

The Kuyperian Theological Framework and Public Hospitality: A Model for Christian Political Participation in Post-Reformation Indonesia

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received 11 Februari 2026

Revised 02 Maret 2026

Accepted 21 September 2026

Keywords

Public Theology;

Abraham Kuyper;

Pancasila;

Identity Politics;

Public Hospitality.

ABSTRACT

The post-1998 Reform era in Indonesia expanded democratic space even as it intensified religion-inflected identity polarization. In this tension, Christian political engagement has often vacillated between passive apoliticism and exclusionary activism, signalling the lack of a coherent and contextually attuned public theology. This article advances Public Hospitality as a Kuyperian-inspired framework for transformative Christian participation within Indonesia's plural public life. Situated within constructive normative public theology, it employs a hermeneutical-constructive, qualitative-theological approach to integrate four foundations Kuyper's common grace and sphere sovereignty, the doctrine of Imago Dei, and the theology of exile (Jeremiah 29) into two praxis dimensions: active pluralism and institutional reform. The model affirms the theological legitimacy of interfaith cooperation and frames Christian public witness as a pursuit of love and justice. In doing so, it offers a constructive contribution to strengthening Pancasila-based democracy and advancing the bonum commune in Indonesia's plural political order.

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1. Introduction

Indonesia, with its abundant ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, is a microcosm of the world that views plurality not merely as a national asset but as the foundation of the nation's collective identity. However, this reality poses significant challenges in managing social relations and political dynamics. Following the 1998 Reform era, the opening of democratic space has brought about ambivalence: on the one hand, it has strengthened civic participation, but on the other, it has intensified polarization through identity politics and tensions in the relationship between religion and the state.

This reality of polarization is not merely a theoretical concern but a tangible empirical fact. Findings from the University of Indonesia's Political Psychology Laboratory indicate that political polarization in Indonesia has accumulated on a massive scale, both in the digital (online) sphere and in offline interactions. Professor Hamdi Muluk, as written by Muhammad Taufiq in "This Survey Reveals 3 Facts About the Types of Political Polarization Still Occurring in Indonesia," emphasizes that religion remains the largest contributing factor in this polarization structure, surpassing sentiments regarding government performance or anti-foreigner sentiments [1]. This phenomenon indicates that religion, which should serve as a moral anchor, is often instrumentalized as a dividing wall (the logic of enclosure) that erodes social cohesion within a pluralistic society.

In recent decades, the acceleration of globalization and domestic dynamics have intensified social fragmentation, deepened disparities, and sharpened the exclusion of

minority groups. In this context, identity rhetoric and exclusionary policies are not merely national issues but reflect global trends. As Pia Klemp notes, “Fortress Europe keeps cruelly raising its walls against the Global South,” indicating that social and political exclusion is not merely the result of internal dynamics but part of a broader humanitarian crisis, in which the logic of fencing and isolation has become an increasingly common pattern in dealing with diversity and global mobility [2]. The same logic of exclusion, albeit in different manifestations, frequently emerges in the dynamics of identity politics in Indonesia, which tends to erect dividing walls between groups. This phenomenon poses a serious challenge to maintaining social harmony and cohesion within a diverse society.

Although studies on Indonesian politics are plentiful, most remain focused on sociological approaches or power analysis. There is a gap in the literature regarding a systematic and contextual contribution of Christian theology to the Indonesian public sphere. The lack of a theological framework capable of integrating with national values often leaves Christian political participation caught between passive apoliticism and exclusive activism.

This study aims to formulate a relevant and constructive framework for Christian public theology within the Indonesian political context. The key question raised is: how can Christian theology contribute to the Indonesian political discourse without falling into exclusivism, while remaining faithful to the integrity of faith and the commitment to citizenship within the Pancasila state? In response, this article proposes a model of “Public Hospitality” as an operational form of Christian political participation rooted in the doctrines of common grace, sphere sovereignty, *imago Dei*, and the theology of exile (Jeremiah 29). Conceptually, public hospitality is understood as a theological orientation that views Christian engagement in the public sphere as a mandate to build a just and dignified coexistence.

Operationally, public hospitality is realized through two main mechanisms. First, active plurality that is, cross-identity engagement to strengthen the protection of dignity and build social trust. Second, institutional reform namely, the drive to improve governance and public policy to make them more just, by reducing majoritarian bias and strengthening structural justice. To explore these two mechanisms theologically and contextually, this article employs the following methodological approach.

2. Method

Research Methodology

This research is situated within the tradition of constructive-normative public theology, employing a qualitative-theological approach aimed at formulating a normative framework for Christian engagement in the public sphere. The social and political context is not treated as an object of empirical verification but is read as a contextual text in a dialogical relationship with biblical sources and theological traditions. Through this constructive-hermeneutical method, the doctrines of common grace, sphere sovereignty, *Imago Dei*, and the theology of exile (Jeremiah 29) are interpreted as normative sources for both evaluating and reshaping Christian political participation within the framework of Indonesia’s pluralistic democracy grounded in Pancasila.

Methodologically, this study moves from theological abstraction toward the formulation of contextual praxis through three main stages. First, a literature review is conducted on primary sources of Reformed theology, particularly Abraham Kuyper’s thought on common grace and sphere sovereignty, as well as a biblical exploration of the concepts of *Imago Dei* and the theology of exile (Jeremiah 29) as theological foundations. Second, a critical discourse analysis was applied to post-Reformation political dynamics, highlighting the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election as a reference point for understanding identity polarization and the instrumentalization of religion in the public sphere. Third, through a

contextual theological approach, a synthesis is conducted between these theological principles and the Pancasila paradigm to formulate the conceptual framework of “Public Hospitality” as an inclusive and transformative model of Christian political participation.

Secondary sources include interdisciplinary thought from figures such as Abraham Kuyper, Benyamin Intan, Christine D. Pohl, James H. Cone, and Nico Vorster, which are used to strengthen conceptual validity and ensure relevance within the discourse on public theology and pluralistic democracy.

Pancasila, Identity Politics, and Sphere Sovereignty

Indonesia occupies a unique position on the map of global political discourse through its adoption of Pancasila as a common platform for national and state life. Ontologically speaking, Indonesia is not a secular state in the sense of marginalizing religion from the public sphere, nor is it a theocratic state that institutionalizes a single dominant religion. Instead, Pancasila creates a religious public sphere, where religion serves as a vital source of moral and ethical values for social cohesion without transforming the doctrines of any specific religion into formal state law. In this model, religion is positioned as a normative anchor that shapes the national narrative, while the state is tasked with ensuring inclusivity and justice across all identities.

This “middle ground” position is theoretically capable of creating a framework for just coexistence in a pluralistic society. In practice, however, this position is dynamic and constantly tested by political and social realities. The tug-of-war between sectarian interests and rising political polarization has challenged the stability of this model. Faith communities, including Christians, are called upon to translate their religious values into an inclusive public discourse so as to remain relevant to the spirit of Indonesian identity and avoid falling into exclusivism.

In recent years, the idealism of Pancasila as a national platform has begun to erode, primarily due to electoral political practices that manipulatively exploit identity differences. Political events such as the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election served as a turning point, illustrating how religion can be instrumentalized to gain electoral advantage. Such practices not only deepen social fragmentation but also undermine the quality of democracy and blur the ethical boundaries between the realms of faith and power [3,4].

This phenomenon can be critically examined through the lens of Reformed public theology, particularly the concept of “Sphere Sovereignty” introduced by Abraham Kuyper. When Kuyper states, “In the totality of human life, God has instituted different spheres, each with its own sovereignty,” this concept emphasizes that every sphere of life including religion, politics, education, and the economy possesses its own autonomy and divine mandate, which must not be arbitrarily interfered with by other spheres [5]. When political actors use religious symbols and authority to legitimize power or win political contests, they have violated the boundaries of that mandate, blurring the line between spiritual power and pragmatic interests.

In the Indonesian context, the misuse of religion in practical politics not only undermines the integrity of faith but also creates a climate that is not conducive to political hospitality that is, openness and a willingness to accept and coexist with “the other.” If the exploitation of identity continues, the public sphere will be filled with exclusivism and mutual suspicion, distancing us from the *bonum commune*, which is the primary ideal of national life.

Thus, restoring awareness of “Sphere Sovereignty” is crucial. The state must act as a guarantor of just harmony, not as a tool for the domination of the majority group or a vehicle for identity politics. On the other hand, religious communities, including the church, must be able to formulate their public contributions with an approach that upholds inclusivity and

avoids one-sided moral domination. Within this framework, Pancasila and Sphere Sovereignty are not two opposing poles, but can synergize as ethical and theological foundations for building a just, democratic, and humane political order. This synergy paves the way for the construction of political hospitality that is not only rooted in local values but also has a solid theological foundation to address the challenges of identity-based democracy today. To clarify this foundation, the following section will outline the theological foundations that underpin inclusive and relevant Christian political participation in the context of Indonesian pluralism.

3. Results and Discussion

Theological Foundation: Toward Inclusive Political Participation

Constructive Christian political engagement in the Indonesian context requires a dogmatic foundation that is not only biblically sound but also capable of engaging in dialogue with a diverse public. This chapter outlines three main pillars underpinning a model of Christian political participation that is both inclusive and transformative: Common Grace and Sphere Sovereignty, Imago Dei, and the Theology of Exile.

Common Grace and Sphere Sovereignty. In Reformed theology, the doctrine of Common Grace, as developed by Abraham Kuyper, offers an extraordinary theological contribution in bridging the gap between the Christian faith and public life within a pluralistic society. This doctrine asserts that God, in His infinite love, bestows His grace not only upon the elect but also upon all humanity. This grace sustains the world, prevents total collapse due to sin, and enables the emergence of goodness, justice, and truth even outside the community of faith. Kuyper rejected the narrow dichotomy between the sacred and the secular, and instead affirmed that God's work is evident in science, art, law, and civil institutions that are not explicitly religious [6].

It is this common grace that opens the door to theological recognition of the value and contributions of non-Christian traditions in society. In the context of Indonesia's religious and multicultural politics, this doctrine provides a normative foundation for interfaith engagement and intergroup cooperation for the sake of the *bonum commune* (the common good). By acknowledging that God works even beyond the walls of the church, the Christian community need not withdraw into spiritual exclusivism but can instead engage actively and openly in building public civility. Moreover, recognition of the common grace serves as the foundation for engaging in dialogue on an equal and friendly footing with adherents of other religions without losing theological distinctions.

However, engagement in the public sphere requires guiding principles to prevent it from falling into sectarian hegemony or moral relativism. This is where the doctrine of "Sphere Sovereignty" becomes crucial. Kuyper asserts that God has established various spheres of life such as the family, the church, the state, education, and the economy each with its own internal structure and laws. No single sphere may claim absolute supremacy over another, for each sphere possesses authority that is "sovereign within its own sphere" (*soverein in eigen kring*) [6]. The state must not intervene in church liturgy, just as the church should not determine the state's fiscal policy. This principle affirms institutional differentiation as part of God's will for a just social order.

In practice, Sphere Sovereignty serves as a critique of two opposing yet equally problematic extremes: theocracy on one hand and radical secularism on the other. Theocracy blurs the boundaries between spheres and turns religious institutions into political rulers, which ultimately undermines individual autonomy and freedom of conscience. Conversely, extreme secularism completely expels religion from the public sphere, as if faith were a private matter that must not touch the structure of society. Both approaches disrupt social balance and disregard the complexity of God's multifaceted creation. Kuyper's doctrine

offers a theological middle ground: acknowledging the role of faith in shaping public life, while still respecting the boundaries established by the Creator [5].

Amid Indonesia's dynamic political landscape, this principle is highly relevant. In a Pancasila-based state that places "Belief in One Supreme God" as its first principle, yet also recognizes freedom of religion and diversity in the expression of faith, Sphere Sovereignty serves as an ethical principle capable of safeguarding peaceful coexistence. It enables the state to regulate social life without becoming a dogmatic instrument of any particular religion. Within this framework, the church is not called upon to dominate public discourse, but rather to serve as a witness that speaks with integrity while respecting the existence of other spheres in society.

A further implication of the integration of Common Grace and Sphere Sovereignty is the opening of space for cross-ideological and interfaith cooperation in advocating for social justice, inclusive education, environmental protection, and an economic system that upholds human dignity. Such cooperation is not a form of syncretism, but an expression of the recognition of God's active presence and His care for all of creation. When the church engages in such work, it does not lose its distinctiveness; rather, it demonstrates faithfulness to the God who sends His people into the world not to dominate, but to serve.

Thus, both the doctrines of common grace and sphere sovereignty are not only important theological legacies of the Reformed tradition but also highly useful conceptual tools for building a just and humane pluralistic society. In a global context increasingly marked by identity polarization, narrow nationalism, and threats to democracy, Kuyper's intellectual contributions become ever more significant. These doctrines teach us not to fall into exclusivism or compromise our values, but rather to be present in society as God's people who bear witness through active engagement, respect for social structures, and a willingness to build together for the well-being of all.

Imago Dei: Dignity as the Basis of Equality. In the Christian theological tradition, the concept of Imago Dei (humanity as the image of God) serves as a very strong foundation for human dignity and equality. The explicit statement in Genesis 1:26–27 that humans were created in the image of God is not merely a narrative account of creation, but an ontological declaration that profoundly shapes human identity and value. This text employs two key Hebrew terms, *tselem* (image) and *demut* (likeness), which, theologically speaking, are not limited to physical aspects but point to humanity's capacity for relationship, morality, and the representation of God in the world [7]. This understanding has been widely accepted within the Patristic and Reformed traditions, as well as in contemporary public theological discourse.

The idea that all human beings, without exception, are the Imago Dei means that every human being possesses dignity that is independent of race, social status, gender, or physical and mental condition. This dignity is intrinsic; it is not bestowed by the state or society. From this perspective, equality is not merely an ethical ideal but an ontological consequence of the fact that all human beings are reflections of the divine. Nicholas Vorster asserts that dignity within a Christian framework is not something derived from social roles or contributions, but rather a gift of creation itself. Therefore, every form of discrimination or oppression is fundamentally a form of resistance against the presence of God manifested in fellow human beings [8].

The concept of Imago Dei also possesses performative power in social and political spheres. When Martin Luther King Jr. invoked this doctrine in the American civil rights movement, he was not merely engaging in religious rhetoric but presenting a theological framework that deconstructed unjust social structures. M. Haspel notes that for King, referring to all human beings as "children of God" and "the image of God" was a way of exposing structural injustice as a collective sin that blasphemes creation itself [9]. Thus, the

theology of Imago Dei becomes a prophetic instrument that connects liturgy and politics, faith and justice.

Furthermore, the influence of Imago Dei transcends religious boundaries and extends into moral philosophy and modern legal theory. Immanuel Kant, though not explicitly referring to Christian doctrine, based his theory of human dignity on rationality and moral autonomy—elements that substantially parallel the idea of humanity as the image of God. Yechiel Barilan points out that the concept of dignity in contemporary law, particularly in the Convention on Human Rights, cannot be separated from these theological and metaphysical roots. It is here that theology and secular ethics have the potential to converge in the formulation of shared values regarding equality, rights, and justice [10].

Amid religious and cultural pluralism, Indonesia is uniquely positioned to enrich this discourse. The second principle of Pancasila, “Just and civilized humanity,” embodies an ethos aligned with the spirit of the Imago Dei. When Pancasila is interpreted through a theological lens—not to exclude but rather to broaden its spiritual and ethical foundations—the Imago Dei can offer an inclusive framework for public anthropology. This serves as a reminder that the foundation of social justice and national unity is not merely a product of political consensus, but is driven by a spiritual recognition of the sacred value of humanity. Thus, Christian theology can contribute to the construction of an integral humanity within a pluralistic society without sacrificing the particularity of one’s beliefs.

Overall, the Imago Dei is not merely a dogmatic doctrine in systematic theology, but also an ethical and political vision of how human beings should be treated in society. It forms the basis for efforts to defend the marginalized, demand a just social system, and reject the logic of exclusion based on discriminatory categories. As James Cone reminds us in his liberation theology, the degradation of human beings is not merely a moral wrong but a form of blasphemy against the Creator present in our fellow human beings [11]. Therefore, treating people with justice and equality is the appropriate response to the reality that human beings are the image of God—a recognition that not only shapes personal faith but also builds the foundation of a just and civilized society.

The Theology of Exile: Striving for the Well-Being of the City. Amid the complexities of life in a secular-pluralistic state, the major question that Christian communities continue to face is how to maintain theological fidelity without falling into isolationism or sectarian domination. A powerful source of inspiration for answering this question can be found in the prophetic call of Jeremiah 29:7: “Seek the welfare of the city where I have exiled you, and pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare is your welfare.” This verse arises from a highly relevant historical context, in which the people of Israel lived in exile in Babylon, far from their spiritual center in Jerusalem, and faced the temptation to withdraw, dwell in nostalgia, or even harbor hostility toward that foreign city.

However, God’s response to this situation was surprising: rather than withdrawing, He became actively involved. God Himself exiled His people to a foreign land, and for that very reason commanded them to love and serve the place where they lived. This is the foundation of what is known in contemporary theology as the Theology of Exile, a framework that calls believers to be a creative and faithful diaspora community in the midst of social, political, and cultural systems that are not fully aligned with the values of the Kingdom of God.

The Theology of Exile rejects two extremes: on the one hand, cultural exclusivism that flees from the world; on the other, total assimilation that erases the distinctions of faith. Instead, it calls for a form of engagement that is radical yet humble: being present in society as full citizens who strive for shalom, a Hebrew term that is far deeper than mere political peace; rather, it also points to wholeness, justice, and the abundance of life for all.

In the Indonesian context, the call of Jeremiah 29:7 takes on its own unique relevance. As a nation with ethnic, religious, and ideological diversity, Indonesia is not a Babylon in

an antagonistic sense, but rather a public sphere that calls for the critical engagement of Christians as citizens who are faithful to God while also contributing to society at large. Christian political participation, in this light, should not be motivated by sectarian interests, narrow identities, or aspirations for moral dominance. Rather, the true theological calling is to engage in politics for the sake of peace, justice, and shared progress.

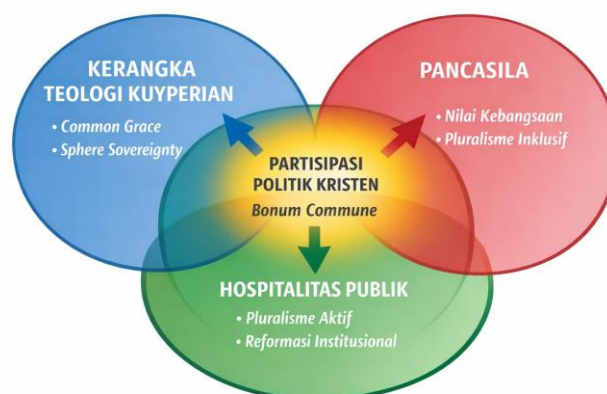
This engagement can take many forms: advocating for public policies that protect the vulnerable, fostering an ethical political culture, contributing to public education and healthcare, and building an inclusive national narrative. Behind all of this, Christians do not act for the sake of expanding power, but rather in response to the divine mandate to be salt and light in the world. Service to the city is not a political strategy, but a form of worship; not an apologetic effort, but an existential faithfulness to God who is also present and at work in the history of the nation.

It is this perspective that enriches the Christian understanding of social presence: as an eschatological community living in the tension between “already” and “not yet,” Christians are called to embody the values of the Kingdom of God within a world order that is temporary yet meaningful. The Theology of Exile provides a profound awareness that alienation is no reason for apathy, and difference is no reason for hostility. On the contrary, in acknowledging the limitations of this world, a vast space opens up for bearing witness through concrete service for the well-being of the city.

When we reflect on the three theological foundations discussed Common Grace, Imago Dei, and the Theology of Exile a normative and practical synergy emerges that charts a new direction for Indonesian Christian public theology. Common Grace teaches us to recognize God’s work outside the church and opens space for interfaith collaboration for the common good. Imago Dei instills an awareness of the unconditional dignity of the human person, serving as the foundation for advocating human rights and equality within the civil order. Meanwhile, the Theology of Exile provides us with a missional orientation, affirming that the presence of Christians in the public sphere is not to dominate, but to serve with humility and faithfulness to God’s word.

These three doctrines do not erase one’s faith identity but rather affirm it in a more mature and relevant form. Amid Indonesia’s pluralistic democracy, they pave the way for a transformative model of Christian engagement that does not lose sight of its biblical roots or constitutional integrity. On this foundation, Indonesian Christian public theology can not only endure in an era of socio-political complexity but also emerge as a moral force that champions justice, openness, and solidarity in national life.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



Conceptual Framework: A Christian Theological Response to Indonesian Politics

The discussion in the previous chapter emphasized that Christian political participation in the Indonesian context must be built upon a solid yet inclusive theological foundation. Abraham Kuyper's concepts of Common Grace and Sphere Sovereignty open space for an encounter between the Christian faith and Indonesia's pluralistic socio-political structures, while the doctrine of Imago Dei and the Theology of Exile provide moral direction and contextualized practices. However, developing a truly relevant public theology requires more than merely formulating principles; it demands a conceptual framework that can be effectively operationalized within the realms of policy, institutions, and social practice.

A number of previous studies have made significant contributions to bridging Christian theology and Indonesia's political reality. Benyamin F. Intan, in [12] for example, has developed a framework for public ethics based on Kuyper's concept of sphere sovereignty and linked it to Pancasila, but has not yet explored its application in the realm of contemporary public policy. [13] examine religious freedom through a Kuyperian perspective; however, their focus is primarily on the legal interpretation of Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution and has not addressed the theological role of common grace in shaping a welcoming public sphere. [14] utilizes sphere sovereignty to critique the state's tendency to demand ideological uniformity and political integralism, but has not systematically examined how the integration of sphere sovereignty and common grace can address the imbalance in majority-minority relations. Katianda, on the other hand, highlights the political misuse of religion through the lens of Kuyper's social philosophy, but does not go so far as to develop a constructive theological model for building solidarity in a pluralistic society [15].

From these various studies, a clear research gap emerges: there is no comprehensive analysis that integrally combines Kuyper's two key concepts sphere sovereignty and common grace into a single theoretical framework capable of simultaneously addressing issues of structural justice and civic cohesion in a society grounded in Pancasila. In fact, the synergy between these two doctrines has great potential to become a new theological foundation capable of addressing the challenge of power imbalances between groups, while also providing a basis for national solidarity rooted in God's grace not merely tolerance.

This study aims to fill that gap by proposing an integrative model based on Kuyperian theology that unites sphere sovereignty and common grace within a single framework of Christian public theology. This approach not only affirms normative pluralism as part of God's creation but also provides a practical path toward a more just, inclusive, and cohesive society. Through this integration, Christianity is expected to be present not as a dominant force, but as an agent of public hospitality that advocates for structural justice and social peace for the sake of the Indonesian nation's sustainability.

Conceptual Framework. The model proposed in this study comprises two main dimensions: (1) active plurality as an expression of hospitality, and (2) institutional reform as a structural reflection of the common good.

First, active pluralism carries a meaning that goes beyond mere tolerance. This aligns with Christine Pohl's perspective, which emphasizes that hospitality is not merely private kindness but a Christian tradition that demands a willingness to make space for those who are marginalized or considered outsiders [16]. In this context, active pluralism demands active engagement in protecting the rights of minorities, fostering sustained interfaith dialogue, and promoting equal participation in the public sphere. In the Indonesian context, the values of Pancasila particularly the second and fifth principles serve as a starting point for developing educational policies that foster a sense of citizenship rooted in respect for diversity. A citizenship education curriculum grounded in hospitality, for example, can serve

as a vehicle for shaping a new generation that is not only tolerant but also proactive in building an ethical and just pluralistic society.

Second, institutional reform aims to structurally reflect the principles of inclusivity and social justice. This includes increasing the representation of marginalized groups in the policymaking process, restructuring regulations to avoid majoritarian bias, and reforming the bureaucratic system so that it truly reflects Indonesia's social diversity. In light of "sphere sovereignty," every institution should have the autonomous space to develop without being constrained by any particular ideological dominance, while "common grace" provides the theological justification for upholding justice even beyond the realm of the church.

With these two dimensions, this framework is not only normative but also operational. It offers a contextual pathway to constructively unify Christian faith with the reality of Indonesian nationhood. Moreover, this approach holds global relevance, particularly amid rising socio-political polarization in many postcolonial nations. Indonesia's experience, with its model of active pluralism and grace-based public hospitality, can make a significant theological and ethical contribution to efforts to build a more humane world order.

Discussion: Implementation in Indonesian Public Discourse

After formulating a conceptual framework for public theology that integrates Common Grace and Sphere Sovereignty, the question that arises is: how can this model be practically applied in the context of Indonesia a pluralistic, democratic society fraught with structural challenges? This chapter outlines three main areas of implementation: strengthening spaces for interfaith dialogue, enhancing the church's role in the political education of its congregants, and active engagement in addressing critical social issues that threaten the integrity of national life.

Interfaith Dialogue as a Space for Public Discourse. In a pluralistic society like Indonesia, interfaith dialogue is not merely an effort to maintain tolerance, but a strategic space for strengthening social cohesion and building civic solidarity. The theology of Common Grace establishes the foundation that God's goodness and wisdom can be found within different faith communities. Thus, Christians need not approach other communities with a defensive or domineering attitude, but rather with active openness and humility.

Through equal and sustained dialogue, public issues such as social justice, education, natural resource management, and the ethics of governance can become points of ethical convergence among religious groups. Within this framework, the Church is called to serve as a facilitator of dialogue that prioritizes theological hospitality that is, the willingness to listen, understand, and walk together in the pursuit of the common good (*bonum commune*).

Participation in interfaith forums such as the FKUB (Forum for Religious Harmony), local community-based initiatives, and joint advocacy on public policy are concrete expressions of public theology that thrive in a multicultural and multi-religious context. The key is not merely "avoiding conflict," but "building trust" through collaborative work.

Furthermore, this dialogue demands epistemological hospitality that is, a humble willingness to acknowledge that truth in the public sphere is not monopolized by any single group [16]. In the light of Common Grace, God's wisdom can shine through the narratives and experiences of other groups. With this intellectual hospitality, Christians are not merely present to impose doctrine but are willing to learn from the noble values of other religions and cultures in order to formulate shared solutions to the nation's problems. This hospitality transforms the public sphere from a battleground for truth into a laboratory for moral collaboration.

The Church's Role in the Political Education of Congregants. The church cannot remain neutral in the face of a political reality rife with inequality and manipulation. In light of the principle of Sphere Sovereignty, while the church is indeed not a political institution,

it does have a mandate to foster ethical awareness, civic responsibility, and public sensitivity among its congregation.

Political education does not mean directing the congregation's political choices, but rather equipping them with a critical theological and ethical understanding of socio-political realities. The church can facilitate public discussions, citizenship seminars, digital-political literacy training, and even the formation of "citizen forums" that connect the values of faith with public action.

Thus, the church serves as a shaper of public ethics not through dogma, but by fostering the character of citizens who think independently, act fairly, and are sensitive to social justice. In the Indonesian context, which still faces the challenges of populism and political polarization, this educational function is highly strategic for nurturing democracy from the grassroots level.

Responses to Critical Issues: Corruption, Intolerance, and Poverty. The theological framework that has been developed will lose its relevance if it is not manifested in concrete responses to the structural problems plaguing the nation. Among these issues, the three most critical are corruption, intolerance, and poverty.

First, Corruption is not merely a violation of the law but a public sin that erodes social trust and destroys the structure of justice. Within the framework of Common Grace, the church is called to foster a culture of honesty and accountability, both within the church itself and in the social engagement of its members. Liturgy, teaching, and church leadership must consistently reflect this value of integrity.

Second, Intolerance is a failure to honor the Imago Dei in others. A church that is exclusive, closed off to other groups, or tolerates hate speech in the name of faith has lost its calling as a witness to God's love in the world. In this context, the church must actively advocate for the protection of minorities, build narratives of peace, and reject an exclusivist theology of power.

Third, Structural poverty is a form of social injustice that demands a prophetic response. The Theology of Exile (Jeremiah 29:7) affirms the people's call to seek the welfare of the city, including the elimination of economic inequality. The church can play a role through the economic empowerment of congregations, ethical cooperatives, educational programs for marginalized children, and collaboration with NGOs and interfaith organizations for social intervention.

Responding to these issues is not merely a moral responsibility but a concrete expression of transformative political participation that is, public engagement rooted in love, justice, and humility, rather than in the desire to dominate or gain power.

Implementing a framework of Christian public theology in the Indonesian context requires the courage to be actively yet humbly present in the midst of national discourse. Through interfaith dialogue, liberating political education, and taking a stand on issues of structural justice, the church can become an agent of social transformation that embodies God's love in the real world. In the spirit of Pancasila and based on its theological mandate, Indonesian Christianity is called not to dominate, but to serve and to live out hospitality as an ethical-political calling in a pluralistic society.

4. Conclusion

This study has formulated a framework of Christian theological thought relevant to Indonesia's pluralistic and democratic political discourse. Through an analysis of post-Reformation socio-political dynamics and a reflection on the ontological position of Pancasila in the relationship between religion and state, this study highlights the need for Christian political participation that avoids both passive isolationism and domineering

activism. The tension between social plurality and religious exclusivism underscores the need for a theological approach that is inclusive, ethical, and contextual.

The line of argument developed in this paper affirms that the integration of two key doctrines in Abraham Kuyper's public theology Common Grace and Sphere Sovereignty can provide a robust theological framework for addressing the challenges of structural justice and civic cohesion in a Pancasila-based society. This framework is reinforced by two additional theological foundations: the Imago Dei as the basis for human equality and the Theology of Exile as a call to collectively pursue the well-being of the city.

The conceptual model proposed in this study offers two main avenues for implementation: active pluralism as an expression of public hospitality, and institutional reform as a structural reflection of Common Grace. Through interfaith dialogue, political education within the church community, and active engagement in critical issues such as corruption, intolerance, and poverty, the church can fulfill its role as an agent of social transformation. This simultaneously affirms that the Christian political presence in Indonesia must be transformative and moderate, not domineering; rooted in love and justice, not merely in political power and influence. This study makes a significant contribution to the discourse on Christian public theology, particularly in the context of a postcolonial and pluralistic nation like Indonesia. First, it fills a gap in the literature that has not yet integrated "sphere sovereignty" and "common grace" into a single, comprehensive operational framework. Second, it proposes an implementation model that is not only normative but also practical through an approach centered on hospitality and institutional reform. Third, it emphasizes that the Christian paradigm in Indonesia's public sphere must not be shaped by ambitions of moral or political domination, but rather by a spirit of service, solidarity, and a commitment to the common good.

Although this article has presented a coherent and reflective theological framework, there are several limitations worth noting. First, this research approach is normative-conceptual and has not yet tested the validity of the framework through empirical data or field studies in the context of specific church communities. Second, the discussion remains focused on the Reformed theological spectrum and has not yet extended to other Christian theological traditions (e.g., Catholic, Pentecostal, Orthodox) that also have the potential to contribute to the development of Indonesia's public sphere. For future research, it is recommended that this framework be tested through implementational case studies at the local level for example, in cities with complex interfaith dynamics or through public policy analysis involving religious communities. Additionally, comparative studies between models of Christian public theology and similar approaches in Islam, Hinduism, or indigenous religions of the Indonesian archipelago could open up spaces for inter-theological dialogue that enriches the practice of pluralism in the future.

By affirming Christianity's transformative calling in Indonesian politics, this study not only highlights challenges but also demonstrates the immense potential of a vibrant public theology one that transcends dogma to enter the realm of concrete action in building a shared civilization that is just, humane, and mutually respectful in the spirit of Pancasila.

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