

“AND EVERYONE’S CHAINS WERE UNFASTENED” ACTS 16:26D

The story of the release of Paul and Silas from prison during an earthquake and the conversion of their jailer makes for dramatic reading. They were imprisoned after a severe flogging and undoubtedly they suffered pain —perhaps this was the reason for their prayer and singing. Concern for the prisoner has always been part of the Christian tradition, perhaps based on this very real experience of the early followers of Jesus. Modern day slavery exists in many forms, including in the cocoa industry where some children have been sold into bondage to work on the farms in West Africa where most cocoa is grown. Some of the children are trafficked to Côte d’Ivoire from Ghana, Burkina Faso and Mali. The chemicals and machetes make the work dangerous. The children may not attend school, suffer beatings and work long hours. The major reason why child labourers are used is poverty—with better returns the small farmers who grow the cocoa beans could hire adults and make enough for their families. Fairtrade has set in place a monitoring system to make sure that children who may work on a family farm are not working in hazardous conditions nor are trafficked.

Deciding to buy chocolate with the fairtrade or Trade Aid brands, is a shopping choice that guarantees small producers and workers will get fair prices, and a fairtrade premium for local community projects. Farmers are supported to grow sustainable crops, expensive middlemen are cut out of the sale and children are not exploited. Products carrying the fairtrade label are independently checked to make sure they meet international standards. Goodness is guaranteed. In Aotearoa New Zealand the market for products carrying the Fairtrade label continues to increase. Fairtrade sales grew from \$45.4 million in 2011 to \$52.6 million in 2012. Growth of almost 16% in the current economic climate is a sign that more New Zealanders are prepared to pay the difference to make sure the food they eat is fair.

Christian World Service is inviting you to do something special for Mother’s Day this year. Focusing worship on the mothers in your midst and the mothers in many developing countries who struggle to provide food for their families in near impossible situations makes the love that is the core of our faith visible.

This year’s resources use the lectionary readings for May 12 as a basis for a fair trade focus, but there are other examples available from our website. Mix and match or use something from these resources for your service. Holding A Fair Cuppa after the morning service is a popular way of putting the spotlight on fairtrade and making morning tea special. Using fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar are the basics. To do something special try fairtrade chocolate brownies or other goodies to celebrate the importance of mothers. Raise funds to help CWS partners make real differences for mothers struggling to provide enough food and a decent life for their families and communities. In this way you can be part of the work that frees people from poverty in a way that enhances their dignity and speaks of the love of God for everyone.





OPENING PRAYER

God of the most High
We come in thanks and praise,
Knowing that our world is broken,
Violence abounds and goodness fails
You are here with us.

We come seeking new energy, more compassion and ways to make the world anew

Knowing that in our own strength we cannot overcome
all that is evil and unjust in our world.

**And so we come seeking your grace.
Amen**

WHY FAIR TRADE?

Fairtrade ensures a better deal for impoverished producers in developing countries through:

- ◆ A fair and stable price for their products
- ◆ Long term trading relations and advance payments
- ◆ Investment in local community development
- ◆ Environmentally sustainable farming methods
- ◆ Support in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to operate successfully in the global economy

CHOCOLATE TIME

You will need sufficient Trade Aid or fairtrade branded chocolate for the group or you could make hot chocolate. Trade Aid has a new [recipe booklet](#) with instructions.

Begin by making a chocolate confession of your own—maybe you ate a whole packet, snuck some extra piece or even hate the stuff. Make it personal, ask who likes chocolate and then ask why so many people like chocolate. Check out how many gave their mothers chocolate for Mother's Day. Then ask if they know where chocolate comes from—mostly from West Africa. Close to 50 million people are dependent on cocoa and over 90% of the world's cocoa is grown on 5.5 million small farms. Many cocoa farmers and workers live in extreme poverty. Children work on the cocoa farms—some are sold for money. They work long hours with dangerous chemicals and using machetes. They can cut themselves or get sick—and they don't go to school. It is not fair. Chocolate tastes good when we know it has a fairtrade or Trade Aid label. Share the chocolate!





FAIR TRADE HYMN

Tune: ST DENIO

(Special thanks to Shirley Murray)

Good neighbours, forgive us –
we do not play fair;
those marketplace forces
determine our share,
in trading, in aiding
economy's role
we've had to exchange
dollar notes for our soul.

Good neighbours, remind us
of just how you toil –
the long hours of labour,
the working of soil,
the profit from harvests
that you never see,
so we can keep drinking
your coffee and tea.

Our own trade agreements
leave no time to heed
the cost of your labour,
your hunger and need,
your children who swelter
in poverty's lap,
your people's enslavement
in poverty's trap.

Good neighbours, allow us
deep feelings of shame,
with ways to recapture
our country's good name –
consumers with conscience,
respecting your role,
are brokers of justice
to save our own soul.

READINGS

Acts 16:16-34

The miracle of freeing a girl from the spirits that enslaved her was not appreciated by those who held her captive. The unscrupulous men who made money from her madness appealed to the crowd who turned on Paul and Silas. They were arrested, severely beaten and thrown into prison. No doubt badly injured they spent the time signing hymns and praying. When the earthquake struck that could have been their freedom, they stayed—saving their Roman jailer from the need to kill himself as was required under Roman law. Paul, ever open to God was able to lead him to Christ. This conversion was immediate—the jailer washed their wounds and had his whole family baptised.

Paul's experiences in prison led to his concern for those who are held captive. He had felt the pain of imprisonment in his body and in an era where slavery was common spoke of the freedom found in Christ. Concern for those who are imprisoned and enslaved is a strong tradition in the Christian faith.

Psalm 97

The psalmist celebrates God's supreme reign by references to the physical world: cloud, fire, lightning, earthquakes, eruptions and the heavens. Besides the other gods, Yahweh was supreme (v9). Interestingly in v6, the psalmist emphasises God's justice as well as God's overwhelming power. In the last verses the reference to lightning dawning on the righteous or just, expresses care for those who live in God's world.

Rev 22:12-14,16-7,20-21

In the closing words of the Bible, the writer of Revelation references the totality of God as the Alpha and Omega using letters of cosmic significance. Referring to God in this way has become commonplace but it is worthy of closer reflection—God as the totality of existence is a statement of great significance. Are there moments in your life where you have felt the expansiveness of God's love?

John 17:20-26

This section is in the form of a prayer. Jesus prays for himself (v1-8), then the disciples (v9-19) and then their disciples (v20-26). In v23 he prays that "they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." To follow Jesus means that we must commit to a very high standard of love and unity. How we live affects the reputation of the whole faith community as well as God who has loved us since the foundation of the world. (v24).

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

Loving God

We think of chocolate and cocoa and give thanks for those who have helped to make it: the farmers who grow the cocoa tree, who tend the crops, who cut the pods and dry them in the sun. For those who transport it and the workers who transform it into the bars. Help us to make sure that all are paid fairly and treated with dignity; they have enough food and the means to care for their families.

Loving God, help us to work to make food fair.

We pray for those who are working to make sure that the workers receive a fair wage and that no one is exploited to make the food we too need to survive. Give strength and insight to those seeking to make markets fair so that trade benefits everyone not just a few. May those who are impoverished be freed from the hunger and want that enslaves.

Loving God, help us to work to make food fair.

We give thanks for mothers and the women that have loved and cared for us through the adventure of life. Give strength to those who care for vulnerable people. Help us to build a community where all people are included and valued, where everyone has enough to eat and where children can go to school.

We pray knowing that change happens when we work together and in the name of the one who comes in the name of freedom.

Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Together we have worshipped and given thanks

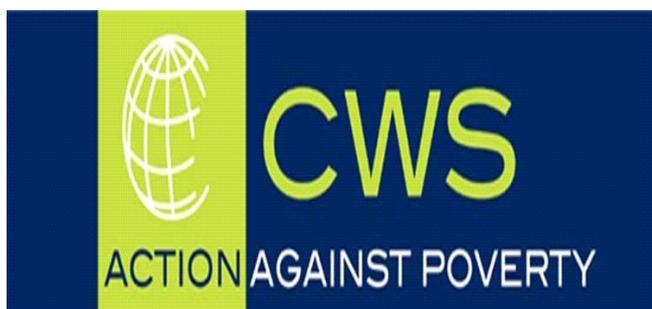
We have shared what is good

And received a measure of your grace

We go, knowing the ground may tremble,
But with your grace the hungry will be fed and the slaves freed.

We go expecting the miracles that we know come from you.

Amen



TAKE ACTION

- Shop Fairtrade. Look for the fairtrade mark or the Trade Aid brand. Tell others about fairtrade.
- Become a Fairtrade Church. For more information and to get a certificate contact CWS or check out the fair trade webpage.
- Raise funds to help CWS partners helping people out of poverty. You could ask for donations or plan a special event a quiz night or a concert during Fair Trade Fortnight.
- Hold a special morning tea for **A Fair Cuppa** It can be as simple as serving tea and coffee or you could try a Bake Off using fairtrade ingredients.
- Pray for the millions of small farmers and workers struggling to make ends meet and for those supporting the Fair trade movement.
- Order supplies from Trade Aid for your parish every week.
- Encourage other churches and groups using your facilities to use fairtrade products.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

CWS: www.cws.org.nz/the-issues/trade/fair-trade-fortnight-2013

Trade Aid: www.tradeaid.co.nz/Home

Fairtrade and Cocoa Report—Fairtrade Foundation: www.fairtrade.org.uk/includes/documents/cm_docs/2011/C/Cocoa%20Briefing%20FINAL%208Sept11.pdf

Fair Trade Association: www.fairtrade.org.nz/

Bananas: allgoodbananas.co.nz/

YouTube videos from Kuapa Kokoo Cooperative, Ghana:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdosVluOYmA&feature=player_embedded

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkltKhSAEw>

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