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MERF News

Middle East Reformed Fellowship—“Declaring the Whole Counsel of God”

October 2019



The Gospel for Young Indonesians



Soppeng, Sulawesi congregation with Bibles open

Indonesia is a multi-lingual nation of thousands of islands in a vast southeast Asian archipelago. It is home to over 270 million and growing fast. The majority are considered Muslim. MERF is involved in strengthening indigenous Christian witness by radio in local languages, evangelism and church extension, biblical training and diaconal aid. MERF’s daughter ministries are very active from centers on two of the largest islands. One is in Jakarta, Java island and the other is in Makassar, Sulawesi island. They impact communities in other islands as well.

Gospel Radio

The **Indonesian Reformed Fellowship (IRF)** broadcasts gospel radio messages in Bahasa Indonesian, Javanese, Sundanese, Bugis, Makassarese and Toraja languages. This year the broadcast ministries have been expanding over the internet. The Lord is blessing with encouraging fruits.

Diaconal Aid

A year ago, when the tragic tsunami and landslides struck towns and villages in central Sulawesi killing and injuring thousands and making tens of thousands homeless, MERF’s local

teams quickly mobilized relief aid. The many local church contacts already established for gospel radio listener follow-up enabled rapid response to the need. MERF continues to cooperate with faithful local churches to run a trauma center for those still overwhelmed by their personal loss. Along with providing material diaconal aid, there are Bible teaching and counseling activities for children and adults.

Also, in poverty-stricken rural areas of Sulawesi, MERF teams continue to carry out microeconomic agricultural projects in partnerships with local churches. So, Gospel light

shines beautifully in both word and deed.

Biblical Training

The Lord continues to prosper the expanding biblical training efforts of IRF. Staff organize biblical training at the Makassar

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”

— 2 Timothy 3:16



Kopeng, Central Java greeting line after church meeting

Center as well as in visits to other communities in different parts of Sulawesi. Bible teaching conferences and seminars are held in different part of the country.

This year two experienced missionaries took part in several Biblical instruction events. Dr. Henk DeWaard, retired Australian missionary to Indonesia and Dr. Woody Lauer, an American missionary serving in Japan, each taught groups of pastors, elders and other church workers. **Currently MERF is seeking a suitable English-speaking full time teacher to lead biblical training at the Jakarta center.** Please keep this need in your prayers.

Indonesian Christians are hungry for sound Bible teaching. This is a key opportunity to ground the next generation of the fast-growing Indonesian church solidly in God's Word.

Indonesia has a very young population. Over 40% are under twenty-five years of age. More than 25% of the total population is under the age of fifteen. The vast majority neither understand nor practice the Muslim religion. Among the urban educated, growing numbers openly question traditional Islamic rituals and ideas.

Now is a strategic time to solidly ground the growing Indonesian church in God's Word, empowering them for faithful and effective witness to their largely nominal Islamic neighbors.

Sunday School Teacher Training

Although a resident Bible teacher has not been chosen, this year the strategic Jakarta Center has been expanded and

equipped for the vision of training many more evangelists. In early August, the Java-based team scheduled the first training program for Sunday school teachers.

Despite short notice to local churches, the twenty-five places were quickly filled. Not only this, but applicants had to be turned away. So, another Sunday school teacher training program was held later the same month. Yet, there continues to be a demand. Another program was held this month to train 45 Sunday school teachers mainly from the Tangerang area.

In addition, Vacation Bible School events are held in various regions of both Java and Sulawesi islands. Last

month the team traveled to Central Java to hold a VBS in Ngadirejo, Temanggung. Delighted with the results, the local church elders pleaded for training opportunities in their region for outreach among children and young people. *Please pray that this can be organized early in 2020.*

Praise God for the openness to the gospel among Indonesian young people. The obvious eagerness of the local churches for more biblical training is encouraging. *Pray for the Lord's continued blessing on the faithful Indonesian MERF teams serving in Sulawesi and Java islands and for His provision of a resident Bible teacher at the Jakarta Center.*



Kopeng, Central Java children

MERF-Canada

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