

NEWSLETTER

ADVANCING GOD'S KINGDOM FOR ASIA

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GEN Z AND THE CHURCH



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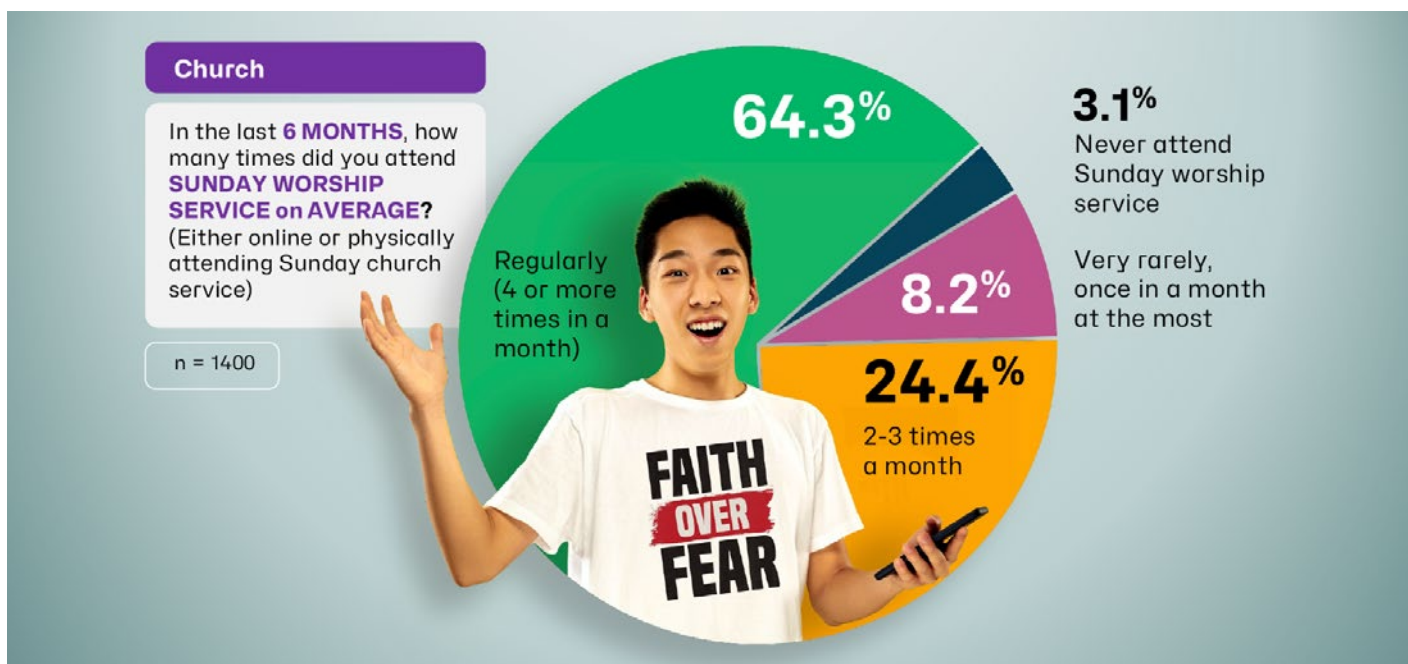
GEN Z AND THE CHURCH



Bambang Budijanto, Ph.D. (Indonesia)

General Secretary/CEO of the Asia Evangelical Alliance
Chairman, Board of Trustees, Bilangan Research Center

Gen Z (born between 1997 and 2012) is the first digital native generation. Based on a recent survey by the Bilangan Research Center (BRC) in Jakarta (April-May 2024), 64.3% of Christian Gen Z members in Indonesia attend church regularly (at least once a week).¹ By comparison, only 20% of Gen Z in the US attend church or a religious service at least once a week (PRRI, March 2024).

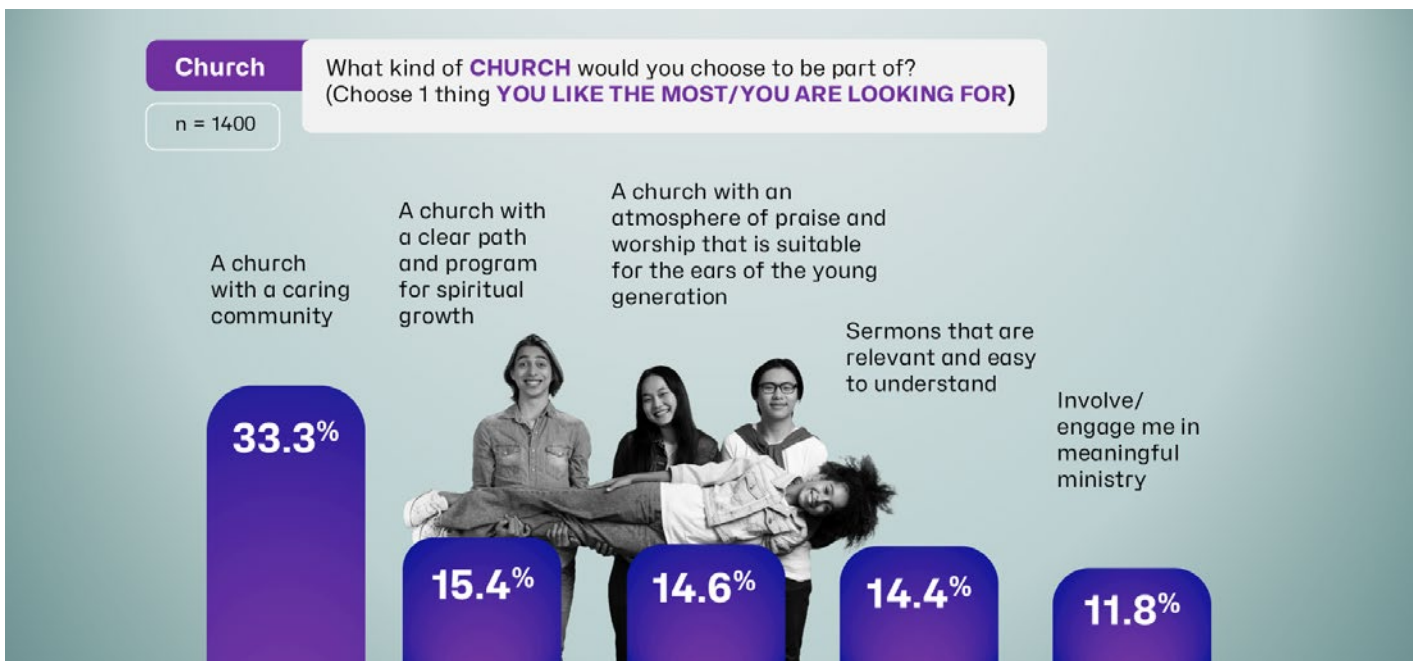


¹ Over the period of 6 years (2018-2024), the percentage of Gen Z attending Sunday Service regularly (at least once a week) remained more or less the same (64.8% in 2018). Bambang Budijanto, *Spiritualitas Generasi Muda dan Gereja* (The Spirituality of the Younger Generation and the Church). BRC, 2018:31.

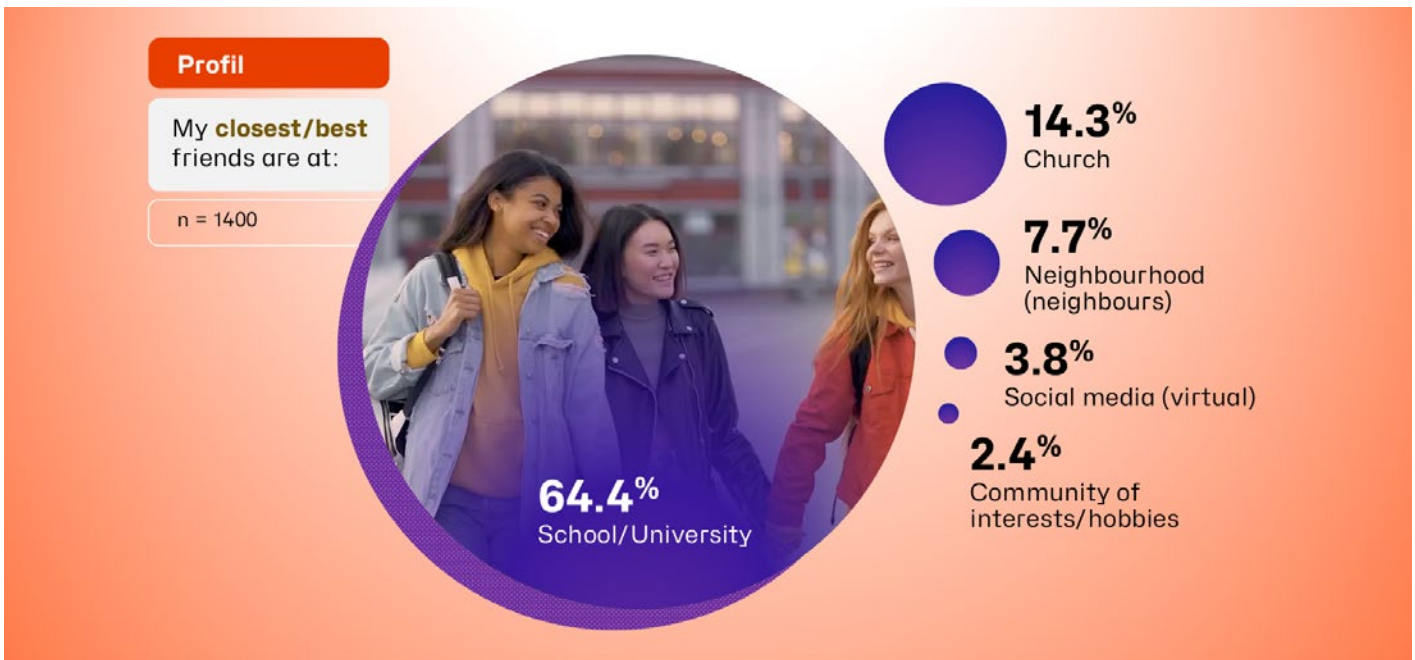
There have been several surveys on what has caused Gen Z to leave the church. In one survey this year, the BRC asked what Gen Z members are primarily looking for as they select a church. Among the responses, 11.8% chose engagement (an opportunity to serve), 14.6% sought a youthful worship style, and 14.4% emphasized the importance of relevant, Bible-based sermons that are solid and yet easy to understand. Furthermore, 15.4% prioritized spiritual growth as their primary reason for joining a church. But the top answer, by far, was that 33.3% of Gen Z choose a church with a caring community. This is Gen Z's deepest desire—to find a sense of belonging at their church.

To retain their youth or to attract young people, many churches have invested their resources in improving their worship style or inviting excellent guest preachers, but very few have considered building an ecosystem for Gen Z communities to flourish and thrive in their churches.

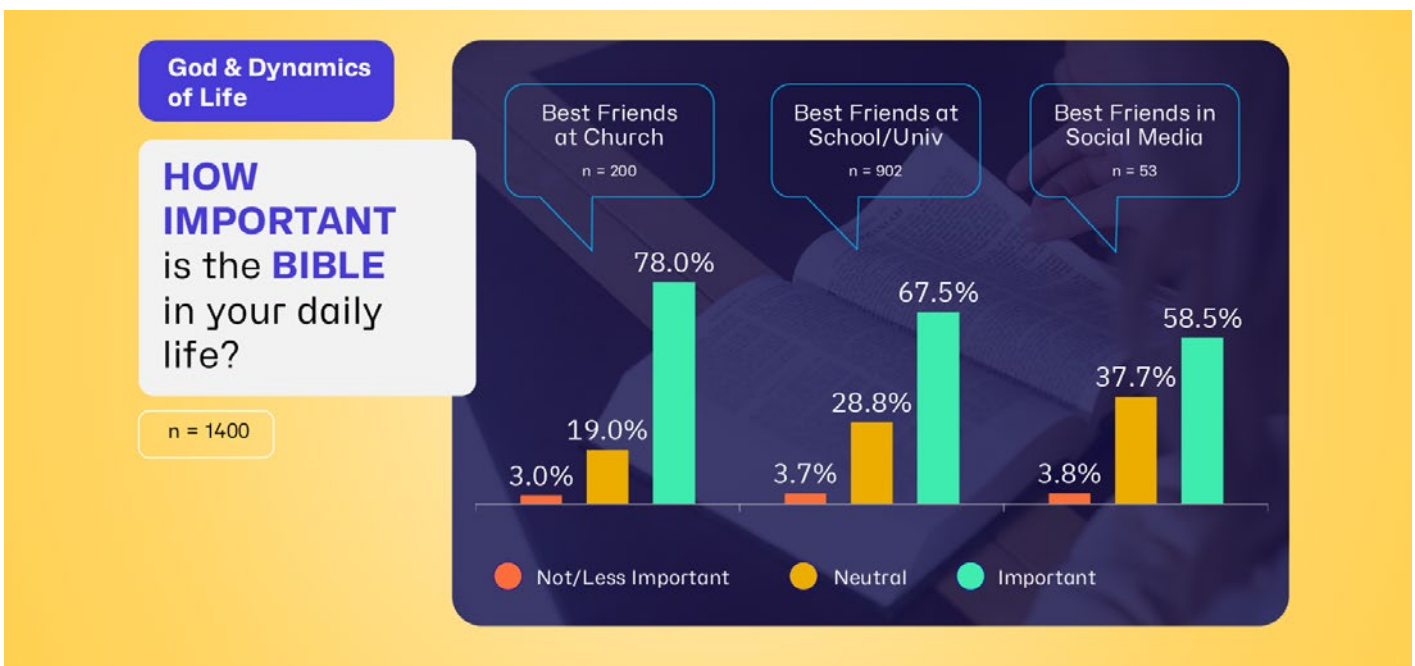
The BRC's survey indicates that a community of friends and mentors is the best way to make young people more resilient amidst life's challenges and stronger spiritually.



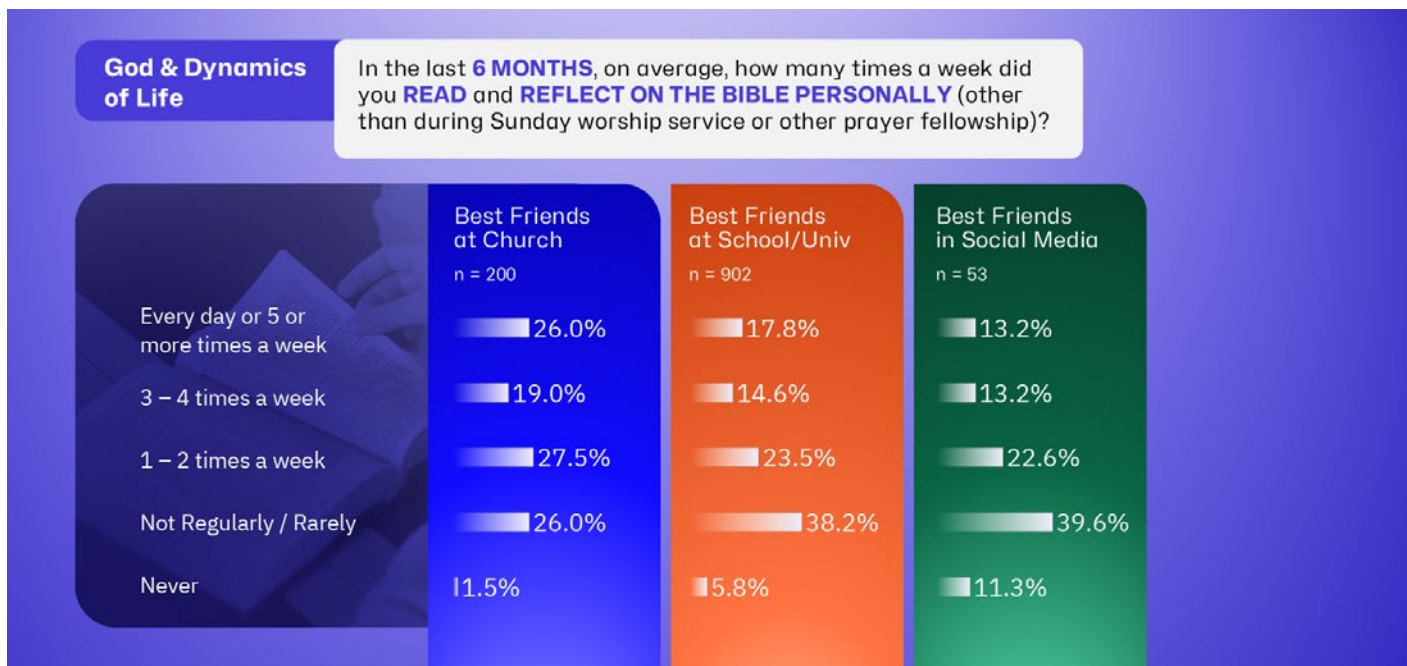
The BRC's survey indicates that a community of friends and mentors is the best way to help young people become more resilient amidst life's challenges and grow stronger spiritually. Unfortunately, only 14.3% of Gen Z feel they have a caring community in the church.



78% of those Gen Z members who do belong to a caring community at a local church said the Bible is very important for their daily life, compared to only 67.5% of those whose primary social community is at school and 58.5% among those whose communities are virtual, through social media.



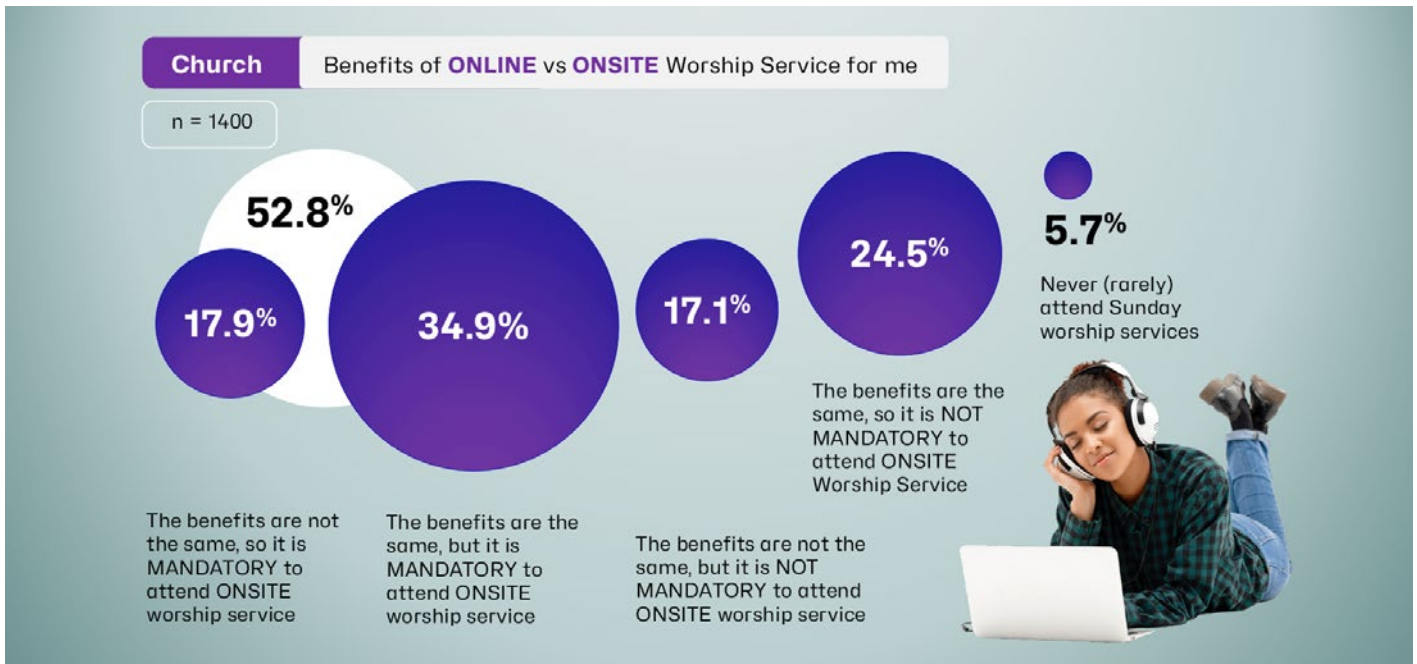
Among those who belong to a caring community at church, 45% read their Bible at least three times a week, compared to only 32% of Gen Z members whose best friends are at school and 26.4% for those who rely on social media for their community.



Spirituality can also be assessed by one’s desire and efforts to grow into Christlikeness. 27.5% of Gen Z members whose best friends are at the church said they had devoted special attention to their spiritual growth in the past six months and were actively looking for opportunities that would help them grow spiritually. In contrast, only 15.3% of those who found community at school and 7.5% whose primary community is social media gave this answer.



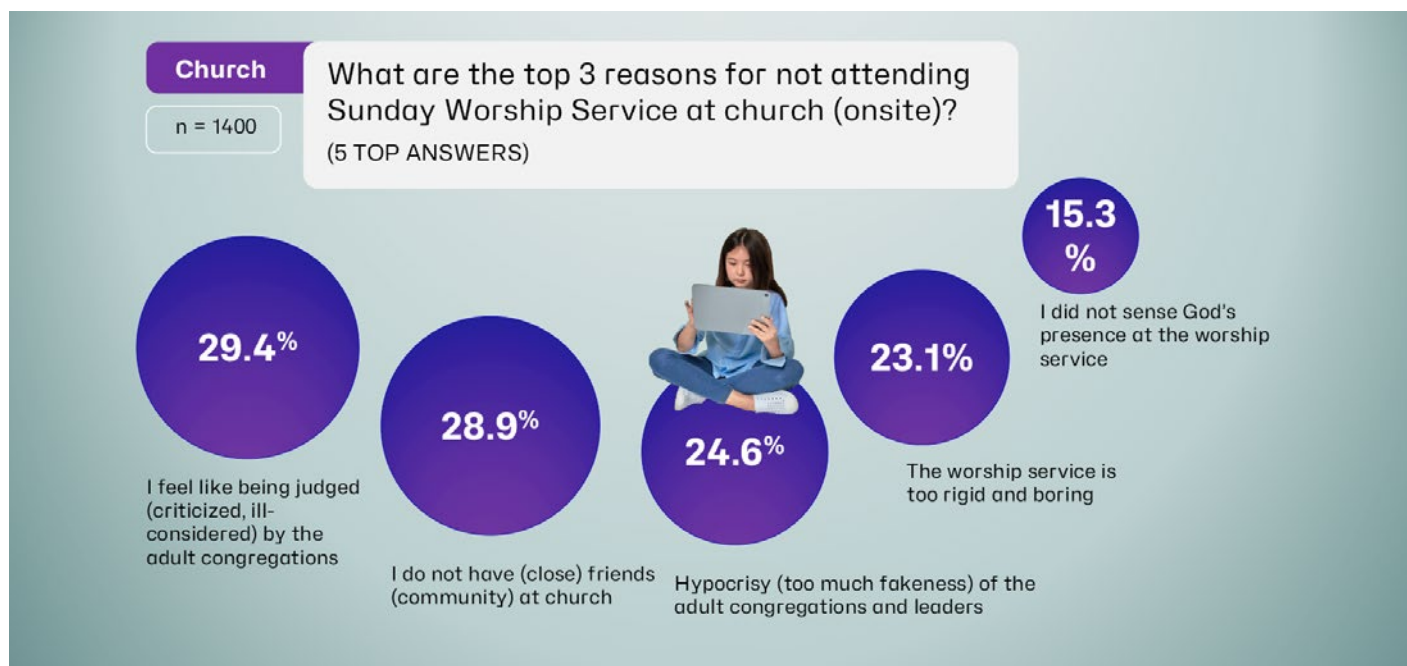
In many parts of the world, Covid-19 has been blamed for the decline of in-person church attendance since the pandemic. Increasing numbers of Gen Z opt for online worship services. Close to 60% of Gen Z consider the benefits of attending online Sunday worship services to be no different from those gained by attending on-site (physical) worship services. In addition, only around 50% of Gen Z believe that every Christian must attend Sunday worship services in person.



In general, Gen Z is less connected to the ritual of Sunday services than the previous generations (Gen Y, Gen X, Baby Boomers). Covid-19 may have been a contributing factor, but it is not the primary reason why Gen Z is gradually moving away from regular in-person Sunday attendance.

When asked for the main reasons holding them back from attending Sunday church services, members of Gen Z were most likely to say, “I don’t have close friends at church.” This answer again highlights their deep need for a sense of belonging. They do not see the church meeting their felt need for a caring community.

Other top answers included “I feel like I am being judged by the adult members” and the lack of authenticity (i.e., hypocrisy and fakeness at church).



Closing Reflections

Gen Z is crying out for godly and passionate mentors to help them navigate the fast-changing, uncharted landscape of church and mission. Their search for direction recalls Joshua 3:4: “So that you may know the way you should go, for you have not passed this way before.”

Gen Z is desperate to be part of a caring community, which they struggle to find in churches around them. In this survey, respondents shared their longing to see churches focus more on strengthening community, beyond Sunday worship events or rituals.

57% of Gen Z in Indonesia are eager to grow spiritually and

are intentionally pursuing this goal. Instead of relying on what church offers (mostly Sunday worship service), they often choose other venues or means, such as YouTube, Tiktok, or faith communities or Bible studies outside the organized church to help them achieve spiritual growth.

Gen Z in Indonesia perceived Sunday worship services, while important, as not the sole or even the primary source for their spiritual growth or the main venue for their spiritual expression. As an on-demand generation, they do not limit their spiritual expression to Sundays. Therefore, to be a caring community, the church must find ways to engage them beyond Sunday services.

Through this survey, Gen Z draws our attention to the need to focus on community, mentorship (discipleship), authenticity and intentionality as part of the church’s self-expression, so as to keep the church relevant for all generations. ■



PHOTO: FREEPIK

RISING TO THE CALL OF DISCIPLESHIP



John P. Mridha (Bangladesh)
Member of AEA Youth Commission

PHOTO: FREEPIK

The Asian church stands at a pivotal moment in history, and the next generation, particularly Generation Z, is at the heart of its future mission. The Great Commission, Jesus' command to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), echoes loudly across the diverse landscapes of Asia. The key to fulfilling this mission lies in effective discipleship, a process that, when deeply rooted, naturally multiplies and accelerates the gospel's spread.

The Asia Evangelical Alliance (AEA) Youth Commission has recognized this as a crucial need for the coming years. For the 2024–2028 term, the Youth Commission has focused squarely on

discipleship. This commitment stems from the understanding that true transformation in Asia's churches and communities begins with a life-on-life model of following Christ. When someone is a true disciple, they not only grow in their faith but also become catalysts for others to follow Christ. This creates a wave of multiplication—disciples making disciples—that has the potential to transform nations.

In the current cultural context, Generation Z faces unique challenges, including rapid technological shifts, increasing secularization, and the pressures of modern life. Yet this generation also has unprecedented opportunities to influence

the world for Christ. The AEA Youth Commission believes that discipling Gen Z is not just about preparing them for future leadership, but about equipping them today to live out their faith authentically, making an impact in their communities now.

This emphasis on discipleship will be carried out in close collaboration with national evangelical alliances across Asia. By working together, we aim to raise a generation of leaders who are not only knowledgeable but deeply rooted in their faith, equipped to disciple others in their respective contexts. This collaborative effort is not merely a strategic initiative; it reflects the body of Christ working together



Through prayer and collaboration, we believe that God will ignite a passion for discipleship and mission in the hearts of this generation, leading to a ripple effect that will advance the kingdom of God throughout Asia.

for a common goal, namely to glorify God by making disciples of all nations, beginning with our own.

The 11th General Assembly of the Asia Evangelical Alliance in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, was a pivotal moment that set the tone for the future. In this historic gathering, leaders from across Asia united with one purpose, to advance the Great Commission. The assembly emphasized that collaboration, authentic relationships, and intergenerational leadership are the keys to accelerating the gospel's spread. It was more than just an event; it was a launching pad. The shared vision from Mongolia now drives the AEA's 2024–2028 focus on discipling Generation Z, equipping them to lead the church into a new era of mission. The seeds sown in Mongolia are already bearing fruit, as the AEA Youth Commission moves forward, confident

that through intentional discipleship, the next wave of gospel transformation is on the horizon.

Looking ahead, the AEA Youth Commission is calling for prayer as it prepares for the 2025 Youth Leaders Gathering. This event is envisioned as a time for young leaders to come together, seek God's guidance, and create strategic plans for a greater move of God in Asia. Through prayer and collaboration, we believe that God will ignite a passion for discipleship and mission in the hearts of this generation, leading to a ripple effect that will advance the kingdom of God throughout Asia.

The road ahead is filled with challenges, but we have the assurance of Christ's words: "I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). As we disciple the next generation, may we see a wave of transformation across Asia, one disciple at a time. ■

The Gen Z Harvest and Harvesters



**Gwen De Rozario-Seah
(Singapore/Cambodia)**

Executive Director of
AEA Family & Children Commission



PHOTO: PEXELS

Gen Z (born 1997–2012)¹ is not a homogeneous group, but there are many common traits that research has identified. This distinctiveness has implications for how we disciple and reach this generation.²

Characteristics

Gen Z is known as “digital natives,” the “switched-on” or

“hyperconnected” generation.³ Singaporean Anglican pastor Fu Wei Kai notes that many young people’s worldviews are formed through their smartphones. “What they know about their friends are from the Instagram stories and TikTok videos,” Fu says. “Some youths are actually awkward in social situations as most of them communicate virtually.”⁴ They have a high dependence on and greater trust in the views of their peers than what we might call traditional wisdom.

Many studies conclude that Gen Z has a great desire to understand the “why.” Viewed positively, this attitude of challenging social and cultural norms arises from a “genuine desire to make improvements and build upon the existing foundation rather than vilifying established ways.” “Gen Z value fluidity in their thinking and seek non-judgmental spaces.”⁵ They also have a strong sense of responsibility and a desire to make a difference.

However, despite the self-assured persona displayed largely online, Gen-Z is

1 Pew Research: In order to keep the Millennial generation analytically meaningful, and to begin looking at what might be unique about the next cohort, Pew Research Center decided a year ago to use 1996 as the last birth year for Millennials for our future work. Anyone born between 1981 and 1996 (ages 23 to 38 in 2019) is considered a Millennial, and anyone born from 1997 onward is part of a new generation.

2 We note that in Asia, many Gen-Zs live in rural areas and may not have all the characteristics mentioned here. Having said that, where devices and social media has penetrated, the same worldview and effects are also impacting them.

3 Understanding Gen Zs in Asia – Their Expectations and Influence on Brands, <https://www.labbrand.com/insights/article/understanding-gen-zs-in-asia-their-expectations-and-influence-on-brands.html>

4 To Keep Gen Z in the Pews, One Singapore Church Lets Them Run the Service by Pearlyn Koh, <https://www.cru.org/sg/en/stories/helping-others-grow/ministering-to-gen-z.html>

5 Debunking Gen Z myths: Insights from Southeast Asia by Ysabelle Belmonte, Quantum, <https://www.warc.com/newsandopinion/opinion/debunking-gen-z-myths-insights-from-southeast-asia/en-gb/6521>

also termed the “anxious generation”⁶ — constantly exposed to negative news and socially isolated by their own devices⁷ may have contributed to this.

Connect and Spur Gen-Z On

What do these characteristics mean in the context of mission?

In a world that provides an endless stream of information and opinions one click away, it's even more pressing that we help Gen Z develop the reflexes to turn to Scripture to discover truth. [Sean] McDowell pointed out that it is no longer sufficient to tell Gen Z what to believe in, but why and how, they can discover truth.⁸

Church leaders who are tuned-in to Gen Z will see the importance of engaging them in a purposeful and

6 The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness. By Jonathan Haidt
7 Gen Zers' Stances on the Role of Religion: Case Study at a Private University in Bandung by Bernardus Ario Tejo Sugiarto, Dadang Kahmad, Yeni Huriani, Parahyangan Catholic University, Sunan Gunung Djati State Islamic University
8 Ministering to Gen Z in Church by Ashley Yang, <https://www.cru.org/sg/en/communities/campus/ministering-to-gen-z.html>



PHOTOS: FREEPIK

meaningful way as opposed to preaching at them. We must give them practical challenges to live for Jesus, bringing His justice and mercy to our broken world. Says McDowell, “I think one of the reasons why the church has lost its power is we live a compartmentalized faith.”⁹

In short, a church-centric approach is not enough. Gen Z needs to be challenged to live out their faith at home and in public. Parents must be equipped to defend their faith if they are to help their Gen Z children stand firm. One of the biggest gaps is in the home setting, where hearts are not connected to faith and lived out. Most parents do not know

9 Sean McDowell quoted in Ministering to Gen Z in Church by Ashley Yang

how to handle the challenging questions that Gen Z or their peers are asking.

Reach the non-believing Gen Z

Gen Z values fluidity and seeks to understand the “why” behind anything they believe. “They are ‘purpose-driven,’ seeking to engage in work or activities that align with their values.”¹⁰

We have God’s Word and truth and access to social media platforms to reach a generation seeking for a

10 The Deloitte 2024 Gen Z (and Millennial) Survey, which gathered responses from nearly 23,000 individuals across 44 countries; Quoted in Gen Z and millennials in Asia-Pacific want purpose, sustainability in jobs by Josephine Tan, <https://hrmasia.com/gen-z-and-millennials-in-asia-pacific-want-purpose-sustainability-in-jobs/>

just cause to stand for. But beyond the online platform, how can we better engage them in person? Many lack the social connectedness of past generations. Everyone needs to experience the love of God. This is where the church family can fill the relationship gap where their home family may be lacking.

Mobilize the Gen Z Parent

In 2023, the Pineapple Lounge released a global study on Gen Z parents and their distinct approach to parenting. The study recommended including words like “independent choices” and developing personal preferences, respect, autonomy, and freedom to explore.

For Gen Z, parenting should complement and enhance who they are as opposed to being a necessary rite of passage. This translates into a higher level of involvement for both mothers and fathers who are more hands-on in all aspects of their children’s development. Gen Z parents value the individuality in their children and celebrate the children’s individual preferences, more so than their parents’ generation.

Values which could translate to being more open-minded about what their children are



PHOTOS: FREEPIK

exposed to and experience, including belief systems. This is a trend found in 2024 Pew research:

Hong Kong (37%) and South Korea (35%) have the world’s highest shares of adults who say they were raised in a religion but who no longer identify with one. Also high on the list are two other East Asian societies: Taiwan (22%) and Japan (21%).¹¹

¹¹ Pew Research Center, June, 2024, “Religion and Spirituality in East Asian Societies”

On the flip side, because they are more involved and engaged with their children, Gen Z parents, if mobilized and equipped well, can be very intentional disciple makers in their homes. If they are made aware of the theology of marriage and parenting and guided to have a higher purpose—namely, to live out their faith convictions in their homes—Gen Z parents are likely to embrace their role to pass on their faith in an intentional way to the now-emerging Gen Alpha. ■

The AEA Family and Children Commission seeks to help both the church and home engage the next generation together. We have recently launched our Asia Family and Children Resource Centre to curate and build a rich depository of resources to help the church & families in Asia.

Visit our website at <https://asiaea.org/familychildren>

Come and be a part of our community of church leaders who are engaged in family discipleship. Contact us at aeafamilychildren@gmail.com to find out more.

The Church, Mission, and Family in a Changing World

Mission with the Next Generation



**Bishop Philip P. Adhikary
(Bangladesh)**
ExCo Member of AEA



PHOTOS: FREEPIK

As we approach the end of another fulfilling year, it is time to reflect on the journeys we've undertaken and the missions we've embraced. This reflection is particularly poignant as we look to the future, envisioning the role of the next generation within the church, in mission, and within the family. The theme "The Next Mission with the Next Generation" invites us to consider how we can nurture, guide, and empower youth to carry forth the torch of faith, service, and love.

In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and shifting cultural landscapes, the church stands as a beacon of hope and stability. However, to remain relevant and impactful, it

must evolve and adapt to the needs and aspirations of the next generation. Engaging young people in meaningful ways requires us to create spaces where they feel valued and heard. This involves not only incorporating contemporary worship styles and digital platforms but also fostering an environment of inclusivity and openness. By doing so, we can inspire a deeper connection to their faith and a renewed commitment to the church's mission.

Young people possess a unique zeal and passion that can invigorate the church's outreach efforts. By encouraging their involvement in ministry, we provide them with opportunities to develop their

spiritual gifts and leadership skills. Mentorship programs and youth-led initiatives can serve as powerful tools to cultivate a sense of responsibility and ownership in the next generation. As they take on roles within the church, they learn to navigate challenges, collaborate with others, and grow in their faith.

Today's youth are often at the forefront of social justice movements and humanitarian efforts. Harnessing their passion for change can lead to innovative mission strategies that address contemporary issues such as poverty, climate change, and inequality. In recent months, Bangladesh has witnessed a remarkable surge in community-led initiatives to change the country's fascism. One

significant event was the Youth Leadership for the Long March in Dhaka, which brought together millions of youth from various parts of the country. The protest focused on equipping the next generation with new leadership in truth and service in Bangladesh. Additionally, youths from churches across Bangladesh have been actively involved in recent flood havoc and flood relief efforts, providing much-needed assistance and support to affected communities. These efforts have not only alleviated immediate suffering but also strengthened the bond between the church and the local population, showcasing the love and compassion that define our mission.

At the recent General Assembly in Mongolia, we witnessed powerful testimonies that resonated deeply with all attendees. Shared stories of the journey to faith began with the outreach efforts of the mission team. Despite facing immense challenges, including societal pressures and personal doubts, believers found solace and strength in the teachings of Christ. These stories are testaments to the transformative power of faith and the unwavering dedication of our missionaries.

We must maintain the family unit as a foundational pillar in the development of young people. It is within the family that values, beliefs, and traditions are first imparted. In today's fast-paced society, maintaining strong family bonds can be challenging. However, intentional efforts to spend quality time together, engage in meaningful conversations, and practice faith as a family can have profound impacts. Parents and guardians are called to model Christ-like behavior, demonstrating love, forgiveness, and service in their daily lives. By doing so, they lay a solid foundation for their children to build upon as they navigate their own paths.

However, education and professional environments are significant arenas where the next generation will live out their faith and mission. Schools, universities, and workplaces are not just places of learning and employment but also mission fields where young people can witness their faith. Encouraging them to integrate their beliefs with their academic and professional pursuits can lead to transformative experiences and opportunities to share the gospel in diverse contexts.

As we look toward the future, the importance of equipping and empowering the next generation cannot be overstated. The church, mission, and family each play a pivotal role in this process. By fostering environments that nurture faith, encourage innovation, and strengthen family bonds, we can ensure that the next generation is prepared to carry forth the mission with passion and purpose.

Let us pray for youth empowerment, focusing on equipping Gen Z with the tools to lead and inspire through the events coming up in the next three months. We may host a series of workshops on digital evangelism, aimed at leveraging technology to reach a broader audience. Our prayer for the spring mission next year is to provide Gen Z support and spiritual guidance.

In this season of reflection, may we be inspired to support and uplift the youth in our midst, recognizing that they are not just the future of the church but its present as well. Together, let us embark on this next mission with the next generation, confident that God's plan for them and for us is filled with promise and possibility. ■

ASIAN CHURCH MISSION AND WOMEN



Grace Hee (Malaysia)
Executive Director of
AEA Women's Commission

"I have not seen a church revived without her women awakened to the call, equipped for serving, and released in their ministry." This was the declaration of Dr. Anne Zaki, professor of preaching and practical theology at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, in her message to 65 students from across Asia at the AEA Emerging Women Leaders Online Training Course (AEWLOT) on October 19, 2024.

Although the topic of women as the end-time harvest force was not highlighted at the August 2024 “Disciple or Die” conference in Mongolia, it is indisputable that from the start of Jesus’ ministry to today, women have played a significant role in the growth of the church. I am constantly surprised that while women easily make up 60 to 70 percent of congregation members in Asia, their leadership voice is a minority.

The AEA Women Commission has resolved to include the training and discipleship of women as a leading goal for the next four years. We desire to awaken women to their calling, equip them, and release them to their local churches to serve. The AEWLOT course aims to raise up 100 emerging young women from national evangelical alliances and churches in Asia who can serve their church and nation effectively. This six-module course will be taught quarterly online by Asian theologians and seasoned ministers, followed by completion of assignments such as Scripture memorization, book reflections, writing assignments, and sessions with an assigned mentor from the commission.



PHOTOS: FREEPIK

“With the significant acceleration of mission and the Great Commission in Asia, we need more good and godly women leaders in Asia,” says AEA General Secretary Bambang Budijanto. Part of creating a movement of godly women is networking, equipping and encouragement. This will happen on December 2–5 in Kuala Lumpur. Under the theme of “Finding My Voice,” Asian female leaders will be equipped in storytelling, with an enhanced appreciation of how their lives’ experiences can be retold in the context of gospel sharing.

Catherine Booth of the Salvation Army said, “If indeed there is in ‘Christ Jesus neither

male nor female’ but in all touching His kingdom ‘they are one’, who shall dare thrust women out of the Church’s operations, or presume to put my candle which God has lighted under a bushel? ... If God has given her the ability, why should not a woman persuade the vacillating, instruct and console the penitent, and pour out her soul in prayer for sinners?”

Brothers and sisters, I implore you to awaken, equip, and release women in your local churches to their call to serve, lead, and disciple in their spheres of influence. You will find the church revived and mission accelerated. To God be the glory. ■

THE ASIAN CHURCH, MISSION, AND GEN Z



ILLUSTRATIONS: FREEPIK



Esther Rai (Nepal)

- Executive Director, Association for Theological Education in Nepal (ATEN);
- ExCo Member of AEA

Historically, Asian Christians have faced persecution, poverty, and societal marginalization, yet they have not stopped spreading the gospel and planting churches in very difficult regions. Many of them chose to die as martyrs for Christ rather than denying their faith. As a result, the number of Christians has increased and continues to grow.

As we look toward the future, our mission and the threat of persecution remain the same in a different way. The Asian church has the responsibility to help the next generation carry Christ's yoke. The younger generation is always the future of the church, society, and the world.

Lamentations 3:27-30 says, "It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. Let him sit alone in silence, for the LORD has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust—there may yet be hope. Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace."

Understanding the next generation

In many ways, Gen Z parallels the disciple Thomas from the Bible. Thomas, who expressed doubt about Jesus' resurrection until he could see and touch Christ's wounds for himself, mirrors Gen Z's desire for tangible evidence and



personal experience. This generation values authenticity and doesn't accept truth claims at face value. They prefer to investigate, question, and encounter truth directly before committing to belief.

Events

- Nepal became a beacon country for South Asia by allowing the registration of same-sex marriage certificates on April 24, 2024. Recently, the Nepal Supreme Court issued its sixth same-sex marriage certificate. Many couples from the LGBTQIA+ community are now seeking to obtain certificates, with couples coming from around the world to get married in Nepal.
- Every day, around 3,000 young people leave Nepal in search of work, and last year, 1.6 million people left the country seeking a better future abroad. Among them were pastors, missionaries, and church leaders. Poverty is one of the reasons. Sadly, workers for Christ have been compelled to work in order to provide for their families.

Growing up in a pastor's family, I witnessed my father's struggles, the financial hardships we faced, and how people often looked down on us. Because of these experiences, I never dreamed of entering ministry during my childhood. Sadly, this is not just my story but that of the families

THE CHURCH'S MISSION TO REACH ALL TRIBES WITH THE GOSPEL WILL NEVER CHANGE, BUT THE METHODS MUST EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE GENERATION Z.

of many Nepalese pastors. My constant prayer is that the local church will become sustainable and practice giving to the servants of God and Christian organizations, as the Bible promises that God will make us givers, not just receivers.

Conclusion

It is time to create more space for young leaders to emerge. Many nations and tribes still need to hear the gospel, especially in places not yet reached. The church's mission to reach all tribes with the gospel will never change, but the methods must effectively engage Generation Z. This generation, with its unique characteristics and challenges, holds the potential to bring about significant spiritual renewal and cultural transformation.

The Asian church must lead the next generation in developing a personal relationship with God, empowering them to be His servants for the world, and combating activities that go against the teachings of the Bible. ■

Youth Driving Change in Communities and Beyond



**Sanya Ladaphongpattana
(Thailand)**

Senior Director of Regional Program,
Compassion Asia

Compassion Thailand's Church Partners are more than just community hubs; they are powerful agents of change, actively nurturing the next generation of youth leaders. Through their involvement in environmental conservation projects, the youth trained by these Church Partners are stepping up as emerging leaders, not only driving impact in their respective communities but also influencing change at the national level. The churches, in turn, are actively supporting and mentoring these young individuals, creating a strong foundation for sustainable leadership that will shape the future of both local and national initiatives.

Youth Impacting Their Communities

At the core of the environmental initiatives led by local churches are youth—dynamic individuals who are deeply engaged in addressing pressing environmental challenges such as deforestation, water scarcity, and waste management. These young leaders have embraced their roles as change makers, working hand-in-hand with their communities to implement sustainable practices.



For instance, during the campaign exhibition at Youth & Creation Care, held in August 2024 in Chiang Mai, youth leaders from 41 local churches from numerous Thai provinces showcased



their innovative projects on soil management, forest conservation, and waste reduction. The event highlighted not only the technical skills these young leaders have developed but also their commitment to serving their communities. Workshops at the exhibition provided additional opportunities for these youth to share knowledge and learn from each other, further strengthening their leadership capabilities.

The impact of these youth leaders is already being felt. In Pa Kia Noi, the youth from Bethany Church have become pioneers in environmental conservation, applying the “Bethany Model,” which focuses on reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable land use. Their efforts were recognized at a Community Project Meeting in Chiang Mai where they presented their model to the Deputy Governor, demonstrating that youth-led initiatives can capture the attention of local government and influence broader policy discussions.

By taking ownership of these projects, the youth are not only contributing to immediate community needs but are also building the skills, confidence, and networks needed to become long-term leaders. Their ability to inspire others is evident in the 16 additional churches that have now committed to leading environmental initiatives, largely inspired by the work of these youth-driven core groups.

Churches Supporting Youth Leadership

The churches themselves play a critical role in this transformation. By fostering a supportive environment where youth can thrive, churches are actively helping to cultivate the next generation of leaders. These churches don't just encourage youth participation, they prioritize it. Through mentoring and capacity-building programs, churches are ensuring that these young

individuals have the resources and guidance necessary to succeed as leaders.

As seen in the case of Pa Kia Noi Church, which is now part of the Royal Project for low-carbon living, churches are connecting young leaders with larger networks and platforms. This level of support amplifies the impact of these young leaders, allowing them to take their work beyond their immediate communities and into broader national initiatives.



Additionally, some key denominations have recognized the importance of youth involvement in environmental conservation and are planning to further expand the Youth & Creation Care initiative. This initiative will be introduced to over 50 district churches in early 2025, with a focus on recruiting even more youth to join the movement.

The goal is to turn these youth leaders into mentors for others, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond the current reach.

Building the Future

These emerging youth leaders are not just changing their local communities, they are on the path to becoming national influencers. By participating in high-profile events such as the Chiang Mai Community Project

Meeting, youth leaders from FCPs are gaining visibility at the regional and national levels. Their work is drawing the attention of organizations such as the Thai Environment Institute and the National Science and Technology Development Agency, positioning them as key players in national efforts to promote sustainability and environmental conservation.

With the ongoing support of their churches, these young leaders are poised to take on even greater responsibilities. Their involvement in initiatives like the Royal Project for low-carbon living demonstrates the potential for youth-driven environmental efforts to inspire systemic change across the country. These initiatives not only provide young leaders with the platform to influence policies but also empower them to mentor their peers, further extending the impact of their work.

A Vision for the Future

As Compassion Thailand looks ahead to FY25, the role of youth leaders in driving change will



continue to expand. The leaders of the original 11 participating churches, now joined by 16 additional congregations, will focus on deepening relationships with families and communities to promote self-reliance in food production, income generation, and environmental sustainability. These young leaders will play a crucial role in shaping prototype areas that serve as models for sustainable living, with the goal of presenting their achievements by October 2025.

By investing in the development of youth leaders, local churches are not only addressing immediate environmental challenges but are also building a pipeline of change makers who will continue to drive progress long into the future, at both the local and national levels.

The future of Thailand's environmental and community leadership is in good hands, thanks to the passion, commitment, and leadership of these emerging youth leaders and the unwavering support of their churches. Together, they are forging a path toward a more sustainable, empowered future for all. ■

TESTIMONY

National Youth Commission of the Evangelical Alliance of Pakistan

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. (1 Cor. 12:4, NIV)



Adeel Samuel (Pakistan)

National Youth Commission,
Evangelical Alliance of Pakistan

I am grateful to God for His Spirit, who unites us across different nations, tribes, and languages to glorify His name among all peoples. He has bestowed various talents and gifts upon His Church, with one purpose: to make Him known to the ends of the earth.

I praise God for those evangelical leaders almost three decades ago who aligned with the vision of the WEA and AEA, leading to the establishment of the Evangelical Alliance of Pakistan. This national alliance has been actively working toward diverse objectives. Unfortunately, it has not had a Youth Commission formally established in all these past years.

By God's grace, the current EAP board selected Adeel Samuel to represent the Youth Commission as team leader, and initial discussions took place with Vania Christian about the formation of the National Youth Commission of Pakistan. Vania, the Executive Director of the Youth Commission at AEA, endorsed this initiative, leading to an online meeting on August 23, 2024. Rev. Aslam Nazik (EAP General Secretary) and

Rev. Iqbal Khokhar (Chairman) invited each board member to nominate two young individuals who are born again, committed, and passionate about serving youth. A selection committee was formed, and after prayerful consideration, seven nominees were chosen to join Adeel: 1. Mrs. Alisha Rohail; 2. Mr. Daud Shazoor; 3. Miss Emmna Gill; 4. Miss Martha Youhana; 5. Miss Rubab Raza; 6. Miss Ruhama Iqbal; 7. Mr. Sherazer Amjad.

An introductory Zoom call among this group took place on October 15, 2024, marking the official startup of the National Youth Commission of Pakistan. Through collaboration with other national youth commissions, we aim to connect with youth both locally and globally.

I am grateful to God for this young and incredibly talented team. I have complete confidence in their abilities and the gifts God has given them. I hope that our new commission will undertake collaborative initiatives for the holistic development of Christian youth in Pakistan, all for the glory of God! ■



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2024-2028

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YOGARAJAH**

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The National Christian
Evangelical Alliance
of Sri Lanka (NCEASL)

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ALUSIA – Indonesian
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2024-2028

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Executive Director of Study
& Research Commission



Bolortuya Damdinjav

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🏢 Head of the
Research Department,
Mongolian Evangelical
Alliance

IT IS CHRISTMAS EVERY TIME YOU LET
GOD LOVE OTHERS THROUGH YOU.

MOTHER TERESA



MERRY CHRISTMAS 2024
& HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025

Peace & Blessings

AEA EXCO

Godfrey Puvindra Yogarajah

Bambang Budijanto, Ph.D. • Rev. Dr. Takahito Timothy Iwagami

Rev. Ezekiel Tan • Bishop Philip P. Adhikary

Otgonbayar Biniye • Saher Khaar

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