

Locust Grove's new coffee shop, Coffee With a Cause, does much more than serve warm coffees, tempting pastries, and filling sandwiches. Like many similar shops, Coffee With a Cause offers a warm, inviting atmosphere perfect for a friendly conversation or a relaxing break. There is a distinction, however, between the common coffee house and this one.

Coffee With a Cause is unique in its purpose. The goal, as the name suggests, is to support specific global charities, as well as contribute financially to several local non-profit groups and ministries. Rather than being a for profit endeavor, this coffee shop will take the proceeds earned and use them to help others. As soon as an individual walks in the door, the word "Indonesia" painted across the back wall catches the eye. This gives an immediate idea to exactly what the primary "cause" of this coffee shop is.

The idea for the coffee shop began after a trip to Nagara, Bali in the Indonesian Islands. Pillar Church and Lakeside Community Church spent time in Bali building an orphanage and working with the people there. The coffee shop uses beans exclusively from Indonesia. "The coffee there was ridiculously good, and that was the start of an idea," said Pastor Clint Clifton of Pillar Church in Dumfries. "So many coffee chains have an advocacy element, but this is much more than just 'Fair Trade'. The proceeds from the coffee shop go directly to supporting the orphanage and people in the community of Nagara."

"We want to raise money to continue to support that orphanage and the kids individually," said Jonathan Davis, pastor of Lakeside Community Church in Locust Grove. "A lot of the proceeds we make will go to buy them food, clothing, and school supplies. We want to continue that relationship there."

Coffee With a Cause is connected to Lakeside Community Church, which meets in the shop on Sunday evenings and serves free coffee to any who attend. Money earned by the coffee shop will support Lakeside's ministry in Bali, as well as other local charities such as the nearby food bank or homeless shelter. However, the coffee shop is a separate organization, has its own manager and staff, and is not funded by the church.

Coffee With a Cause has been a labor of love for those involved, with key members from both the church and coffee shop putting their own time and resources into completing the design and construction. There is still work to be done before the shop is everything it has been envisioned to be. Coffee With a Cause hopes there are more people willing to donate time or money. There are still finishing details that will enhance the atmosphere and the shop will welcome individuals who want to volunteer in the day to day work of the shop. This will allow more of the proceeds to be used to help the work in Indonesia as well as the communities in Orange County.

"We really want it to have a feeling of community," said Phillip Scott, manager of Coffee With a Cause. He hopes that it becomes a place where individuals can relax, converse, and enjoy themselves, as well as be a location for other charities or groups to meet. Both

Scott and Davis see the coffee shop as a great opportunity to bring together different ministries in the community, providing an environment conducive to working together.

Jonathan Davis also hopes Coffee With a Cause will be able to reach out to the community in other ways, such as summer movie nights for families. He hopes this shop is just the first of many. “This is a bit of a pilot program,” Davis explained, “If it works, then we will open other coffee shops in other areas.”

As the cooler weather moves in, Coffee With a Cause might be the perfect place to warm up, relax, and chat with friendly staff or patrons, all while supporting a great purpose.