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What is "Church"?





ANN & BRUCE BORQUIST



SUPPORT PLEDGED



SOUTHEAST ASIA AND JAPAN

Have you ever wondered what it means to be “the church”? While it’s common to say we “go to church” on Sundays, theologians remind us we “go to be with the church” since “church” is the fellowship of God’s people – the community of faith – and not a building. We recently explored different dimensions of “being church” with the Union of Indonesian Baptist Churches (UIBC).

“What is church?” – pastoral visits in western Java

We started with a 5-day, 1,125 kilometer (700 mile) road trip around western and central Java with our colleagues, the UIBC’s General Secretary and Director of Community Ministries. At UIBC

Tani Organik Merapi (Organic Farmers of Merapi) near Yogyakarta

churches and schools we saw firsthand how Indonesian Baptists are growing healthy and faithful churches and blessing their communities. We were especially inspired by a church and its pastor in the Yogyakarta area.



They have developed a community enterprise called *Tani Organik Merapi* (“Organic Farmers of Merapi”) that has created jobs, increased incomes and fostered cooperation and understanding between Christians and Muslims in this rural area. It is a powerful demonstration of what it means to be “church.”

“What is church?” – member care



Member care training with UIBC church leaders

Back in Jakarta, we led a training seminar for about 30 church mission leaders from 10 regions. They came to learn how to better support cross-cultural workers who serve among the over 300 ethnic groups of Indonesia and

internationally. We shared our own experience with the challenges of living and working cross-culturally and offered practical tips for how a church can provide the support and guidance their workers need to be healthy, resilient and effective.

“What is church?” – mentoring a “lost generation”

The UIBC and its churches are deeply concerned about the future of children in Indonesian society. The program *Sayang Anak*

Indonesia (Beloved Indonesian Children) was launched with the goal of training 2,000 young adult leaders to mentor 10,000 children in small groups. We

were invited to help train about 40 regional coordinators from 19 regions. Our modules dealt with how to recruit church members to be mentors and how to support mentors and the children they work with.

What does it mean to be “the church,” to “be Jesus,” in your city and neighborhood? Is church just a building where people meet or is it you, the presence of the kingdom of God – like salt and light – in your community? We work with partners here in the Asia Pacific region as they reflect on this question, and we’d love to work with you as your church struggles with this crucial question, too. Just let us know!

Thanks for your prayer and financial support that make all this possible.

Faithfully,

Bruce and Ann

Praises and prayers

We visited the Pacific Northwest in September to celebrate Bruce’s father’s 87th birthday. We’re grateful to God for the opportunity to be with family we hadn’t seen in years, and for the opportunity to visit partner churches in the Bremerton and Portland areas.



Sayang Anak Indonesia regional coordinators ready to recruit mentors for 10,000 children

Please pray for Ann's upcoming ministry trip to Thailand and Indonesia to participate in two conferences and teach at a partner seminary.

October is often the month churches (people, not buildings!) give a special offering to support American Baptist global mission outreach through the [World Mission Offering](#). This offering can be given "where needed most" or directed to support a specific country, project or global servant. Please respond prayerfully and generously!