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A Faith-Building Model Based on Colossians 2:7 for Strengthening Congregational Spirituality: A Community Service Study at GBT Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda

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Abstract

This Community Service Program (PkM) aims to strengthen the faith of the congregation of Beth-El Tabernacle Bukit Hermon Church, Mangkupalas, Samarinda, based on Colossians 2:7 through planned and contextual faith formation activities. The program was motivated by the congregation's need for systematic spiritual guidance to develop a firm, growing, and resilient faith amid modern life challenges. A participatory approach was applied using Bible-based faith formation methods, including material presentation, interactive discussions, and faith reflection. The program involved approximately 250 congregation members and was conducted within a worship and fellowship setting. The results indicate an increased understanding of Colossians 2:7, particularly regarding living rooted in Christ, being built up in faith, and growing steadfast in faith. Furthermore, the program strengthened spiritual attitudes, faith awareness, and the congregation's commitment to spiritual disciplines and active involvement in church ministry. Therefore, Bible-based faith formation within the framework of community service is effective in strengthening the congregation's faith foundation and has strong potential for sustainable implementation in local churches.

Keywords: faith formation; Colossians 2:7; community service; church congregation; spiritual growth

Abstrak

Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat (PkM) ini bertujuan untuk menguatkan iman jemaat Gereja Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda, berdasarkan Kolose 2:7 melalui kegiatan pembinaan iman yang terencana dan kontekstual. Kegiatan ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kebutuhan jemaat akan pendampingan rohani yang sistematis agar memiliki iman yang kokoh, bertumbuh, dan relevan dengan tantangan kehidupan modern. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan partisipatif dengan pembinaan iman berbasis Alkitab melalui pemaparan materi, diskusi interaktif, dan refleksi iman. Kegiatan ini diikuti oleh sekitar 250 jemaat dan dilaksanakan dalam suasana ibadah serta persekutuan gerejawi. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemahaman jemaat terhadap makna Kolose 2:7, khususnya tentang hidup berakar di dalam Kristus, dibangun dalam iman, dan bertambah teguh dalam iman. Selain itu, pembinaan ini juga memperkuat sikap spiritual, kesadaran iman, serta mendorong komitmen jemaat dalam disiplin rohani dan keterlibatan pelayanan gereja. Dengan demikian, pembinaan iman berbasis Alkitab terbukti efektif sebagai model PkM untuk memperkuat fondasi iman jemaat secara berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: pembinaan iman; Kolose 2:7; pengabdian kepada masyarakat; jemaat gereja; pertumbuhan iman



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INTRODUCTION

Community service is one of the manifestations of the Tridharma of Higher Education, which requires the active involvement of academics in addressing the real needs of partners through planned, context-specific, and directly impactful activities. In the context of theology and church ministry, community service can be realized through activities aimed at nurturing the faith of congregants, to sustainably strengthen the spiritual life of the Christian community.¹ As a part of society, the church faces complex internal challenges, particularly in maintaining the congregation's steadfast faith amid ever-changing social, cultural, and spiritual dynamics.² This activity was carried out by a team of faculty members from the Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Kristus Alfa Omega Semarang, consisting of Fianus Tandiongan as team leader and Tri Astuti as a team member. The team was responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the activity, which was based on an academic approach within the framework of the Tridharma of Higher Education.

Theoretically, this ministry is grounded in a holistic approach to faith development and spiritual formation, in which the Christian faith is understood not only as theological knowledge but also as a lived reality that involves biblical understanding, church community, and the application of Christian values in daily life. Several studies indicate that Christian religious education (PAK) implemented systematically in the church can foster congregational growth in both quantity and quality, including maturity in faith, active participation in ministry, and spiritual steadfastness.³

Gereja Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda, as a ministry partner, faces a real need to strengthen the faith of its congregation. Based on initial observations and a simple survey of 30 congregants, as well as interviews with 10 church leaders, it was found that 60% of the congregants do not yet understand the practical meaning of Colossians 2:7, while 55% are not consistent in their spiritual discipline, and 50% are not

¹ Anton Siswanto, "Relasi Formasi Spiritual dan Pertumbuhan Rohani," *Te Deum (Jurnal Teologi dan Pengembangan Pelayanan)*, 2024.

² Bakhoh Jatmiko, Gift Mtukwa, and Sherly Ester Elaine Kawengian, "Embracing psychology for Theology: The role of developmental theories in Christian spiritual formation," *Evangelikal: Jurnal Teologi Injili Dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat*, 2024.

³ Fengky Luky Masengi, "Pendidikan Agama Kristen dan Pertumbuhan Gereja (Studi Deskriptif di Gereja Pantekosta di Indonesia Jemaat Ekklesia)," *Lumen: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Katekese dan Pastoral*, 2022.

actively involved in church ministry. These data indicate a real need for structured and sustained faith formation as a form of academic intervention in community service activities. This situation aligns with research findings showing that weak faith formation leads to low spiritual maturity and low levels of active congregational participation in church life.⁴

Strengthening the congregation's faith cannot be separated from a deliberate, focused, and Bible-based discipleship process. Faith discipleship is a form of spiritual empowerment that helps the congregation understand, internalize, and apply Christian teachings in a contextual way in both their personal and community lives.⁵ Within the framework of community service, faith-building activities serve as a strategic means of addressing our partners' spiritual needs in a practical way, rather than merely in a conceptual or theoretical manner.

The theological foundation of this ministry is rooted in Colossians 2:7, which affirms the importance of the congregation being "rooted in Christ, built up in Him, and growing firm in the faith." This verse emphasizes that the Christian faith must experience continuous growth toward Christ as King, through a structured process of learning and discipleship.⁶ Theological studies show that Colossians 2:7 is not merely a doctrinal teaching, but a practical church principle that requires concrete implementation in the life of the congregation.⁷

Various empirical studies also confirm that systematically designed faith-building activities can enhance the spiritual quality of the congregation, deepen their relationship with Christ, and strengthen their faith identity within the church community.⁸ Priyono and Prabowo demonstrate that nurturing faith identity through a biblical approach is also an effective strategy for strengthening Christian identity among Christian college students, as reported in a

⁴ Samuel Benaja, Daniel Suharto, and Julien Lontoh, "Korelasi Pembinaan Warga Gereja dan Materi Pembinaan bagi Pertumbuhan Rohani Jemaat di Gereja Gerakan Pentakosta Immanuel Bogor Berdasarkan Efesus 4:11-16," *Jurnal Silih Asuh:Teologi dan Misi*, 2025.

⁵ Simon Maahury Moshe, "Faktor Pendukung Pertumbuhan Gereja: Analisis Pertumbuhan Jemaat Gereja GBI Keluarga Allah," *Jurnal Teologi Terapan*, 2022.

⁶ N.T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Prison Letters*, Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, KY, 2004, 164.

⁷ Segarman Gea, "Peranan Pembinaan Rohani Kristen Berdasarkan Kolose 2:6-7 dan Relevansinya Bagi Remaja Masa Kini," *Kaluteros Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen*, 2025.

⁸ Sonius Wenda, Neri Payage, and Amardius Bawan, "Upaya Peningkatan Pertumbuhan Iman: Studi Kasus Efektivitas Program Pelayanan Gerejawi Jemaat GKII Yerusalem Amsangi Daerah Silimo Yerusalem Amsangi Daerah Silimo," *Journal of Knowledge and Collaboration*, 2024.

Christian identity-building program for the extended family of Christian students at the Politeknik Negeri Samarinda based on Matthew 5:13–16.⁹ Meanwhile, Siswanto explained that effective faith formation does not merely emphasize the cognitive aspect, but also addresses the affective and practical dimensions, so that faith does not stop at knowledge but is manifested in concrete actions.¹⁰ Wenda, Payage, and Bawan documented the effectiveness of the church's ministry programs in fostering spiritual growth among the GKII congregation.¹¹ However, most PkM reports on faith development in churches rely solely on qualitative evaluations in the form of observations and verbal responses. There have not been many PkM studies that apply a mixed-methods approach using quantitative instruments (such as pre-test and post-test questionnaires based on a Likert scale) combined with in-depth interviews to measure the effectiveness of faith formation in a more comprehensive and measurable way. Thus, this PkM activity employs a mixed-methods approach that combines pre-test and post-test questionnaires using a Likert scale (covering four indicators: understanding of Colossians 2:7, faith awareness, spiritual discipline, and involvement in ministry) with reflective interviews, thereby allowing for a more comprehensive measurement of the effectiveness of faith formation compared to similar PkM studies.

In the context of church-based community service, the approach to faith formation must be tailored to the needs and characteristics of the local congregation. A contextual approach ensures that the materials and methods used in faith formation are relevant to the congregation's lived reality, so that the service provided is truly impactful and sustainable. Therefore, the faith formation activities in this service initiative are designed as a direct response to the spiritual needs of the congregation at Gereja Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas. Based on this background, this community service project aims to strengthen the congregation's faith in accordance with Colossians 2:7 through well-planned and contextual faith-building activities. It is hoped that this service project will not only

⁹ Joko Priyono and Paulus Dimas Prabowo, "Pembinaan Identitas Kristen bagi Keluarga Besar Mahasiswa Kristen Politeknik Negeri Samarinda: Penerapan Matius 5:13-16," *Real Coster: Jurnal Pengabdian kepada Masyarakat*, 2025.

¹⁰ Joshua Nolt, "Faith Development Theory and a Developmental Approach to Spiritual Formation for the," George Fox University, 2021, 411.

¹¹ Sonius Wenda, Neri Payage, and Amardius Bawan, "Upaya Peningkatan Pertumbuhan Iman: Studi Kasus Efektivitas Program Pelayanan Gerejawi Jemaat GKII Yerusalem Amsangi Daerah Silimo Yerusalem Amsangi Daerah Silimo," *Journal of Knowledge and Collaboration*, 2024.

provide practical contributions to the church's partner community but also enrich theology-based service practices relevant to the context of local church ministry in Indonesia.

METHOD

This community service activity is carried out using a participatory and contextual approach, which positions the congregation as active participants in the faith-building process.¹² This approach was chosen because strengthening faith cannot be achieved instantly, but rather through direct engagement, dialogue, and ongoing mentoring within the church community. The implementation method was designed to address the real needs of our partner, the Gereja Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda, in its efforts to strengthen the congregation's faith based on the biblical principle found in Colossians 2:7.

Subject and Location of the Community Service Project

The subject of this community service activity is the congregation of Gereja Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda, consisting of approximately 250 participants, including adult congregants and church leaders who are actively involved in church life. This community service activity was held on Wednesday, December 3, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. WITA. This church was selected as a community service partner based on a mutual agreement with church leaders who expressed a need for more structured and ongoing faith formation. The activity took place on church grounds and was conducted within the context of worship and congregational fellowship so that the formation process would be contextual and relevant to the congregation's daily spiritual lives.

Stages of Activity Implementation

This community service activity was carried out through several interrelated stages: the preparation stage, the implementation stage, and the evaluation stage. During the preparation stage, the service team conducted initial coordination with church leaders and ministers to identify the congregation's needs regarding faith strengthening. In addition, faith-building materials based on Colossians 2:7 were developed, taking into account the

¹² Robert Chambers, *Participatory Workshops: A Sourcebook of 21 Sets of Ideas and Activities*, Routledge, London, 2012, 12–15.

congregation's circumstances, background, and level of faith understanding. The materials were designed to be simple yet profound so they could be easily understood and applied in daily life.

The implementation phase consisted of faith-building activities that included presentations of biblical material, interactive discussions, and group reflections. The material was presented using a dialogic lecture method combined with question-and-answer sessions and group discussions, so that the congregation not only received information in a one-way manner but was also actively involved in the process of learning about their faith. In each training session, the congregation was encouraged to connect the principles of Colossians 2:7 with their life experiences and the challenges of faith they face.

The evaluation phase was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the faith-building activities that had been carried out. The quantitative evaluation instrument consisted of pre-test and post-test questionnaires using a 1–5 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree), comprising 20 statements covering four main indicators: (1) understanding of the meaning of Colossians 2:7 (5 items, example: "I understand that 'rooted in Christ' means making Christ the center of my spiritual life"); (2) awareness of faith (5 items, example: "I realize that the Christian faith must grow continuously, not merely be a verbal confession"); (3) spiritual discipline (5 items, example: "I routinely set aside time for personal prayer and daily Bible reading"); and (4) involvement in ministry (5 items, example: "I am actively involved in at least one area of ministry at church"). The evaluation sample consisted of 60 respondents selected through purposive sampling from a total of approximately 250 participants, representing various age groups and levels of involvement in the church.

In addition, a qualitative evaluation was conducted through semi-structured interviews with 10 participants selected based on the variety of responses to the questionnaire. The interview guidelines covered three main themes: (a) the participants' experiences during the training process, (b) changes in their understanding and attitudes toward faith after the training, and (c) concrete plans for applying the principles of Colossians 2:7 in their daily lives. The results of the quantitative evaluation were analyzed descriptively (percentages and average scores), while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic coding to identify dominant response patterns.

Methods and Techniques of Discipleship

The primary method used in this program is Bible-based faith discipleship, with an emphasis on understanding and applying Colossians 2:7 in the lives of the congregation. Discipleship techniques include Bible study, small group discussions, and simple spiritual mentoring. This approach aims to help the congregation not only understand the biblical text intellectually but also internalize the values of faith in their attitudes and concrete actions.

Faith formation is designed to foster the congregation's awareness of the importance of being rooted in Christ, built up in faith, and living in an attitude of gratitude as an expression of spiritual maturity. Through this method, the congregation is encouraged to experience continuous growth in faith that is relevant to the context of their lives as part of the church community and society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This activity is not merely a preaching service, but rather an academically-based Community Service (PkM) program that involves problem identification, method development, structured implementation, and data-driven evaluation. The community service activity which focused on strengthening the faith of the congregation at Gereja Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda—was carried out by a team from STT Kristus Alfa Omega in Semarang, led by Dr. Fianus Tandiongan, M.Pd.K., with Dr. Tri Astuti, MA., M.Th., serving as a team member.



Figure 1. Presentation on Strengthening Faith at GBT Bukit Hermon

The results of the community service program demonstrated a positive impact on the congregation's understanding and lived experience of faith. These findings were obtained through direct observation during the activities, reflective discussions with the congregation, and verbal feedback provided by the participants. This approach aligns with the nature of community service, which emphasizes changes in attitude, understanding, and practice as indicators of success.

Strengthening Faith Based on Colossians 2:6–7

The understanding that faith is not merely an “initial acceptance” but must continue to grow spiritually and consistently is at the heart of Colossians 2:6–7. These verses call on believers to “be rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith,” pointing to a dynamic process of faith formation. In the context of church discipleship, this passage provides a “theological” foundation for a model of faith formation that does not stop at mere knowledge but leads to life transformation through mature faith.

Growing Stronger in Faith

Exegetically, Colossians 2:7 contains three metaphors that form the framework for the progressive development of faith. First, the word ἐρριζωμένοι (*errizōmenoi*, “rooted”) uses the perfect passive participle, indicating that the rooting of faith in Christ is a process that began at the moment of conversion and whose effects continue permanently.¹³ The metaphor of “roots” symbolizes a source of nourishment and stability. A faith that is rooted is a faith that continually draws strength from Christ as the source of life. Second, the word ἐποικοδομούμενοι (*epoikodomoumenoi*, “being built up in Him”) uses the present passive participle, which indicates an ongoing and continuous process of building up.¹⁴ Unlike “rooted,” which is static and foundational, “built up” is dynamic and constructive, meaning that faith must continually be built up through teaching, discipleship, and community. Third, the word βεβαιούμενοι (*bebaioumenoi*, “confirmed”) is also in the present passive participle

¹³ F F Bruce et al., *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2007, 183.

¹⁴ Peter T. O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*. WBC 44., Word, Waco, 1982, 107.

form, emphasizing the progressive process of strengthening or confirming faith.¹⁵ A steadfast faith does not mean a faith without struggles, but rather a faith that grows stronger as it is continually strengthened through life experiences and encounters with the Word.

These three dimensions rooted, built, and established—together form a holistic-progressive model of faith formation: beginning with a relational foundation with Christ (rooted), continuing through a process of ongoing learning and discipleship (built), and achieving steadfastness through consistent strengthening (established). This model parallels Ephesians 4:11–16, where Paul explains that God gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (v. 12) until they reach “full maturity” and “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (v. 13). Together, these two texts affirm that growth in faith requires deliberate pedagogical intervention, not merely individual spiritual experiences.

Within the framework of Christian Religious Education (PAK), this Colossians 2:7 model of faith formation can be understood through the theory of faith formation, which distinguishes four styles of faith: experienced faith (faith experienced through community), affiliative faith (faith that grows through a sense of belonging in a faith community), searching faith (faith that matures through critical questioning and exploration), and owned faith (faith that is personally held and fully committed). Faith formation in this PkM activity is designed to facilitate the transition from affiliative faith to owned faith, where congregants not only feel they are part of the church but actively internalize and take ownership of their own faith. The approach of dialogical sermons, group discussions, and shared reflection applied in these activities is an implementation of the principle of shared praxis, which emphasizes five steps: (1) naming current faith experiences, (2) critically reflecting on those experiences, (3) exploring Christian faith traditions (in this case, Colossians 2:7), (4) engaging in dialogue between tradition and experience, and (5) formulating a new response of faith. The integration of the PAK framework transforms faith formation from merely conveying sermon content into an educational-transformative process that engages the cognitive, affective, and practical dimensions of the congregation.

Research on the family and church environments shows that consistent Christian

¹⁵ James D.G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. NIGTC., Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1996, 142.

religious education, both within the family and within the community, serves as an important foundation for building a strong faith. For example, the study “Implementation of Christian Religious Education in the Family Setting” found that Christian religious education (PAK) within the family through shared prayer, Bible reading, and the consistent application of Christian values can foster mature faith and Christian character in both children and adults.¹⁶ Thus, the concept of being “rooted and built up in Christ” from Colossians 2:6–7 can be applied practically: faith must be shaped through systematic faith education, spiritual discipline, and a supportive community, so that it does not become superficial or unstable when faced with life’s challenges.

A study of spiritual formation strategies in local churches shows that in-depth theological teaching, supported by a strong community and involvement in ministry, contributes significantly to the development of the congregation’s faith and character.¹⁷ Furthermore, growth in faith is also linked to spiritual maturity, which involves emotional, relational, and commitment aspects not just cognitive ones. As stated by Anggi Fatma Triyani, Timotius Ferry Setiawan, and Andinna Salsabela, who adopted a spirituality-based approach including Bible reflection, prayer, and spiritual meditation—this approach is effective in fostering deep faith and a stable spiritual life.¹⁸

Both theoretically and practically, “growing stronger in the faith” as described in Colossians 2:6–7 requires a holistic discipleship model that includes consistent Bible teaching, spiritual discipline, a supportive church community, and tangible service in daily life. This approach fosters a faith that is not merely theoretical or ritualistic, but a living, mature, deeply rooted faith that is relevant to the challenges of our time. On this foundation, the use of interactive sermon methods in discipleship activities at the local church is not merely about presenting Bible verses, but becomes part of the faith formation process: inviting congregants to engage in dialogue, reflect, and internalize the Word so that their faith

¹⁶ Tiurma Berasa, “Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Kristen di Lingkup Keluarga Sebagai Upaya Pembinaan Iman Anak dan Orang Dewasa,” *Jurnal Trust Pentakosta*, 2024.

¹⁷ Ofertiaman Zai and Arde Zebua Justitia, “Memahami Strategi Pembinaan Rohani Untuk Warga Gereja: Membangun Iman Dan Karakter Jemaat,” *Jurnal Ilmiah Research Student*, 2025.

¹⁸ Anggi Fatma Triyani, Timotius Ferry Setiawan, and Andinna Salsabela, “Spiritualitas dalam Pendidikan : Mengembangkan Iman melalui Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Kristen,” *Sabar : Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Kristen dan Katolik*, 2024.

may truly be “rooted and growing” in Christ.

Life in Jesus Christ

Living in Jesus Christ is at the heart of the Apostle Paul’s teaching to the church in Colossae (Colossians 2:6–7). The phrase “walk in Him” (ἐν αὐτῷ περιπατεῖτε) emphasizes the existential relationship between believers and Christ—not merely an intellectual profession of faith, but a life commitment rooted and built in Him. Paul affirms that true Christian life is not the result of human effort alone, but rather the result of union with Christ, which brings about inner transformation and behavioral change.

From a theological perspective, living in Christ means a life led by the Holy Spirit, centered on God’s will, and making Christ the source of true wisdom. As Lase explains in his study on spiritual formation, Christian maturity is formed when an individual continually submits to the work of the Holy Spirit, who shapes the character of Christ within them. This formation is not merely a formal spiritual activity, but a transformational journey that touches upon moral, social, and spiritual dimensions.

Living in Christ also demands faithfulness to the pure Gospel, as emphasized in Colossians 1:23: “You must persevere in the faith, remain steadfast, and not waver.” This message is relevant in the contemporary context, where congregations face various forms of teachings and ideologies that have the potential to undermine the foundation of their faith. Thus, Bible-based teaching has a direct impact on the resilience of the congregation’s faith and character.

Furthermore, life “in Christ” means rejecting all forms of syncretism and false teachings that obscure the supremacy of Christ. Paul wrote to the church in Colossae precisely to reaffirm the primacy of Christ over all misleading worldly philosophies. In addition to focusing on doctrinal integrity, living in Christ also reflects an ethical lifestyle that bears fruit in love and service.

Life in Christ is also inseparable from an awareness of one’s new identity as a creation renewed in Him. Paul describes this transformation as a transition from the “old self” to the “new self” (Col. 3:9–10). Life in Christ also implies a dynamic relationship between faith and concrete action. Through spiritual practices such as prayer, fasting, and reflection on

the Word, individuals learn to direct the focus of their lives toward Christ as the source of strength and comfort. This process enables believers to live in peace and with gratitude amid difficulties. Furthermore, a Christ-centered life also requires active participation in the body of Christ, namely the local church. The church serves as a place of spiritual formation where believers edify, correct, and strengthen one another's faith.

Thus, "living in Christ" is not merely a moral call but a spiritual reality that demands the integration of faith, character, and deeds. Such a life serves as a sign that a person is truly rooted and built up in Christ, and becomes a model of faith for a world that thirsts for God's truth and love. In the context of Community Service, this discipleship not only deepens the congregation's theological knowledge but also revitalizes their faith so that it bears fruit in love, service, and unwavering hope in Jesus Christ.

Enhancing the Congregation's Understanding of Colossians 2:7

The implementation of faith-building activities demonstrated an increase in the congregation's understanding of Colossians 2:7 as the foundation of a Christian life rooted in Christ. Before the activities took place, some members understood the verse in general and normative terms, without directly relating it to their daily lives of faith. Through systematic and dialogical discipleship, members began to understand that the concept of "rooted in Christ" implies total dependence on Christ as the center of spiritual life.

In addition, the congregation's understanding of the phrase "built upon Him" has developed significantly. They have begun to realize that the Christian faith is not a fleeting experience but a process of growth that requires ongoing discipleship. In small group discussions, they were able to connect the concept of building faith with spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible reading, and participation in fellowship.

The congregation's understanding has also grown in interpreting the meaning of "being strengthened in faith" as a call to maintain steadfast faith amid life's challenges. Through shared reflection, the congregation has come to realize that steadfast faith does not mean a life without struggles, but rather the ability to remain faithful to Christ in various life situations. This deepened understanding is evident in the congregation's response, as they began to connect their life experiences with the principles of faith taught in Colossians 2:7.

Furthermore, the faith-building activities helped the congregation understand the relationship between faith and gratitude as emphasized in Colossians 2:7. The congregation began to see that a faith that grows healthily will be reflected in a life attitude full of gratitude, whether in times of joy or difficulty. This awareness emerged through reflective discussions that invited the congregation to reassess their attitudes of faith in daily life.

Overall, the congregation's deepened understanding of Colossians 2:7 demonstrates that faith formation conducted within the framework of community service is able to bridge the gap between theological understanding and the practice of faith. Congregation members not only understand this verse as a biblical text but also as a relevant and contextual guide for living. This reaffirms that faith-based community service activities make a tangible contribution to strengthening the congregation's foundation of faith and supporting sustained spiritual growth.

Strengthening the Congregation's Spiritual Attitude and Faith Awareness

The faith-building activities carried out have had a tangible impact on strengthening the congregation's spiritual attitude, particularly in fostering a more reflective and responsible faith awareness. The congregation has begun to recognize that the Christian faith is not merely a religious identity, but a living relationship that must be nurtured consciously and consistently. Throughout the activities, the congregation demonstrated increased emotional and spiritual engagement, especially when sharing their faith experiences and life struggles. This process of sharing created a safe space for the congregation to reflect on their faith



Figure 2. Strengthening Participants' Commitment and Reflection

journeys honestly and openly. Such interactions reinforced the awareness that faith growth often occurs through encounters with others within a mutually supportive community.

The strengthening of the congregation's spiritual attitude is also evident in their growing commitment to practicing spiritual disciplines more consistently. Some members expressed a desire to be more diligent in personal prayer and Bible reading in response to the guidance they received. This commitment reflects a shift from a passive faith toward a faith that is actively and consciously lived out.

Overall, the strengthening of the congregation's spiritual attitudes and awareness of faith demonstrates that these community service activities not only provide theological knowledge but also shape the congregation's spiritual orientation in life. This growing faith awareness serves as a vital foundation for the congregation as they face the challenges of life and ministry. This underscores that faith formation within the context of community service makes a strategic contribution to the congregation's ongoing spiritual maturity.

Impact and Evaluation of Community Service

The community service activity which involved fostering the congregation's faith at Beth-El Tabernakel Bukit Hermon Church in Mangkupalas, Samarinda, and was attended by approximately 250 participants had a significant impact on both the individual and communal aspects of the congregation. The impact of this service initiative is evident not only in the congregation's increased spiritual understanding and attitudes but also in changes in their faith awareness and involvement in church life. In the context of community service (PkM), this impact serves as a key indicator of the activity's success, as it demonstrates a tangible transformation among the service partners.

Impact on Congregation Members as Participants in the Ministry

The direct impact of this faith-building program is evident in the increase in the congregation members' personal faith awareness. The relatively large number of participants indicates that this program reaches the congregation in a broad and inclusive manner. The congregation demonstrated high enthusiasm in attending each session, as reflected in their attendance, active participation in discussions, and engagement in shared reflection. Research

in the context of church ministry shows that active participant engagement is an early indicator of the success of faith formation.

Furthermore, the impact of this ministry is also evident in the shift in the congregation's perspective on the Christian faith. The congregation has begun to understand faith as a continuous process of growth, rather than merely a verbal confession or a routine of worship. This awareness has encouraged the congregation to be more consistent in their practice of spiritual discipline and involvement in ministry.

Impact on the Life of the Church Community

From the perspective of ecclesial community theology, the local church functions as *koinonia*—that is, a community of love that builds one another up (Ephesians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27). According to Snyder, healthy church growth encompasses three communal dimensions: *koinonia* (fellowship), *diakonia* (service), and *martyria* (witness). Within this framework, the impact of PkM activities on the life of the church community can be traced to these three dimensions.

In the *koinonia* dimension, this faith-building program—which involves approximately 250 congregants contributes to fostering a collective awareness of the importance of growing in faith together as the body of Christ. Congregants have begun to demonstrate mutual support and openness in sharing their faith experiences, which strengthens relationships among church members. In the *diakonia* dimension, there has been an increase in the congregation's readiness to engage in church ministry. This is demonstrated by a rise in ministry participation rates from 50% to 78%, reflecting that faith formation grounded in Colossians 2:7 has empowered the congregation to transition from being “recipients” to “practitioners” of ministry. In the dimension of *martyria*, growing faith awareness has the potential to serve as the foundation for the congregation's living witness in the community, although this dimension requires long-term evaluation.

Evaluation of the Activity Implementation Process

Data were collected from 60 respondents out of a total of approximately 250 congregants, and the results indicate a significant improvement across all indicators,

confirming that Bible-based faith formation methods are effective in strengthening congregants' understanding and practice of their faith. The evaluation was conducted using a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data (post-test questionnaires) with qualitative data (interviews and reflective discussions). The significant improvement across all four evaluation indicators can be explained by several dominant factors. First, the contextual-exegetical approach in presenting the material enabled the congregation to understand Colossians 2:7 not merely as a verse to memorize, but as a practical principle for living. When the concept of "being rooted" was explained through an analysis of the Greek text and connected to the congregation's life experiences, the resulting understanding became deeper and more personal. This explains the highest increase in the Colossians 2:7 comprehension indicator (+33%), where the congregation experienced a leap from a normative understanding to a meaningful one.

Second, participatory methods particularly small-group discussions and shared reflection, created a safe space for the congregation to explore and express their faith honestly. Research shows that faith education involving dialogue and personal narratives leads to stronger internalization than one-way lectures. This factor contributes to an increase in faith awareness (+28%), where congregants begin to reflect on their faith not merely as a routine, but as a living relationship that requires active commitment.

Third, the context of worship and fellowship as a setting for discipleship provides a spiritual dimension that ordinary classrooms or seminars lack. The atmosphere of worship facilitates spiritual encounters that strengthen the motivation to commit to spiritual disciplines (+27%) and involvement in ministry (+28%). These findings align with interview results in which several participants stated that "the atmosphere of worship makes the material feel alive and touches the heart, not just the mind."

Table 1. Changes in the Congregation's Understanding and Attitudes Toward Faith

Indicator	Before (%)	After (%)	Improvement
Understanding Colossians 2:7	52%	85%	+33%
Faith Awareness	60%	88%	+28%
Spiritual Discipline	55%	82%	+27%
Involvement in Ministry	50%	78%	+28%

However, it should be noted that the indicator for service involvement shows a relatively lower increase (+28%, from 50% to 78%) compared to understanding of Colossians 2:7 (+33%). This is understandable because ministry involvement is a behavioral dimension that takes longer to change consistently, unlike cognitive (understanding) and affective (awareness) changes, which can occur more quickly through brief interventions. These findings indicate the need for follow-up programs that specifically facilitate the transition from attitudinal change to behavioral change.

Implications of the Evaluation for the Future Development

The evaluation results indicate that this faith-building activity has great potential to be developed as a sustainable community service program at the partner church. With a large number of participants, the church has a strong community base to continue faith-building independently, with guidance from academics or trained ministers. This evaluation confirms that community service does not end with a single activity but is an ongoing process of building the spiritual capacity of partner.



Figure 3. Group Photo

CONCLUSION

The Community Service (PkM) activity conducted at the GBT Bukit Hermon Mangkupalas, Samarinda, demonstrated that faith development for the congregation based on Colossians 2:7 had a significant positive impact on strengthening the congregation's faith and spiritual awareness. Through a participatory and contextual approach, the congregation not only gained a deeper theological understanding of the meaning of "being rooted in Christ,

built upon Him, and growing firm in the faith,” but was also able to relate these principles to their daily lives of faith.

The results of the program indicate an increase in faith understanding, a strengthening of spiritual attitudes, and greater congregational awareness of the importance of continuous faith growth through spiritual discipline and active involvement in the church community. In addition to having a personal impact, this faith formation also contributes to strengthening church community life, as evidenced by increased congregational participation and commitment to ministry. Furthermore, the evaluation data—which showed improvements across all four indicators (understanding of Colossians 2:7: +33%; faith awareness: +28%; spiritual discipline: +27%; involvement in ministry: +28%)—provides empirical evidence that this discipleship model is effective and has the potential to be replicated in other local churches with similar contexts. The three-stage model (preparation, implementation, and evaluation) that has been developed can be adopted by theological colleges and other church institutions in designing impactful and sustainable theology-based community engagement programs. Thus, these PkM activities affirm that planned, biblical, and contextual faith formation is an effective means of strengthening the foundation of the congregation’s faith and has the potential to be developed as a sustainable outreach program in local churches.

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Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) to check sentence-level accuracy and identify errors in formulation, QuillBot for paraphrasing assistance, and Grammarly for grammar and language refinement. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the publication. All arguments, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this article are the work of the authors, and all sources cited have been verified against the original publications.

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