

## Scripture

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

## "It's alright!"

The phone rings. It is from a municipal social worker. The staff gather for a meeting. "Can we prepare a room in time?" "Are we able to fully respond to the client's needs?" Questions like this fill their heads. HELP Asian Women's Shelter provides emergency shelter to people who need a safe and secure place to stay, although temporary residency is restricted to people who can climb up and down the stairs, as there is no elevator, and to people who do not have a serious illness, since there is no resident medical worker.

After verifying the arrival time of the new resident, the cook is requested to prepare an additional meal. A room is cleaned and aired, and beddings are laid out. Sometimes, the new resident arrives accompanied by a social worker in the late afternoon. Upon their arrival, a staff member confirms whether the new resident has any allergies, whether she can manage her medicine by herself and other such matters, and what name to call her by. Rules for living at HELP are explained, including bathing times, meal times, and lights-out time. With regard to outings and mobile phones, an experienced staff member discusses with the new resident what kinds of rules are required, also in consultation with the accompanying social worker, because circumstances vary from person to person. Such detailed consultation is essential to ensure that the new resident will be able to live comfortably at HELP after this. Lastly, the staff member asks, "How would you like your eggs for breakfast—sunny side up or boiled?" Most residents who have suffered DV and have had a hard life have been deprived of opportunities to make their own decisions. Therefore, no matter how trivial something may seem, the staff believe it is important for them to let each resident know, "We want to know what you wish," and that "You are free to decide for yourself."

Everyone is apt to make small blunders when living in an unfamiliar shelter. Someone might spill soup during a meal. Someone might be late for a curfew due to the trains running late. Or a child might inadvertently tear a page in a picture book. However, the staff always say to them, "It's alright." What warm words they are! It's alright to make a mistake. It's alright to mess up. Being told "it's alright" makes people think, "I'll be more careful next time." I also frequently hear staff members saying "It's alright!" to each other.

Because HELP is an emergency shelter, temporary residency is offered for up to two weeks, as a rule. Some residents leave after a few days, but others require time to proceed to their next step and ultimately stay at HELP for as many as three or even four weeks. They leave when they themselves decide they are ready to do so, through constant exchanges with their social worker.

Everyone who seeks shelter at HELP comes with only a single small bag, leaving behind everything they have cherished in their life, to flee from domestic violence. They stand at the door to their future, holding a paper bag modestly packed with donated underclothes and other basic necessities with the staff's help. It is easy to imagine that their feelings of insecurity are greater than their sense of hope. The staff gather to see them off.

"It'll be alright. Please take care."

The name of the shelter HELP stands for "House in Emergency of Love and Peace." Kyofukai members throughout Japan and the many supporters of HELP Asian Women's Shelter daily pray for love and peace for all. So, don't worry, "It's alright!"

Hiroko Matsui (HELP Asian Women's Shelter Director)



# Overview of HELP Beneficiaries in 2021

## Women Moving Slowly toward Recovery after Being Left Speechless at the Loss of a Loved One or at Becoming a Victim of Violence

In 2021, HELP provided shelter to 71 people, including 8 women of non-Japanese nationalities, 55 women of Japanese nationality, and 8 accompanying children. These residents stayed at HELP for a cumulative total of 1,486 nights (59.5% compared to last year). While their total length of stay decreased considerably compared to 2020, the total number of residents increased slightly, and a clear tendency was seen toward shorter stays. A variety of therapy programs were offered throughout the year as in the previous year. They included music therapy (four times/month), flower arrangement classes, and art and yoga programs organized with funding from the Cabinet Office Grant for Strengthening and Supporting Safety Net Programs (see page 7).

To ensure the safety of residents who are victims of domestic violence, HELP staff accompanied residents to medical facilities at a rate of 8.1% (16.1% last year) among all residents and 50.0% (53.6% last year) among non-Japanese residents. Even while society at large is encouraged to avoid close contact with others as much as possible amid COVID-19, there is still the need to provide assistance in the form of accompaniment and language assistance to non-Japanese residents.

### <Non-Japanese Women>

A total of 8 women of non-Japanese nationalities stayed at HELP in 2021, including 3 women who brought their children with them. There was a total of 4 children, all of preschool age. These women sought shelter due to domestic violence (41.7%), violence by a family member (25.0%), and homelessness (16.7%), among other reasons (16.7%). Other reasons included abandonment by a common-law husband.

Non-Japanese residents stayed at HELP for an average of 17.92 days. Their stay was close to two months shorter than last year's average of 76.75 days and the next shortest within the past five years, following 2017. This was partly because women were relatively more smoothly accepted by medium to long-term facilities than in previous years.

DV victims: Among women and child victims of domestic violence who were referred to HELP in 2021, there were women whose health deteriorated from trying to deal with their young children who longed for their father and took their anger out on their mother. Some women harbored mixed feelings about their family's decision not to leave their homes because they wished to protect their social status in Japan. Even in the same family, everyone reacts differently to violence, and this amplified the women's feelings of confusion. Yet, many moved on to an environment where they can live a stable life, owing to daily visits and intensive support from supporters such as social workers from relevant institutions, caseworkers, and staff members of Children and Family Support Centers.

Women with nowhere to go: In 2021, HELP provided temporary shelter to a woman who left her home because she could no longer make ends meet while living with her family, and a woman who sought a respite from relationship troubles at a facility. Their stay was short, but they improved both their mental and physical conditions by participating in music therapy and left HELP with a smile.

Care for residents and former residents: In 2021, small-group Christmas parties were held on three separate occasions, and spontaneous visits were made to former HELP residents several times when no pre-emergency measures were imposed. Support was also provided in the form of telephone consultations.

### HELP Asian Women's Shelter receives women and children of foreign nationalities

*Since 1990, HELP Asian Women's Shelter has operated with funding from the Tokyo Metropolitan Program for Emergency Temporary Protection of Foreign Women. We have solid experience providing shelter to women and children of non-Japanese nationalities. For inquiries about the use of HELP by non-Japanese women, please call us at 03-3368-8855 (weekdays 10:00 – 17:00).*





## <Japanese Women>

55 women of Japanese nationality stayed at HELP in 2021, including 2 who brought their children with them. More than half of them, 54.2% to be exact, sought shelter due to homelessness. The rest sought shelter due to domestic violence and violence by a family member (22.0% each), among other reasons (3.8%). As with last year, women who fled from domestic violence (from an intimate partner) or violence by a family member again accounted for more than 40% of all residents. Amid the prolonged pandemic, no decrease was seen in the numbers of women and child victims of violence. On the contrary, the situation has become even more serious, with many women thought to require considerable time to recover. On the other hand, HELP received no pregnant women in 2021.

Women who sought shelter from domestic violence (violence from an intimate partner or family member) in 2021 included an elderly woman from a rural province and a young family of mother and child who both required special care for a disability or intractable disease. There was also a woman who, upon securing her and her child's safety and holding repeated exchanges with families with children living in Tokyo, took the next step of seeking a place to stay where she could cook for herself. Yet another woman patiently waited for the right time to move to her next facility while coping with the disability that made her daily life difficult.

Homeless women who come to HELP are of various ages and backgrounds, and spend their time at HELP in diverse ways. For example, in 2021, an elderly woman with a chronic condition requiring constant medication and a woman who had been in hospital for a prolonged time spent their days at HELP mentally and physically getting back in shape. A young woman without medical insurance made regular visits to a doctor for the first time after coming to HELP, and a woman who was not good at socializing came to enjoy expressing herself by participating in various therapy programs. At the same time, there was also a woman who availed herself of HELP's support repeatedly, displaying signs of the hardships of communal living amid the ongoing tension of COVID-19.

Japanese residents stayed at HELP for an average of 21.54 days, shorter by three days compared to last year (24.4 days). Nevertheless, the average length of stay continued to be more than three weeks.

## <Telephone Consultation>

In 2021, HELP provided telephone consultation on 1,066 matters (121.1% compared to last year) to people calling from 20 countries, including Japan (29 countries last year). The increase in calls by more than 20% compared to last year was partly due to the growing demand due to the prolonged pandemic.

Calls from people of non-Japanese nationalities were regarding domestic violence, inquiries about quarantine and airport procedures when traveling abroad amid COVID-19, grievances about not being able to receive the desired services due to relevant institutions switching to remote and digital operations, and counseling for a pregnant woman who had been experiencing difficulty acquiring a status of residence due to the non-cooperation of her husband, among others. There were also calls from nearby local governments (consultation desks), foreign support organizations, and other institutions making inquiries about various support matters. For example, they inquired about pregnancy and childbirth support services that are available to foreign technical internees, and about providing shelter to women who are victims of domestic violence or women who need a stable place to stay before and after having a baby but do not have a status of residence that qualifies them for welfare.

Calls from people of Japanese nationality were mostly about the hardships of living after having suffered domestic violence or sexual abuse, as with last year. Such calls were received almost every day and showed an increasing trend. There were many first-time callers, but there were also people who had called in before, several or tens of years ago, indicating that worries over an uncertain future have diverse impacts on people's lives.

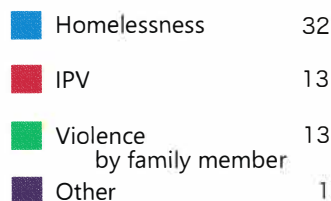
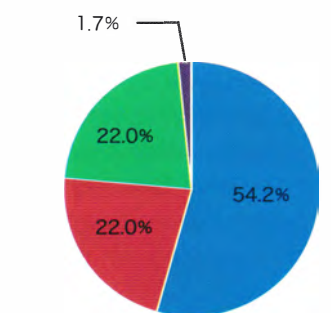


# Statistical tables for 2021

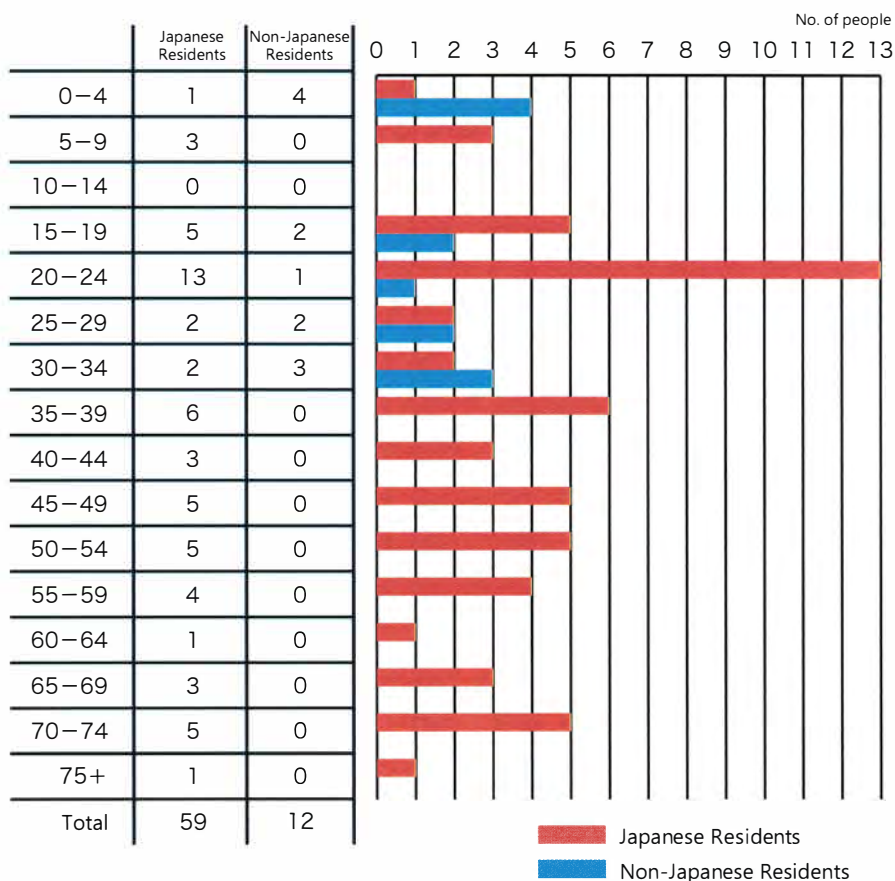
## Reasons for Seeking Shelter

(April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022)

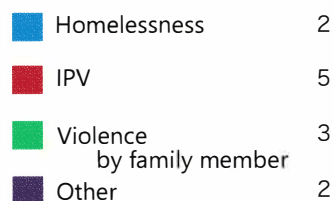
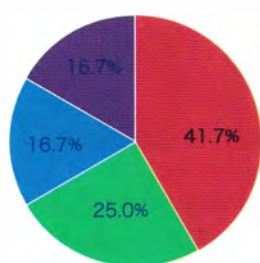
### [ Japanese Residents ]



## Age Distribution of Residents



### [ Non-Japanese Residents ]



## Number of Residents at HELP by Nationality

(April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022)

※ Including residents whose stay extended into the next fiscal year

### Number of Residents at HELP by Nationality

Nationality	Women	Accompanying Children
Myanmar	3	0
China	2	0
Congo	2	3
Nepal	1	1
Subtotal	8	4
Japan	55	4
Total	63	8

8 Non-Japanese residents women of which 3 were accompanied by children

55 Japanese residents women of which 2 were accompanied by children

### Breakdown of Non-Japanese Residents by Region

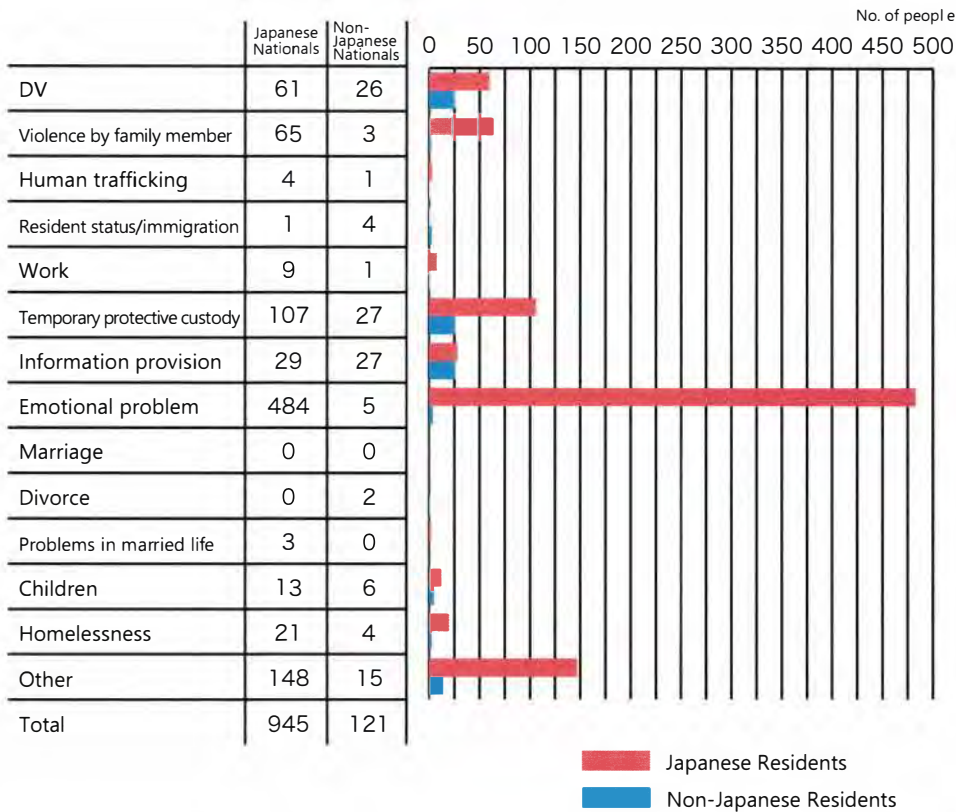
Region	No. of residents
Tokyo	10
Kanagawa	2
Total	12



## Number of Telephone Consultations

by subject

by Nationality



Nationality	No. of consultations
Japan	945
Philippines	33
Nepal	9
China	8
Thailand	7
USA	7
Myanmar	6
India	5
South Africa	3
Nigeria	3
Congo	3
UK	3
Russia	2
Vietnam	2
Brazil	2
Indonesia	2
Malaysia	1
France	1
Ukraine	1
Unknown	23
Total	1066

### Destination of Residents after Leaving HELP

Destination	Japanese Residents	Non-Japanese Residents
Welfare home	35	7
Apartment	1	3
Women's center	2	2
Home country	0	0
Home	3	0
Home of friend or acquaintance	0	0
Streets	1	0
Hospital	2	0
Live-in employment	0	0
Unknown	2	0
Undecided	7	0
Other	6	0
Total	59	12

### Avg. Length of Stay by Non-Japanese Residents

2017	16.38 days
2018	50.03 days
2019	46.46 days
2020	76.75 days
2021	17.92 days

### Total Length of Stay by Nationality

Japanese Residents	1271
Non-Japanese Residents	215
Total	1486





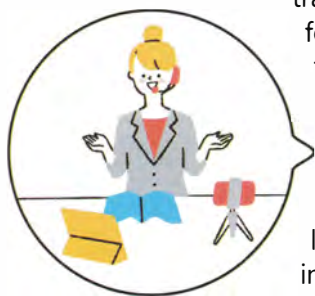
# Report on Programs Funded by the Cabinet Office Grant for Strengthening and Supporting Safety Nets

In August 2020, we completed our second year of programs funded by the Cabinet Office Grant for Strengthening and Supporting Safety Nets, and are heading into the third year with some improvements made in April.

Despite the ongoing pandemic, we have been able to offer therapy programs for HELP residents steadily without interruption last year, while taking full precautions against COVID-19. Yoga classes are popular among residents of all ages. They come to the realization that they can gain emotional stability by moving their body and controlling their breathing. Art therapy is particularly suited to residents who have fled from violence or a life full of difficulties and are in a state of confusion. The process of creating art provides them a way of releasing the feelings they cannot express in words. There was a case where a resident wished to continue receiving art therapy even after leaving HELP. She was granted her wish, and the staff at HELP took the opportunity of her participation in therapy to keep up to date on her situation and to listen to any worries and questions she faces in her everyday life. We hope that through these therapy programs, the residents of HELP will regain the power and energy they originally possess and proceed to take their next step.



We also endeavored to continue offering training and supervision by a clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, and lawyer amid the spreading pandemic, by using remote means such as Zoom to the fullest. In-person training was resumed in March when pre-emergency measures were finally lifted. Compared to online training, face-to-face interactions elicited many opinions and questions and made for lively sessions. At the same time, there was also positive feedback about Zoom training, that it can be attended conveniently from home. This advantage may have contributed to the increase in participants from last year. With regard to training themes, the emphasis this year was on dispelling the worries and doubts the staff experience in their daily support activities. In the areas of psychology and psychiatry, participants learned about emotional and mental disorders including PTSD and depression, with a focus on their mechanism, treatment, social resources, and approaches. Participants also learned about self-care techniques that could help prevent caregivers from burning out, along with practice opportunities. In the legal area, participants furthered their understanding of matters that are relevant to HELP residents, such as the Domestic Violence Protection Order, the adult guardianship system, and adjustment of debts. We also offered training aimed at providing an update of information such as on the change in the age of adulthood and other system revisions that pertain to residents in their teens.



This year, as in past years, we will continue to provide seamless support and aftercare to residents who have left HELP but make return visits for a consultation or to participate in a therapy or other program offered at HELP. When necessary, we intend to also provide outreach support by visiting the homes of residents who have left HELP. We will make ongoing efforts to enhance the quality of the support we offer our residents and to care for our staff who make that support possible. To people experiencing a difficult life due to the pandemic and to people who have survived various forms of violence, we wish to be a place of emotional rest and healing in the true sense of the word.



## HELP' s Facility Usage Fee Has Changed in April 2022

HELP Asian Women' s Shelter has offered shelter to women and children who need a temporary place to stay at fees that have remained the same for over thirty years since immediately after its founding. Please note, however, that we have recently changed some of the fees as shown below, taking the occasion of the enforcement of the Tokyo Metropolitan Ordinance Concerning Free and Low-budget Lodging Facilities.

### ***Lodging fee (room charge)***

Single person	1,790 yen/day	53,700 yen/month
2-person family	2,130 yen/day	64,000 yen/month
3 to 5-person family	2,320 yen/day	69,800 yen/month

### ***Meal expenses (per meal)***

Breakfast	Adults 400 yen (Children 300 yen)
Lunch	Adults 600 yen (Children 400 yen)
Dinner	Adults 800 yen (Children 600 yen)

In cases where shelter is sought at HELP under a temporary protective custody agreement with a prefectural Women' s Consultation Office or local municipality, usage fees shall be subject to those specified in the agreement. In all other cases, either the above fees or fees specified in a relevant entrustment agreement shall apply. Please inquire in advance for details.

The entire staff at HELP will make ongoing efforts as always to maintain a consistent quality of support and provide delicious meals and round-the-clock security so all residents can spend a peaceful time in a safe and comfortable living space. We thank you for your unwavering support of our efforts.



## We Have Changed Our Mobile Phone Rules at HELP !

From around the beginning of 2021, we began discussing whether or not our rules regarding the usage of mobile phones (social media devices) at HELP should be kept the way they are. Following a trial period that began in January 2022, we formally adopted new rules in April 2022.



Up to now, mobile phones were to be placed in the safekeeping of the facility office as a rule, and they were allowed to be used only in certain rooms during the daytime and during outings. With the change in rules, mobile phones are now to be personally managed by each resident as a rule, and they may be used in their own rooms at any time throughout the day. Detailed rules have also been established to ensure everyone' s safety.

Smartphones and other such mobile devices have become basic necessities indispensable to daily life. In line with the trend of the times, they are no longer simply a means of communication. Through repeated discussion, we sought a good balance between protecting our residents' rights and avoiding risks, but we may make changes again as necessary. Perhaps our greatest "concern," however, is that our minds cannot keep up with the slew of new devices, not to mention smartphones, that are appearing on the market one after another!

Even in a shelter, and because we are a shelter, we must ensure both freedom and safety.

Our discussion toward realizing this shall continue. (Y.)



# HELP Asian Women's Shelter Needs Your Support !

## Maintenance Donations

We are experiencing a time when our future remains uncertain, but we hope everyone is safe and well. It is precisely because of the situation we are facing at this time that, now more than ever, we are filled with deep gratitude that we are able to continue our activities to lend a hand to women and children in need of help with your generous support.

Last year, HELP provided shelter to 71 women and children from Japan, China, Myanmar, and Congo, and received telephone consultations regarding women from 20 countries around the world. There are many women and children who have suffered abuse and violence from parents or family members or who carry within themselves a painful past and difficult present, and require our help. All of us staff at HELP will further our efforts to reach out and lend a helping hand to such people in need.

Given our difficult financial situation, however, we need your support in the form of maintenance donations to fulfill our mission. We thank you in advance for your understanding and generous consideration.

June 2022

KYOFUKAI Japan Christian Women's Organization

Mizuho Iida, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Hiroko Matsui, Executive Director and HELP Asian Women's Shelter Director



**Please send your donation to :**  
**Post Office Account : 00110 - 5 - 188775**  
**Account Name : 女性の家 HELP (Josei no ie HELP)**

## Goods Donations

When we pass on items of daily necessity to our residents at HELP, we do so with the wish that the giving might help women and children who have made it to our shelter after having left behind their familiar surroundings, personal relationships and much of their precious belongings, to nurture hope and the will to begin a new life. With your generous support, we will make ongoing efforts to respond to the diverse needs of each of our residents in accordance with their age, nationality, culture, etc. Your cooperation is deeply appreciated.

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are currently accepting only new, unused items.**  
**Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.**

### <Foods>

Condiments (sugar, salt, soy sauce, vegetable oil), jam, snacks, drinks (coffee, tea, cocoa, green tea, juice, creamer) \*Items that have not passed their expiry dates

### <Sundry goods>

Shampoo, laundry detergent, kitchen detergent, tissue paper, skin lotion, milky lotion, cosmetics, hand cream

### <Clothing>

For adults: Pajamas, sweat suits, socks, jackets, hooded sweatshirts, undergarments (short and long sleeved) \*Children's clothing are not accepted at present

### <Other>

Folding umbrellas, shoes, notebooks, cotton blankets, bath towels and face towels, Quo Cards (prepaid cards), gift certificates, etc.

**Please send goods donation to : KYOFUKAI**  
**2-23-5 Hyakunincho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169-0073**  
*Please specify your delivery to be made between Monday and Friday.*

### Thank you for your donation!

In 2021, we received a donation of various goods from UBS Securities Japan Co., Ltd. and BOSE Corporation, to help improve the quality of life of women and children that we support at HELP. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.