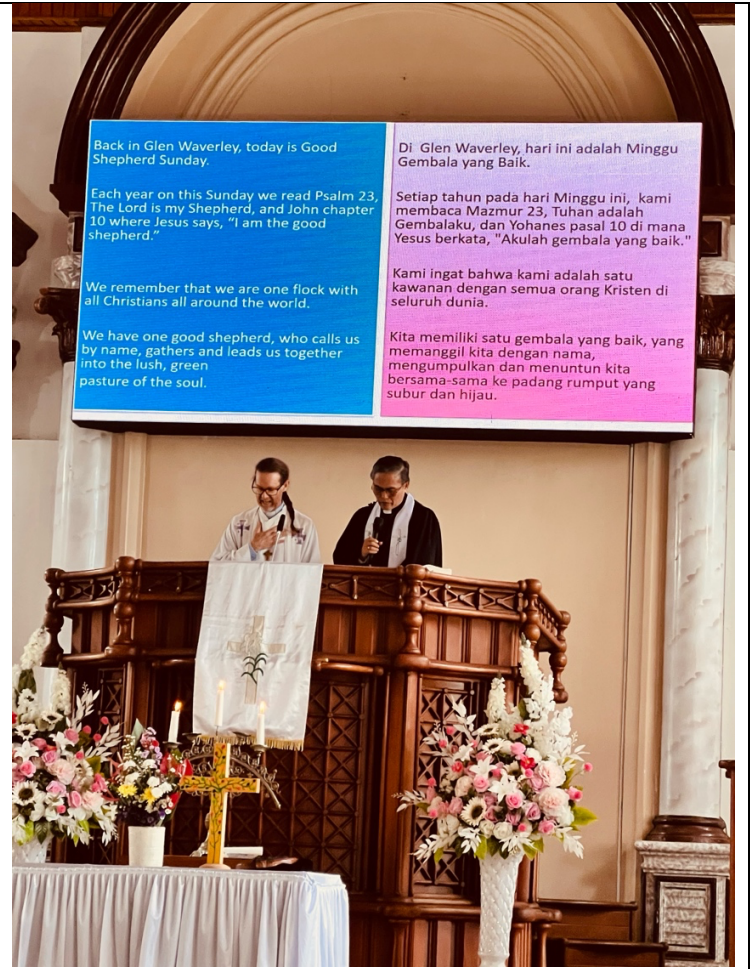


# A brief outline of what we did in Minanasa, North Sulawesi May 9 -22 2025

Who went? Rev Ian Ferguson, Beth Shelton, Glyn Howells, Lina Liu and Mark Knoll.



**By Glyn Howells, Convenor, Intercultural Task Group: 12 June 2025.**

*There are arguably few parts in Indonesia (28 million Christians out of a population of about 280 million) that are more overwhelmingly Christian or where the reformed Christian tradition is so dominant as North Sulawesi.*

*Lucky Kalonta and Rev Dan and Rev Lurine Sompe organised the following meetings/events/sharing with:*

Riedel ministers and leaders (elders) from presbytery, 5 *kolums* (cell groups) –in homes for about an hour: worship, then share a meal; GMKI (Indonesian Student Christian Movement) – Manado. Following up from my previous month with GMKI in Java in 1975. Sam Ratulangi University in Manado (capital N. Sulawesi) – met engineering dean and engineering lecturers with whom we share a weekly zoom conversation from Melbourne (Andrew, Lucky, Glyn etc.).

Early morning walk around Tondano to see churches and stadium; then breakfast at Pdt Dan's son's place – fresh coconut juice.

Over a meal meeting with moderators of 3 Protestant denominations from Gorontalo (south of N. Sulawesi), KGPM (North Sulawesi) and GERMITA (Talaud archipelago) and old friends from previous trip. + discussing cooperation/ sharing. Shared briefly with GMIM Synod leaders in Tomohon. Tara Tara GMIM congregation –Ian shared with leaders of congregation. Checked out new housing development in Tara Tara on way to lunch on farm up the hill.

Environment talk as part of workshop with local environmental organisation (below) in Riedel church – Group is named in translation:

‘To protect the *coconut land*’ (meaning *Minahasa*).

I spoke + PowerPoint on the challenges facing Australia because of the climate crisis + what we have been doing step by step over many years at GWUC (buildings and manses) to ‘go green’ and create less waste, as well as at Moonee Creek Cooperative – 40 years off the grid. Local environmental organisation chaired meeting and spoke on local issues and actions and Rev Ian spoke about God and creation.



Beth Shelton's presentation.

Astound Hill – lunch with church members Eng and As; Visited old Sion church Tomohon; Met with Rabbi in only Synagogue in Indonesia; Tomohon dinner with former secretary of Riedel, GMIM who visited us two years ago. Preaching Riedel/ Mark Sam Ratulangi church / Ian at Roong – all GMIM congregations; Lake Tondano for lunch with leaders from Roong, GMIM; met leaders at Mosque – warmly welcomed; made good link. Pizza night at pastori (manse) – Angel played piano; Tourist hill – overlooking the valley. Karegesan church: met leaders – mother of Indonesian Fellowship organist; Eddie's place in Treman overnight with dinner and talk with Lady Kimbal (leader of Manado State University Choir) and Pdt Teofale– Treman church met leaders → *Beth (picture above) talked about mental illness (different levels) and led workshop in church about dealing with stress (Lady translated);* Met with Albert's (Indonesian Fellowship) minister Pdt Francky ...breakfast; Went to Suwaan church - mother of organist; Lunch in Restaurant in Suwaan; walked to Kolum with Christine, daughter of Pdt Lurine and Dan Sompe – Pdt Alan presided – Lina, Mark and I each shared about where we had seen God at work in our lives/ community – linking to the Bible reading; Visited Masarang farm up in the hills for breakfast.

***Everywhere we went we were overwhelmed by the hospitality and the generosity of our hosts.***

Ian, Beth, Lina and Mark took part in many other occasions/ events e.g. youth group, badminton, orphanage, Angel's home visit, pastoral care.

***Today (12/5/2025) we meet with Rev Dr Apwee Ting to process some of our experiences and reflect on continuing our cooperation with Minahasa.***

***And that will result in a more practical future-oriented report.***





We also had 17 hour stop-over in Singapore airport, drove through floods, ate two breakfasts, two lunches and two dinners, were woken at 5am by the daily church devotional broadcast, travelled through beautiful valleys and mountains and at times with houses and shops inches away, saw volcanoes and dense forests, had breakfast in the cool mountains, saw steam rising from a thermal power plant, swam in hot springs pools, saw many beautiful birds, and met horse drawn carts and even carts with water buffalo on the roads and were knocked off our feet by the performance of the Manado State University Choir.

