Temple theologies of the Torah and Former Prophets motivated by the failure of their kings to achieve the archetype expressed in the seventy-second Psalm towards the post-exilic marginalized and oppressed experience of “Judaism’s own life...driven from the center of political reality, so the God of the Jews in the same way moves from the active center to the reflective margin.” [ix] As a result of the communal experiences of the people of Israel reflected in the writings of scripture we are able to witness the transformation of God from that of an active participant in history to that of being a Divine force that desires an intimate connection to the people. An intimacy in relationship that calls for an awareness of the people to the personal responsibility to promote and protect justice, righteousness and shalom in their lives of themselves and the other in place of the kings and the temple elite of days gone by. “At last the Israelites take charge of their own life.” [x]

This transformation of the understood and expressed character of God runs in tandem with the people of Israel's understanding and expression of their personal and corporate identities. "...Israel can no longer rely upon the 'direct action' of YHWH, as did the remembered ancients...if the God of this Scripture is motivator and legitimator but not actor, then human agents must take their own risks."^[xi]

The presence of the Oracles against the Nations throughout the Latter Prophets defines a theological interpretation of inclusion and diversity that envelops all of humanity. An understanding of the changing character of God received and rediscovered throughout the Latter Prophets and Writings reveals a responsibility we bear as Christians today to hear the message of inclusiveness that embraces diversity for the relationships of the church, our communities, and with each other. Simply put: as revealed through scripture there is no such thing as an *illegal* immigrant.

Van Ess, cont. from page 4

^[i] Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Cannon and Christian Imagination*. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003) 159.

^[ii] McCann Jr., Clinton J. *BI 12B Biblical Studies II: The Latter Prophets and Writings*. (Lecture notes, 02-09-09 @ Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO, USA).

^[iii] Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Cannon and Christian Imagination*. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003) 163.

^[iv] McCann Jr., Clinton J. *BI 12B Biblical Studies II: The Latter Prophets and Writings*. (Lecture notes, 03-09-09 @ Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO, USA).

^[v] McCann Jr., Clinton J. *The Hermeneutics of Grace: Discerning the Bible's Single Plot*. (Interpretation: January 2003) 12.

^[vi] McCann Jr., Clinton J. Comments made in reference to Spring 2009 Midterm. (BI 12B @ Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO, USA).

^[vii] McCann Jr., Clinton J. *The Hermeneutics of Grace: Discerning the Bible's Single Plot*. (Interpretation: January 2003) 12.

^[viii] Miles, Jack. *God: A Biography*. (London and New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995) 406. As referenced in: Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Cannon and Christian Imagination*. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003) 385.

^[ix] Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Cannon and Christian Imagination*. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003) 385. From observation made in: Neusner, Jacob. *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism*. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1973).

^[x] Miles, Jack. *God: A Biography*. (London and New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995) 401. As referenced in: Brueggemann, Walter. *An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Cannon and Christian Imagination*. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2003) 386.

^[xi] Ibid.

Committing

Sarah Wolford, Yale Divinity School

A few months ago, I spent an evening of conversation with Anisah and Nadim*, Iraqi refugees who were taken in by a Christian hospitality community for missionaries which I minister to in New Haven, Connecticut. We gathered at the director's home, and with the help of two Arabic speakers from the community, we got to know each other better.

Through the translators, we learned that Nadim and Anisah lived in constant fear of bombings and death in Iraq. But despite that fear, they missed home. Anisah spoke wistfully of her grandson. She had spoken with him over the internet but wanted to hold him in her lap so much.

As the evening came to a close, conversation turned to me. Anisah asked my name. I told her: "Sarah." Her eyebrows lifted in surprise as she began to talk excitedly to her translator. Her translator smiled when she caught my questioning gaze: "Anisah was happy to hear that your name was Sarah because it's popular among Iraqi Muslim women."

Sometimes, as Anisah found out, we find home in strangest places; but as Christians, we know that such occurrences are simply a foretaste of God's kingdom. And if we are communities that are committed to reminding the world of this new kingdom, we must also make an effort to be concerned with allowing this truth to shine through our actions of welcoming strangers into our own congregations and communities in tangible ways.

To begin, your congregations can donate money through Week of Compassion and Great Hour of Sharing offerings. The proceeds of this offering fund Global Mission programs that provide support for refugees around the world.

Congregations can also contribute to refugees' spiritual needs by praying for them in small group and worship settings; a perfect beginning point for this would be participating in World Refugee Day on June 20.

If this initial step leaves your congregation hungry to learn more, look around your area to partner with non-profits and other churches who are currently working with refugees/immigrants. Congregations who get involved on the community level usually donate clothing, furniture, toiletries, and volunteer time.

And if your church is interested in deepening their commitment to refugees/immigrants outside of donations, you can get involved with addressing more systemic issues that face strangers in the U.S. Your congregation can seek that compassion, as well as justice, is done by peacefully sitting in on deportation hearings at a local courthouse or write letters to their congressmen and women advocating that the U.S. reform its policies and treatments of strangers in our country. But if this systemic work does not fit your congregation, you may try a more personal and direct form of commitment: sponsor and house a refugee family. Wider Church Ministries (UCC) can provide detailed guidance for you.

These are only suggestions and I hope they prove to be a useful starting point. Whatever your congregation decides to do, remember that your actions will be speaking a familiar name in a strange place for those you welcome: God's love.

*Names are changed to protect privacy.

Resources:

Disciples Home Mission—Refugee and Immigration Ministries (RIM): <http://www.discipleshomemissions.org/RIM/index.htm>

RIM trains Disciples of Christ congregations to become advocates for immigrants and refugees. Refugee resettlement and immigrant hospitality ministries are predominate.

Global Ministries: www.globalministries.org esp. <http://globalministries.org/resources/special-days/WRD/> Provides congregations with information and materials to celebrate World Refugee Day (June 20). Also includes up to date news regarding new studies and advocacy movements on immigrant/refugee issues.

United Church of Christ on Immigration and Refugee Resettlement: <http://www.ucc.org/justice/immigration> and <http://www.ucc.org/refugees>

The site gives a comprehensive overview of immigration and refugee issues and how UCC churches are already involving themselves. Worship (prayers, sermons, calls to worship, and hymns) resources are also available. This is also the site that connects to the refugee resettlement work of Wider Church Ministries.

Be A Global Mission Church and Women's Issues

Receiving—Merlyn Lawrence, Chicago Theological Seminary
Sending — Lauren Lorincz, Andover Newton Theological School
Committing — Melissa Marquis, Bangor Theological Seminary

Receiving the Gifts of Global Mission Partnership **Merlyn Lawrence, Chicago Theological Seminary**

I know a woman who generously responded and gave to people in need. She willingly gave her time, offered hospitality, was a listening ear and genuinely loved and cared for those who were hurting or hungry. However, in her own time of deepest need, she chose to keep her crisis a secret and so endured her pain alone. She was unable to share her own vulnerabilities or to receive from others the gifts she so graciously bestowed on others. I wondered why it was so difficult for her to be ministered to by others. For many of us it is so much easier to give than receive!

In the past, global mission was experienced as the Church of the West and North imposing its western ways of being, doing and believing on our global mission partners. Today, we seek to be true to alternative models of mission, with “partnership” and “critical presence” being key concepts defining the paradigm shift in our theology of global mission. So what does partnership entail? Partnership includes being in egalitarian relationship with our partners, a relationship of mutuality, hospitality, sharing, giving and receiving and accompaniment. It involves a walking alongside of each other, companioning each other and being a critical presence to each other. Partnership includes reciprocity, cooperation, collaboration and trust in relationships.

If the goal of our global mission relationship is to be both the senders/givers and recipients of the gifts of partnership, then why is it that churches and denominations in the west are more likely to send missionaries to other parts of the world who appear more materially needy than us in the west, to be received there? What will happen if our global partners would come to our (less materially needy) churches as missionaries in residence and sojourn with us for a while? Would we be open to receiving the gifts they have to offer? What would it be like for our global partners to be a critical presence to us, to minister to us at the point of our deepest need?

We remember that it was through Jesus’ encounter with the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15: 21-28) or the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30) that Jesus was gifted in his ministry. Through the encounter with her, Jesus expands his ministry to include Gentiles. As we contemplate Global mission, we see the gift of this woman’s ministry. Jesus did not come to this lightly. It is this foreign woman’s persistence, tenacity, quick wit, wisdom and advocacy on behalf of her daughter that enables Jesus to see differently and that causes him to have a change of heart, leading him to transform and expand his ministry to all. May we too be open to the experience of the “other”, to be receivers of global mission partnerships in our communities of faith.

Hagar Sent Out Into Wilderness

Lauren Lorincz, Andover Newton Theological School

A woman and her young son are exiled into the wilderness. They wander aimlessly, with very little water and hardly any food. The situation seems hopeless and they are alone in their misery. In her distress, the woman weeps and lifts up her voice to God in desperation. She weeps for her young son who will surely die, she weeps for herself, and she weeps for the injustice of it all.

Many of you may recognize this as the Biblical story of Hagar and Ishmael, exiled to the desert after the birth of Isaac. Hagar, an Egyptian slave, and Ishmael, the son of her union with Abraham, were sent away into the harsh wilderness of Beer-sheba with only a skin of water and some bread. And in Genesis 21, God does come to Hagar's aid. God hears the cries of Ishmael and sends an angel to help the young family. The angel helps Hagar to see a well of water and assures her that a great nation will descend from Ishmael. The woman and her young son survived another day and their cries of misery were answered.

The story of Hagar is difficult to read. Imagining this innocent mother and her son sent out to die is almost unbearable. In part, it is difficult to read because it is unfortunately not unique. People are still exiled to wildernesses around the world, often displaced by violence and terror. Refugees exist from many countries, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, and Columbia. In the Middle East alone, there are 4.2 million people who are refugees or internally displaced—most are Palestinians, Afghanis, and Iraqis. And it is estimated that four out of five of all displaced people in our world, a staggering 45 million people, are women, children, and young people. Unfortunately exiled women and adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to rape and abuse. Exiled women face the hardships of refugee life without the protection of a stable home and often without government aid. Like Hagar, exiled women often have to watch as their children suffer. Thus, the story of Hagar and Ishmael continues to play out in our world today and it is up to us to respond.

We have the power to be the hands and feet of God. We can minister to the modern-day Hagers and Ishmaels in our midst. We can help open up their eyes to the well of the overflowing love and mercy of God. It is up to us to hear their cries and respond. It is up to us to help them not just survive another day, but work alongside them for a day when they can leave the wilderness and be at peace in stable homes once again. When we go out into the world to serve others, when we respond to injustice, we help those who are sent out into the wilderness. We help Hagar and we help Ishmael. May it be so with us.

1 Genesis 21: 1-21, *Harper Collins Study Bible*, New Revised Standard Version.

2 "Refugee Camps Worldwide," Million Souls Aware, Accessed 31 January, 2010 <<http://millionsoulsaware.org/>>.

3 Women's Refugee Commission Fact Sheet," Women's Refugee Commission, Accessed 30 January, 2010, <http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/docs/wrc_general_fact_sheet.pdf>.

Making a Personal Commitment to Action **Melissa Marquis, Bangor Theological Seminary**

Human Trafficking, Poverty, Hunger, Domestic Violence, Oppression, Genocide, Natural Disasters, Rape, Neglect, War, Despair.....The magnitude of injustices affecting women and children in the world can lead a person to a place of paralyzing fear. We might think, "What kind of difference could just one person make?" I have seen first hand how one person *can* make a difference. No one is too young, too old, too limited by health, income or talents to get involved in some way. Below is a list of ideas and resources to help people get started. This list is by no means exhaustive. The internet is an incredible resource that can guide a person to find ways to get involved.

You are personally involved in these issues through **Global Ministries**. Lots of stories.... Visit www.globalministries.org under "Resources" or "Get Involved"

Websites:

- Thehungersite.com- a daily click of your mouse can help feed hungry people.
- Simply type in "end genocide in Darfur" and you will have many choices of websites and ways to help.
- Change your search engine to "Good Search". Every time you use this search engine, money goes to a charity of your choice. Global Ministries is on "Good Search."
- www.prajwalaindia.org
- www.healafrika.org
- www.worldwidefistulafund.org
- www.34millionfriends.org

Books:

Half the Sky (Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn) Kristof and his wife have spent years traveling the world talking to women about their struggles from human trafficking to abuse and neglect. The book gives firsthand accounts and stories along with a plethora of websites and ways we can all lend a hand.

Not on Our Watch: The Mission to End Genocide in Darfur and Beyond (Don Cheadle and John Pendergast)
The Devil Came on Horseback (Brian Seidle) These two books give witness to the ongoing genocide happening in the Darfur region of Sudan in Africa.

Be the Change: Your Guide to Ending Slavery and Changing the World (Zack Hunter- a 12 year old from Atlanta)
How to Change the World (David Bornstein)
Three Cups of Tea (**Greg Mortensen**)

Organizations committed to making change:

- American Assistance for Cambodia.
- Polaris Project- working with victims of human trafficking worldwide.
- Free the Slaves- developed by Kevin Bales
- The Sonagachi Project
- New Light- developed by Urmi Basu
- Vital Voices
- International Justice Mission
- Equality Now
- FemCare (Procter & Gamble)
- Ashoka, a company developed by Bill Drayton
- Kashf Foundation

Learn about the laws and how you can help change them:

- Trafficking Victims Act of 2000
- The International Violence Against Women Act

Get to know who your politicians are and where they stand on these issues.

***Pray**

Be A Global Mission Church and Fair Trade

Receiving—William Bauzo, Christian Theological Seminary
Sending — Tim Graves, Lexington Theological Seminary
Committing — Jayme Harvey, Brite Divinity School

How can we be agents of liberation through Fair Trade?

William A. Bauzo, Christian Theological Seminary

Have you ever asked yourself, what good is it to buy fair trade products? Or have you found yourself questioning if the right people actually get what companies express they are giving through the fair trade exchange programs. These questions were on my mind when I worked for the Starbucks Coffee Company and each time I read the label on a pound of coffee. The idea that this social movement and market based approach is designed at providing growers and hand-crafters in current developing countries with the means to be sustainable at their trade is one thing, but have you ever asked yourself, how can both persons of first world countries and of second or third world countries become liberated through the buying and promoting of fair trade products?

When you buy a fair trade product be it coffee, tea, a bracelet, and/or a handbag you may have thought that you were being a Good Samaritan by helping persons with less privilege receive the basic requirements for living, but have you ever looked at it from a different perspective? Each time you give a gift to someone you care about or give money to a homeless person on the street, you feel good about what you did and an instant gratification is attained. Have you ever thought that persons in other countries who benefit from the fair trade exchange program receive the same sense of satisfaction when they get news of all the people in the U.S. and other countries that are in love with a purse they made by hand or a drum that is being used in churches across the country? This is being an agent of liberation through the fair trade exchange program. When you buy fair trade, you empower persons in various countries to continue to sell their products at a reasonable price and not just attain the means to live, but the means to know that they are making a difference in the lives of others in the world through their products. No longer is it about just helping them monetarily through the purchases of their products, but it is also about providing them with the knowledge that there are people enjoying the products that they made with love and dedication. When you buy a fair trade product in the future remember that liberation is being attained bilaterally and not unilaterally like once believed by many.

Generosity as Fair Trade
Tim Graves, Lexington Theological Seminary

Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" He saw through their duplicity and said to them, "Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?" "Caesar's," they replied. He said to them, "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent. Luke 20: 22-26 NRSV

This passage has often been interpreted to justify the payment of civil taxes. Yet, that simple interpretation neglects that all of creation comes from God. The redwood trees, the olive tree, the ant and the bumblebee, the robin and the cardinal are all from God who created the heavens and the earth. If we give to God that which is God's, as Jesus counsels, then we must give all that we have and are to God and the furtherance of God's kingdom.

Kenneth Carter suggests that, "People are basically generous at their core. . . . [because] people are created in the image of God." The responses following each natural disaster supports a belief in innate human generosity. How could it be any other way if we are indeed made in the image of God?

Generosity is more than the checks we write to our local congregations, however. How we spend our money reflects *whose* we perceive ourselves to be. When we spend our money at the expense of others, we are forgetting that we belong to God. When our desire for a cheap cup of coffee, for a smartphone, or for a cheap pair of jeans takes priority over someone else, we are giving to Caesar that which is God's.

We live in a world in which our sinfulness has created disparities across the globe. It is a world in which it is impossible to live fully in community as God intends us to live. Buying fair trade coffee and other fair trade products will not end all unfairness and oppression but when a parent receives a fair wage to provide for their children, we are giving to God that which is God's.

We are called by Jesus to give to God what is God's, that is we are called to work toward the coming kingdom. Through socially responsible spending of whatever wealth has been entrusted to us, we are furthering the kingdom.

Fair Trade, The Buying Guide
Jayme Harvey, Brite Divinity School

When buying fair trade products, make sure it has the fair trade certification label.



Below is a list of fair trade certified products served at national cafes and restaurants as well as retailers where fair trade certified products are sold.

National Cafes and Restaurants:

- [Ben & Jerry's Scoop Shops](#) - Ask for Vanilla, Chocolate, Coffee or Coffee Heath Bar Crunch ice cream.
- [Bruegger's](#) - Ask for their daily Fair Trade Certified brewed coffee.
- [Caribou Coffee](#) - Ask for the Fair Trade Blend.
- [Dunkin' Donuts](#) - Order any hot or iced espresso drink.
- [Einstein Bagels](#) - Ask for their Global Village Fair Trade Blend.
- [Indigo Coffee](#) - Ask for their Global Village Fair Trade Blend.
- [Noah's Bagels](#) - Ask for their daily Fair Trade Certified brewed coffee.
- [Peet's Coffee and Tea](#) - Ask for the Fair Trade Blend.
- [Seattle's Best Coffee](#) - Ask for the Fair Trade Certified Organic French Roast.
- [Starbucks Coffee](#) - Ask for Cafe Estima.
- [Tully's Coffee](#) - Order any hot or iced espresso drink.

Retailers:

- [Costco](#) - Look for Kirkland Signature FTC (Fair Trade Certified) Coffee
- [Fred Meyer](#) - Look for FTC coffee, chocolate, tea
- [Giant](#) - Look for FTC flowers, coffee, tea, chocolate
- [Kroger](#) - Look for FTC coffee, chocolate, tea
- [Organic Bouquet](#) - Look for FTC flowers
- [Safeway](#) - Look for FTC coffee, tea, sugar
- [Sam's Club](#) - Look for Member's Mark® coffee, Neu Direction FTC wine, Peterson Farms FTC Sweetened Dried Triple Cherry & Cherry Berry Blend, FTC bananas, & online FTC flowers
- [Target](#) - Look for Wandering Grape FTC wines, Archer Farms FTC coffee
- [Trader Joe's](#) - Look for FTC coffee
- [Wal-Mart](#) - Look for Sam's Choice FTC coffee, Peterson Farms FTC Chocolate Covered Dried Cherries
- [Wegman's](#) - Look for FTC coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar
- [Whole Foods Market](#) - Look for FTC coffee, tea, chocolate, wine, sugar, energy bars, body care products, flowers, rice

Source: <http://transfairusa.org/content/>

WhereToBuy/

Every morning there is a glorious smell that beckons me to life. I hop out of bed, make my way to the kitchen, and reach for the coffee pot full of deliciousness. I am addicted to coffee and I am not ashamed!

The best part of my addiction is what it supports – fair trade.

Fair trade positively impacts the lives of farmers, their families, and their communities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Fair trade is built on the principles of fair price for the farmers, fair labor conditions for the farm workers, direct trade through the elimination of inessential middlemen, democratic and transparent organizations, community development, and environmental sustainability (<http://transfairusa.org>).

Coffee isn't the only fair trade product. Other fair trade certified products in the United States include **tea, cocoa, sugar, fruit, rice, flowers, and wine.**

Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39). Buying fair trade products is *one way* to actively participate in loving God and neighbor.

Getting caught up in fair trade doesn't have to be difficult. I leaned into fair trade slowly by choosing one product I consume every day to be fair trade certified, and it is no more expensive than the coffee I would have bought otherwise. Every morning when I take that first sip of brew, I know that I have actively supported a movement that stands on principles that influence loving God's children and loving God's creation.

Grace and Peace,
Jayme

God is the breath that sustains us. As a reflection of God's breath, free trade sustains individuals, families, and whole communities.

For further reading about fair trade and how you might get more involved check out the resources below.

- [Fair Trade: A Beginner's Guide](#). Jacqueline DeCarlo. 2007. Oxford: One World Publications.
- [Fair Trade: Using our Purchasing Power for Justice and Hope](#), Judy Hoffine, June 2008, Partners for Just Trade
- [Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival](#) by Daniel Jaffe, University of California Press, April 2007.

Global Ministries Council of Theological Students 2009-2010

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