

*“Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.”*

Matthew 3:15

## Holy Waters

A recent environmental study found that Jakarta’s rivers dump more than 2,000 tons of plastic into the Jakarta Bay every year. Indeed, most of the rivers that run through Indonesian cities are little more than open sewers. Sadly, the urban poor often have nowhere else to turn for water to bathe, wash clothing, and even cook. Even so, we can imagine Jesus joining them in this filthy water; the whole point of his baptism was to show that he entered willingly into all the sin and dirt of human life, especially among the poor.



JOHN  
CAMPBELL-NELSON

Here in rural Timor, John and Jesus would face a different problem: for much of the year, Timor’s rivers are dry, with only a few pools of stagnant water where village women line up every morning to fill plastic containers with their families’ daily water allotment. John and Jesus would have to wait until the rainy season for the baptism, and even then, they would need to wait for the floodwaters to subside. Climate change has brought more extremes of both drought and typhoons.

Global Ministries partner church, the Evangelical Christian Church of Timor (GMIT), has taken the lead in water conservation by promoting tree planting (encouraging each family to plant a tree at the time of a child’s baptism) and collecting rainwater. GMIT also promotes efforts to reduce the use of plastic and develop better systems of waste disposal. Surely an adequate supply of clean water is part of what Jesus meant by his call to “fulfill all righteousness.” (Mt. 3:15).

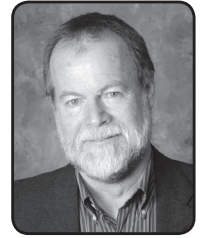
*John Campbell-Nelson serves the Evangelical Christian Church of West Timor. His appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church’s Wider Mission, WOC, OGHS and your special gifts.*

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