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# The 23rd JELCW • Newsletter

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Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church Women  
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Overlying Theme: "Trust in the Lord next to Us" -- Faith, Hope and Love

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## *Scriptural Theme:*

*There are three things that remain --- faith, hope, and love --- and the greatest of these is love.*

*I Corinthians 13:13*

## **To my beloved sisters**

Rev. Naoko Kokatsu,  
Pastor,  
Sei Pauro Church



With new board members elected, the 23rd term of JELC-Women has begun. The league of churchwomen will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2028. As this year is the 87th year since its inception, I read its 75th commemorative chronicle that was published 12 years ago. There was a list of thanksgiving donations in it. I found a period when the league had stopped its operation. A note said, "interruption due to WWII (1940-1948)." I also noticed that the donation amount declined year after year from its peak of 156.90 yen at the start of this period to 58.65 yen, almost one-third, over the eight years. It was eventually suspended. After resumption, total donations increased until 1985, and then fell with some yearly fluctuations. Last year, it hit the 530,000 yen mark, the same level as 1977.

I would like to believe that JELCW always

experiences changes. Even in this situation, churchwomen have continued ministry and various aid programs both at home and abroad. Even at this time in the organization's lowest point in its 87 year history, the contribution and ministry if our organization was invaluable. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII. We would like to honor the work of JELCW even when the contributions totaled 58.65 yen, pray for peace and be a witness to the good news. As the agenda for this term includes "discussing ways to select a president," we will anticipate reviews or changes throughout JELCW with regard to its organizational structure and its programs. Yet, we must not lose sight of our purpose, which is to maintain the bond of fellowship among churchwomen and to continue the lay ministry movement. Looking back at the dark war years when our activities were restricted, how blessed we are now to be called together in the name of the Lord!

I pray that women's meetings at each church may be blessed abundantly. "Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you (Mt18: 20)." We are a flock called to stand together by the Lord.