

## W5 on Missions: Easter Edition

What does celebrating the death, burial and resurrection of Christ look like in other lands?



Here is what some CBM Field Staff had to say about their Easter traditions:



**Joyce Hancock (retired CBM Field Staff, Brazil):**

Easter celebrations with the Baptist Convention in Brazil were very traditional. The church members often had breakfast together followed by Sunday school and worship service. Sometimes there would be an evening cantata. I appreciated being involved in a small congregation in Aguas Lindas my last eight years in Brazil. We had breakfast together and then shared about the wonders of Christ's love that led to our salvation through His death and resurrection.



**John and Ruth Chan (Germany):**

Easter for Germans is similar to that in Canada: Good Friday and Sunday services.

But for the Chinese Christians in Germany, every Easter is a big gathering to have a retreat and celebrate together. We have our annual German-wide Chinese Christian Discipleship Camp for the Easter weekend (Thur.-Mon.). The camp is held at Frankfurt, with usually 400 attendees from 40-50 different cities in Germany. There is an adult session (conducted in Mandarin) and a youth session (conducted in German). It is the largest spiritual feast for us for the year.



**Suraj Komaravalli (India):**

There are normally two services on Easter – sunrise service (starting around 3-4 am) and the second service from around 10 am to 2 pm. All three Baptist Associations of Odisha (Kui, Soura and Oriya), have a time of dancing and singing very early in the morning: 2:30 – 3:30 am (Oriya); 4-5 am (Soura) 8-9 am (Kui). Singing and dancing serves as a call to worship and is a time of strengthening the faith of those in Christ as they celebrate His resurrection. It is also a proclamation of Christ's deliverance for all to people of other faiths.

Among the Oriya church, only the women gather early in the morning. They walk through the streets with candles,

singing praises to God and telling others the gospel of Christ's resurrection. After the sunrise service, the whole church dances and sings songs of resurrection and plays their traditional instruments (gini and mrudangam) as they pass through the village streets. The second Oriya service is quite elaborate where the children take an active role in singing songs, dramas, memory verses, etc. Some Oriya Baptists clean the tombs of their dear ones.



**The gini and the mrudangam (two sided skin drum which is played with two hands).**



In Kui churches, after the sunrise service, the villagers start dancing and singing and the whole community gets involved. Before entering the church, there is a snack. After the church service around 1 pm they again gather for snacks and fellowship. All the villages of the Kui Baptist have an Easter lunch on Monday with grandeur.

Some churches among the Soura Baptists gather at midnight (12 am) on Easter for around 15 minutes in prayer remembering the resurrection of Christ.

The urban churches of the Convention of Baptist Churches in the Northern Circars (CBCNC) in Andhra Pradesh, follow more western traditions, but many rural churches continue their cultural practises. After the sunrise service, the pastor and the congregation walk through important streets of their respective village, singing resurrection songs with instruments. Baptisms on Easter Sunday are often conducted by rural CBCNC churches, but since many do not have baptism tubs, all join in a procession to a nearby lake/river/canal. As they all walk, they again sing songs, highlighting the significance of Christ's resurrection.

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Erica & Aaron Kenny with Emma, Ava, & Tristan

### Aaron and Erica Kenny (Kenya):

Easter is the height of the Christian year for many Churches in Kenya. It is a bustle of activity with large worship services and dozens of choirs. Churches often hold day long celebrations spilling out of the sanctuary into tents or open air gatherings.

For our family, Easter has been a very personal time of reflection. Most years, we leave Nairobi and travel with our children into the countryside camping to experience the majesty of God within the beauty of creation: sometimes alone as a family, but often with our CBM colleagues. Easter is a time for us to reconnect with why God has called us to live and serve in Africa. We experience the hope of Christ and the power of the resurrection in our lives.

We are so thankful for wonderful memories during these Easter celebrations. You don't see many chocolate bunnies in Kenya, but our children still hunt for Easter eggs. On our first Easter in Kenya, we had gone camping with another international family on the Northern ridges of Mount Kenya. On Easter morning we had a small Easter service, reading from the Gospels, singing and praying together.

After the service, our kids searched for plastic candy-filled eggs among the mountain shrub grass and thorny bush. By the time they had finished, we had drawn a group of four or five curious Kalenjin men working at the camp. Without missing a beat, the children explained what they were doing and asked the men to cover their eyes as they re-hid the eggs. The rest of the morning was spent in laughter as our unexpected guests hunted for eggs and shared the candy. It is an experience that we will never forget.

The risen Jesus continues to show up in unexpected ways, often in encounters that we could never have planned or expected. Unexpected joy is at the heart of the resurrection story. God appears, nothing stays the same.

**Lisa Lohnes**

Corresponding Secretary for UBWMU/ABW

## GO!

This is the year of "Go!" We must take a simple call "Go!" Our responsibility is to take the gospel. Going is to be our heartbeat. We have to do something! Let us push forward! **"And he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15**

**It is time to TRANSIT from "I'm coming, Lord" to "I'm going, Lord!"**

**John 4:4-42** tells us about the meeting of Jesus and the Samaritan Woman.

**John 4:3** He left Judea and **departed** again to Galilee.... In order to be able to "Go" obediently, we need to depart from certain things in our lives that holds us back all these years in our walk with Christ. It can be fear, unbelief, unforgiveness, lack of confidence in yourself, wrong choices, negative attitudes, etc. You have to **LET GO and LET GOD** take full control of your life.

**John 4:4** But He **needed** to go through Samaria. **This is a need!** It does not depend on how you feel or when or what time you favor to go. No! It's a **NEED** and you have to **GO!** It's vital, it's urgent, it's very important! A life is waiting to hear the gospel and be saved for eternity.

**John 4:7** A woman of Samaria came to **draw water**. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." Your **thirst** will always drive you to move! We must thirst for God, for His Word, for His Kingdom and for His plans in our lives. Water is vital in our lives; likewise, God is vital in our lives. He should be the first and all else comes second. Therefore **GO!** Don't be afraid of losing your life for God. Just obey His command.

**John 4:28** The woman then left her water pot ... let us **leave our past** lives behind, our past testimonies, our past praise reports, our past experiences and look forward to the new things God is going to teach and show you when you learn to obey the word **"GO"**.

**John 4:14** "...but whoever drinks of the water I give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." **You shall be filled and overflow with** His strength, His power, His love, His anointing, enabling you to do the purpose of God who created you. For you are a woman of purpose and destiny.

**GO! It's a command.** Just trust and obey.

**Amelia Gavidì**

Co-President of BWUSWP