

IMAges

[the newsletter of the International Missions Association]



An IMA ministry team travels by boat to their outreach destination in Indonesia. Photo by Javier Soler.

IMA members

The International Missions Association (IMA) is an association of Anabaptist mission bodies established for prayer, mutual support, and partnering in carrying out the Great Commission. It was begun in 1997 by four members (PIPKA of Indonesia, MKC of Ethiopia, Amor Viviente of Honduras, and EMM of the U.S.), and presently includes 13 members:

African Christian Mission International (Kenya)
 Amor Viviente, Honduras
 Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM, U.S.)
 Honduran Evangelical Mennonite Church (IEMH)
 Integrated Mennonite Church (IMC, Philippines)
 Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania (KMT)
 Kenya Mennonite Church (KMC)
 Mennonite Convention of Nicaragua Mission Board
 Meserete Kristos Church (MKC, Ethiopia)
 PIPKA, Indonesia
 Pocket Testament League (PTL India)
 Rosedale Mennonite Missions (U.S.)
 Spanish Mennonite Council (U.S.)

President – Richard Showalter
 Vice president – Javier Soler
 Coordinator – Tilahun Beyene Kidane

Indonesia 2005

Every IMA meeting has been unique, but our meetings since 1997 fall into two broad categories.

From 1997 until 2001, we held a series of Global Mission Study Seminars in connection with our annual meetings. The hosting groups – Honduras (Amor Viviente) in 1997, Ethiopia (MKC) in 1998, Indonesia (PIPKA) in 2000, and the United States (EMM) in 2001 – led these so that all of us could learn from the hosting group's experience in mission. These were wonderful occasions of growing and learning together. Each year a booklet or notebook was published, sharing what we learned together.

From 2002 until the present, our meetings have been centered around the development of the Holy Spirit in Mission conferences. In 2002 (Tanzania) we began to plan it, and in 2003 (Ethiopia), 2004 (Honduras), and 2005 (Indonesia) we held the first three conferences. In addition, we commissioned David Sherk to help us understand Islam. He shared with us as a group of leaders in Tanzania, then led seminars in most of our countries during the following years. In this second season, Tilahun Beyene has served as our coordinator, assisting us in taking practical steps of action in fulfilling our vision. These have been extraordinary years of experiencing the outpouring of the Spirit among us, along with great relational bonding in mission.

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President's corner

As we look ahead toward 2006, what do we see for the IMA?

We plan to meet, the Lord willing, in the Philippines from September 8 to 18, hosted by the Mission Board of the Integrated Mennonite Church. We plan to convene for another Conference on the Holy Spirit in Mission with the enthusiastic endorsement of the Filipino brothers and sisters. Our coordinator, Tilahun Beyene Kidane, plans to visit the Philippines in preparation.

In the meantime, we are committed to pray for each other, respond to calls for assistance from each other, and encourage each other in our common mission, until the whole world has the opportunity to know Jesus as Lord. Let's not forget what we're about.

The Executive Committee has already met once since we parted in Indonesia, and we plan to continue moving ahead with several projects which you have given us and which



we believe will add new life and vigor to our fellowship in mission. One of these is the mundane, but important, task of completing our by-laws.

Another is to review our membership categories. But beyond these are the visions for connection and partnership in global mission which have fired our hearts.

Let us hear from each other!

– Richard Showalter
IMA President



At the 2005 Holy Spirit in Mission Conference in Indonesia, John Hertzler (back center) prays with Tilahun Beyene Kidane of EMM (left), Pastor Joi of Thailand (front center), and Kennedy Mbatia of Kenya (right). Photo by Javier Soler.

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Within this broad picture, what was the uniqueness of Indonesia 2005?

The Conference on the Holy Spirit in Mission was once again a wonderful time of fellowship, prayer, fasting, teaching, testimony, and connection in the Spirit. We will long remember, for example, Petrus Agung's story of the building of the Holy Stadium in Semarang. The fortieth anniversary celebrations with PIPKA were likewise special times of walking in joy with our Indonesian brothers and sisters. The IMA annual meeting, with the addition of three new members and a growing experience of prayer and practical sharing, was itself a highlight. In the midst of it all, the growing one-on-one relationships with brothers and sisters in mission from all over the world have made all these meetings outstanding.

But beyond all this, it was our week of mission together in small teams that left us standing in amazement at the work of God among us. For several days we scattered in small teams to the growing edges of the body of Christ in Indonesia, to minister together. We went to northern and southern Sumatra, to the towns and jungles of Kalimantan. We went to youth retreats, pastors' conferences, local churches, villages, cities, and to tsunami-ravaged Aceh. We went to pray, preach, teach, listen, and learn.

When we reconvened in Jakarta, it was a thrill to hear the testimonies of wonderful days together in mission. There were stories of deliverance, healing, and salvation. The teams represented many nations, and some of our members had the privilege of being the first from their nation ever to appear in the locations to which they went. In going together, we had ourselves met Jesus in a new way.

We thank God for the way he met us in Indonesia, and we thank our Indonesian hosts for the outstanding way they planned for our visit and hosted us while we were there.

Each year when we meet, we ask, "Can it get better than this?" And each year God faithfully shows up to take us some new steps of joy in obedience. It happened again in Indonesia.

Mission together!

– Richard Showalter

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The power of ministering together: Indonesian Mennonites host Holy Spirit in Mission Conference and International Missions Association

SEMARANG, Indonesia – Dozens of mission leaders from 16 nations, representing 23 different church groups and mission agencies, gathered in Semarang for a conference on the Holy Spirit in Mission, May 12-14, then fanned out across Indonesia on multicultural ministry teams, May 15-19. Events concluded in Jakarta, May 20-21, with two days of reports and business with the 13 International Missions Association (IMA) member agencies and a joyful celebration of the 40th anniversary of the founding of PIPKA, the mission board of Indonesia Muria Mennonite churches (GKMI).

PIPKA, with assistance from JKI, another Mennonite conference in Indonesia, hosted the Holy Spirit in Mission conference. During the three day conference, the group spent time in fasting and prayer. They heard moving reports from five continents and powerful messages on what the Holy Spirit is doing around the world – and will do when invited and expected. Participants testified to supernatural healings, deliverance from satanic bondage, dramatic church growth, and miracles of financial and material supply for new church buildings and for ministry.

During the day, the conference group met at the Sola Gratia GKMI church, but each evening moved to the 6,000-member JKI church for open sessions.

“The growing fellowship, collaboration, and synergy among the various IMA groups is beautiful to see,” said Richard Showalter, president of Eastern Mennonite Missions and chairman of the IMA. He cited last year’s Holy Spirit in Mission conference in Honduras, where Honduran Mennonite church leader Melvin Fernandez requested that his global brothers and sisters pray that one of the Mennonite churches in his district be able to obtain a new property.

The huge, abandoned Chiquita warehouse was prime real estate located in a tourist town near an airport. It had great potential for church development. The owners had already reduced the price from \$5 million to \$2.5 million when they knew the church was interested, but the congregation still didn’t have the money.

“When I saw the money from Indonesia, I knew that God was in it, and I received courage.”

As the 2004 IMA group visited the prospective site and prayed for God’s will to be done, Yesaya Abdi, a missions leader and IMA participant from Indonesia, pressed a \$100 bill into Fernandez’s hand. Fernandez said, “When I saw the money from Indonesia, I knew that God was in it, and I received courage.”

Strengthened by the \$100 gift as a symbol of God’s blessing, Fernandez and the Honduran church leaders offered \$75,000 for the facility. Amazingly, the owners accepted the offer. Then the church went to work in the old warehouse, selling off several tons of scrap steel worth \$80,000. They earned more than enough to buy the property and renovate it for a church.

Now at this year’s gathering, Melvin gave the Indonesian church \$1,000, a ten-fold payback, and asked, “If \$100 can buy a property worth \$5 million in Honduras, how much will \$1,000 from Honduras buy in Indonesia?”

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Melvin Fernandez, left, from Honduras, and Yesaya Abdi, right, from Indonesia, pledge to work together. Photo by Samuel Lopéz.

Coordinator’s corner

At the IMA gathering in May we heard many wonderful stories of how the Lord is transforming lives and establishing his kingdom in different parts of the world – from Cusco, high in the Andes of South America, to villages perched on the slopes of the Himalayas. Participants and speakers shared amazing experiences of transformation and fascinating stories of provision. Ministry in the towns and villages added to the richness of the experience. In all this, the message from the Lord was loud and clear: when you listen to me and obey me unconditionally, things will happen and lives will be transformed. May the Lord help us to live in unconditional obedience to him.

– Tilahun Beyene Kidane
IMA coordinator



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The power of ministering together – continued from page 3

The Sunday after the conference, the international participants preached in local Mennonite churches in central Java, then broke into 11 smaller ministry teams that traveled to three regions of Indonesia. PIPKA had carefully planned for transportation, meals, lodging, and ministry opportunities in each area. Some groups flew to Medan and Aceh, the region most affected by the tsunami; others flew to western Kalimantan; still others traveled by van and ferry to southern Sumatra, an area of rice fields and cacao bean plantations.

As the international mission leaders ministered in Sumatra and Kalimantan, they saw tremendous needs but witnessed unmistakable evidence of the Holy Spirit at work. The teams led seminars, spoke at youth retreats, conducted revival meetings, visited pastors and remote congregations, spoke with tsunami survivors, and witnessed rebuilding of fishing and salt production industries.

“It was powerful to see Mennonite Christians from very different backgrounds and experiences working side by side in ministry, encouraging more openness to the Holy Spirit and his work,” said Tilahun Beyene, an EMM staff member who serves as the IMA coordinator.

“It felt like the book of Acts,” commented Antonio Ulloa, an EMM church consultant who served as the official English/Spanish translator for the IMA. “When we came to a village in Lampung, the people lined up after the service and asked us to pray for them. Then a sister from the church asked us to go to her house to pray for her husband who, for the past seven months, had been paralyzed by a stroke on the right side. We went and as we prayed, suddenly we saw him start to move the fingers on his right hand.”

Moses Otieno, a bishop from Kenya, said, “In one village we visited, people had never seen an African before. I had a chance to share the gospel from Africa to Indonesia.”

After ministering on an international team in Indonesia, Mosa from the Himalayas said, “I’ve always had a vision for outreach and church planting among my own people. This is the first opportunity I’ve had to minister cross-culturally – and it’s changed my life.”

“In one village we visited, people had never seen an African before. I had a chance to share the gospel from Africa to Indonesia.”

– Ruth Martin

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