



Coffee House Ministry – United Church of Christ military chaplains have found an old way to invite soldiers in Iraq into a safe and informal place where they can receive spiritual care and good coffee. Congregations and individuals can support the Coffee House Ministry and simultaneously participate in the UCC Coffee Project by sending Equal Exchange Coffee to the military Chaplains in Baghdad. Special thanks to First Congregational United Church of Christ in Wallingford, Connecticut for creating this ministry and supporting it in an ongoing way.

Coffee may be an unlikely ally of the Gospel, yet in the hands of a chaplain it can enable meaningful ministry addressing an individual's normal reactions to extreme situations, allowing them to return to us as healthy functional human beings capable of loving and caring for others and themselves. By offering a place to come and relax, the "Coffee House and Café Ministries" provide our military chaplains a place to establish rapport with and minister to the needs of our sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, husbands and wives—our troops. In these safe spaces soldiers come to talk and develop perspective on their experiences in war.

At this time our troops in Iraq find themselves in difficult and sometimes life-threatening situations. Their daily experiences extract an extreme physical, emotional and psychological toll. Many of them are young and inexperienced in dealing with such extreme issues. Our chaplains are a first line defense against the emotional and psychological issues faced by our troops.

During the Revolutionary War, the Congregational Church furnished chaplains for the Continental Army in the tradition of European War. The chaplains were for the comfort and succor of the leaders and the army, administering worship, sacraments and of course presiding at burials. The chaplains were an integral part of the army and often were found on the battlefield. In modern warfare many things have changed, including how the chaplains are able to function. No longer is the "king" a part of the army, the leaders often being removed from the war by many thousands of miles. Nor do the chaplains often follow the troops into battle; in fact there are not really many battles anymore. Rather the chaplains are in specific places and so the troops must often find their way to them in places like the Holy Joe's Cafe.

Whether or not we agree with our country's policy with regard to Iraq, we can offer our troops a cup of coffee and support through the ministry of our military chaplains.

Here's How:

- **Order at the Equal Exchange Interfaith Online Store (<http://store.yahoo.com/equalexchange>) with your Visa or Mastercard.**
- **Holy Joe's suggests that you go to the "Percolator Coffees" page and order Fellowship Blend, but they are happy to receive any coffee you choose.**
- **Under "Choose the Shipping Address," be sure to enter the following:**
 - (first name) **Holy Joe's** (last name) **Cafe**
 - c/o Cooper-Atkins Corporation**
 - 33 Reed's Gap Road**
 - Middlefield, CT 06455**
- **Under "Customer ID" please enter your church's ID if you know it. If you don't know it, or if you have never ordered with Equal Exchange before, please enter "IRAQ001."**
- **Under "Congregation or Organization" you may enter your church's name or, if you are ordering individually, "UCC Individual."**
- **If your church has a tax-exempt number, we appreciate receiving it, but it's not necessary to process the order.**

For more information contact: Tom Jastermsky (888-970-7994) or Chaplain Mike Lake, rmlake@odsgc.net.