

in God's image

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**Subscription Rates for one Calendar year:**

US \$60.00

(Europe and North America)

US\$55.00

(Australia, New Zealand/Aotearoa, Africa, and South America)

US\$40.00

(Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Japan)

US\$17.00

(Other Asian countries and Pacific Islands)

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As a matter of policy, AWRC/*IGI* respects our contributors' writers' use of English, provided it is proper and acceptable in Asia and worldwide. From henceforth footnotes and references quoting *IGI* will use the form "*in God's image*" and not "*In God's Image*".

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**About the Cover**

Human rights are invoked and claimed by the people's struggles for justice and peace as depicted in this cover artwork by Indian artist Shashi Memuri, who hails from Kerala, India. Memuri graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from Mysore University, India, and also studied tribal art in Odisha, India. He has made invaluable contributions of his gifted and creative artworks, paintings and designs to many ecumenical and social movements, including the film industry.

**Published by**

Asian Women's Resource Centre  
for Culture and Theology  
69 Lorong Anggor  
Taman Shanghai  
58100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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**Printed by**

Vinlin Press Sdn Bhd  
2 Jalan Meranti Permai 1  
Meranti Permai Industrial Park  
Batu 15 Jalan Puchong  
47100 Puchong, Selangor, Malaysia



## Social Movements

The struggles of grassroots movements to bring about changes in structures of domination is the focus of this year-end issue of *IGI*. Themed 'Social Movements', the articles inside examine and analyse various community-based people initiated efforts to deal with concrete issues that unjustly impact the lives of people such as the LGBTIQ, immigrants and Dalits. Each writer challenges our pre-conceived notions of the "others" and widens our understanding of what it means to be a Christian in a variety of social actions that seek to expand the democratic space to be inclusive of diverse voices for the well-being of all.

In the first article, **Eun-joo Lee** of Korea looks at the 2014 Sewol ferry disaster that claimed 304 lives, including young people, paying attention to the dynamic aspects of the phenomena the disaster had revealed, and the spiritual journey the Korean people walked, path by path, along with the revelation. **Shuba keerthana K.** describes the oppressive manual scavenging occupation of Dalit women as "deeply rooted modern-day slavery" in Indian society, and calls the church to stand in solidarity with this marginalised community to eradicate this inhuman practice and restore their rights and dignity. **Shannon Clarkson** details a US community's active response to an immigrant woman's deportation ordeal and likens it to the gospel story of the Syrophenician woman whose challenge turned Jesus around.

**Donald E. Messer** and **Joseph N. Goh** provide some practical theological reflections on LGBTIQ people and churches, believing that "... the time has come for churches to locate the face of God in unconventional and unfamiliar spaces." **Le Ngoc Bich Ly** examines why the Evangelical Church of Vietnam has been slow to recognise women's full participation in leadership, and shows how the unique political-religious context of Vietnam and the authoritarian leadership style of church leaders have been strong factors in this slow process. The article by **Vedha Kani Na** focuses on three voices of biblical women in relation to Jesus and his ministry in order to learn more about the significance and theology behind these narrations. **Norma Dollaga** contributes a poem "At 53" and **Elizabeth E. Castillo** writes a poetic essay "Ambush Conversation with God".

The production of this December *IGI* issue has been made possible by the joint effort of a team of dedicated individual members of AWRC while the search process is on for the new AWRC Coordinator and Publications Secretary. *IGI* records its appreciation for the voluntary work provided by Woon Yoke Heng in editing the articles, Hisako Kinukawa in co-ordinating the collection of articles and writers, Yong Ting Jin for sourcing the artwork for the cover design, and the Editorial Advisory Committee members, Hisako Kinukawa, Limala Longkumer and Eunice Novio, for their invaluable advice. *IGI* is also grateful to Clare Law for coordinating the final production work and to Indian artist, Shashi Memuri, for his contribution of his powerful artwork for the cover. Most of all, *IGI* wishes to thank all the writers for sharing their thought-provoking articles in this issue.

*IGI* Production Team