

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Supporting Families • Growing Futures • Changing Lives™

OUR MISSION

Living the Gospel by building economic justice and respect together with Mt. Meru coffee farmers

For over 23 years, the Mt. Meru Coffee Project has partnered with the coffee growers of Mt Meru, like Senyaeli Mbise (pictured here). Along with the Diocese of Meru and the Greater Milwaukee Synod we have maintained a keen and constant focus on staying true to our calling in Christ: walking with our partner farmers in Tanzania to build respect and economic justice. This year, we took the time to focus on our Mission and how we live more fully into the values of the Project. We discovered new strengths and challenges while continuing to recover from the disruptions of the pandemic. A fall 2022 visit to our partners reaffirmed that we are changing lives for Meru farmers, their families and community. We remain strong and robust. Just like our premium coffee.



2022 HIGHLIGHTS

- Strategic Plan was developed by the Board; long-range priorities and goals defined
- Compelling new Mission Statement reflects our calling in Christ, and Values defined to ground us in Gospel
- Project leaders visited Tanzania in November
- Our commitment to farmer training maintained
- Congregational Ambassadors re-energized post pandemic
- Robust coffee sales throughout the year, especially during the holidays

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Partners with the Coffee Growers of Meru,

Initiating change and self-examination is not comfortable, especially when what we have been doing has worked. In March, the Board authorized me to search for a consultant to help us in a longer-range planning process. With the assistance of Janet McMahon, past Board Director, we recruited Brenda Skelton, retired CEO of Siebert Lutheran Foundation, as consultant to the process. Led by Janet and Brenda, both deeply skilled at non-profit leadership, our dedicated Board of Directors spent countless hours in a structured process to create a compelling new mission statement and exceptionally sound strategic plan included in this report.

Why was this important? Over time, various mission statements had been developed, committed volunteers had come and gone over the years, and then the pandemic created a crisis in our ability to distribute coffee in typical ways. We needed a process to re-unite all volunteers around our desired impact in the world (our Mission), how we do business and relate to each other (our Values), and our long-term plans to move the Project forward (our Goals and Objectives).

Board Vice President Rick Frowein and I visited Mt. Meru in November with a focus on deepening our direct relationship with farmers and their families. Through conversations about why they joined the Project, how they use the proceeds from sales and the value of coffee growing training, we strengthened the commitment to each other. Watch for their stories to be shared in various media as 2023 unfolds.

Congregational Ambassadors are significant contributors to our Mission success. We refreshed our annual fall Ambassador event to make it an interactive gathering of idea sharing. Thank you, Ambassadors for the biggest attendance in years.

Our Mission Statement reflects our foundation in Christ and was a significant outcome of the planning process. *“Living the Gospel by building economic justice and respect together with Mt. Meru coffee farmers.”*

Thank you for reading this report,

Walt

“I used to sell to others outside the Project, but I didn’t always receive the money. Now I trust I will get paid, at a higher price!”

Michael Nnko, Farmer



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Walt Chossek

President

Rick Frowein

Vice President

Patti Nelson

Secretary

Tori Mallack

Treasurer

Andy Petersen

Financial Secretary

Fred Meyer

Member at Large

Rev. Paul Erickson,

Bishop, GMS ELCA

Rev. Kevin Beebe

Synod Council Rep.

MT. MERU COFFEE PROJECT

Strategic Plan 2023-2025

Executive Summary

Our Mission

Living the Gospel by building economic justice and respect together with Mt. Meru coffee farmers.

Our Values

We are inspired by Jesus.

We strive for justice.

We believe in mutual relationships.

We embrace joyful hospitality.

We seek to be stewards of the Earth.

We serve to change lives.



Key Strategic Goals & Priorities

Goal #1: Sustainability/ Finances

1. Establish and execute cohesive and consistent finance and accounting practices and procedures
2. Develop an annual budget of projected revenue and expenses for the board to review and monitor
3. Solicit volunteer expertise to create a financial development strategy to increase contributions
4. Ensure our operational processes evolve with federal, state and local regulations

Goal #2: Marketing, Sales & Operations

1. Create and recruit board/volunteer positions focused on key skills needed to sustain and grow
2. Evaluate potential new wholesale and retail markets; develop sales strategy(ies)
3. Survey customer base; analyze data and implement marketing strategies to increase sales
4. Stratify market segments and focus energy on highest potential
5. Maintain solid base of trained volunteers to help with weekly order processing

Goal #3: Mission Impact

1. Build relationships with farmers, learn more about the impact of training; create videos and stories to demonstrate mission impact
2. Plan activities to deepen cooperation, relationships and collaborations with the Greater Milwaukee Synod, ELCA, and the Diocese of Meru, ELCT
3. Training coffee farmers at 120 farms/year, striving to reach 100% trained
4. With the growers' association, seek funding for environment practices for the processing centers; improve coffee cupping scores annually

Goal #4: Organizational Development & Stewardship

1. Update Bylaws for effective and efficient business practices and fiduciary oversight and stewardship
2. Recruit new Board members in key areas of need; orient and train for engagement and effectiveness
3. Create standing committees, to address highest need functions and key priorities; examine committee and board practices for effective conduct of business
4. Establish a quarterly board review of progress toward long range strategic goals and priorities

BOARD MEMBER RETIREMENT

Ron Bohrer, Vice President, Sales and Marketing

We thank Ron for his twenty plus years of dedicated service and commitment. His marketing expertise has contributed to our successes.

Janet McMahon, Vice President, Development

We thank Janet for her leadership in development and for her critically important contribution to the strategic planning process, as she continues to be a processing volunteer.

Marilyn Heyde, Member at large

We thank Marilyn for her generous support and her many years of processing orders.



IN MEMORIAM

We are grateful for the life and ministry of the Rev. Ed Weiskotten. Ed played a pivotal role in the establishment of Greater Milwaukee Synod's partnership with the Diocese of Meru. Pastor Ed's passion for justice was instrumental in initiating the Coffee Project and recruiting the early volunteers.



MISSION IMPACTS

#1 FARMER TRAINING:

Training is critical to our coffee grower farmers seeking to improve their lives. Each year more farmers are selected to participate in training; both in the classroom and in the field. How to plant, how to care for the trees and how to pick and process the coffee to ensure higher quality and production are training topics. **\$7,600 was invested in 2022 in farmer training.** We continue to see higher cupping scores (the rating of quality) as a result!

120 New Farmers



SILK Processing Center

#2 SUSTAINABLE INCOME:

Over 800+ small, rural, family farms enjoyed increased annual incomes as a direct result of our fair-trade importing. In 2022, we advanced over \$87,500 to purchase coffee to be imported in 2023. These funds are paid to the farmers when they bring the unprocessed “cherry” to us directly from picking.

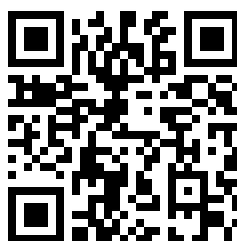
\$87,500
Invested



Mulala Processing Center

MEET OUR FARMERS SERIES

During Walt Chosseck’s and Rick Frowein’s visit to Tanzania in early November, they were able to interview several farmers throughout the coffee growing region of Meru. Those stories will be highlighted every month on the website. Watch for new QR codes on the coffee bags that link to these “Meet Our Farmers” stories. Several short videos are also being edited and will be made available for use by the Ambassadors. These efforts are aimed at focusing on our positive impact on farmers, their families and communities.



MEET OUR FARMERS



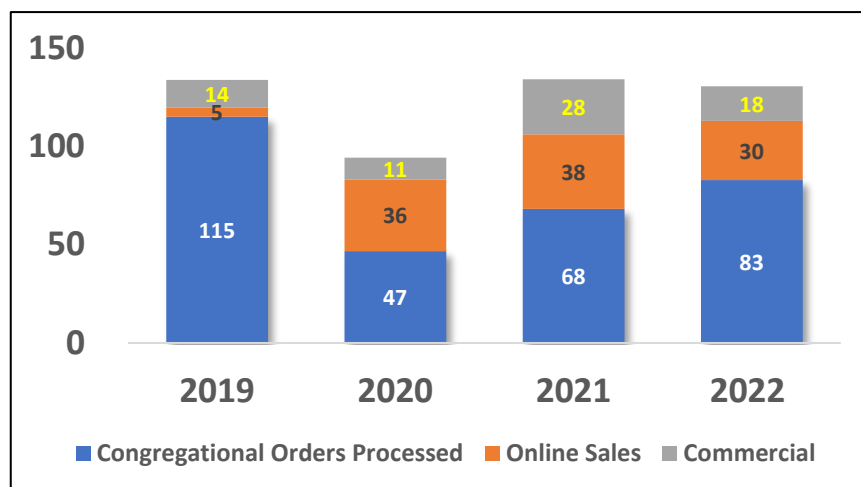
**Farmer Gamalel Mbise with MMCP
Board VP Rick Frowein on
November 2022 project visit**



“With the income from coffee we can send our children to school, improve our home and invest in the farm growing vegetables and harvest honey to sell ”
Goodness Issangya, Farmer

MISSION ENTERPRISE

COFFEE SALES:



While commercial sales can fluctuate from year to year, overall sales continue to rebound after the pandemic. Thanks to all the participating Congregations for their continued strong support.
Asante Sana (Thank you in Swahili language)

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY (cash basis):

For fiscal year ending December 31, 2022

Operating Revenue

Consumer Sales	\$114,300
Commercial Sales	17,530
General Contributions	16,410
Farmer Training	<u>6,770</u>
Total	\$155,010

Operating Expense

Advances for Coffee & Tz Op	\$95,000
Farmer Training	7,300
Getting Coffee to Customer	61,505
Interest Expense	<u>2,445</u>
Total	166,250
Net Cash from Operations	(11,240)

Financing Activities

Increased Debt (net)	9,050
Refund of Import Bond	<u>5,000</u>
Net Increase of cash on hand	\$2,810

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets

Cash on Hand	\$ 40,140
Investment in Coffee	197,820
Accounts Receivable and	
Other Assets	<u>20,410</u>
Total Assets	\$258,370

Liabilities and Net Assets

Line of Credit	\$50,000
Vehicle Loans	3,800
Accounts Payable	<u>2,670</u>
Total Liabilities	\$56,470
Net Assets	<u>201,900</u>
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$258,370

Change in Net Assets = \$27,872

SERVANTHOOD

Volunteers committed to serving through leadership

- 120 Mission and Marketing Volunteers
 - Includes 40 Congregational Coffee Ambassadors who attended the November meeting, learned new ideas and practices and were re-energized to serve their respective congregations
- 13 Coffee Order Processing & Fulfillment Volunteers
 - (>650 hrs. supporting the project in 2022)
- 8 Directors on the Governing Board



MT. MERU COFFEE PROJECT DONORS



Grateful for our donors

Generous contributions allow us to meet our annual commitment to farmers, as well as their training. We are deeply grateful for the global spirit of giving by individuals and Congregations.

TaCRI Instructional Staff

\$1,000+

Aleta and Walt Chossek
Faith Lutheran Church, Cedarburg, WI
Dianne and Rick Frowein
Marilyn Heyde
Holy Cross Lutheran Church,
Menomonee Falls, WI
Janet McMahon
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church,
Hubertus WI

\$500-\$999

Ingred Burbey
Grace Lutheran Church, Grafton, WI
Jean Leslie
Martin Luther Church, Milwaukee, WI
Deborah and Andy Petersen
St. Olaf Lutheran Church, Rubicon, WI

\$100-\$499

Christ the Victor,
New Berlin WI
Kathleen Dolan
Dottie and Joe Dorr
Lynn and Paul Erickson
Douglass Flemons
Amy Herndon
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church,
West Allis, WI
Donald Middleton
St. Luke Lutheran Church,
Slinger, WI
Our Savior's Lutheran Church,
Oconomowoc, WI
Shelly Rosenstock
Pamela and Neal Zimmerman
Vernon Lutheran Church,
Mukwonago, WI

\$1-\$99

Amber Anderson
Marian Benz
Barbara Fischer
Dick Frowein
Elizabeth Hoffman
Linda Lueck
Sue and Tom Johnson
Sarajane Kennedy
Carolyn Kilday
Charlotte Reckling
Wende Rosier
Julie Starks
Margaret Stein-Kodzik
Elizabeth Vaden