



# Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC)

## Congregations in Kumamoto

### Rev. Hitoshi and Satoko Adachi

### ELCA Missionary and Associate

#### BLESSINGS during LENT and THANK YOU

Hitoshi and Satoko are walking their 3rd Journey of Lent in Kumamoto. For them, it is the toughest one out of the three.

Many of you know that in Kumamoto, there are short term missionaries from ELCA called J3 as their co-workers and worshiping together Sunday evening every week. Currently four J3s are serving in Kumamoto as English teachers at Lutheran Junior and High Schools. Out of four, at least three are ending their term but there are no scheduled replacements mainly because of the on-going pandemic.

Although Hitoshi and Satoko feel like it is tough, considering the suffering Jesus Christ endured on the cross, they feel joy for Jesus is and will continue pouring His Love and Mercy in difficult situations. Hitoshi and Satoko ask for your understanding regarding this short newsletter this month, thank the Lord and they appreciate your continuing prayers, thoughts, and support for Jesus' ministry in Kumamoto. And they pray for your safety, health, and peace from the crucified Lord!



#### LIVE as CHILDREN of LIGHT

##### - Hitoshi's Reflection

We are in Lent, the season when we remember the suffering of the Lord. For some reason Hitoshi began to spend his days intensely reading the four Pauline Epistles. 13 of the 27 books of New Testaments are said to be written by the apostle Paul, and 4 of them were written when he was in prison. They were specifically, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

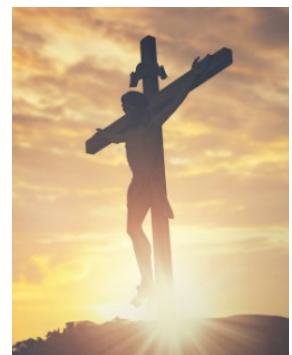
Many of the familiar verses have been rediscovered as St. Paul's writing in prison. For example, although they are not singing this year due to Corona, on Sundays during Lent, Japanese Lutheran congregations chant: "he humbled himself, and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross."

This verse was written by Paul in prison. (Philippians 2: 8). And the title "Live as Children of Light" is from the verse Ephesians 5:8.

Furthermore, from prison, St. Paul wrote a surprising verse, "I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church." The words made Hitoshi think that Paul saw the Light of Jesus on the cross, even if he was buried, but conquered death by Jesus' death. And he hopes to be brave enough to endure any further sufferings coming for the body of Christ.

At the US Presidential Inauguration on January 21st broadcasted worldwide, 22-year-old Amanda Gorman was reading her very meaningful poem. Hitoshi felt like it was a sermon rather than a poem. It began with the question, "When day comes we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade?" And at the end of the five-minute reading, it concluded with, "For there is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it."

During this Lenten journey, let's be brave enough to see the light on the cross, and remember that we are brave enough to be the light on the cross when we were baptized as Children of Light. Amen.



#### IS HTIOSHI SIMILAR TO PRESIDENT BIDEN?

Since January, Japanese TV stations have been broadcasting pictures and videos about the new, current President Joe Biden. At the Adachi's home, several children still come to play in the afternoon almost every day. Satoko has been entertaining them very well. Hitoshi tries to spend time with them also, but he can't always interact with them due to his other responsibilities. One day, since some girls could not see him, they wanted to leave a letter to Hitoshi. One girl wrote a letter saying, Attention "Adachi Biden", because to her Hitoshi looked like Joe Biden due to their shared gray hair color... Ha ha. Children often say amusing things.

