



## Introduction

Throughout scripture we are confronted by God's repeated call to act justly. The continuing poverty of millions in a world of plenty, the gross inequalities in the way we conduct trade are affronts to his goodness and justice. They demand a response from us.

Traidcraft was founded as a Christian response to poverty. As one of the pioneers of fair trade in the UK we rely heavily on the support of God's people who buy our products, who give to our charity, and who campaign with us for trade justice and a world freed from the scandal of poverty.

In this act of worship we will make a solemn promise to respond to God's call. It is offered as an act of recommitment for those who have supported us over the past 30 years and as inspiration for those who are just embarking on the fair trade journey.

## Call to Worship:

*Grace and peace to you from God, our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 1:3

Living God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, sacred Trinity. We have come as individuals from many places for this time to be together:

All **Living God - we give you thanks.**

Living God who calls us to seek justice for the poor. We have come to acknowledge your presence and to seek your face:

All **Living God - we give you thanks.**

Living God, sustainer and inspirer, protector and restorer, the one in whom we live and move and have our being. We have come to worship, to share, to learn, and to be renewed.

All **Have mercy on us. Amen.**

## Hymn:

**Reading:** Genesis 9: 12 - 16 (NIV)

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come:



I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the

rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.

**Reading:** James 2: 14 - 17 (NIV)

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

From the earliest days, God established a covenant relationship with his creation, calling his people to holiness, bearing witness to his steadfast love, finding delight in serving him

Let us, then, seek God's forgiveness for ways in which we have denied his claim upon us.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, when we do not listen for your word in the voice of others,

All **forgive us and renew us.**

All When we neglect or misuse the gifts you have given us,  
**forgive us and renew us.**

All When we do not love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ,  
**forgive us and renew us.**

All When we prefer our needs to those of our neighbours,  
**forgive us and renew us.**

All When our trade is built on power and not on justice,  
**forgive us and renew us.**

All When the earth's bounty is used to satisfy greed rather than need,  
**forgive us and renew us.**

All When we fail to share the Good News with the poor,  
**forgive us and renew us.**

### **Silence**

God calls us to serve him in the world,  
forgives us in Christ,  
and renews us by his indwelling Spirit

All **Amen. Thanks be to God.**



### **Hymn:**

**Reading:** Luke 22: 19- 20 (NIV)

**And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."**

We stand within a new covenant made by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and we bear his name.

With this new covenant God promises us new life in Christ as we promise to live no longer for ourselves but for God.

In the strength of this covenant, let us once more bind ourselves to God who, out of his grace, binds himself to us.

**(All stand)**

### **The covenant**

Sisters and brothers, God calls us to action on behalf of the poor. Let us, then, make a covenant with each other and with God to respond to his call in everything we do, and wherever Christ leads us.

To take up this covenant means that we are content that Christ directs us and that Christ alone is our reward.

Christ calls us to fairness and justice in many different ways. Some ways are easy and require little effort or personal sacrifice, but others are

difficult and will mean us having to change what we buy and where we shop, and to go without ourselves.

Some ways will bring us praise from those around us and win us admiration, but others may bring criticism and make us unpopular, when we raise our voice for the voiceless, when we call for justice for the poor.

Some ways we will find interesting and absorbing and will play to our natural strengths, but others we will find tedious and a chore.

In some of these ways we may please both Christ and ourselves; in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves.

Yet we know that we have the power to be able to act in all these ways because Christ inspires and strengthens us, and because we know that he has no hands or feet on earth but ours. If justice is to be done, it is we who are called to do it.

Therefore, let us make this covenant with God our own, giving ourselves anew and relying on his promises and his grace.

Loving Lord, since you have called us through Christ to share in this covenant, we will take on this duty with joy. For whatever we do for the least of our sisters and brothers, we do it for you.

We are no longer our own, but yours.

All **I am no longer my own but yours.**

**Call me and open my eyes to the injustice around me, the unfairness around me and the poverty around me; call me to dare to change my lifestyle, my habits and my outlook for you.**

**Call me to strive for fairness and justice in everything I do, not just in words, but in actions; not just locally, but globally.**

**Let me change myself for you, and so change the world for you.**

**I freely and wholeheartedly commit myself to this duty, knowing that in everything you will give me your inspiration, strength and grace.**

**Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it.**

**Let this covenant now made on earth be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.**

***(Silence. All seated)***

We do not enter this covenant for our own sakes but as servants and witnesses to God in the world. Let us pray for the church and the world.



Loving God, we pray for your church,  
that in the unity you call us to we may  
follow the way of Christ and live to your  
praise and glory:

All **Make us one, that the world may  
believe.**

We pray for the leaders of all nations,  
all who set policy and all who exercise  
judgement in the conduct of trade:

All **Rule their hearts so they act with  
justice and fairness.**

We pray for nations, communities and individuals whose lives are marred  
by conflict, shrunken by want, and warped by injustice:

All **We hear their cry: give us the resolve to meet their need.**

Creator God, you made all things good and we pray for the life of a fruitful  
earth, delighting in its beauty, marvelling at its richness:

All **We will cherish all creation and share fairly in its bounty.**

We pray, now, for our own needs and for those of others.....  
**(silent or open prayer)**

Give us wisdom Lord, to know your will,  
and courage to do it.  
May our words declare your love  
and our lives give substance to our words.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

**Hymn:** (Tune: Dundee)

Let us who share God's rainbow sign,  
A covenant of grace,  
Commit ourselves to share God's work,  
Creation to embrace.

In Christ who shares our flesh and blood  
We own our common birth,  
Evolving from God's seeds of love  
We're part of His good earth.

The way we live is linked to all,  
Our power to heal or bruise  
Builds justice or feeds poverty,  
Through what we spend and use.

So let us pledge all we control  
In a new covenant  
To strive for fairness 'til we join  
Earth's resurrection chant.

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## Prayer

Living God, we give thanks for the work of Traidcraft and the other dedicated fair trade organisations; for those whose vision and determination led to the setting up of these organisations; for those whose support and commitment has helped the fair trade movement to grow and flourish; and for those whose skill and advocacy keeps us alert to the continuing demand for trade justice and to the cry of the poor. Sustain and bless them in their work through the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, we pray.

Lord, help us to put on the full armour of God as we seek to fight poverty through trade. Give us the courage, wisdom, discernment, grace and strength as we confront, challenge, engage with and overcome injustice and unrighteousness in your name. Give us the voice to speak for the voiceless and the grace and empowering to live out what we believe. Keep before us that vision of a world freed from the scandal of poverty, where trade is just and people and communities can flourish. Help us to live what we teach and not to grow weary in serving your kingdom and embracing your call upon our lives, alone and together.

All **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**



We are grateful to the Faith & Order Committee of the Methodist Church in Britain for permission to adapt material from the Covenant Service, which inspired this worship. And we acknowledge with gratitude the contributions and assistance of the Rev. Nils Chittenden, the Rev. Alan Hinton, and members of the Northumbria Community.



## Help us do more

If you are using this service in your church, please consider taking up a special offering to support the work of our charity, Traidcraft Exchange.

Collection envelopes are available to order by quoting ref: 51520. Order them online at **[www.traidcraftshop.co.uk](http://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk)**

Traidcraft Exchange is currently touching the lives of over 25 million people in Africa and Asia helping them gain the confidence, knowledge and opportunities they need to generate a sustainable income through trade.

Our work enables people to grow their small businesses and trade effectively, realising their full potential and achieving a better quality of life for them, their families and their communities.

We are highly dependent on the support, generosity and involvement of thousands of individuals and churches to help us continue to empower many millions of poor producers.

- £26 could pay for a fair trade producer to attend a fair trade festival where they can sell their products and find new buyers.
- £62 could pay for 20 fair trade producers to receive a training manual that will provide advice on how to sell their products in the Indian market.
- £182 could pay for a fair trade producer to participate in an in-depth training and mentoring programme that will give them the skills to supply fair trade products to the local market.

Other ways you can support us:

- Run a regular Traidcraft stall
- Open a Traidcraft refreshment account
- Campaign with us
- Pray for us and the producers we work with

Find out how at **[www.traidcraft.org.uk/getinvolved](http://www.traidcraft.org.uk/getinvolved)**

**However you choose to help, thank you.**

## Uncle Jan's Rainbow

In many agricultural communities around the world, the rainbow is still regarded as a special sign of God's blessing, and Eksteenskuil, in South Africa's Northern Cape region is no exception.

The raisins Traidcraft uses in its cakes, bars and confectionery are supplied by members of the Eksteenskuil Agricultural Co-operative, who farm on islands in the Orange River.

The river separates The Great Karoo, a vast semi-desert area to the south, from the true desert of the Kalahari to the north. Beyond its fertile banks the land is arid, harsh and unforgiving.

Winning a livelihood from this beautiful but severe landscape is no easy task, so the rainbow, with its promise of rain to swell the grapes and sun to dry them, is always welcome to farmers like "Uncle" Jan Schwartz and his son, Wendy.

They live next door to each other on the five-hectare farm and at harvest time the area between their houses is a sea of drying grapes. When they run out of space they even dry the grapes on the roof of Wendy's house!

And just beyond the grapes is the church, built on land donated by Uncle Jan in 1986. "That is the first church that was built in our Eksteenskuil area. I gave the piece of land for free and we built it as well," he says with pride.

Uncle Jan plays the accordion for worship in the church, which is attended by around 15 people who live in the 2km area.

Attendance is sometimes down during harvest time when people are working late, but he is always among those who turn up for the regular Tuesday night service.

For 72-year-old Uncle Jan his Christian faith, church and reading his Bible are at the heart of his existence. "It is very important to me. You can't live without Jesus in your life," he says, simply.

Recently, Fiona Thomson, from Traidcraft, visited Eksteenskuil to collect pictures and stories about the way working with Traidcraft is helping not just the farmers and their families but the wider community as well.

This year the co-operative decided to use some of the Fairtrade premium it receives for the raisins to buy multi-coloured schoolbags for all the children in the local schools.



"The children were carrying their schoolbooks in plastic carrier bags and, as it's rainy season, the books get damaged so they can't do homework," explained Fiona. "One grateful headteacher described the day as a blessing and the gifts as manna from heaven!"

Later, learning that Traidcraft is a Christian-based organization, the community decided they would hold a "braai" (barbecue) so more people could meet the visitors from Traidcraft and the event was advertised on the Eksteenskuil noticeboards, another benefit from the Fairtrade premium.

"The Orange River splits and divides so many times in this area it creates 'island' communities which makes communication difficult so the local churches rarely get together," said Fiona. "But on this occasion there were members from four churches and a choir!"

"One man who we'd visited earlier that day stood up and gave a mini-sermon in which he said: 'I have eaten a Geobar and it has a man from our local community on the box!' And Uncle Jan told everyone our visit had touched his heart.

"Outside, the most beautiful full double rainbow had formed over Uncle Jan's house and we all agreed it was a blessing from God on the visit."