



Reviving Faith: The Dynamic Legacy of HKBP Resort Balige Church

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Abstrak: HKBP is one of the largest congregations in the world and has even spread to America and Europe. HKBP in Indonesia is a Christian Church based in Tanah Batak, namely in Tarutung City, North Tapanuli, North Sumatra Province. The main focus of this research is the history of the HKBP Resort Balige church. This research uses a historical research method which has four stages, namely stages heuristics, criticism, interpretation and historiography. The research results show that the history and development of the HKBP Ressort Balige Church began with the arrival of Christian missionaries to Batak Land, then built the HKBP church, which was consecrated as the HKBP Balige church by Ompu Ephorus Pdt. I.L. Nommensen. In its development, the HKBP Balige church developed well; this was marked by the social charities around the church, such as hospitals, Schools, universities and a Multi-Purpose Building which functioned as a public service to the surrounding community. The role of the HKBP Church in the social life of the Balige community as a fellowship of believers always requires order and order in the implementation of services. This can be proven by your willingness to be selected as an Elder, Deacon, or Servant on the Development Commission or on the Committee of an activity.

Keywords: Batak; Indonesia's Church; Christian missionary; history of the church; North Sumatra.

1. Introduction

Christianity is still significant in today's religious life for a variety of reasons, despite the rising secularization of many Western countries. Christian values continue to influence morality and social norms, particularly family values, charitable giving, and volunteerism. These values prioritize marriage, parenthood, and good family relationships, as well as compassion and kindness to those in need (Adamu et al., 2021). Moreover, the core message of Christian faith remains relevant in addressing modern human experiences and challenges. The cross, as the central event in Christianity, continues to be a symbol of hope and redemption, connecting closely with questions of hope, morality, and knowledge (Ammerman, 2020). Moreover, despite declining church attendance in some Western countries, Christianity is growing rapidly in other parts of the world, particularly in Africa and Asia. The church in Iran and Afghanistan is also experiencing significant growth, often despite persecution (Braunstein, 2021). Likewise, Christianity's counter-cultural characteristics, such as loving one's neighbor, generosity, and compassion, can open windows to faith. These characteristics are particularly relevant in a world obsessed with individualism and self-fulfillment (Barnes et al., 2021). In addition, in times of global crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, religious life is called to respond prophetically. The vowed life of religious communities offers a unique response to suffering and chaos, drawing inspiration from early Christian communities (Lazăr, 2024). Hence, Christianity remains relevant in today's religious life due to its continued influence on morality, community, personal growth, and hope, as well as its global growth and resilience.

The above facts occurred at the HKBP Balige Church in the Toba Batak community. Portrait of the Toba Batak people who already have a belief system about "*Mulajadi Nabolon*," [who has power above the sky], and the radiance of his power is manifested in Debata Natolu. This belief existed before Christianity entered Tapanuli, especially in the Balige area. In the past, the Toba Batak community often had wars between one village and another. The Toba Batak people in Balige at that time were very afraid of the power of amulets. To change the way of thinking of the Toba Batak people, the missionaries tried to introduce education. The arrival of Christianity then resulted in a reduction in the occurrence of wars between villages. The above is inseparable from the efforts of missionaries who came to Batak Land to advance society and change their way of thinking through education coupled with Christian religious teachings (Sihombing, 1996).

In the era of Dutch East Indies colonial rule, there are records that church growth did not always go smoothly. There are times when church growth experiences obstacles, such as the number of church members starting to decrease and eventually disappearing altogether. This actually doesn't only happen in Tapanuli. In the 17th century in Europe, a particular church organization could disappear or follow the king's decision in a particular region due to social and political shifts resulting from the emergence of reformation. At that time in Europe, there was relatively negative church growth. That is because of the influence of materialism and rationalism. There is also positive church growth, both absolute and relatively ongoing. Many churches in Indonesia are currently growing, because the Holy Spirit continues to work and give power to witness and produce church growth (Gondowijoyo, 1994).

Talking about the church, especially the Protestant Church, we must also talk about Martin Luther as the first figure in the church Reformation in the 16th century. Through the reform movements that have occurred in world history, there are principles that were born from the events of church reform. Church reform first emerged in an era, namely the 16th century in Western Europe. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, there are eight church organizations that claim to adhere to or belong to the Lutheran sect and are members of the LWF (The Lutheran World Federation), namely HKBP, GKPS, GBKP, GKPI, HKI, GKLI, GKPA, and GKPM. All of them are centered in North Sumatra and its surroundings. One of the things that will be discussed in this writing is the Huria Christian Batak Protestant Church (HKBP) (Aritonang, 1996).

In 1881 a priest named Rev. Pilgram held a meeting with the congregation to plan the construction of the Balige HKBP Church. All meeting participants at that time agreed with the construction of the church. Approval for the construction of the Church was not just in words but in reality when the funds had been collected. The construction of a new and quite large church was completed with extraordinary enthusiasm on 26 April 1883 and was used as a church called the HKBP Balige Church by Ompu Ephorus Rev. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen, who came to Batak Land (Simanjuntak, 2006).

On August 23, 1906, HKBP Balige and his staff held a 25th Jubilee. Jubilee itself is an inauguration or a liberation. Jubilee is the same as celebrating a birthday. At the time of the jubilee, 11 churches had been established in Toba Hasundutan with a congregation of 3644 people and a Sunday School of 1108 people. The first jubilee party was attended by almost all Christians in Balige, and many invitations came from Humbang, Silindung. In fact, the Jubilee party was attended by 25 guests from abroad. The first jubilee (25 years) was a very important and very expensive moment because, at that time, Ephorus HKBP Pdt. I.L. Nommensen enthusiastically and confidently voiced and told the meaning of Jubilee.

After 50 years of HKBP Balige's existence, a big 50-year Jubilee party (golden party) was held. The joy of the Balige people was extraordinary. Rev. Eigenbord invited the public to participate in enlivening the Jubilee party. Until November 10, 1981, Balige held a 100-year Jubilee party. The congregation was very happy in enlivening the Jubilee party because the 100-year Jubilee committee approached migrant children from HKBP Balige.

The HKBP Church plays an active role in society. Pastors, elders and even Sunday School teachers also participated with the Balige community. Even the hard work of the Church committee shows good cooperation so that congregation members also support this togetherness. Apart from that, looking at the condition of the HKBP Balige Church, which is very beautiful, clean and has a committee that is always active in serving the community, many congregations who come from outside Balige worship

there because, at that time, HKBP Balige was the largest and most beautiful church of its time. The pastor and elders of the Church were highly respected and liked by the community because of their excellent service.

The organizational structure of the HKBP from the center to the resort starts from the HKBP, which is organized according to the diocesan system, similar to churches that adhere to the episcopal system, such as the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, Methodist Church, and so on. The highest leader was called Ephorus. The first Ephorus HKBP was Dr. I.L. Nommensen. Ephorus is assisted by a Secretary General and a number of Department Heads. Below him were the priests who led the church districts, while below the districts, there were the Resorts led by the Resort pastor, and at the lowest level were the individual congregations led by the pastor. Currently, HKPB has 26 praeses throughout Indonesia. In his ministry, an HKBP priest is usually assisted by Guru Huria, while there are also other positions, namely Bibelvrouw and deaconess (Nadeak, 1995). Departing from the background above, a formulation of the problem to be studied is created as the main basis for the research. This research was created to discuss the development of the HKBP Church in Balige. Therefore, this research aims to find out the background to the founding of the HKBP Ressorst Balige Church, the development of the Balige Ressorst Church and its role in the social life of the Balige community.

Previous research that has been carried out with the same theme as a literature review includes the first book by Berkhof H (2005) entitled *Church History*, which explains that the Church always tries to teach its valid and pure teachings, in accordance with the Word of God, in the face of all the heretical teachings that arise around it. Researching the history of the Gospel message will also tell us how the Church has done its duty towards all people who have not yet known God's love. When the life of the Church is viewed from the perspective of the fellowship of its members with Christ and with each other, then one's piety, congregational worship, social efforts, and so forth are visible.

Second, Locher, G.P.H's (1997) book entitled *Governance of Protestant Churches in Indonesia* explains that the function of Church Governance in the church is to create a polite and orderly atmosphere and establish the rules that must be followed to make this happen. Church order is the means used by Christ to govern His Church. Church regulations are rules and guidelines to ensure that in the church and in society, everything occurs politely and orderly.

Third, the book *History of the 125-Year Jubilee of HKBP Balige* (2006), published by the head of the history section named Hot Marulak MP Simanjuntak, explains that the Dutch government has begun to appoint regional leaders from Batak people who become kings, mostly appointed from among people who have received the Word Lord. After Balige received God's Word, many teachings emerged. They used various methods to attract members of the Balige HKBP congregation and branch congregations to leave HKBP. However, thanks to the persistence of the pastors, they made every effort to ensure that the HKBP congregation was not interested in this teaching. In the end, these teachings failed without success. Instead, they reaped moral and material losses.

2. Research Method

In descriptive-analytical history writing, there are four stages that must be passed, namely heuristic, criticism, interpretation and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). *First*, heuristics (data collection) appropriate to the object under study. This uses library research methods/literature studies and field research/field study methods. This literature research was carried out by collecting several books, articles and previously written works related to the title being studied. *Second*, source criticism is the effort made by researchers to select sources or materials collected, so that a truth value will be produced. This source is internal criticism that examines and selects the truth of content or facts, whether written, for example, books or documents related to regional libraries. External criticism is carried out to determine the validity of the data and is carried out by testing to determine the authenticity of the source, both from books and interviews with sources. *Third*, interpretation is the stage of interpreting or analyzing a source or data obtained. This is done to try to eliminate the subjectivity of the data, although, in fact, this cannot be eliminated. It is hoped that this interpretation can be temporary data before the

researcher puts it into writing. Then produce a conclusion from the object studied both analytically and synthetically.

Historiography, namely compiling reliable testimony into an interesting story or study and always trying to pay attention to the chronological aspect to produce scientific and objective historical writing regarding the development of the HKBP Ressort Balige Church. The method used in this writing is analytical descriptive, namely by analyzing every data and fact. This historiography is the result of collecting critical sources (both internal and external criticisms) as well as interpretation results.

3. Research Results

a. Establishment of HKBP Resort Balige

History of the HKBP Resort Balige Church

On May 6 1956, Johannes Warneck was stationed at Balige. Before carrying out the Zending mission, Johannes Warneck made observations accompanied by other evangelists such as G. Pilgram, Pohlig, Jung, and Bruch for 3 days in the Tanah Batak evangelistic area, namely in March 1957. During these observations, they received a good welcome from the kings and entertained them with typical Batak food. From the results of these observations, he chose the Balige area as the initial stage for preaching the Gospel and as an evangelization post for Batak Land (Hutauruk, 2010).

HKBP itself is a church, not an Indonesian science institution. Therefore, what the HKBP congregation needs is a ministry that fears God, not a ministry that has a title. If the HKBP ministry has the fear of God, then materialistic, honorless pastors are not on the list of HKBP ministries. HKBP is also not a Batak cultural preservation institution. The aim of maintaining Batak customs missionaries from Germany is so that the Batak people can receive 100% of the Word of God that they bring. That is one of the evangelism strategies to win Christ (Nommensen, 1921).

Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP) is the largest Protestant church among the Batak people, even among the Protestant churches in Indonesia. This church grew out of the RMG (Rheinische Missions Gessellschaft) mission from Germany. Currently, HKBP has more than 3 million members throughout Indonesia. HKBP also has several churches abroad, such as in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Los Angeles and New York. Even though it uses the name Batak, HKBP is also open to other ethnic groups (Berkhof, 2005).



Figure 1. A picture of the HKBP Balige church

Since it was first established, HKBP has had its head office in Pearaja (North Tapanuli Regency, North Sumatra), which is about 2 km from Tarutung, the district capital. Pearaja is a village located along the road to the city of Sibolga (capital of Central Tapanuli Regency). The HKBP office complex, the administrative center of the HKBP organization, is located in an area of approximately 20 hectares. In this complex, Ephorus (bishop), as the highest leader of the HKBP, also has an office.

HKBP is organized according to a diocesan system, similar to churches that adhere to the episcopal system such as the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, Methodist Church, and others. The highest leader was called Ephorus. The first Ephorus HKBP was Dr. I.L. Nommensen. Ephorus is assisted by a Secretary General and a number of Department Heads. Below him are priests who lead

church districts, while below the districts there are resorts led by resort pastors, and at the lowest level are individual congregations led by pastors (Nababan, n.d.).

Before the physical establishment of the HKBP Balige church, the community still held worship in an open field. Seeing this situation, Rev. Pilgram invited the community to build a bigger and better church. Then on May 14 1881, a meeting was held chaired by Rev. Pilgram to plan the building of the Church. All the meeting participants at that time agreed and the approval for the construction of the church was not just in words, but was actually real at that time. The funds collected amounted to 700 ringgit. The construction of the new church was completed on April 26 1883 and it was converted into a church called HKBP Balige by Ompu Ephorus Pdt. DR. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen (Nababan, n.d.).

At the time of the inauguration of the HKBP Balige church, tension arose throughout Batak land. Many people who had accepted Christ apostatized as a result of the cruel war between the Dutch and Sisingamangaraja. However, most of the residents of Humbang and Balige are becoming stronger and more united in realizing the construction of the church, as was the case in Paindoan and Tampubolon. Rev. Pilgram was always present in all Toba Balige community activities, so that in 1954 as many as 606 people received Holy Baptism.



Figure 2. A picture of In a church

More and more Balige people are becoming more interested in God's Word and also because peace is getting better. Because from the start, Rev. DR. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen always emphasizes that the nation's sons should be more active in studying and studying God's Word so that they will be able to lead the HKBP and the Indonesian nation. Also, the most successful missionary was DR. I.L. Nommensen, who continued his predecessor's duties in spreading religion in the Tapanuli area. DR. I.L. Nommensen in his mission was always guided by what he learned in Germany through several books about the Batak Tribe (Batak Land) (Nababan, n.d.).

Growth of the HKBP Church in the Balige Community

In general, people realize that healthy church growth is not a matter of quantity but quality. However, even though the emphasis is on quality, often the final conclusion is still an increase in quantity. It is rare for a writer to testify that because he emphasizes quality, to this day the number of his congregation has not increased but has remained constant.

If the concept of a growing church is defined as expansion and development, then the apostles could be said to have been unsuccessful in establishing a church - because now the churches that the apostles served were left in ruins. This should be our thinking about what it means to have a growing church. Therefore, a growing church does not mean that it must always exist throughout the ages and continue to multiply.

The Church that grows according to the Bible is: First, the existence of spirit and not surface or outward symptoms. The spirit of a growing church consists of congregations who have been born again

and repented of accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior. The early church was a God-centered church, there were concrete actions they took. The essential change is a change in the purpose of life, if previously it was for self-interest, now it is for the glory of God whom we worship. The God we worship is the King above all kings who we should worship. The Christian life is not a life for itself anymore. The congregation has been purchased and the price has been paid in full, therefore we must glorify God with all our life. This is a very basic thing about a growing church. If you already have this basis, clearly the response will be different.

Church growth or congregational growth can be organic, qualitative, or quantitative. What is meant by organic church/congregation growth is growth in the organizational administrative field. Qualitative church/congregation growth is the growth in the level of spiritual quality or growth in the spiritual maturity of congregation members. Meanwhile, quantitative church/congregation growth is the growth in the number of members. This growth can come from three sources, namely (a) biological birth from members of the congregation's family, (b) transfer of members from other churches/congregations, and (c) additional congregation members as a result of preaching the gospel. The church growth referred to in this discussion is quantitative church growth which is the result of efforts to preach the Gospel (Clinton, 1985).

During the reign of the Dutch East Indies, there are records that church growth did not always go smoothly. There are times when church growth experiences obstacles, such as the number of church members starting to decrease and eventually disappearing altogether. Church growth, especially in the HKBP Church, occurred through the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles and other disciples. At first the apostles were pioneers in providing testimony. Then other students who were part of the movement of all Christians joined in carrying out this task. The testimonies of the apostles and other disciples are two movements that run together and complement each other. The two are partners who complement each other. One supports the other, one needs and strengthens the other. Both embody the harmonious movement of the one body of Christ.

Basically, church growth includes two areas of spiritual and organizational paradigms. This is clearly expressed by modern evangelism theory that if someone experiences spiritual renewal and accepts Christ as his Savior, the Holy Spirit will encourage his heart to witness to others who have not accepted Christ. The goal of church growth is to multiply and mature the church. In other words, namely to more effectively spread the Gospel and multiply churches in new areas (Nababan, n.d.).

A healthy church is a church that grows in quantity and quality. In terms of quantity, the early church only had 120 people, after Pentecost their number increased by 3000 people. The characteristics of church growth are (a) emphasis on God's Word. The early church placed the Word of God (the teachings of the apostles) as the foundation and life of the church. The church will not experience growth if it only contains moral teachings or motivational words from humans. (b) the existence of beautiful fellowship. The fellowship of the early congregation was demonstrated by frequently gathering, uniting, helping each other, and eating together. Without fellowship, the church cannot grow. In fellowship, there is mutual giving and receiving because there are many people who need love and attention. (c) holding Holy Communion. (d) persevere in prayer. Without a prayer meeting, it is impossible for the church to progress, because God is the one who gives growth. Without prayer, it means that humans only rely on their own strength (Andreas, 2011).

There is a big difference between the life of the early church and the life of the church today. In big cities, church growth is almost in line with the growth of economic sectors, such as malls, business centers, and so on. The early church grew in simplicity, but under the powerful guidance of the Spirit. Close fellowship is the main characteristic and manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit, which emboldens them to become strong witnesses of Christ. The number of believers continues to increase despite the many obstacles and dangers faced (Andreas, 2011).

With the growth of the church, especially in the HKBP Balige church, the spirit of Christianity in Balige increasingly showed the quality of their faith, because in 1934 HKBP Balige again built the Frobels School (STK). The HKBP Balige congregation and its branches are required to make donations, but the amount of the donation is not determined. HKBP Balige Hospital still takes part in all development

initiated by the church, even though their burden and responsibility is very heavy. However, they still gave their best for the construction of the school.

HKBP also has an organizational chart from HKBP, district, resort to congregation. Because in this chart, all parts of the HKBP can be seen starting from the Great Synod to the church sections of the HKBP. HKBP is organized according to a diocesan system, similar to churches that adhere to the episcopal system such as the Roman Catholic Church, Anglican Church, and Methodist Church. The highest leader was called Ephorus. The first Ephorus HKBP was Dr. I.L. Nommensen. Ephorus is assisted by a Secretary General and a number of Department Heads (Nababan, n.d.).

b. Development of the HKBP Balige Church

The Entry of Christian Missionaries in the Balige Community

Long before the Dutch entered Indonesia, the Toba Batak were in one kingdom, namely the Batak kingdom which was centered in Bakara. The Batak Kingdom which was under the government of the Sisingamangaraja dynasty divided the Batak Kingdom into 4 (four) regions called Raja Maropat, namely: 1) Raja Maropat Silindung; 2) King Maropat Samosir; 3) King Maropat Humbang; 4) King Maropat Toba (Hutauruk, 2010).

After independence, the government of the Republic of Indonesia continued to make Tapanuli a residency. Dr. Ferdinand Lumban Tobing was the first Resident of Tapanuli. There have been slight changes made to the name but the regional division remains the same. For example, the name Afdeling Batak Landen was changed to Luhak Tanah Batak, and the first luhak appointed was Cornelius Sihombing.

When sovereignty was handed over to the Republic of Indonesia in early 1960, the Tapanuli Residency, which had been integrated into North Sumatra Province, was divided into 4 (four) new districts, namely; North Tapanuli Regency (formerly Tanah Batak Regency), Central Tapanuli Regency (formerly Sibolga Regency), South Tapanuli Regency (formerly Padang Sidempuan Regency), and Nias Regency.

When in 1961 missionaries came to Batak land, with the aim of preaching the Gospel to the Batak people before the Batak people knew about Christianity. Previously, Christian society still adhered to animism or idol worship. Society is still in a world of spiritual darkness. However, after the arrival of the missionaries to the land of Batak, the Batak people became more familiar with God and began to follow the worship taught by the missionaries.

The arrival of missionaries had quite a good influence, namely efforts to improve the welfare of the local population. The Dutch colonial government, which occupied the Balige area, supported these missionary efforts. More and more Toba Batak people are entering Batak Land to open up agriculture. Modern education began to be introduced and efforts to improve the economic system of life through efforts to change and introduce new methods. In the agricultural sector, the Toba Batak people began to introduce the rice field method and began clearing agricultural land. Batak people obtain land through local customary rules.

The number of Batak Toba people living in Tanah Batak (Balige) in 1963 was already thousands of people. Their arrival to Balige after the formation of Balige as an autonomous region was more by public transport, and they came personally without bringing their families. After getting a job for sure and being able to provide a decent life for their new family, they told their family to come to Balige. Most people from the Batak Toba region do not want to return even if they do not get a job. If unable to work in the government field they prefer to open a new business and live settled in Balige.

Some of them embraced Christianity, and some embraced other religions. They live in the fields eating sweet potatoes and a little rice. Life for the Batak people in Balige was not comfortable because Dutch soldiers often came to people's houses to ask for food and money. The Dutch East Indies colonization of the Balige area became one Onder Afdeling led by a Dutch Controleur.

Meanwhile, social relations in Toba Batak society are viewed from the function of the clan, having a clan will make it easier to get to know each other's relationship and position. A person's nickname is their surname, not their personal name, so when Toba Batak people meet, the first thing they ask is their

surname. By knowing the surname, you will follow the genealogy tracing process to find out the kinship between those who are often called *martutur* or *martarombo*.

At the beginning of 1964, the British Baptist Church sent 2 (two) missionaries to Batak Land, namely Rev. Burton and Rev. Ward. They anchored and landed in Bengkulen (now Bengkulu) to meet the head of the Dutch government in Sumatra (Gouverneur). Mr. Raffles, who at that time held the position of governor of Sumatra. After staying for some time in Bengkulu, while learning the language and habits of the Batak people, they left for Silindung (Tarutung) via the port of Sibolga-Barus.

Traveling from Barus, the two priests walked through the forests and hills until they reached Silindung. It was really surprising for the two pastors (Burton and Word) to see the Batak people who came to see and hear the purpose and purpose of their presence. After the Batak people present at the meeting heard the aims and objectives of the two pastors, they spontaneously cheered and left them. From here it can be said that the mission of the two priests failed and they returned to Sibolga and continued their journey to Padang (West Sumatra).

Seeing its development, HKBP experienced several incidents of congregation abandonment, starting with the establishment of Mission Batak, followed by Huria Christen Batak (HCB), Punguan Kristen Batak (PKB), and Huria Kristen Indonesia (HKI). In 1964 a number of members left and called themselves the Indonesian Protestant Christian Church (GKPI). Due to the HKBP crisis that occurred in the 1960s, a number of members also moved to other churches. According to the HKBP Almanac, HKBP has 3,139 churches spread across Indonesia and even in Singapore and the United States. On December 24, 1964 Zending Barmen sent and dispatched Rev. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen to Sumatra with the aim of Batak land. After 142 days of traveling by sea (ship), he arrived in Padang on May 14, 1965. Pdt. Ingwer Ludwig Nommensen stayed in Padang for only 39 days while studying the Batak language and culture, which he had learned from N. Van Der Tuuk's book. While traveling from Padang on June 23, 1965, Rev. I.L. Nommensen in Sibolga- Barus (Pasaribu, 2004).

For approximately six months, Rev. I.L. Nommensen in Barus, he always communicates with priests in Sipirok, Angkola and also in Parau Sorat. Only then did he officially leave Barus and live in Sipirok. For 6 months Nommensen lived in Parau Sorat, but his heart and mind were always focused on Silindung. The Silindung and Toba areas were the targets of Nommensen's presence, in accordance with the message from Inspector Barmen, who at that time was led by Rhoden. Missionary Nommensen was the first to depart from Sipirok to Silindung via a very difficult road, where he had to pass through forests and steep hills, and not only that, he had to always be alert of the kings he had to pass as well as the poisonous animals and tigers that were in his path. At that time it was called the Sumatran tiger. The trip to Silindung at that time was really intense and planned, but what could it be, Nommensen couldn't meet the people of Silindung, he could only look at the area from the Siatas Barita hill (currently called the Cross of Love Spiritual Tour), that's where Nommensen prayed that The Lord God gave him the strength and ability to be able to set foot in Silindung.

In his missions he was always guided by what he learned in Germany through several books about the Batak tribe (Batak land). He remembered Inspector Rhoden's message from Germany, that every place in Batak land must first meet the local king. In the beginning, the people of Silindung, including King Pontas Lumbantobing, found it very difficult to accept the teaching of God's Word, and many people even hated it. Truly God always accompanies and guides every step of His servant Nommensen. In the course of his life, Nommensen not only taught God's Word but also provided treatment and even redeemed people whose parents had sold them to become servants due to losing at gambling. With Nommensen's presence in the Silindung area, comfort, security and war between villages began to subside. Almost every day there is teaching about God's Word and also about hygiene as well as writing and reading. Nommensen built a schoolhouse and medical center, which was assisted by King Pontas Lumbantobing. The calm peace and health of the people in Silindung have begun to spread to Humbang and Toba (Pasaribu, 2004). To spread the Gospel, Nommensen was assisted by Raja Pontas Lumbantobing (the first Batak King to be baptized) to take him from Barus to Silindung with a written note that he was not well received by the population. After seven years of Nommensen's evangelism, 1,250 Batak people converted to Christianity.

Development and Growth of the HKBP Balige Church

In line with the development of the church, in the early days, its movement had socio-cultural and religious characteristics. The organization occurs according to region of origin, ethnicity or religion and then ideology, with objectives initially more related to socio-cultural and economic matters. The organization of "Christian tribes" is more of a tribal or regional organization than a religious one, even though it is led and has a majority of Christian members. However, these organizations are described here because they show the social and political background of Indonesian Christians, as well as being an alternative forum. Indeed, these organizations cannot be considered to directly run or represent the Christian side in the national movement, unless they clearly assert themselves as Christian organizations.

The development of the HKBP Balige Church began with the entry of Christian missionaries to Batak Land with the aim of preaching the Gospel to the Batak people, providing God's teachings, and establishing education in Batak Land. This development is slowly progressing and can be felt by the people of Balige and the people who visit Balige. Members of the congregation who worship at the HKBP Balige church can feel how big the role of the Church is, including the pastor who never stops inviting people to worship at the church. This is what continues to increase the development of the HKBP church.

The acceptance of Christianity in Batak Land was carried out by missionaries; in 1966, the HKBP carried out its duties to carry out the mission, namely to Christianize the entire Batak Land, which still believed in *sipelebegu* (idolatry) peacefully and not by force. HKBP in Balige is becoming more social where the program implemented by these Zending missionaries in Batak Land is developing rapidly because it includes aspects that are directly related to the renewal of life (Simanjuntak, 2004). The development of HKBP in Balige was marked by the establishment of Distrik XI Toba Hasundutan. However, this district experienced a vacuum because, at that time, the end of Dutch rule in Indonesia and the entry of the Japanese army to control all of Asia with the motto of the 3A movement, namely Japan Protector of Asia, Japan Leader of Asia, and Japan Light of Asia. With this movement, Japan succeeded in controlling parts of Asia, including Indonesia.

However, when the Japanese came to Batak Land, it was an obstacle for the missionaries to carry out their program. After Japan came to power throughout Batak Land, they arrested Europeans including German Pastors who served in their mission program. During Japan's leadership in Indonesia, the Christianization program was hampered. Japan confiscated HKBP assets such as hospitals, churches, schools and priests' residences to be used for war purposes, and the buildings were used as Japanese army posts. Even though Japan does not support the Christianization program, HKBP continues to carry out its mission.

In 1968, the development of the HKBP Balige church was also seen in terms of its large building because, from year to year, the HKBP church was never separated from development. Apart from that, many congregants worship at the church because they see the comfortable situation and conditions of the church and the church committee who never stop inviting people to worship and preach the Gospel. In the 1968 HKBP almanac on page three, it is written as follows:

Huria Kristen Batak Protestan ima pardomuan ni halak Kristen sian sude marga, houw dohot bangso di Indonesia on dohot di sandok portibi on, na tardidi tu bagasan Goar ni Debata Ama, AnakNa Tuhan Jesus Kristus dohot tondi Parbadia. Ima sada hapataran di pematang ni Kristus na marpanindangion na manghamham na porsea di sandok portibi on.

[Huria Kristen Batak is a forum for the fellowship of people from all groups, circles and ethnic groups throughout Indonesia, as well as throughout the world, who are baptized into the Name of God the Father, His Son, Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This Church is a real manifestation of the Body of Christ, which witnesses the unity of believers throughout the world.] (Gaol, 1998).

The portrait of the church is that it is a living organism with people who believe in the Lord Jesus so that they can worship, fellowship, grow, serve and evangelize. However, a church that is alive, dynamic and growing also needs an orderly organization so that it can run well. This is what the early church faced in the early years of the church. When the congregation was still small and there were not many things to do, the apostles could still handle many things. However, when the church grew bigger, the church's activities also increased. Especially if the congregation comes from multi-ethnic groups with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, such as the early congregation (Andreas, 2011).

Along the way, the HKBP has outlined a special definition of "worship" or "service" in the 1969 HKBP Guidance and Development Outlines, which states that a service is an ecclesiastical ceremony in which a number of believers gather to hold communion with God the Father. The characteristics of the HKBP service are the same as those of the early church, namely feelings and understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit about the great deeds of God.

In the development of HKBP, the issue of worship has received great attention from RMG Zendeling, who serves in the Batak Church. This attitude and attention is proven by being prepared as a way to manage the increasing number of congregation members, especially in the Silindung area and its surroundings. The Zending began to try to build an orderly congregation and be able to stem the influence of "infidelity" in Batak Land (Protestan., 2002).

The congregational regulations contain rules regarding Christian congregational life, Sunday services and daily worship. To help implement these rules, several people were appointed to become *sintua*, deaconesses and children's teachers. In the service system at that time, there was a reading of the Ten Commandments before confession and forgiveness of sins.

Previously, an agenda had been prepared, although its use was not uniform in all churches. All matters relating to worship at HKBP are still very important matters to be discussed through ministerial meetings and sessions of the Supreme Synod. The elements that have played an important role in HKBP services throughout HKBP's history are the liturgy (Agenda), the Ecclesiastical calendar, worship services, Ecclesiastical songs and music.

Based on the 1970 Agenda, there are 11 service arrangements that have been provided to carry out each type of service, namely: Sunday service order, children's baptism service order, reception of adult candidates for baptism, adult baptism, confirmation of the sidi, marriage blessing, preparation for holy communion, Holy Communion together with its preparations, Holy Communion (at home and elsewhere), the ordination of Bible evangelists and deaconesses, and the dedication of Church buildings.

In 1972, HKBP became one of the churches with the largest congregation in Asia and is a forum for Christian fellowship from the Batak tribe which has dynamics in its historical development from time to time. With the end of the HKBP crisis and the reunification of its congregation, it will hopefully be a spur for the implementation of ministry and the preaching of the Gospel together with other congregations of God, so that all tribes, peoples and nations in Indonesia and throughout the world receive baptism in the name of God the Father.

The location of HKBP Balige is located in the center of the capital city of Toba Samosir (Tobasa) district. It has a congregation of 1500 families served by 3 Pastors, 1 Huria Teacher 1 Bibelvrouw and 40 Parhalados. Now HKBP Balige is 128 years old. Mr. Pandita Pilgram is known as a missionary who pioneered the seeds of the gospel (*sitastas nambur*) in this area. To serve the congregation of 4,000 people, services are held 3 times every week using the Toba Batak language. On average, 900-1000 people attend the service. The presence of Deaconess Education, HKBP Nursing Academy (AKPER), HKBP Hospital and HKBP private elementary school right next to the church demands maximum service (Nababan, n.d.). HKBP is divided into several districts led by district pastors (*praeses*). This district division has existed since 1956. At that time, Toba had become one of the districts in the HKBP that was united with Samosir, namely District IV Toba Samosir. In the Toba Hasundutan District XI area, there are 8 (eight) resort churches and 28 (twenty-eight) HKBP church buildings. District XI Toba Hasundutan, which has offices in Pearaja Tarutung, leads 8 resorts, namely: 1) Balige Resort; 2) Tampahan Resort; 3) Tambunan Resort; 4) Huta Gaol Resort; 5) Hinalang Silalahi Resort; 6) Parik Sabungan Resort; 7) Bonan Dolok Resort; 8) Laguboti Resort.

Each resort is led by a Resort Pastor and houses congregations led by Guru Huria. HKBP Balige Resort Balige District XI Toba Hasundutan, as one of the oldest churches, is an example for other HKBP churches. Members of the congregation, both in villages and overseas, often give the example of HKBP Balige as a congregation that is always growing. Because the presence of God's word in this area brings changes in the standard of living for the community. In 1974 several scholars and national and international figures emerged from the HKBP Balige congregation. Indeed, HKBP Balige has never escaped people's memories. It can be said that HKBP Balige, HKBP Pearaja Tarutung and HKBP Kampung Kristen have several similarities. These three HKBP churches are referred to as "bohi ni HKBP" (the face of HKBP). The society is advanced and always open to developments in science and technology. Several investors have also invested their capital around Balige which has certainly brought progress to the surrounding community.

When students from the Pastor's School made an ecclesiastical visit to HKBP Balige in 1976, members of the congregation paid attention to the function of the church as a place to commune with God. Starting from Sunday School children to parents, they took turns attending the service. On this occasion, students at the Pastor's School also witnessed several praise choirs. This visit has been long awaited by the congregation, considering that the Pastor of HKBP Ressort Balige, Pahala Simanjuntak, and Gr Monang Lumban Tobing (Teacher Huria) are alumni of the Sipoholon Seminarium. When the students listened to the praise choir, the members of the congregation felt their faith was awakened.

To describe the development of the church since 1954, it is necessary in some cases to go back in time to outline the growth of certain parts of the church organization in the 19th and 20th centuries. Therefore it is clear that things have changed since 1954, but there is also continuity with the past (Locher, 1997).

The battle against Japan resulted in radical changes. This was due to the colonization of Indonesia by the Japanese army, making it no longer possible to maintain the existing pattern of church management, where the Church Administrators, for the most part, held the leadership of the church. Management must be carried out in another way. When Japan lost, it turned out that people longed for church reorganization. When relations with the church in the Netherlands were restored, the way the plan was implemented was influenced by the reforms that had taken place during the war in the Dutch Hervordnd Church. This is very clear from the draft church system, which in early 1978 was submitted to the church by the Theological Commission (the Church Management re-formed the Commission after the war) (Locher, 1997).

The development of the HKBP Balige church began in 1954 when Ephorus HKBP inaugurated District XI Toba Hasundutan. At the time of the inauguration of the HKBP Balige church in 1954, a large party was held to welcome the presence of the HKBP leadership for the inauguration of the Toba Hasundutan district. The development of the HKBP Balige church means that more and more congregations are coming to worship at the church. This is because the service management of the Church Management is very good and invites the Balige community to carry out worship at the HKBP church (Simanjuntak, 2006).

Apart from the church, there are other buildings related to the HKBP Balige church, there as the HKBP Balige school, and even the HKBP Balige Hospital, which has one religious sect and teaching that really strengthens people's faith so that more and more people worship at the church and at the same time many people has spread the Gospel to other areas. The developments shown by HKBP Balige are the construction of the HKBP Siahaan Church in Hinalang, HKBP Nasangkae which is in Pardede Onan, and HKBP Tampubolon which is in Tampubolon (*Bertauli Hutauruk, Wawancara, 19 Februari 2011., n.d.*). These three churches were built in the same year, and completed in the same year. HKBP Balige is also divided into 4 parts, plus the HKBP Balige church, which is discussed now (Protestan., 2002).

To be precise, the inauguration of District The schools built include HKBP Balige Elementary School, which has 3 sections (HKBP I Elementary School, HKBP II Elementary School, and HKBP III Elementary School). The presence of the HKBP Elementary School is proof of the skill and tenacity of the teaching staff (teachers), so at that time, the HKBP Balige Elementary School was very popular.

HKBP Balige Elementary School is led by Mrs. Delpina Pardede, assisted by 7 civil servants and 4 honorary people, the number of students is 259 people.

Seeing the development time that continues to move, the development of HKBP Balige services has reached Sihailhail and Ranggalgit. From that moment on, HKBP Balige's service environment became wider. With the increase in these services, services are certainly needed. So it was agreed to add one person to Sintua in the neighborhood, namely St. B. Panjaitan is expected to be able to serve and become an extension of HKBP Balige. HKBP Balige is the District service center, so all activities in this District should be known to HKBP Balige and Balige Resort.

HKBP Organizational Structure

HKBP is a forum for the fellowship of people from all groups, circles and ethnic groups throughout Indonesia and throughout the world who have been baptized into the name of God the Father, His Son, Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Church is a real manifestation of the Body.

Christ, who witnessed the unity of believers throughout the world. So that the HKBP church has a vision, mission and principles to develop quality life through the services that have been taught to the HKBP congregation, apart from that, HKBP is a symbol of the body of Christ, which must be accepted by Christian congregations. Therefore, the vision, mission and principles of HKBP are:

- a. Vision, HKBP develops into a church that is inclusive, dialogical open, and capable and powerful in developing quality life in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with everyone in global society, especially Christian society.
- b. Mission, HKBP seeks to improve the quality of all members of society, especially HKBP residents, through quality church services. To be able to carry out the mandate of the Lord Jesus in all behavior in personal life, family life, and life together throughout human society at the local and national levels, at the regional and global levels in facing the challenges of the 21st Century.
- c. Principles: To carry out the mission towards the vision mentioned above, HKBP adheres to the principles below. 1) Serve, not be served; 2) Become salt and light; 3). Upholding justice, peace and the integrity of creation (Hutapea, 2010). Meanwhile, the aims and objectives of HKBP are: 1) Proclaiming and living the Word of God; 2) Maintaining the purity of the preaching and teaching of God's word; 3) Providing himself to be the glory of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 4. Establish and strengthen the existence of HKBP.

HKBP services are divided into general (central), District, Resort, Huria and Congregation HKBP. At the general HKBP level, it is the unity of all HKBP, which includes congregations, resorts, districts, institutions and foundations led by Ephorus. General services are carried out by Ephorus, Secretary General, Head of the Koinonia Department, Head of the Marturia Department, Head of the Diakonia Department, foundation, Chair of the Pastor's Meeting, Synod Worker Council, HKBP Audit Board, HKBP Business Entity, HKBP Education Organizing Body, HKBP Development Research Agency, Treasurer General, and commission.

The definition of a district is a union of several resorts to strengthen and develop fellowship, testimony, and service in that district. District services are led by Praeses, District Secretary, District Treasurer, Head of the Kononia Division, Head of the Marturia Division, and Head of the Diakonia Division. Resort is an association of local congregations to strengthen and develop fellowship, testimony and ministry among the congregations. Resort services are led by the Resort Pastor, Resort Council, Resort Secretary, and Pastor, who is assisted by Bibelvrouw, Deaconess, and Resort level activity management board. The local congregation is an association of several HKBP residents in a certain place, led by the leadership of the local congregation. Congregational-level services are led by Teacher Huria, Parhalado Huria, Sections for managing activities at Huria, Development Committee.

Pastor JR. Hutauruk explained that the neatly arranged pyramid-shaped HKBP organization type applies to presbyterial, synodal and episcopal systems. In the congregational layer, all three apply, but what stands out is the presbytery; that is, the congregation, through the congregational council, organizes itself so that the layers above it can live in an orderly manner. The synodal element is under

pressure both at the resort level and at the top level of the Godang Synod. The entire presbyterial and synodal leadership was further strengthened by the episcopal element, namely in the position of Eporus, including Praeses and Pastor of Resort.

Meanwhile, structural positions in HKBP are based on HKBP rules and regulations, namely:

1) *Ephorus*

The meaning of ephors is that which leads all HKBP and HKBP representatives towards the government, church and other organizational bodies. He must carry out his position in accordance with the Confession, Church Order and Church Strategy of the HKBP. His leadership period is 4 years and he can be re-elected to lead for 2 terms.

The person who serves as Ephorus in accordance with the 1979 HKBP rules and regulations is First who shepherds congregations and ministers throughout HKBP; second, carries out training for ordained ministers in order to increase their ability to carry out their ministry duties, especially in the ministry of the word and shepherding; third maintaining and voicing HKBP's prophetic duties towards the government or rulers through words and concrete actions to uphold truth and justice in the midst of the nation and state; fourth represent HKBP to the government, church, and other bodies at home and abroad; fifth leads the entire HKBP together with the Secretary-General and heads of departments based on the Bible, Confession, Paraaturan Rules, and Pastoral Regulations and Church Strategy as a manifestation of obedience to Jesus Christ, the King of the Church. Ephorus can delegate the authority to carry out certain tasks to the Secretary-General, heads of departments or *praesses* according to their needs; sixth convene the Supreme Synod in accordance with the provisions of the proceedings of the Supreme Synod; seventh, chairing the HKBP Leadership Meeting; eighth lead Praeses Meetings; ninth prepare and develop a Master Plan for the Development of HKBP Services which will be submitted to the Supreme Synod for adoption.

The requirements for becoming an Ephorus include having at least 20 years of ministerial *tahlbisall* at HKBP and working continuously at HKBP. Pastors who are sent by HKBP to work in churches or other institutions are considered to continue working at HKBP. Then he was never subject to sanctions from the HKBP Church Pastoral and Strategy Regulations.

2) *President*

The praeses duties are as follows; First lead the district together with the head midwives by preparing strategic plans and annual work programs for the district in accordance with the decisions of the Supreme Synod, Synod Worker Council and HKBP Leadership Meeting. Coaching and shepherding ordained ministers in work that is in accordance with their respective ministry duties. Guiding and supervising all activities related to spirituality and wealth in congregations and resorts. Chairs district synods, district synod workers' councils and district leadership meetings.

3) *Secretary General*

The Secretary General's duties include accompanying Ephorus in leading HKBP together with department heads, leading HKBP administration in accordance with HKBP Regulations, representing Ephorus in carrying out tasks assigned by Ephorus according to his needs, receiving service reports from service organs under him, and together with the department heads accompany Ephorus to prepare the Service News, Annual Plan and Annual Revenue and Expenditure Budget Plan for HKBP, which they will submit to the Synod Workers' Assembly; Accountability Report and Strategic Plan to the Supreme Synod.

4) *Pastor Resort*

His job is to lead the resort together with the resort council. Leads the main congregation of the resort together with other ordained ministers. Chair resort meetings, resort board meetings, and other meetings at the resort level. Thinking about everything that is needed to revive and revive the congregation together with the servants at the resort. Guiding the congregations who are members of the resort to fulfill their responsibilities. Implement decisions of the grand synod, synodal workers' council meetings, district synods, district workers' councils and resort meetings. Supervise the finances and wealth of the congregations in the resort. And make evaluations and provide work reports, statistics and resort finances to resort and *praeses* meetings.

5) *Ordained minister at HKBP*

The duties of an ordained office are an ecclesiastical position assigned to a minister through ordination in accordance with the HKBP Agenda. There are six types of Ordinary Positions in the HKBP in accordance with the HKBP Confession and Agenda: Ordained Ministers in the HKBP. Pastors are those who receive ministerial positions from HKBP through Ephorus in accordance with the HKBP Agenda.

The requirements to become a pastor are that you must graduate from the HKBP Theological College or another theological college recognized by the HKBP, which has the same curriculum as the HKBP Theological College majoring in clergy. For HKBP residents who appreciate God's grace which they received through baptism and confession of faith. Then he has practiced for at least two years at HKBP, and is considered capable of accepting a priestly position in accordance with the recommendations of the praeses and resort priest. d. Healthy spiritually and physically. Has received priestly ordination from HKBP. Pastors who are sent by other churches who believe in the HKBP are counted the same as HKBP pastors (Hutauruk, 1990).

Understanding the church as an instrument of God's kingdom since Old Testament times is a very important concept for pastoral ministry because the church, as the offspring of the woman, will continue to be in conflict with the offspring of the serpent. This conflict is consistent and spiritual. Then, in this war, the church is guaranteed victory based on God's faithfulness to His plan and the work of Christ on the cross. The focus of church ministry must be on God's interests (expanding His kingdom) on earth. A church that only focuses on itself is not really a church (Agustinus, n.d.). (Agustinus, n.d.)

In 1980, the HKBP Balige church could be seen as a growing organization. Many congregants come to worship at the church, seen from the very active role of the church pastor in inviting the public to hold services at the HKBP Balige church. Because the church is the body of Christ, which consists of His people who are gathered together to listen to His Word, obey and act according to His Word. To "act" as a member of the Body of Christ, involves a life of faith in all aspects of life. Therefore, as the Body of Christ, the church represents Him in the world, expressing His life and completing His work. The church must trust God in facing problems in the world, living in unity and inseparability from God.

In 1981, the church's growth became more visible. This is seen from the church as the Body of Christ. The church is likened to a physical body, a complex organism that has different parts. The church is an organization used as a place of worship for Christians. Until the end of 1981, the HKBP Balige church was the oldest church. And the results of the church's development are visible, where the congregation is increasing and the role of the pastor is also to invite the Christian community so that they can join in worship and preach the Gospel.

c. The Role of the HKBP Church in the Balige Community of District XI Toba Hasundutan

Service Arrangements

Apart from serving (diakonia), the form of church service must improve the welfare of the surrounding community, as said by the Prophet Jeremiah. So the Church becomes a place of complaint for all congregations and the surrounding community. If the Church has become a place for complaints, then the Church has become the central point in serving the community. "It is not the Church that complains to society, but society that complains to the Church. It must start from the Church opening itself. The church, as an institution, must encourage its people. So if the Church instills, builds and fosters that belief in society, then society will believe. If people do not believe in the Church, which can help or assist, how will people want to come to Church (Nababan, n.d.).

There are at least three tri-tasks of the Church, namely koinonia, marturia, and diakonia. The church prioritizes the physical development of the church but does not play a role in increasing the faith of its congregation. So even though the Church is increasing, the congregation's faith is not increasing like the increase in Church buildings. Within the framework of living together as a nation, the role of the Church and its contribution to society and the state is very important and cannot be ignored.

As a community, the Church always requires order and order in the implementation of services. For this reason, congregation members are needed to be moved to be involved in service so that the

church can regularly carry out its activities. This is where members of the congregation are called to express their participation. For example, there is a willingness to be elected as an Elder, Deacon, Servant on the Development Commission or on the Committee of an activity. If there are no members of the congregation who are moved to be involved in organizing services, it is certain that the church or congregation will experience lethargy.

Therefore, one thing that is worth paying attention to in this case is that every person who is moved to be involved in organizing ministry must prioritize God's will. This means that involvement is not because you want to stand out or be respected by others but rather so that God's own will and work will prevail. Even though the church requires organizational arrangements, in essence, the organization does not have a hierarchical spirit (there are superiors and subordinates), meaning that a leader is not the ruler, while the citizens are not the ones who must always submit. The organization is based on the principle of dividing work according to each individual's talents. One person is equal to another person. In Biblical language, a leader is a servant.

The importance of clear arrangements is that it is hoped that congregation members will carry out their roles as fellow members of the Body of Christ, for example by conveying fresh ideas for improving and developing the church. These ideas can be conveyed during Household Worship, "community meetings", or directly to the Congregation Council or Congregation Council Auxiliary Body.

HKBP never serves people or congregations whose church status or position is unclear. If there is a certificate showing that he is registered in a church, then he will be served according to his needs. Sintua, the pastor and other servants at HKBP only serve their congregation. That means there is no sintua or priest in the world who can serve anyone, any human being in this world. Especially those in the nature of church services. The group or organization that elects, appoints and appoints him recognizes him, for example, as a sintua or pastor. Others can be recognized only if there is an ecumenical relationship (Nababan, n.d.).

When carrying out service, you must always be driven by love. Service that is not based on love ultimately results in the arrogance of power. Love and service are principles that determine the success of empowerment programs for social and environmental change. The implication is that all programs in the field of fellowship, testimony and HKBP service must be designed in such a way that is based on an ecclesiological theological understanding of the church's actual challenges. It is time for HKBP to get out of the trap of formal activities and ceremonial routines, which will only strengthen the structure and weaken the congregation's independence. HKBP must focus on service based on the love of Christ so that the entire congregation is able to actualize service that is truly touching as an implementation of the growth of faith, love and hope.

Meanwhile, the aim of carrying out the ministry duties of church ministers is to empower or equip the Communion of Saints to become a congregation that can carry out transformative diaconal work. So, the congregation is the base. If the congregation is the base/subject/actor of Diakonia's ministry mission, then the position of the ecclesiastical ministry is truly servants who are present to equip the members of the congregation. Through this method, a service model called transformative diakonia service will be created, where the people on the front line are able to respond to various situations that occur. The communion of saints is independent through a missionary spirit so that, in this way, they themselves will return to bring the transformative missionary spirit of Diakonia service into their daily work (Siregar & Dr. Jamilin Sirait, n.d.).

Social Sector

As has been understood, this service unit is a service that is still relatively new in the service structure at HKBP. So far, the service strategy is still to take a development approach only, but with the existence of this new program it is in accordance with the demands of HKBP's vision and mission which is inclusive, educational, and considers an approach based on a humanitarian code of ethics. So in this period this service unit has made efforts to empower educational services and advocate policies that side with the congregation and the weak, poor and oppressed people.

As a new ministry, it is seen that a new process of ministry has taken place in the congregation, district and center. There have also been new service responses to natural disasters. Among other things, HKBP has responded to programs for tsunami victims in Aceh and Nias and earthquakes in Nias and Mentawai. Likewise when responding to victims of flash floods in Tanah Alas, earthquakes in Bantul Yogyakarta, tsunamis in Pangandaran, flash floods in Besitang, floods in Jakarta, earthquakes in Tapsel and West Sumatra. This shows that there have been at least 5 new awareness within the HKBP responding to natural disasters. *First*, there has been spontaneous, fast and responsive awareness from various districts in HKBP to send aid to congregations affected by the disaster. *Second*, each district has even been able to motivate its citizens to immediately help communities affected by disasters, without waiting for letters from the head office. This is worthy of appreciation because there has been seen a revival of service responsibilities and functions in districts and resorts. *Third*, spontaneity has grown as the district has begun to civilize with efforts to train personnel to face disasters at any time. *Fourth*, if previously the HKBP was only able to help congregations and communities affected by disasters in the form of solidarity funds, now it has reached the rehabilitation stage.

Fifth, through HKBP's services serving tsunami victims, HKBP has been encouraged to develop its service management for survivors in a professional manner and in accordance with international codes of ethics. So that HKBP, through program implementers from the YTBI institution, can provide services ranging from emergency programs, rehabilitation, reconstruction and mitigation as well as preparation. Now HKBP has been recognized for its institutional and management capacity from YTBI, and from the International Auditor Institute. In the future, HKBP needs to improve its institutions so that they are also open to accepting membership from members of other Lutheran churches in Indonesia. Because only in that way can this institution become a trusted part of running programs in international and national categories. Now this institution is led by Dr. Jongkers Tampubolon, MSc. *Sixth*, because HKBP has been recognized for its commitment and consistency in serving communities affected by disasters, HKBP is considered to no longer only think about HKBP residents, but includes the wider community. This is in accordance with the inclusive vision of HKBP.

Apart from that, there is also the role of the Church towards society in the social field, namely to renew the determination to work together with the poor and weak to play a role in changing conditions of injustice, repairing environmental damage and bringing peace where violence occurs by continuing to foster an attitude of courage to start with existing strength and potential, no matter how small, without depending on outside help. Encouraging congregation members who have been blessed by God with great economic power, to be more honest and wise in finding ways to improve the lives of the poor and weak and the damaged environment (Nababan, n.d.).

To maximize the social role of the HKBP church in the midst of humanitarian and nation-oriented services, the possibility of institutionalizing services in the form of a foundation or other institutions, including the provision of forums at the district and central levels, has also been well formulated. If this is studied, then it is not impossible that there will be a forum for community leaders from the HKBP congregation, a forum for farmers, a forum for services for workers, fishermen, concern for the unemployed, evangelism for the urban poor, students, and so on. If the presence of HKBP without carrying the name HKBP shows HKBP's willingness to present itself with a face that has the ability to open networks with the government and the general public. So that HKBP can be present to express the universal love of Christ (Nababan, n.d.).

In the social sector, the HKBP church is able to play a role in the community by expressing the love of Christ and playing an active role in serving the community. So far, HKBP Balige has also played a big role in society, both from within and from outside. So that fellow citizens share in the form of service and help each other for the Church.

Field of Faith

Christians are part of the body of Christ whose duty is to serve society. This form of service is drawn from preaching the Gospel and the church also invites the public to participate in knowing God. Because before the Toba Batak people became Christians, they adhered to the Mulajadi Nabolon religious system

or adhered to the influence of animism. However, with the teachings of Christian missionaries, the Toba Batak people increasingly know God and carry out God's teachings.

Meanwhile, the role of the Church in the midst of society in the field of belief is to provide enthusiasm for the community and the Balige congregation in terms of worship. The Church also invites the public to take part in services in the form of preaching the Gospel to people who do not yet know God. And this is where the HKBP Church plays an active role in increasing people's trust in God as the creator. Even people believe in God's teachings in the Holy Bible and continue to carry out His commands. The target of this role is that the church is the body of Christ and works as a place of worship for the congregation, and is able to develop the church's vision and mission.

First, the church needs to understand its identity and mission in the world more clearly and comprehensively. By using the Bible as the main foundation and learning from the history of the church throughout time and place, the church positions itself appropriately in a society that is diverse and continues to change. *Second*, the church must have a clear and firm attitude towards the problems faced by the country today. Attitudes towards religious plurality, poverty and ignorance, customs and culture, as well as other relevant matters, must be an agenda and study in determining the basis and direction for the formation and service of church members. *Third*, the need for courage and willingness from church leaders and members to continue to transform themselves, so that every church member can grow and then be able to play an active and appropriate role in fulfilling their call to service. *Fourth*, the importance of the unity of the church as the body of Christ which has unique gifts, callings and contextual situations faced. Diversity is not to be opposed, but on the contrary, it should make the church grateful for the richness and completeness of the body of Christ (Prayogi & Veritas, 2004).

The active role of the HKBP Church in community services, especially in the field of faith. HKBP tries to raise people's enthusiasm for worship and prayer. Apart from that, the HKBP Church also reminds members of the congregation who already know Christ to help preach the Gospel to other people who do not yet know Christ more deeply. HKBP Balige truly completes the church as part of the body of Christ for a congregation that grows in faith and service to church members. In this area of belief, the church is able to become the body of Christ which has the vision and mission of the church so that people are able to become part of the body of Christ so that they can attract other people to attend worship at the HKBP Balige church. The community is truly growing in faith and the form of service of church members. In this area of belief, the church is also able to develop the vision and mission of the church as part of the body of Christ. Therefore, people increasingly believe that the church is a part of the body of Christ that cannot be forgotten in people's lives. So many people believe that God is the Savior and this is the task of the church for Christian society.

In giving trust to the congregation of the HKBP Balige Church, the congregation is invited to attend worship and services at the church. Because the church is the body of Christ which has been given to humans to run and never forget, whether it is God's teachings or commands. So that the people of Balige are able to attend services every week at the church, this is all due to the service management of the church committee which makes more and more congregations go to church. The belief of the Toba Batak people before the arrival of Christianity was to adhere to the Debata Mula Jadi Nabolon system (God who has no beginning and end).

As for the soul and spirit, the Batak tribe recognizes three concepts, namely: 1) Tondi, is a person's soul or spirit which is strength, therefore tondi gives life to humans. Tondi can be had since a person is in the womb. If the tondi leaves a person's body, the person will get sick or die, so a mangalap ceremony (picking up) the tondi from the sombaon that holds him is held; 2) Sahala, is the soul or spirit power that a person has. Everyone has tondi, but not everyone has sahala. Sahala is the same as sumanta, the luck or magic possessed by kings or hula-hula; 3) Begu, is the tondi of a dead person, whose behavior is the same as human behavior, only appearing at night.

Christianity offers a sense of community and belonging to its followers, providing a strong support system during difficult times. This sense of belonging is crucial for many people, especially in a world where individualism is increasingly prevalent (Pauw, 2024). Also, Christian teachings provide answers to pressing issues like poverty, inequality, and suffering. The doctrine of love and compassion

encourages individuals to engage in social justice causes, helping those in need (Yust, 2024). Christianity emphasizes personal growth and development through spiritual practices like prayer and meditation. These practices help individuals navigate the challenges of modern life (Rocha, 2021). Additionally, the message of redemption and grace offered by Christianity resonates with many people who feel disconnected from society or struggling with personal problems. This message provides hope and forgiveness, which are essential for many individuals (Francis et al., 2021). Furthermore, Christianity has had a profound impact on Western civilization, culture, and politics. Its influence can be seen in art, literature, music, and philosophy, and it has been instrumental in shaping human rights movements throughout history (Parish, 2020).

4. Conclusion

HKBP is a Christian church based in Tanah Batak in Tarutung City, North Tapanuli, North Sumatra Province. HKBP is one of the largest congregations in the world, spreading to America and Europe. Moreover, the history and development of the HKBP Resort Balige Church began with the arrival of Christian missionaries to Batak Land. With the arrival of missionaries to Batak Land, Balige built the HKBP church which was consecrated as the Balige HKBP church by Ompu Ephorus Pdt. I.L. Nommensen. So that the HKBP Balige church develops physically and the congregation comes to worship at the church. This church is one of the churches that is developing well. This can be seen from the social charities around the church, such as: Hospitals, Schools, Universities and Multi-Purpose Buildings which function as public services to the surrounding community. Furthermore, the role of the HKBP Church in the social life of the Balige community. The Church as a fellowship of believers always requires order and order in the implementation of services. For this reason, congregation members are needed to be moved to be involved in service so that the church can regularly carry out its activities. This is where members of the congregation are called to express their participation. For example, there is a willingness to be elected as an Elder, Deacon, Servant on the Development Commission or on the Committee of an activity. If there are no members of the congregation who are moved to be involved in organizing services, it is certain that the church or congregation will experience lethargy.

Based on direct studies and surveys in the field, several recommendations that are important to be followed up by related units and agencies as policy materials are: that the historic and ancient churches in the North Tapanuli and Tobasa areas have been eroded by modernization so that in maintaining and renovating the churches they do not pay attention to aspects of their genuinity and historicity. As a result, new buildings are often completely different from the original form, such as changed architecture. Therefore, the HKPB must consult with related agencies to renovate existing historic and ancient churches. It is also time for the HKBP to consider including local architecture in building the HKBP church to preserve local cultural values or values with Batak nuances in the church building. Also, the Regional Government needs to register and designate historical buildings, one of which is the church, as cultural heritage and protected by Cultural Heritage Law No. 11 of 2010. This law stipulates that not only church buildings are protected cultural heritage but also the area around them. Finally, to the Ministry of Religion and related units, especially the Directorate of Christian Community Guidance, it is necessary to coordinate with other government agencies to determine churches that have high historical values to be included as protected cultural heritage.

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Conflict of Interest

The results of this research are free from various conflicts of interest from certain parties who may claim the results of their research.

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