



The Konko Missions in Hawaii will fulfill Ikigami Konko Daijin's vision to embrace the world with the Konko Faith.

## KCNA/ KMH Joint Conference 2025

By Rev. Koichi Konko, Konko Mission of Honolulu



This year, I participated with my son in the Konko Churches of North America / Konko Missions in Hawaii Joint Conference, which is held once every five years. The venue was Applegate, California, about one hour from Sacramento Airport, and the schedule was from July 4 to 6. Eight church members from Hawaii participated in the entire Conference, and a couple of Aisen Shiatsu group members (Sensei Indei, a member of Konko Mission of Waipahu, is the principle of the Aisen Shiatsu School) also joined one of the programs. In total, about 85 participants gathered. Also, right before the conference, a Family Camp, Youth Camp & Young Adult Gathering, Spirituality Bridge were held at the same location, and my son and I participated in the Family Camp as well. Five years ago, a conference was scheduled to be held in Hawaii, but it was canceled due to the pandemic, so this was the first joint conference in ten years. In North America, conferences are held annually on a rotating basis, but I believe this is the first time I've participated since the joint conference in Hawaii 15 years ago. It had truly been a long time since I attended a North America-based one.

The theme this time was: "Praying—Anywhere, Anytime, for Anything." The Family Camp was also structured around this same theme. For my son, it was his first time participating in both the Family Camp and the Conference, and he was able to befriend kids his age and seemed to have a very enjoya-

ble time. This year's Family Camp had many participants—15 children from ages 4 to 12, and with guardians included, the total came to about 24 people. There hadn't been previous opportunities for my son to recite prayers in English or discuss faith with peers, so as a parent, it was a very grateful experience.

Also, Rev. Roderick Hashimoto, Chief Administrative Minister of North America, distributed the English version of the comic "The Founder of the Konko Faith: Konko Daijin Opened 'The Way of the Divine Parent and All People'" to the children, and I was impressed to see my son reading it right away. I believe I showed it to him as the English version was released, but at that time he didn't show much interest, so I think the positive atmosphere of the Family Camp had a good influence this time.

Since July 2021, I've been irregularly hosting a podcast called *Konko Talk* with Rev. Edna Mat-suoka from Wahiawa and Ms. Aimee Yasutake from Wailuku. In this show, the three of us speak for about 45–50 minutes on a single theme. Rev. Hashimoto of North America took a liking to this podcast, and from that came the idea for a panel discussion on the theme of "Prayer" at this year's conference. On the first day, there was a panel discussion (Part 1) with four ministers, and on the second day, another

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er discussion (Part 2) with four believers. There were also two breakout discussion sessions. The minister panelists were Rev. Andrew Uzunoe from Portland Church, Rev. Rodney Yano from San Francisco Church, Rev. Edna Matsuka from Wahiawa Church, and myself. For the believer panel, for some reason, I was asked to serve as the facilitator, asking the panelists various questions and about their experiences with prayer, while also sharing about the Founder's prayers and Konkokyo's prayers.

[2025 KCNA / KMH Conference - Sensei Panel](#)

[2025 KCNA / KMH Conference - Believers Panel](#)

I had the joy of reconnecting with ministers and believers I hadn't seen in a long time and also meeting new people with whom I now have ties, which made it a truly enjoyable time. I saw that North



American believers who were slightly younger than me and single at the last conference are now married with families, and their children are participating in youth and family camps. This made me realize that the faith is indeed being passed down. Among those with whom I formed new ties

were people who encountered Konkokyo online. Since this conference was also livestreamed, people who couldn't come to Sacramento were able to join via YouTube or Zoom. I was also happy to meet people who regularly listen to *Konko Talk*.

Although preparation and cleanup required many helping hands and was challenging, and although it would be difficult for the Hawaii region to organize and execute this kind of event alone every year, I truly felt thankful to be able to participate and receive blessings in this way.



## KMH Ministers' Gathering

*Presentation by Rev. Mayumi Kawai of the Konko Church of Nakano in Tokyo for the KMH Ministers' Gathering on May 29, 2025*

**PART 2 ...continued from the last issue...**

There is one more case I would like to share, though there are actually many. The next case involves a woman I'll call Ms. B. Her grandmother was a faithful believer, and her mother was also nominally faithful, though she was somewhat problematic. Because of her mother's difficult nature, Ms. B herself began seriously engaging with faith.

She faced many challenging circumstances. First, her parents divorced. She had no interaction

with her father and lived with her mother and younger sister. Her mother was the kind of person who harshly said things like, "Whose money do you think you're eating off of?" or "Get out of the house," whenever they didn't listen to her. She worked at night in entertainment businesses.

Because their financial situation was still difficult, her mother started dating a certain man. That man was married with a family of his own, yet he

nancially supported their household. Eventually, a decision was made to marry Ms. B off to that man's son—effectively forcing her into this marriage. It was truly like something out of a TV drama.

Ms. B reluctantly married the son because this man had financially supported her education, even paying her university tuition. Yet, as expected, living with someone she didn't love was extremely difficult. The worst part was when her father-in-law (who was also her mother's partner) attempted to assault her. Unable to bear this situation, she confided in her mother. Shockingly, her mother simply told her, "Endure it." It was unbelievable to me that such a terrible parent still exists in this day and age.

Unable to endure it any longer, Ms. B fled to Tokyo. She completely severed ties with her family and lived alone, supporting herself with part-time jobs. Later, she met a man, married him, and had children. After that, feeling she must return to faith, she happened to visit Nakano Church.

Even at this time, she was continually tormented by frequent phone calls from her mother, who would become hysterically angry if she didn't answer. It was very painful for her. When she became pregnant with her second child, instead of asking her mother for help, she asked me, "May I seek assistance from you?" We took care of her oldest son. She desperately wished to cut ties completely with her mother and never return home, as her mother was extremely overbearing.

Ms. B had actually remarried, but this was her current husband's first marriage. Thinking he might want a proper wedding ceremony, she prayed to Kami. Around that time, she came across a campaign on the internet: "Free wedding ceremony (venue fees) for couples who have children but never had a wedding, or for people who remarried." She asked my opinion, and I casually suggested, "Why don't you apply?" To her surprise, she actually won.

During wedding preparations, the venue staff told her, "You should write a letter of gratitude to your parents." However, she hadn't met her father since her parents' divorce, and was completely estranged from her mother, so this troubled her deeply. Her mother had also argued constantly with her own mother. Ms. B explained that since arguments between mothers and daughters ran in her family, she sincerely wished at least her own family could live peacefully. At that time, she was advised to at least write a letter to her mother, since her father's whereabouts were unknown after the divorce. Coincidentally, around then, at Nakano Church, we were reading Rev. Kawahatsu's book, "Arigato 100 Times a Day," from San Francisco, following our monthly services. In that book, there was a story about a father-son relationship repaired through the words "thank you."

Reading this, Ms. B felt, "This is Kami's way of telling me I should write a letter to my mother." She

checked this idea with me, and I agreed wholeheartedly. Thus, she decided to read the letter at the wedding ceremony.

On the day of the wedding, she invited her mother, who indeed attended. She read the letter of gratitude aloud. I myself witnessed this moment. The truly astonishing event happened the following day. Her mother called her, and Ms. B feared another hysterical conversation. However, her mother said, "You've grown up and become independent now, so I won't nag or interfere with you anymore." From that day on, her mother's constant interference and phone calls completely stopped, and her attitude changed dramatically.

Through this experience, I truly felt that the timing of Kami's work cannot be controlled by human beings. From a common-sense perspective, most people would never wish to associate again with such a terrible mother. Yet, precisely because Ms. B embraced faith, the situation resolved beautifully. Later, even her mother expressed gratitude to me for assisting her daughter during childbirth.

This is precisely what we mean by "mutual fulfillment." It isn't about Ms. B alone finding happiness; rather, it involves a world where everyone, including her mother, finds peace and happiness. Rather than specifically praying for the blessing you want, it's crucial to accept the blessing Kami wishes to give. I deeply learned how important it is to follow the sequence and timing Kami arranges.

The key point here is that it wasn't me giving instructions or directions. Instead, Kami directly worked upon the person through events. Both Ms. A and Ms. B experienced things that would normally be impossible, causing them to directly experience Kami's existence and thereby firmly establishing their faith.

The workings of the universe are not matters of logic or theory but rather actual events brought about by Kami. Thus, when we sincerely ask Kami with the humble stance of "I don't know anything," answers continue to appear. A minister's role is to accompany the believer until they fully understand themselves. There's no need for ministers to give instructions or make decisions on their behalf.

Ministers simply help believers to align their prayers. First, we say, "Let's pray in this manner," and something happens. Then we ask, "How does Kami view this? Let's pray to Kami for guidance on what we should do." By aligning their prayers in this way, their hearts and minds naturally align as well.

Furthermore, Kami's true blessings often come in the form of seemingly troublesome events, the kind that make us initially think, "Oh no, what a disaster!" Real blessings from Kami always surpass our expectations. They don't simply fulfill our human desires—they bring about results greater than anything we could have wished for.

Therefore, we must adapt ourselves to the events that Kami brings forth. It's much like surfing—you cannot move forward effectively by resisting the waves. It's important not to insist on your desired direction, but rather to naturally ride the waves Kami creates.

When I provide Toritsugi (mediation), I always listen to each believer with a fresh mind, not allowing previous impressions or feelings to linger. Strangely, this helps me naturally see the specific points each person needs to improve upon. And because changes also occur according to Kami's own timing and order, I have found it is better for mediators to do as little as possible. It is most important for believers to experience Kami personally and thereby come to their own understanding.

One day, a dentist visited our church for the first time. He asked me for guidance, saying, "There's a dental clinic for sale in Minami-Aoyama, and I'm considering buying the property."

I knew the location he mentioned because I have a family grave in Minami-Aoyama and often passed by that area. Personally, I felt, "This place isn't very good." But I'm human, so whenever I see or hear something, I naturally react at first, thinking, "I don't like this person," or "That person is beautiful." However, right after, I always remind myself, "What would Kami do?" and calm those initial thoughts.

I clearly told the dentist that my role was not like a fortune-teller who says, "You should buy this," or "You shouldn't buy that." The Kami of Konkokyo always works in ways beyond human thinking, so I cannot accurately predict outcomes. Instead, I advised him to pray, "Kami, please show me clearly whether I should buy this property or not." I assured him that Kami would certainly indicate "buy" or "don't buy" through concrete events.

While he continued praying in this manner, he ended up not purchasing the Minami-Aoyama property. Instead, Kami guided him to an excellent opportunity: a dental clinic in Kichijoji, an established practice earning about 120 million yen annually, which he could take over smoothly.

Originally from Iwate Prefecture, this dentist had no personal connections in Tokyo and was not affiliated with any Tokyo dental association. At the time, he had a practice in Nerima, but he wasn't satisfied there and was looking around various areas, including Minami-Aoyama.

While continuing his prayer—"Should I buy the Minami-Aoyama land?"—a dental materials supplier visited him. When he mentioned his interest in the Minami-Aoyama property, the supplier said, "Actually, there's a dentist who wants to sell his clinic." However, this seller was particular, stating clearly that he didn't want to sell to dentists who operated multiple clinics as side businesses for profit. But the

supplier said, "You seem earnest, doctor, so shall I introduce you?" Within that same day, introductions were made, and the negotiation proceeded swiftly.

Although considerable funds were needed, he also received financial blessings arranged by Kami. As a result, he could smoothly purchase the clinic, experiencing a marvelous blessing that he had never imagined.

However, if we try to push forward strictly by our own ideas, things often don't work out well. To buy the clinic, he needed a loan of about 50 million yen. He approached several banks but faced difficulty obtaining financing. Yet, I told him, "Initially, you had no contacts in Tokyo, yet Kami connected you to this opportunity through the dental supplier. Kami is clearly telling you to move forward. Perhaps you're simply approaching the wrong lender. There must be another lender out there. Let's try again."

Eventually, he approached Yamanashi Chuo Bank, which was seeking to expand into Tokyo. Since the dental clinic was registered as a medical corporation, the bank willingly offered him a generous loan of 80 million yen, enabling him to buy the clinic without any problems.

Through this entire experience, I clearly realized one crucial thing: this approach of advancing while relying on Kami's guidance, carefully confirming each event along the way, is universally effective—whether it's family matters, economic issues, or even complex business transactions.

Regardless of the issue, if we sincerely use this method, we will surely receive Kami's assistance. I firmly believe this. We often value traditions, thinking, "We've inherited a wonderful faith," or "There's a lineage from our predecessors." However, Konkokyo teaching itself does not specify concrete instructions, such as "Do this, and you'll receive blessings." The Founder's teachings consistently emphasize simply asking and consulting with Kami.

I frequently remind believers that asking Kami isn't limited to the altar (Hiromae) or during special prayers. Frankly, you can pray and consult Kami even while bathing, riding a train, brushing your teeth, or washing your hair, always sincerely asking, "Kami, what should I do? Please teach me."

Sometimes, I wonder what the purpose of the Founder's "Oboegaki" (memoranda) and "Oshirasegoto-Oboecho" (records of divine messages) were. They clearly document concrete events and how blessings were received after sincerely praying to Kami. They describe exactly the approach I've been sharing with you today.

Not a single entry from the Founder says, "Because I thought this way, things went exactly as I anticipated," or "My prediction was correct." Though the Founder described many events of advising believers and the outcomes, nowhere did he claim, "My own thinking was correct." This means the Founder



always lived obediently according to Kami's guidance. Similarly, I remain aware that if I lose this stance even for a moment, Kami might remove me from this role at any time.

Although my own future is uncertain, I always strive to approach Kami with this humble attitude. There's a specific instance where I deeply felt, "The Founder truly is incredible." That moment was during the governmental order for the closure of his worship place (Shinzen Tekyo). (He was ordered to stop preaching, close his altar, and prevent people from gathering.) His disciples who were toritsugi mediators like Saito Juemon and Takahashi Tomie were actively spreading his teachings, and the faith was gaining momentum when suddenly the Founder's worship place became non-functional and had to close. Amid this crisis, the Founder sat quietly alone in an inner room, continuously offering sincere prayers.

Not once did he seek help from people he knew, like the Ono family (village head), nor did he plead with authorities, saying, "I haven't done anything wrong." Instead, he simply continued to pray alone in that inner room.

He refrained from unnecessary actions, humbly praying, "Kami, I've been spreading your teachings, yet now I'm facing this difficulty. Many have followed me to share your teachings nationwide. Kami, what should I do now? Please guide me." He probably didn't even pray for wisdom to persuade the authorities directly.

Amid such sincere prayer, the divine message known as "Tenchi Kakitsuke" (Divine Reminder) emerged. In that Divine Reminder, it says, "Pray single-heartedly." This prayer isn't for personal desires like "I want money" or "I wish things were different," but rather an earnest plea asking, "Kami, what should I do?"

I used to dislike the phrase "Goshin'gan joju" (fulfillment of Kami's wish). Previously, I didn't understand clearly what fulfillment meant, feeling distant from the phrase. But my interpretation was mistaken. The true meaning is that Kami's wish for each individual be fulfilled. Realizing this made everything about this faith I've discussed today logically consistent.

I spent ten years studying the Founder's teachings at the Theological Research Center. As a habit, I always verify if my explanations align accurately with historical teachings. Doing so helped me profoundly understand what earlier teachers taught.

Initially, I didn't appreciate "Goshin'gan joju," but I finally understood it means fulfilling Kami's specific wishes for each individual. Recognizing and living according to Kami's wishes is fundamentally what this faith is about. Ministers must take an additional step: deeply understanding Kami's wishes for each believer, sometimes better than the believer

themselves. Through continued practice, ministers naturally come to realize, "Kami wishes this for this person," or "This person lacks this."

However, I don't directly instruct believers. I don't explicitly guide them toward fulfilling Kami's wish. Instead, I gently support them, helping them become ready to realize it on their own, without their even noticing my support. Yet, I constantly recognize that Kami's vision is so grand that no one can fully comprehend it. What I don't understand far exceeds what I do. True blessings lie precisely in the unknown. Therefore, it's crucial never to assume that I completely understand, but rather humbly accept Kami's actions.

Unlike Christianity or many other religions, Konkokyo's Founder is not someone who did extraordinary ascetic practices inaccessible to ordinary people. Rather, Konkokyo emphasizes recognizing one's ordinariness and limitations. Through profoundly realizing our limitations and ignorance, we encounter transcendence. This direction is entirely different, but incredibly powerful.

As mentioned before, in Konkokyo, even while brushing your teeth or chopping carrots, you can ask Kami, "How should I proceed?" The greatest beauty is that faith can permeate every aspect of daily life. As ministers, our priority should be not to get caught up in preconceived notions. We should not quickly label events as good or bad but instead patiently observe how each event connects to the next. Like assembling a jigsaw puzzle, the complete picture emerges only when each piece is connected in sequence.

The Founder said, "Since Meiji 3, I have become one with the heart of the universe," not because he achieved special powers, but because he freed himself from habits, common sense, and personal beliefs, becoming capable of seeing things neutrally. Through such clarity, he became one with the heart of the universe.

I'd like to conclude here. Thank you very much.



The poster features a red circular logo with a white character inside, set against a background of a green mountain landscape. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical manner, with the main title in large, bold letters, followed by a subtitle in a smaller, italicized font, and then the event details in a clean, sans-serif font.

**Konko Missions in Hawaii**  
**Centennial Celebration**

*100 Years of Faith: Continuing to Serve Kami and the People of Hawai'i*

**Save the Date!**

Saturday, August 15, 2026 from 11 am to 3 pm  
(At Ko'olau Ballrooms & Conference Center)

Sunday, August 16, 2026 from 10 am to 3 pm  
(Optional BBQ Picnic event at Magic Island)

# Warm Gathering Across Oceans: The 5th Konkokyo International Yatsunami Gathering

*Prepared with the assistance of AI*

The 5th Konkokyo International Yatsunami Gathering was held on Saturday, November 15, bringing together believers and friends from Hawai'i, Japan, and the continental United States. Though held on Zoom, the gathering carried a warm sense of connection, gratitude, and shared faith that bridged the physical distance between participants. The Zoom room opened at 2:30 p.m. for early attendees to chat and reconnect, creating a friendly prelude to the official program.

The gathering opened at 3:00 p.m. with welcoming remarks by emcee Edna Matsuoka, who invited participants to join the hour with open hearts and a spirit of aloha. Reverend Koichi Konko led the Tenchi Kakitsuke prayer, grounding the group in gratitude for the blessings received through Heaven and Earth. Following the prayer, Reverend Yasuhiro Yano offered an uplifting message reflecting on the meaning of faith and connection within the Yatsunami community.

An *odemashi* of the current 6th Spiritual Head, Reverend Hiromichi Konko followed, allowing participants a moment of quiet reverence before a live message from the Kyomu Sōchō, Reverend Michio Hashimoto. His words emphasized the importance of unity, sincere appreciation, and the continued practice of faith, even as communities remain separated by distance and circumstance.

One of the highlights of the gathering was the lively presentation from the Wakaba Taiko Group, introduced by Reverend Katsuyuki Kajiwarra through a pre-recorded video. Their *Yosakoi* dance and taiko performance were filled with energy and pride, showcasing the spirit of Konkokyo in a dynamic and inspiring way. The rhythmic presentation brought smiles to many faces across the Zoom screens.

The program continued with a musical offering titled "*Shinjin no Eiko*," a collaboration by Reverend Kazuhisa Shimatani of the Konko Church of Sone and several other churches in Japan and Hawaii. His video collab provided a gentle yet powerful reminder of the beauty that faith, music, and heartfelt devotion can bring into our lives.

To make this year's gathering more interactive, the planning committee introduced the **Konko Trivia Challenge**, prepared by Reverend Koichi Konko. Participants eagerly typed their answers into the chat box,

testing their knowledge of Konkokyo history and teachings. Many noted with delight that they learned new and unexpected facts about the faith—including things not found in the *Kyoten*. The trivia segment brought



laughter and surprise.

Near the end of the hour, a lively Happy Birthday *Banzai Sanshō* was presented by the Reverend Masato Kawahatsu of South San Francisco and participants then gathered for a group photo to commemorate this year's international event.

The gathering concluded at 4:00 p.m. with a closing prayer by Reverend Koichi Konko, bringing everyone back to a place of gratitude and calm reflection.

The 5th Konkokyo International Yatsunami Gathering once again demonstrated that spiritual community is not limited by geography. Through prayer, music, learning, and joyful fellowship, participants across the globe shared an uplifting hour grounded in Tenchi Kane No Kami's blessings. The event closed with warm expressions of thanks, leaving attendees looking forward to next year's gathering and the continued growth of the *Yatsunami* spirit worldwide. Thank you all for joining us.



# Practicing the *Dō*

By Rev. Edna Matsuoka, Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Hey, everybody! If you're a baseball fan, you already know the Dodgers just repeated as World Series champions, powered by MVP Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Will Smith's clutch home run. That got me thinking about something I've wondered for a long time: Why do so many Japanese athletes, artists, and creators seem to refine their craft to such an extraordinary level? What helps them reach the top so often?

I'm *not* suggesting it's something in their DNA or trying to be ethnocentric—this was just genuine curiosity.

One morning over breakfast, I asked my mom. She said, "Of course—it's because Japanese people practice the *Dō* 道. Like Ka-dō, Sa-dō, Sho-dō, Jū-dō—they all follow 'the Way.'"

That really clicked for me. In Japan, students are often encouraged to study a traditional art or martial art—Jūdō, Karate-dō, Sadō (tea ceremony), Kadō (flower arranging), Kyūdō (archery), Shodō (calligraphy), Aikidō, Nihon-buyō (traditional dance), and many others. These practices develop a person from the inside out—spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally. And when those young people grow up, whatever path they choose seems to go more smoothly because that inner foundation is strong.

There's actually a new Kyūdōjō in Kaimukī that really caught my attention. It's a bit far from Central O'ahu, but if there were one closer, I'd love to learn Kyūdō—Japanese archery. What I find beautiful about Kyūdō is that the target isn't an enemy or an animal—it's more like a mirror. Your real opponent is yourself. When your mind, body, and spirit align, the arrow naturally finds its mark. I thought that was so deep.

It reminded me of a black-belt sensei who sometimes visits our karate dōjō. I'll admit—he kind of scares me! But he once told me something I'll never forget. He said it's hard to describe what we're truly meant to gain from karate, but when your energy—your *chi* or *ki*—is properly aligned, even a small five-foot woman can unbalance a six-foot man. Those words stuck with me. He also said that reaching that level takes steady, sincere practice.

In Reverend Yoshiaki Fukuda's book *Live with Faith*, the very first chapter is about sincerity. He explains that sincerity is the essence of faith—that it shows in how we walk, speak, and smile. With wholehearted sincerity, our faith naturally shines through our actions, even when we don't say a word about it.

That's the kind of person I want to become—someone whose faith quietly radiates through everything I do.

My mom pointed out that athletes like Shōhei Ōtani and Yoshinobu Yamamoto are essentially practicing *Baseball-dō*. They approach baseball with the same mindset as a martial art, putting sincerity into every action. They don't spit or litter. Ōtani is even known for discreetly picking up trash and putting it in his pocket. They're humble, caring, and respectful to everyone—even the waterboys.

Thinking about all of this made me realize I've got a long way to go in my own faith practice. But instead of feeling discouraged, I felt inspired—and grateful. The mystery I'd been wondering about for so long finally made sense to me: it's all in the *Dō* 道.

As 2025 comes to a close, I just want to say thank you. This year brought its share of challenges and blessings, but through it all, we learned, laughed, and grew together.

One thing I keep coming back to is how important it is to do small things with great love. Whether it's helping someone, offering a kind word, or simply showing up sincerely—it all matters. Every small act done with a true heart becomes part of something much bigger.

That's what the *Dō*—the Way—means to me: living each day with sincerity and care in everything we do.



# Konko Missions in Hawaii

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## KMH Mission Statement

The Konko Missions in Hawaii addresses the spiritual needs of the people of Hawaii by promoting the Konko faith through a better understanding of the life and teachings of Konko Daijin, and through the practice of Toritsugi (Divine-Mediation).

“Malamalama” is now available through e-mail!

For our devoted readers who would like to receive the “Malamalama” electronically, please let us know at [kmhcenter@konkomissionshawaii.org](mailto:kmhcenter@konkomissionshawaii.org)

For our readers who would still prefer a hard (paper) copy, please do not hesitate and let us know.

Thank you!

We welcome any and all article contributions! If you have an interesting story of faith, inspiration or have any ideas or suggestions for material you'd like to see in future issues of the Malamalama, we're all ears! Please contact us at [kmhcenter@konkomissionshawaii.org](mailto:kmhcenter@konkomissionshawaii.org).

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