

Focus on: Representative to LWF/WICAS

What Shall We Do Next?

Kyoko Tawara, Representative to LWF/WICAS

In August, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) elected Elizabeth A. Eaton, bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, as the next ELCA presiding bishop. The ELCA marked its twenty five years of ministry, and Bishop Eaton will be the first female to lead the ELCA. This is a public recognition of women's leadership, and I am looking forward to seeing how Bishop Eaton will lead the ELCA for the next six years of her term, while the church body is facing declining church membership and financial support.

The Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC) is facing similar challenges. However, women's participation in JELC decision-making is scarce both at the district and church wide levels. Even though 70% of the membership is female, and women are the major agencies for the mission and service of the church, the president of JELC Women and the district directors are not permanent voting members at the church wide assembly; they can be only observers or appointed voting members. It is crucial for the church to recognize the importance of women's perspectives and experiences when we pursue transformation of our church.

One of the goals of the LWF/WICAS 2017 Action Plan is to promote gender equality and women's leadership within the church. The LWF suggests 40% male, 40% female, and 20% youth representation at every decision making level. The LWF/WICAS aims to promote gender equality and women's leadership in its 2017 action plan. The JELC is committed to meet this standard, and WICAS requests JELC Women to discuss this issue at the next national assembly.

Didn't God create men and women as equal partners? Session three for *A Faith Reflection on Gender and Power* is "Theological Reflection on Gender." You will discover stories of women who were liberated from discrimination and oppression, being empowered, and receiving new life through Christ in scripture. This article is available at the JELC Women homepage. I encourage your women's group in the church to read and discuss this article.

ACWC (Asian Church Women's Conference)

Naomi Tajima and Keiko Renge, representatives

ACWC Day seminar: "Asian Women Moving Forward"

Date: Nov.1st Venue: Osaka Church (JELC)

Bible study by Rev. Yurie Tateishi (Salvation Army)

Date: Nov.8th Venue: Fujimichou Church in Tokyo (Church of Christ)

Bible study by Rev. Junko Tuji (Church of Christ)



NCCJ/Women's Committee

The representative switched from Noriko Sugimoto to Noriko Ishitani in August this year.

* The representative attended "Korean, Japanese-Korean and Japanese women's committees' solidarity meeting" held on June 5 to 7 in Sendai. A communiqué will be compiled focusing on human rights.

* The parties to offer the "World Day of Prayer" donations were decided.

Itsukushimi

Hisako Ishitobi

Representative for Kanto area

Akie Momiyama

Representative for Kansai area

14th Seminar

Date: Oct. 19th, Sat. Venue: Osaka Church (JELC)

Theme: Music in worship service and joy of praise

Speaker: Seiko Ii (Lecturer, Lutheran College/Organist)

Please remember in your prayer