



Lectionary readings

Fairtrade Fortnight is the annual campaign to raise awareness and promote products carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark. Every year campaigners around the country organise thousands of events. By encouraging our communities to make small changes and buy Fairtrade products regularly we can trigger a positive change in the lives of producers.

For more ideas on how you can reach out to your community, order the Fairtrade Fortnight Action Guide which is packed with ideas for activities. It is available from www.fairtrade.org.uk/resources

February 22 (Transfiguration of the Lord)

2 Kings 2:1-12. Elisha resolutely travels with Elijah to the very end, visiting the 'company of prophets' in different towns before Elijah's fiery farewell.

Psalms 50:1-6 2. God shines. God will bring change and not keep silent.

Corinthians 4:3-6. Light and dark. Enlightenment and blindness to God's good news and purposes.

Mark 9:2-9. The transfiguration. While Peter gets flustered and bumbles about structures, God calls for the disciples to stop, look and listen.

God's shining revelation, transfiguration and the need to see what is really going on run as themes through these passages. God's light and words are needed as much as ever today to help us find our way through the problems our world faces.

Fairtrade Fortnight starts this week. The Fairtrade story is a shining example of seeing things differently, of daring to imagine the world differently and working to bring that world into being; the key role of the church in establishing the Fairtrade Foundation and

of promoting Fairtrade a glorious example of how God's Kingdom of justice can be realised when the church takes seriously Jesus' words to bring good news to the poor.

Are we able to grasp God's shining moment and listen to Jesus or, with Peter, are we caught up in the peripheral and ephemeral? And just as Elisha took on the mantle of Elijah, are we ready to take responsibility for keeping the vision and story alive – and to seek the solidarity of 'the company of prophets' in our towns and cities to encourage us on our journey of seeking transformation?

1 March (1st Sunday in Lent)

Genesis 9:8-17. After the flood, a sign and a covenant that encompasses every living creature.

Psalms 25:1-10. Humble trust in God's steadfast love and the cry of the troubled and afflicted.

1 Peter 3:18-22. The place of water and baptism in God's saving purposes.

Mark 1:9-15. After he is baptized, Jesus faces temptation in the wilderness and announces the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Fairtrade Fortnight

23 February – 8 March



Water – source of both life and destruction;
baptism – symbol of new life and initiation
into Christ's life, death and Kingdom.

Water is a powerful metaphor, because it
is essential to sustain life. But for millions
in the world today, lack of access to clean
water, its privatisation as a commercial asset,
drought and flooding are factors that dominate
and destroy life. And things are set to get
worse as climate change disrupts weather
patterns further.

Not surprisingly, provision of safe water is one
of the top priorities for communities deciding
how to spend the Fairtrade premium – the
money paid on top of the Fairtrade minimum
price that is invested in social, environmental
and economic developmental projects. Clean,
accessible water is not only safer, it can help
provide a healthier diet by allowing irrigation
of crops and, critically, it frees women and
children from the time-consuming burden
of fetching water.

As Christians, we are bound through the water
of baptism to fellow Christians in countries
at the sharp end of poverty and injustice.
A hard question for all of us as Christians is
how closely do we identify with that hurting
global body of Christ?

After his baptism, Jesus went into the
wilderness, the Living Water entering a barren
place. The forty days in the desert, mirroring
the forty days of flood, are reflected in the
period of Lent.

This Lent, can we be living water in desert
places? Rather than giving anything up for
Lent, why not encourage people to take
up the Fairtrade alternative instead? This is
a practical fast in the spirit of Isaiah 58 v6:
*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose
the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs
of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free
and to break every yoke?*

8 March (2nd Sunday in Lent)

Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16. God promises the
seemingly impossible to Abraham.

Psalms 22:23-31. Praise for the Lord who
has not disregarded the poverty of the
poor but has listened to their cry for help
(Jerusalem Bible).

Romans 4:13-25. Abraham's faith: 'hoping
against hope, he believed...' (v18)

Mark 8:31-38. Jesus' way will challenge
established powers. Following Jesus requires
tough choices but is the way to life.

The Fairtrade story echoes these truths: an
alternative trading system which blesses both
producer and consumer, challenges the *status
quo* and which has grown dramatically from
the seed of an idea, a hope, to become an
established, major reality – a growth achieved
by individuals believing, making choices and
taking action.

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