



Reflections | Fast for the Climate

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FAST FOR THE CLIMATE AND THE JAPANESE CONTEXT

By Yuki Yamato

Hi, this is Yuki Yamato, a member of JELC (Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church). I am happy to write a reflection about LWF's project, the Fast for Climate Justice. I joined LWF's youth Pre-Assembly and Assembly in Germany in 2010 as a youth delegate, and since then, I have been interested in what LWF and young Lutherans all over the world are concerned about, and I've wanted to find how I and Japanese young Lutherans can be involved in these projects. However, in our context, it's very difficult to find the way of that. It is because all of us are busy doing our own tasks and we don't have enough time to discuss and cope with various things.

In this situation, firstly I was very surprised that some young Lutherans joined COP19 and took important actions. Surely, news about COP19 was appeared on TV and newspaper, but I couldn't imagine some of young Lutherans, including my friends, took part in this and concerned about what they can as young Christians. When I read some articles about their actions on Facebook and LWF's youth blog, I tried to catch up with them and share it with other Japanese young Lutherans, but I couldn't. Of course, except for me, only a few know about LWF, COP19 and young Lutheran's actions there.

There are some problems in our context, Japanese young Lutherans, when concerning about the Fast for Climate Justice. First, we haven't discussed environmental problems as a Christian. When we come together, we enjoy singing songs, praying, reading the Bible, discussing, and so on, but we rarely deal with social problems, like environmental problems, racial discrimination, and poverty. For sure, after the Great East Japan Earthquake, Japanese society has faced with serious problem, how we should cope with nuclear plant and should get energy in our future. We, of course, are concerned about this, but it is not as Christian, but as Japanese. Until now, we can't find the way we connect such problems with our own faith to God.

Second, we don't have enough opportunities to know what young Lutherans all over the world do as Christian because of a language barrier. Most of Japanese young Lutherans hesitate to read reports and articles written in English, because it takes much time and even if they do that, they can't understand them well. Therefore, if I want them to get interested in what other young Lutherans do, I have to summarize some articles in Japanese. I want some Japanese young Lutherans to help me to do that, but it's difficult to find such a colleague.

The third and the biggest problem is that young Japanese are not familiar with "fasting" and "hunger". In Japan, a developed country, most of us have no problem with our daily food. Otherwise, it is often said that we throw away a lot of leftovers, which shows our ignorance about others' conditions. Of course, in Japan, there are some people who don't have their houses and get enough food every day. And we ourselves have some opportunities to provide some food and clothes for them. However, if we decide to fast for concerning about the climate justice, most of others around us don't understand what we can do through that and why we don't intend to have dinner with them.

Even in these conditions, I am still interested in and impressed by what young Lutherans all over the world are trying to do, "the Fast for Climate Justice". In addition, as Japanese, people from a developed country, we all should be aware of what is happening around the world and concerned about what we can do as a member of the world.

Therefore, first of all, I should tell other Japanese young Lutherans about this project, and then, I want them to join this. And if it is difficult for us to fast for all day, I want to

suggest we skip just one meal. It is just a small small step, but I hope this small step will be widened in our future.

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