



# Anabaptist World Fellowship Sunday Worship Resources

Prepared by the  
3 MWC member  
churches (synods)  
in Indonesia for  
23 January 2022,  
or at any time convenient  
for your congregation.  
These could be used during  
the time of the Assembly,  
5-10 July 2022.

## Theme and texts

**a. Theme:  
Following  
Jesus  
together**

**b. Why this theme  
was chosen:**

This is the theme for  
the Indonesia 2022  
Assembly, 5-10 July,  
2022

**c. Biblical texts  
options:**

Old Testament:  
Genesis 12:1-5

Psalm  
104:1-4, 24, 31-33

Gospel:  
John 20:19-23

New Testament:  
1 Corinthians  
12:3-13

**d. Texts and theme:**

- God's call to Abraham and Sarah expanded to include all followers of Jesus, a call to be a blessing to the world.
- As creatures of God's creation and followers of Jesus we together testify to the glory of God.
- As followers of Jesus in MWC we come together as a communion – sisters and brothers in Christ – learning from each other and supporting each other in times of suffering and joy.

## 2

### Prayer Requests

- Pray for the three Anabaptist synods in Indonesia: GITJ (Gereja Injili de Tanah Jawa – the oldest Anabaptist-Mennonite Global South conference in the world), GKMI (Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia) and JKI (Jemaat Kristen Indonesia). Pray for the churches' safety and witness in Indonesia, part of a small Christian minority in the country with the largest number of Muslims in the world.
- Pray for the many MWC meetings in Indonesia in July 2022 – the member church delegates at the General Council, Commissions, MWC networks (mission, service, peace, education, health), and the global Assembly itself. Pray for health and safety of all participants. Pray that the Spirit will move in the midst of the gatherings, uniting and strengthening the body.
- Pray for a world divided by inequities, as demonstrated by COVID-19 in the last two years. Pray for sisters and brothers who are struggling with vulnerability due to illness, violence, disaster and injustice. May we embrace and support each one, as we work together to address these many systemic issues.
- Give thanks for the gifts of the Spirit, uniting and strengthening MWC member churches around the world.

## 3

### Song Suggestions

#### Indonesian Songs

- #15 MWC 1978 Songbook, *Dhuh pangeran* (O Prince of Peace), by Saptojadi, a Mennonite songwriter
- #17 MWC 2015 Songbook, *Nyanyikanlah Nyanyian Baru* (Sing to God a new song)  
2022 MWC Songbook, *S'gala puji syukur* (All our praise and glory)

#### Other Asian songs from MWC 2015 Songbook

- #20 *Sari srishti ke malik tumhi ho* (All praise to the God of Creation)
- #22 *Ki Ri Su To No* (May the peace of Christ be with you)

#### Other songs from MWC 2015 Songbook

- #7 *Som'landela* (We will follow)

## 4

### Multimedia resources

See [mwc-cmm.org/awfs](http://mwc-cmm.org/awfs)

- Video greetings from congregations around the world
- Scripture texts read in multiple languages on video
- Song videos
- Assembly videos introducing Indonesia
- Photos
- Interactive map
- Sample bulletin covers
- Posters





## 5 Offering

- MWC invites congregations to take a special offering for our global Anabaptist church community on Anabaptist World Fellowship Sunday. One way to think about this offering is to invite every member to contribute the cost of at least one lunch in their community in order to support the core activities, commissions and resources in our global faith community of MWC. Sacrificing one lunch is our humble way of giving thanks to God and supporting the ongoing core ministry of God through MWC.
- MWC also invites congregations to designate part of their offering this year for the Assembly and related gatherings in Indonesia.
- [mwc-cmm.org/donate](http://mwc-cmm.org/donate)



## 6 Additional Resources

### In this package

- Liturgies
- Anabaptist historical context for AWFS
- Sermons
- Ideas for children's time
- Cultural contributions from Indonesia



GKMI synod



JKI synod

The biblical texts, prayers, song suggestions, sermon ideas and other resources in this package have been prepared by members of MWC out of their experience in their local context. The teaching does not necessary represent an official MWC position.

### Contact Information:

**Agus Mayanto**, GKMI, MWC Regional Representative for Southeast Asia ✉ [agusmayanto@mwc-cmm.org](mailto:agusmayanto@mwc-cmm.org)

**MZ Ichsanudin**, GITJ, MWC Executive Committee, Asia ✉ [mzichsanudin@yahoo.com](mailto:mzichsanudin@yahoo.com)

**Lydia Adi**, JKI, MWC Faith and Life Commission ✉ [Lydiaadi@gmail.com](mailto:Lydiaadi@gmail.com)



## Liturgies

### Mennonites in Indonesia

There are 3 MWC member churches (synods) in Indonesia:

- GITJ, Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa, begun in 1851, incorporated in 1940
- GKMI, Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia, begun in 1920
- JKI, Jemaat Kristen Indonesia, begun in 1985

### Gathering liturgy

(often used in GITJ)

(congregation stands)

**Pastor/Worship leader:** Our help comes from the Lord God who created the earth and the sky, who never abandons his creation, and is faithful for ever and ever.

(congregational song, remain standing)

**Pastor/Worship leader:** May the blessing and peace of God the Father and his son Jesus Christ come upon us all. Amen

(congregation sits down)

### Benediction

(Often used in GKMI)

The Doxology is usually sung as the benediction in GKMI congregations.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow  
Praise Him, all creatures here below  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

AMEN

### Bahasa Indonesian

Kepada Allah b'ri puji  
Semua makhluk di bumi  
PadaNya ku b'ri pujian  
Bapa, Anak dan Roh Suci  
Amin

### Interpretive dance

(Used in JKI worship)

The JKI congregation that worships in the Holy Stadium in Semarang includes dancers during the worship through music. This introduces creative, expressive art and provides another “language” to worship the Lord. An expression of the heart, movements symbolize honour, adoration, joy and thanksgiving. Dance can include tambourine, ribbons, banners and other objects. Movements are usually structured with specific meanings; the patterns are familiar. The dance team follows the lead of the worship leader and music director, united in one heart to glorify God and to usher the congregants into God’s presence.

Click [mwc-cmm.org/worshipdance](http://mwc-cmm.org/worshipdance) to watch



Worship dancers at JKI Holy Stadium, Semarang, Indonesia. Photo: supplied



## Anabaptist historical context for Anabaptist World Fellowship Sunday



**The Limmat River in Switzerland where early Anabaptists were drowned as punishment for their rebellious re-baptisms.  
Photo: Henk Stenvers**

Anabaptism is a Christian movement that traces its origins to the Radical Reformation. The most widely accepted date for the establishment of Anabaptism is 21 January 1525, when Conrad Grebel baptized George Blaurock in Felix Manz’s house in Zurich, Switzerland. George Blaurock immediately baptized several others on confession of their faith. These baptisms were the first “re-baptisms” known in the movement.

Anabaptism developed into several groups in Europe during the 1500s – including the Mennonites (named after Menno Simons from the Netherlands) – and spread in multiple locations. Members of this movement continued to move and grow in numbers around the world in the centuries to follow.

Mennonite World Conference began in 1925 as a way of bringing together the many churches from different streams of Anabaptism. Today MWC has member churches in 58 countries, each with their own story of how they began and came to be part of our Anabaptist communion. Anabaptist World Fellowship Sunday is an annual event for MWC member congregations around

the world, worshipping together in spirit using the same worship resources, knowing that we belong to each other in this global family of faith.

### How Mennonites came to be

The Anabaptist movement began as part of a renewal movement within the Catholic Church in Europe in the early 16th century. Some of its inspiration comes from the Catholic tradition: the strong sense of discipline and community found in monasticism, for example, the attentiveness to the Holy Spirit that could be found in Catholic mysticism, or the emphasis on following Jesus in daily life in *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas á Kempis. Anabaptism also owes a debt to Martin Luther and the early Reformation movement, particularly Luther’s emphasis on the authority of Scripture and his emphasis on the freedom of the Christian conscience. And the movement was shaped by deep social and economic unrest of their time that exploded in the Peasants’ War of 1524-1525.

The Anabaptists themselves, however, would have said that they were simply trying to be faithful followers of the teachings of Jesus and the example of the Early Church.

Although dates can be somewhat arbitrary, the Anabaptist movement “officially” began on 21 January 1525 when a small group of Christian reformers gathered for a secret worship service in Zurich, Switzerland. The group was frustrated by the hesitance of their leader, Ulrich Zwingli, to enact the changes to Catholic rituals that they agreed Scripture demanded, especially regarding the Mass and the practice of infant baptism. In their reading of Scripture, true Christian baptism assumed a conscious commitment to follow Jesus – something no infant could do. So on 21 January 1525, this small group agreed to baptize



each other as adults. Although it would be some time before the full meaning of baptism came into focus, the early Anabaptists understood this act to symbolize the presence of the Holy Spirit in the gift of God’s grace, a commitment to a life of daily discipleship, and membership in a new community of God’s people.

Members of the movement generally referred to themselves as “Brethren” (*Brüder*)—or later by the more descriptive term “Baptism-minded” (*Taufgesinnten*). Their opponents labeled them Anabaptists (= re-baptizers), in part because “rebaptism” was a criminal offense in the Holy Roman Empire, punishable by death. At first, the group resisted the term “Anabaptist” since in their minds they were not rebaptizing, but rather baptizing correctly for the first time. But over time, the name persisted. Today, *Anabaptist* is an accepted English term for all Reformation groups who practiced believers (rather than infant) baptism, and the denominations descended from them such as the Amish, Mennonites, and Hutterites.

Over time, however, a coherent movement emerged. Its identity was forged, in part at least, from the need to respond to several basic challenges. First, in response to accusations of heresy by religious and political authorities in the first half of the 16th century, Anabaptists were quick to define themselves as faithful, Bible-believing Christians. Second, militant voices within their number who were ready to impose social and religious change with violence forced Anabaptists to clarify their identity as peaceful, law-abiding, nonresistant Christians whose only weapon was love. And finally, in the face of spiritualist dissenters who favored an internal religious experience that could avoid theological disputations and go undetected by authorities, Anabaptists were compelled to defend the public and visible nature of the church.

Despite the diversity of theology and practice

evident in the first generation of Anabaptists, three coherent groups had emerged by the 1540s: the Swiss Brethren in the German-speaking territories; the Hutterites in Moravia; and the Mennonites of the Netherlands and North Germany who were organized around the leadership of Menno Simons. Although these groups differed in important ways, they nonetheless recognized each other as members of the same religious tradition, so that their internal disagreements often took the form of a family quarrel.



*Excerpts from **Stories: How Mennonites Came to Be**, by John D. Roth, Herald Press, 2006. Adapted and used with permission.*



Click here to view baptism video: [mwc-cmm.org/baptismwebinar](http://mwc-cmm.org/baptismwebinar)



## Sermons

### Calling for Christians

In the midst of the increasing prevalence of hate speech and intolerance around us, we as a Christian community placed in Indonesia have a calling that is not easy. There are many efforts made by Islamic groups or schools who want to make the Republic of Indonesia a country with a religious ideology, an Islamic country. This movement has become increasingly strong over the last 10 years with the emergence of identity politics in the general elections, both central and regional.

Yet, God has not wrongly placed us here and now in the country with the largest Muslim population in the world (around 229 million Muslims in a population of 271 million people – about 84%). It is our calling to shine the light of God in the midst of this nation.

How do we live up to our calling among our Muslim brothers and sisters? This passage in the text of Genesis 12:1-5 teaches us some principles, which, when we earnestly live them out, will encourage us to persevere in our calling even though there are many challenges and opposition.

#### **1. The God who calls us is the Immanuel God**

Sisters and brothers, our text gives us the story of Abram's calling to leave his home community, his family and his country. This call demanded a high price.

Abram had to leave his comfort zone, an established life in a sculpture-making family. Bible scholars explain that Abram's family had a successful business as an idol maker. We all understand that leaving an establishment and going to a far place to start a new life is not an easy thing. This is where we learn the meaning of obeying God's commands.

Abram had to leave his extended family.

The consequence of this command is that Abram is uprooted from his cultural roots and community of origin. Leaving his friends, family and memories of his past was a high cost. This is what obedience to a command means.



**A GITJ congregation worships outdoors.  
Photo: GITJ synod**

Will a new place make life better? Will it be possible to find a good community like before? Can one start building a business later in life? Of course, such questions popped up in Abram's mind. But we see how Abram truly trusted the God who called and faithfully accompanied him.

We too are invited to believe that this God who called Abram is the same God who calls us to live for God's will and glory where we are placed. God wants us to be God's representatives, spread God's truth, and tell about God to everyone around us. Like Abram, we know this call is not easy, requiring a real struggle. We believe that if God was with Abram throughout his life journey, then God will also be with us throughout our lives. God is Immanuel, God with us.



**2. The God who calls us is the Responsible God**

A friend once told me that everything is tested for truth over the passage of time. After I studied the story of Abram’s life, I understood more about the meaning of this phrase. We find evidence that the God who called Abram is a God who remains consistent with what God promised.

Not only did God accompany the journey of Abram’s family life, but God was also responsible for the life and safety of all of Abram’s extended family. Notice how when Abram lived in the Negev where there was a famine (Genesis 12:10-20), then Abram fled to Egypt, and during the exile in Egypt, God blessed Abram’s family. Notice also how God saved

lives. Today, we learn from Abram’s life journey that when he tries to obey God’s commands with all his heart, God is responsible for doing God’s part. God will sustain, help, accompany and bless Abram.

Likewise, for us, living in the midst of a nation whose majority do not know the true God, we know that we Christians live with intimidation. We experience problems such as complicated permits for the construction of places of worship, or even places of worship that have been used for decades and then closed with a fabricated reason. We hear other sad stories where Christians don’t get promoted because as devout believers we don’t want to be participate in dishonesty, corruption and compromise. But we believe that God’s power will not be blocked. People may try to stop the blessing from coming to us, but the Lord Jesus will send it from another way. God who calls us to live for God, and will surely be responsible for the consequences of decisions in our lives.

**3. God who calls us requests an obedient response from us**

Sisters and brothers, we all understand that from the very beginning when God created humanity, God wanted to make humans the object of God’s love. We find beautiful, romantic stories before humans fell into sin, about the close relationship between humans and God. God wants broken relationships to be repaired and broken self images to be restored. God wants to be obeyed.

The story of Abram, who obeyed God’s commandments, becomes a model for us to imitate today. Just as we are faced with challenges and temptations, Abram in his day also faced many challenges and temptations. One of the challenges that shook Abram’s soul was that he and his partner (Sarai), had not yet had the child promised by God (Genesis 18:11). Even when God repeated His promise (Genesis 17:17), Abram had doubt about it, but Abram chose to keep trusting God, obeying with all his heart, until God finally gave Isaac. But the



**Church community clean up. GITJ congregations often do this in the days before Passover. Photo: GITJ synod**

Abram’s family from being captives of the kings (Genesis 14:1-16). Notice also how God saved Lot from being punished by Sodom and Gomorra (Genesis 19:1-29). Notice also how Abram’s wife, Hagar (Genesis 16:1-14) and their son Ishmael were saved and protected (Genesis 21:14-20).

Brothers and sisters, we are aware that responding to God’s call in our lives does not eliminate problems in our lives. On the contrary, as we try to wholeheartedly carry out God’s call in our lives, problems will come and go in our



challenge of Abram's obedience was not over, because God tested Abram's obedience again by asking him to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:1-12). Again, we are shown the absolute and unconditional obedience of Abram to the call of the Lord God.

Brothers and sisters, I believe that God has never wrongly called us or placed us in this land where the majority of the population do not know who the Lord Jesus Christ is; where followers of Jesus are the object of ridicule and intimidation. This is where our obedience is being tested. We have a choice: to surrender to the challenges and opposition, or to obey God regardless of the cost.

Indonesia needs our testimony as children of God who dare to live obediently to God's truth, marked by practicing that truth in life from day to day. We are called to be agents of peace, full of love, in our communities. Obeying God does not mean there are no challenges, but obeying God will surely bring blessing.

—*Natanael Sukanto, pastor of GITJ (Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa) congregation in Sembaturagung, Pati, Central Java, Indonesia.*

## The Love of the Lord Jesus

Everyone has difficult times in their lives, whether it is grief, economic difficulties or health problems. Around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought tremendous shocks to all areas, including Indonesia. The economy slumped, health was threatened, social interaction was limited and countless lives were lost. We see businesses going bankrupt, hospitals overwhelmed with patients, increasing unemployment and other bad effects. But what tortures us the most psychologically is that COVID-19 can threaten us anywhere and anytime, and we don't know how long this pandemic will last. Worry, anxiety and loss of our sense of security make us lose calm and peace. In order for us to live our lives well, we need something that can sustain our lives better.

Brothers and sisters, our reading today in John 20 describes how the disciples also experienced great shocks in their lives. They experienced two big challenges. They lost Jesus, their leader and teacher. This Jesus, who was their mainstay, died helplessly on the cross like a big-time criminal. Secondly, the disciples were under political pressure and threats. They were fearful that the Jewish leaders who had arrested and killed

Jesus would find them. These are the reasons why they held meetings in houses with tightly locked doors. But in the midst of great fear and anxiety, we find there are several important messages from this text as valuable lessons for us today.

### **1. Jesus wants us to have peace**

The Lord Jesus understood that the greatest human need is for a sense of calm or peace, even though in this world it is very difficult to find true security or peace. We are often deceived by a false sense of calm offered by the world, that if you are beautiful or handsome, rich, famous and have abundant assets, then you will have inner peace. However, the facts on the ground present a different reality. We often see actors, actresses, public figures, politicians, businessmen and those who are established and comfortable by the world's standards, involved with various addictions, such as sleeping pills, sedatives, alcohol and narcotics. It seems people with abundant wealth, exorbitant popularity and amazing achievements are not happy. Some even end their lives in tragic ways. The reason is because they don't have true peace.





The source of true calm and peace is not from this world, because this world is cursed (Genesis 3:17) and the pursuit of this world will lead to nothingness. The Bible says clearly that the world and everything in it is moving toward destruction. True peace will occur when the human experiences an encounter with the true God, and sins are forgiven.

Because Jesus knows human needs, the first greeting given to the fearful disciples is “Peace be with you” (vs 21). Sisters and brothers, Jesus longs that in the midst of the chaos of this world, God’s peace will keep and guard our hearts and minds. For it is only this peace that does not come from the earth that can permanently reside in our hearts. God’s peace cannot be stolen or taken by anyone, nor can it be influenced by situations or conditions. Only the Lord Jesus can give true peace. Only the Lord Jesus can pacify our souls in the midst of various storms and chaos in our lives.

Are you willing to accept this peace from Jesus?

**2. Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit**

The next message that also gives us joy is that Jesus gave his Spirit to his disciples. We read in John 20:22, about how Jesus met his disciples and breathed on them with his Holy Spirit. This is the fulfillment of what he had promised in John 14:16-17, 16:7-14, promises about the Spirit of

God who provides comfort, who strengthens and who empowers the disciples.

When the disciples had not yet received the Holy Spirit, they experienced fear and anxiety, giving up easily. The Bible tells how they scattered when Jesus was arrested, then many gave up and returned to their old lives and professions.

Why did the disciples give up so easily? The answer is because the disciples had not yet received the Holy Spirit. That is why when Jesus met them, Jesus gave his Spirit to strengthen and sustain them.

For our brothers and sisters who work as health workers, these years have been tough, dealing directly with COVID 19. Even developed countries with high quality medical services and equipment have been overwhelmed by these challenges. We have heard testimonies from many of God’s children who almost gave up and were desperate while facing this difficulty, but when they turn to God, truly the Spirit of God provides strength and support. (Isaiah 40:31).

We often experience difficulties in our lives, such as illness that is impossible to cure, or a business experiencing decline, losing a loved one and other problems. There are many things that make us want to give up or despair, but by asking God we will get new strength from God’s Spirit. The Spirit of God not only accompanies us, but also enables us to keep walking and even running in fulfilling God’s call in our lives.

Are you willing to receive the Holy Spirit?

**3. Jesus wants us to be his witnesses**

The next message from the Lord Jesus to his disciples is tell them to be messengers of God to this world. The disciples were living witnesses of how Jesus lived life, served everyone and preached the good news. They were witnesses of how Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind. They were the first to experience Jesus rising from the dead. They were living witnesses of all these events, and



A thanksgiving event at GIJT Banyutowo, Central Java, Indonesia.  
Photo: GITJ synod



they were given the task of sharing these experiences with the world.

My dear sisters and brothers, the mandate to be a witness of God was not only for the apostles at that time, but also applies to us today. We have a responsibility to tell what Jesus did 2 000 years ago, and what God is doing today.

We might ask, can I? The answer is of course yes, because the Holy Spirit was also given to us.

Will there be people who believe my message? It is the Spirit of God who will act on the message within the listeners. The important thing is just to do it. Remember, my brothers and sisters, this witnessing task is a commandment, not an invitation or an option.

There are at least two ways for us to be witnesses of God.

First, we can witness **verbally**.

This means that we tell our neighbours that God loves humanity, in spite of the sin that humans choose. God's love for humans meant that God

came into the world, becoming human in the person of Jesus Christ, to provide a way for forgiveness of sins through Jesus' death on the cross, then whoever repents will have their sins forgiven and be adopted as children of God. This message can be conveyed through spoken or written language.

Secondly, we can witness **through our lifestyle**. This means our overall behaviour reflects God's truth in our lives with everyone who interacts with us. This is what is called an open gospel, which means that our lives truly reflect the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us ask for the power of the Holy Spirit to move us to really witness, so that people turn to the truth of the gospel. May the Spirit of God enable us to witness for the glory of God. Immanuel.

— *Natanael Sukamto, pastor of GITJ (Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa) congregation in Sembaturagung, Pati, Central Java, Indonesia.*

## God's Glory Revealed

How does God reveal God's glory to humanity?

### 1. *Through the universe.*

Along with the psalmist, the Jesus follower confesses with a heart filled with awe: "The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork." (Psalm 19:1). The Jesus follower exalts the greatness of God: "LORD my God, You are great" (Psalm 104:1b).

The psalmist expresses admiration in Psalm 104 for the divine majesty that radiated through the processes in nature, even though the ancient poet expresses it in the language of mythology and cosmology. For the psalmist, the variety of creatures that fill the earth expresses the wisdom of God. His admiration for the glory of God made him want to rejoice in God (v. 34). He even

wants God to rejoice over all the fruits of God's work (v. 31). When the divine glory, that is, the majesty and wisdom of God, covers the heart of a believer, the Jesus follower rejoices in God. Furthermore, the believer wants to unite with the joy of God over all the divine works that have revealed the glory of God.

Thus, for a follower of Jesus, the universe is the *theatrum gloriae dei*, the stage on which the glory of God is presented, as said by John Calvin, an early Reformed theologian.

### 2. *Through Jesus Christ.*

The follower of Jesus understands that Jesus Christ was the Word made flesh. Through the Word, God made all things (John 1:3); the heavens and the earth and all that is in them (Genesis 1:1-2:4a). Then the Word was



incarnated, made flesh in Jesus Christ (John 1:14). He who was “in the beginning” (John 1.1) and “in the beginning was with God” (John 1:2), enjoys the deepest fellowship with God (John 1.18). Jesus has come into the world as a human to interpret God (John 1:18) for humanity, that is, to reveal God’s heart to human beings.

The whole life of Jesus reveals that God is willing to be Father/Mother/Parent for humans. By God’s willingness to become a Father/Mother, God reveals God’s grace and truth in the life of Jesus to humanity, accepting humans as God’s children. Whoever accepts Jesus Christ becomes a child of God. Whoever believes in the name of Jesus knows for sure that God has become Father/Mother. The glory of God, revealed in Jesus, is the glory that invites everyone to experience God’s grace, and the truth that God is completely trustworthy.

**3. Through the church.**

Based on Christ’s victory (through his death and resurrection) over the powers and principalities, the church is the mode Jesus Christ exists in the world today. Christ, who “ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty” to reign as the Messiah, is no longer physically present in the world. According to God’s plan, Jesus is present through the church, which is “his body” (Ephesians 1:23), meaning the representation of Christ or sign of Christ’s presence in the world.

Through the church, Christ continues to “preach peace” (Ephesians 2:17; Ephesians 6:15). Through the church, Christ also proclaims victory over the powers of the world (Ephesians 3:10), over the structures that make humans exploit, oppress and marginalize each other, even plunder and destroy nature!

Sociologically, the church, which is called the Body of Christ, is a community. The church is a community made up of people who through faith (and believers’ baptism) have committed their

life (and death) to Jesus Christ. It is remarkable that Christ presents himself in the world through “the sociological.” How can the “sociological” represent Christ in the world, be a sign of his presence that greets the world with peace, and proclaims his victory over the powers? The answer is by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, has poured out his Spirit to empower the church. First of all, in union with Christ, every believer or follower of Christ is united to one another. Unity has a concrete form, namely a community. That’s the church. Then the Holy Spirit, who indwells every follower of Christ and is present in the church:

- forms the character of Christ in each follower of Christ (Galatians 5:22-23a);
- gives spiritual gifts to serve and build one another up (1 Corinthians 12:3-13); and
- provides love, wisdom and courage to preach the gospel of peace and to live authentically as people who have been freed by Christ from the powers that exploit, oppress, and marginalize (Ephesians 3:10; 6:15; 2 Timothy 1:7).

Obviously, the Holy Spirit empowers the church to truly represent Christ in the world, to be a sign of Christ’s presence that greets the world with



**A GKMI small group shares fellowship in a home.  
Photo: Daniel K Trihandoyo**



peace, and announces Christ's victory over the powers. Jesus himself once called his followers "the light of the world", and "the city on the hill", and "the lamp on the lampstand" (Matthew 5:14-15). Through the beautiful works done together by Jesus followers in the church, many will glorify God, their Father.

This is how we understand these "beautiful works": empowered by the Holy Spirit, the church proclaims the gospel of peace and people live authentically, having been freed by Christ from the powers that exploit, oppress and marginalize. In this way, the glory of God is revealed.

Equally important, we believe that in Christ the purpose of God's call to Abraham was fulfilled. In the story about Abraham (Genesis 12-25), we find that God promised him three things: descendants, land and fellowship. All three served one purpose: that Abraham and his descendants would be a blessing to all the peoples of the earth. We also find these three promises and the same purpose in the story about Isaac (Genesis 26-27) and the story about Jacob (Genesis 28-35).

The apostle Paul argued that, in Christ, the seed of Abraham reached its fulfillments, and Abraham's blessing reached the Gentiles (Galatians 3:14,16). All around the world we share in that blessing, which is to become children of Abraham and children of God, "through faith in Christ Jesus." The implications are very important. As we read in Galatians 3:26-28, in the church there is no more racism

("no Jews or Greeks"), no class distinctions ("no slaves or independent") and no sexism (no male or female"). All have been united with or in Christ by the Holy Spirit through baptism. All are children of Abraham and children of God.

Together, we are sisters and brothers – equals – called to love and serve one another, and to build up the church. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we work together to make this a reality, so that there really is no racism, class difference, or sexism in the church. This is an example of authentic living, as people who have been freed by Christ from the powers that exploit, oppress and marginalize. This is the testimony from the "community of the free" of Christ's victory over the powers! This makes the preaching of the gospel of peace meaningful and impactful on the world, because it has the weight of "word and deed."

The truth about the church, which is the core of the practice of following Jesus together, is the truth about the revelation of God's glory. God revealed God's glory to humanity through the universe, and through Jesus Christ, and through the church, which is the community of Jesus followers, namely us – we who follow Jesus together!

*—Rudolfus Antonius (Pdt. Rudiyanto) is the pastor of the GKMI (Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia) congregation in Yogyakarta.*



## With Jesus Through the Storm

It has been two years that we, wherever we are in the world, have faced this pandemic season. These times have been difficult with lockdowns and much loss – from jobs to even people who we dearly love. This is a chaotic time that no one in 2019 could have imagined to hit the world soon after.

Everything that has happened could cause us to lose our peace and tranquility in life. We could be filled with fear and worry of what the future may hold. In my contemplation toward the difficult situation, I am reminded of the story of Jesus calming the storm.

### ***Jesus calms the storm***

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:35-41 NRSV)

In the reading above, there are a few things that catch my attention. The first is that Jesus himself invites his disciples to go to the other side of the sea, but in the middle of the journey, a hurricane crashes onto the boat, so that the boat begins to fill with water.

**One** thing we need to realize is that although the disciples are with Jesus on the ship, it does not mean that they would be immune to trouble. It does not mean that their journey would be

smooth, without any obstacles or trouble. In reality, it was not as they expected. It was not a peaceful breeze that came to help them relax but a dangerous and mighty wind!



**Members of a JKI congregation commemorate Indonesian Independence Day with a special service during pandemic times.  
Photo: JKI synod**

God never promised that when we follow God, everything will be fine, without problems and all safe and sound. No! What God promises is “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5b). No matter what situation we are in, God is there with us.

The **second** thing that is interesting is that Jesus actually falls asleep in the stern until finally his disciples wake him up.

Why does Jesus sleep when the situation is so chaotic with waves crashing into the boat? For Jesus, the waves, the typhoon, the wind are not a problem. Maybe for us those things are frightening and life-threatening. That is what the disciples felt. But again, I want to emphasize that for Jesus, it is a small matter.

Why does Jesus eventually wake up? Jesus wakes up not because of the storm, but when his disciples cry to him for help. Interesting, right? Jesus does not respond because of the windstorm, but because his people call on him for help. That moves his heart. Jesus loves us so much.



We know that in the end, Jesus rebukes the wind and tells the sea to be still. Then the wind dies down and the sea becomes completely calm.

### **Jesus is present**

Jesus turns to his disciples and reminds them that they are with him on the ship. Yes, so often we forget, as we are experiencing struggles that are not easy, that Jesus is not going anywhere. He is with us and never leaves us.

Once again, Jesus never promised that we would not face all of this, but he did promise no matter what condition we are in, he is there. Jesus is present. He will never leave us because we are always in his mind and heart.

And is not the most important thing that Jesus is walking beside us? And the Jesus who is walking alongside us is saying to you today, “Do not be afraid.”

Because the God who walks with you is more powerful than any problem that you are facing.

It is not an empty promise – God’s promises are “Yes” and “Amen”! (2 Corinthians 1:20). The disciples are terrified and say to each other, “Even the wind and the waves obey him!” Yes! Jesus’ power overcomes every problem we are facing.

I pray that, in this short message, we can realize that the presence of Jesus in our lives is more important than any difficulty that we may face. When we realize that Jesus is with us, we find peace and strength, instead of fear.

Even though the situation is not easy, we can still remember, with whom are we walking? That is far more important.

There our hearts will find peace and calm even in difficult situations. Do not be afraid, just believe!

**“Whatever our problem and struggle is, the answer and solution is already with you and his name is Jesus!”**

*—Anton Kurniawan Sidharta is a member of the leadership team of JKI (Jemaat Kristen Indonesia) Maranatha and founder of the Unlimited Fire youth convention.*



**Ideas for children's time**

**8. CENTRALITY OF CHRIST**

A disciple is someone who learns from a teacher. Anabaptists learn from Jesus and commit to live a life shaped by the life of Jesus. They look to scripture to see how Jesus acted and related to others. Anabaptists seek to keep Jesus as the center of their lives.

**EARLY STORY**



**Anna Jansz** was a young Dutch woman from a wealthy family who joined the Anabaptist movement in 1534. She was arrested for Anabaptist activity, and while in jail in 1539, she wrote a letter to her young son. This letter has been beloved by Anabaptists for many years. Anna speaks of the importance of following Jesus, even in difficult circumstances:

*I go, I say, the way which Christ Jesus, the eternal word of the Father, full of grace and truth, the Shepherd of the sheep, who is the Life, Himself went, and who went this way and not another, and who had to drink of this cup, even as He said: 'I have a cup to drink of, and a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am straitened till it be accomplished!' Having passed through, He calls His sheep, and His sheep hear His voice, and follow Him whithersoever He goes; for this is the way of the true fountain.*

(from an old letter in the Martyrs Mirror, page 453-4)

34

**GLOBAL STORY**

**Naomi Tamura** is a young Mennonite Christian from Japan. In Japan there are very few Christians, so Naomi and others in her church often feel different from those around them. Some people think that those who seek to follow Christ are weak or poor.

But Naomi thinks that the differences of her faith are good. "I gave up being in the norm to live together with God," says Naomi.

Naomi likes the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:9): "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." Because of Jesus' teachings and the ways he lived out peacemaking, Naomi knows that her difference as a Mennonite Christian is a good



thing. When she acts as a peacemaker in the way of Jesus, people notice.

"I think that the 'difference' Japanese people feel against the peacemakers is the sign that our work is bringing change into this world," says Naomi. "They don't know God, but God knows them well. We as Christians can love them as neighbors. They can understand Jesus through working with us Christians." Naomi hopes that her life can introduce others in Japan to Jesus.

**FAMILY QUESTIONS**

- ▶ What is your favorite story of Jesus?
- ▶ Can you think of stories of Jesus as a baby, a young person, and a grownup?
- ▶ What stories of Jesus are you talking about in Sunday School or church?
- ▶ Why do you think Christians tell the stories of Jesus?



35

"Centrality of Christ" from *Let the Children Come to Me: Nurturing Anabaptist Faith within Families* by Lisa Weaver and Elizabeth Miller; Design by Judith Rempel Smucker. Cascadia Publishing House (2019). Used with permission.



**SCRIPTURE**

I Corinthians 3:11

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

**ACTIVITY**

SHARE THE STORIES OF JESUS with each other.

What symbols would help you remember the stories of Jesus that you named during your "Family Questions" conversation? For example, a fish might help you remember the loaves-and-fishes story from Matthew 14:13-21; a boat might help you remember when Jesus calmed the storm in Matthew 8:23-27.

Create or gather symbols for as many stories as you would like. Consider gathering a symbol for each family member's favorite story.

**FIND IT AT HOME!**



SYMBOL: a manger scene  
STORY: Jesus is born (Luke 2:1-7)

SYMBOL: a towel  
STORY: Jesus washing his disciples' feet (John 13:3-5)



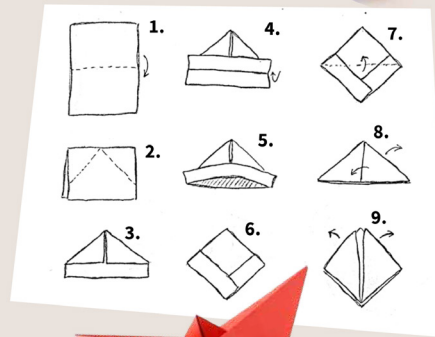
**FIND IT IN NATURE!**



SYMBOL: a heart  
STORY: Jesus says, "Love your neighbor" and tells a story about The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

**MAKE IT!**

SYMBOL: a boat  
STORY: Jesus calms the storm (Matthew 8:23-27)



**PRAYER**

Thank you, God, for giving us Jesus, who showed us how to live a life of peace.

Amen

- ▶ Once you've gathered all your symbols, can you go back and name each story?
- ▶ What if you look at the symbols tomorrow? Would you still be able to name and tell the stories?
- ▶ Where can you place these symbols in your home to look at during the week?

"Centrality of Christ" from *Let the Children Come to Me: Nurturing Anabaptist Faith within Families* by Lisa Weaver and Elizabeth Miller; Design by Judith Rempel Smucker. Cascadia Publishing House (2019). Used with permission.





## Cultural contributions from Indonesia

Indonesia is a very large country with 17 000 islands and 270 million people, speaking 600+ languages amid 300+ different ethnic groups. Indonesian food is as diverse as the people, and often hot and spicy.



Photo: Lorenzo Felycando

### Grilled Mackerel with *Dabu-Dabu* Relish

Serves 3

*Ikan tude* (Indian mackerel) is an inexpensive fish that can be easily found in local markets across Indonesia. The fish is simply grilled or pan-fried and served with *sambal dabu-dabu*, a sour and spicy salsa-like condiment from North Sulawesi. The result is a refreshing aromatic Manado dish.

#### Ingredients:

- 3 pieces small Indian mackerel fish (or 3 chicken thighs, or any fatty fish)
- 2 pieces lime, juiced
- 3 grams/½ teaspoon salt
- 1 gram/¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

#### *Dabu-dabu* relish:

- 250 grams/1 cup unripe green tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 30 grams/about 6 shallots or green onions, thinly sliced
- 5 grams OR 1 Tablespoon fresh/1 teaspoon dried sliced fresh cayenne pepper
- 6 pieces calamansi (Philippine lime), juiced (or replace with 3 tablespoons lemon juice mixed with 1 Tablespoon lime juice and 1 Tablespoon orange juice)
- 4 grams/¾ teaspoon salt
- 8 grams/2 teaspoons sugar

#### Directions:

1. Clean the fish, marinate with salt, pepper and fresh lime juice.
2. Set aside for 15 minutes.
3. Grill over low heat until well cooked.
4. Make *dabu-dabu* relish: In a bowl, mix all ingredients.
5. Pour the relish on the grilled fish and serve with steamed rice or baked/mashed potato.

Source: *Flavors of Indonesia: William Wongso's Culinary Wonders*, 2016. Used with permission.



Photo: Shutterstock



Photo: Elina Ciptadi

### **Dadar Pegagan/Gotu Kola Omelette**

Serves 4

#### **Ingredients:**

- 50 grams/2 cups Gotu Kola leaf, sliced (or pennywort, spinach or pea shoots)
- 1 stalk spring onion, sliced
- 30 grams/about 6 shallots, thinly sliced
- 5 grams/1 Tablespoon fresh/1 teaspoon dried sliced fresh cayenne pepper
- 3 pieces duck eggs (or chicken eggs)
- 3 grams/½ teaspoon salt
- 1 gram/¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 40 grams/3 Tablespoons cooking oil

#### **Directions:**

1. In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs. Add gotu kola leaf, spring onion, shallot, cayenne pepper, salt and pepper. Mix well.
2. Prepare a medium non-stick pan, heat cooking oil with medium heat. Pour the egg mix onto the pan. Wait until cooked and serve.

Source: *Flavors of Indonesia: William Wongso's Culinary Wonders*, 2016. Used with permission.

\*Gotu Kola is an herb from the parsley family, sometimes also called pennywort.

### **Pisang Goreng/Fried Banana Fritters**

Serves 4

#### **Ingredients:**

- 8 pieces ripe saba bananas (or 4 ripe plantains cut into two to get 8 pcs total)
- Oil for deep frying

#### **Pisang goreng batter:**

- 100 grams/2/3 cup rice flour
- 7 grams/1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 2 grams ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 8 grams/2 teaspoons sugar
- 6 grams/½ teaspoon salt
- 0.5 grams/1/8 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 60 grams/½ cup water

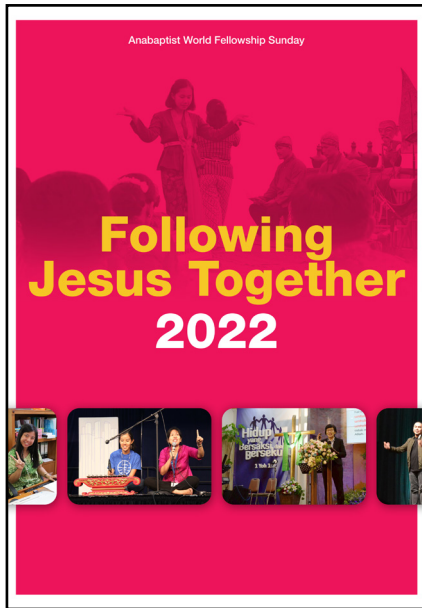
Recipe by Anita Jacobson, "Daily Cooking Quest"  
Click link below for preparation directions.

Source: [dailycookingquest.com/pisang-goreng-indonesian-fried-banana.html](http://dailycookingquest.com/pisang-goreng-indonesian-fried-banana.html)



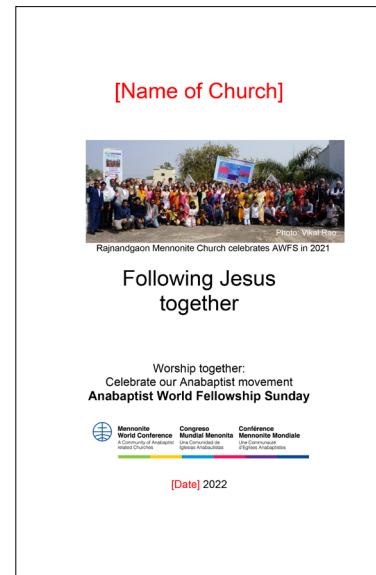
**Additional resources**

**Poster A**



Click on image to download file.  
Poster: MWC

**Sample Bulletin Covers**

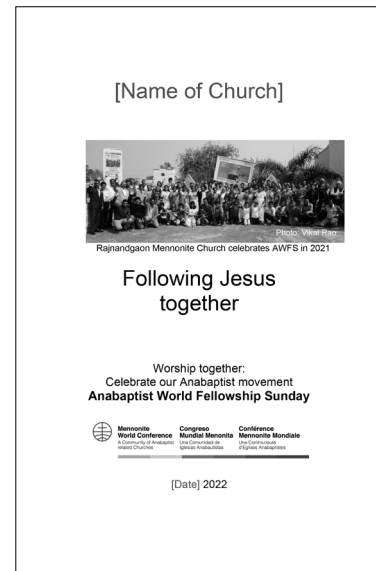


**Sample bulletin cover: colour version.**  
Click on the image above to download the .doc file.

**Poster B**



Click on image to download file.  
Poster: MWC



**Sample bulletin cover: black & white version.**  
Click on the image above to download the .doc file.

