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Welcome Konkokyo's 150th Anniversary Year!

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By Rev. David Yano (*Wahiawa*)

The Konko Missions in Hawaii held a Faith Enrichment Meeting on December 6, 2008 at the Konko Mission of Honolulu. A total of 26 people attended the Faith Enrichment Meeting to listen to the guest speaker, Dr. Yotaro Miyamoto, who is a Professor of Religion at the University of Kansai. His theme for the meeting was "Let's Narrate Our Own Sacred Stories." (See page 4)



He talked about the difficulty of passing on the faith to our children, along with emphasizing the importance of creating a narrative of our faith to tell our children. The creation of a narrative story allows the child to think about the importance of practicing faith in his/her daily life. Presumably it is through the narrative, that we would be able to ingrain the faith into our children.



I wondered how we could narrate our own sacred story, but after listening to Dr. Miyamoto's speech, I had a better understanding of creating one. I felt that we have to realize the importance of practicing faith in our own lives before we can actually create and relay meaningful narratives for our children. If children find no interest in the stories being told to them, they will not retain it. Furthermore, they will not make it a part of their life.

Dr. Miyamoto talked about how we have to look back at our past to see things that affected our faith. We were then told to put those important events into chronological order and create a living story that led

to the development of our faith. The activity gave me an opportunity to look back at my past and reflect upon the significant events that affected my life as well as my faith. Listening to personal recollections of the past

from familiar people would have a greater impact for me, than hearing about the past from someone I do not know. For me, the events that were of significance to my faith were marriage and parenthood. I have experienced many positive and negative things in my life, but I remember the Konkokyo

teaching read by Dr. Miyamoto which goes, "Kami will never let you have an experience which has no meaning" (*Voice of the Universe* 28). There is another teaching in Konkokyo which states, "Look forward to the future." I believe that when we look forward to the future we can reflect on our past experiences and see the meaning behind those events as blessings of practicing the faith.

The Faith Enrichment Meeting theme of creating our own narration of our sacred story to pass on the faith to our children is very much like the continuation of this year's Konko Missions in Hawaii Conference—the theme of creating our own *Rikkyo Shinden*. We should follow our *Rikkyo Shinden* (our calling) and create a sacred narrative of our faith to pass down to our children as well as others as a guide for the 150th Anniversary for Konkokyo in the year 2009.

-Memories of the Late Rev. Katsuo Yasutake-

By Rev. Mitsumasa Yasutake (Waipahu)

The late Reverend Katsuo Yasutake was my father's younger brother and also my uncle. We lived together at the Konko Church of Amagi. I'd heard as a little kid that he often used to come to our room and play with me. I don't remember that actually, but I can see it in some pictures.



Reverend Katsuo knew how to sketch very well. I remember visiting his room often, and I'd ask him to draw on the back of some newspaper ads. Then I'd try to copy what he drew. He usually drew animals, and especially elephants, which were my favorites.

Reverend Katsuo had ten nephews on the Yasutake side of his family. And I learned that I was maybe the one who was taken care of by him the most.

When Reverend Tetsuro Yasutake (who is my father) was asked to do some missionary work in Hawaii, he could not make up his mind right away. On the other hand, we thought it would be better for me to come to Hawaii first, and to start learning English for the future. I would be graduating from high school real soon.

And so I went on a long-term home stay to the Reverend Katsuo's, who had already been in Hawaii and been living in Mililani at that time. And so I was going to an ESL school at UH. This home stay would be under the conditions that I could remain in his house until my family came over. However I wonder how Reverend Katsuo and his family could accept my home stay, because as I mentioned before, since my family had not decided yet, they were not sure for how long I would continue to stay.

As it turned out, I would be there between August of 1979 and March of 1980, for six and half months. During this period I would enjoy various events, such as the 50th Anniversary of the Konko Mission of Honolulu, and of course also Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, and my birthday. The Reverend Katsuo's family treated me like one of the family. And we, the four of us, often went out to-

gether shopping, or went on guava harvests, or to the beaches, and to family get-togethers.

Reverend Katsuo helped me, but I couldn't understand English at all at that time. Since we didn't have any English conversation classes at junior high and high school in Japan, I couldn't catch on to what they say, even though I could write and read a little. He helped me to get a social security number, apply for ESL school, open a bank account, and other things. He also helped me find a dentist who could pull my wisdom teeth (that were growing out the wrong way), and find an eye doctor to give me glasses.

His relatives also treated me like one of the Reverend Katsuo's family. So, not only at his home, but also when I was invited to family parties, I could have some unique foods that I'd never eaten in Japan, such as whole-roasted pig, roasted turkeys, beef steaks as big as slippers, lobster tails, pumpkin pies, poke, lau-lau, boiled and seasoned pig feet, and much more.

And Reverend Katsuo took me to various places on the holidays. One day, he surprised me, "I'm going to collect money. Come with me?" OK. The place we went to for the collection was a US military base! And even stranger, it was a submarine that had belonged to the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force! In Japan only official naval members were allowed to board, but the captain made an exception and allowed me to get on. So I took footsteps right behind my uncle, and went



The Late Rev. Katsuo

aboard.

While he was talking with the captain and the man he was collecting money from, another crewmember showed me around the submarine. According to him, when they come to Hawaii, they go through various types of training: They run a simulation exercise by pretending that general cargo ships are enemy warships aimed by torpedoes. They also train themselves to only whisper in conversation all the time, because if they spoke normally, the enemy could pick up the sounds and attack them.

Although there are still many more episodes from Halloween or Christmas parties that I'd like to share about the late Reverend Katsuo, it's just too bad that I cannot write down all of the memories. Thank you so much for reading.

Konkokyo Kauai Gathering Held!

By Saijiro Matsuda (*Malamalama Editor*)

Wong's Restaurant in Hanapepe, Kauai was the happy site of a Faith Gathering held this past December 17. Reverend Setsuko Okuno, Head Minister of the Konko Mission of Hanapepe, and I from Honolulu, we joined in. And Kami-Sama blessed us each and every one. We had close to a dozen loyal members of the Hanapepe Church come together at Wong's for the Gathering.

As you may know, the church building in Hanapepe closed its doors back in 1994. But our Faith on Kauai has not dimmed, or dried out, or rubbed away like old paint; we've kept it bright in its glow; it still shines. For ten years now we've been holding special Gatherings of our Faith two or three times a year on Kauai to keep things kindled. And we've been doing our best to support the great legacy of the folks on Kauai who, through the inspiration of Toritsugi Mediation provided for a generation by Reverends Shoichi and Setsuko Okuno, have kept their Faith. So we've been striving to keep our torch burning on Kauai, to keep our Faith healthy and strong through Faith Gatherings.

What a joy it is to travel over to the Garden Island! I meet up with Church members in Hanapepe only 2 times a year, yet they are always best friends with Aloha. This time around can you believe it? They all showered me heavy with questions about Shoa, our baby daughter. And so I showered them back with baby pictures. "Cute! Cute! Cute!" they all beamed! So I was up on Cloud Nine pretty much of the time floating over Waiamea Canyon, it seemed. They got me spoiled to the max!

After good feelings like these at Wong's restaurant, we began the Faith Gathering. We recited together the traditional Adoration Prayer and Tenchi Kakitsuke.

Then Reverend Setsuko Okuno extended greetings: "I'm so very thankful to Kami-Sama for giving me this opportunity to meet you all again. This is truly something special. We have gone through many

hardships up to now, but it's all because the gift of life has been bestowed upon us. We run into problems as long as we live. But Konko Daijin teaches us that the divine favor depends on our own heart, joyous, peaceful, and harmonious. Hardships can be blessings in disguise as long as we keep practicing the Faith. So let's appreciate our gift of life and our faith in Kami-Sama, and express joy from our hearts, no matter what difficulties we come across!" Reverend Setsuko's greeting was inspirational!

And so now it was my turn to share a word with a mini sermon. "Past, Present, and Future with Kami" was my theme for these words. I discussed the painful loss of my mother, and then I discussed the truly wonderful joy of becoming a father: "...From these very different events – the loss of mother, the gain of parenthood – I have learned that we can live with dear people who have left us on Earth, yet live on with our children to-be. Our Konko Faith helps us link with a bridge our precious lives in the past, to the here and now, and to our future. So let's renew our Belief, and rejoice once again in our link to a Konko Continuum, of continuing blessings!"

We had lunch after this over friendly conversation, happy small talk.

The members of the Church on Kauai are spread widely around. So Reverend Okuno and I paid a visit as we could to all of those who could not be there that day. One of the members of the church was in a nursing hospital. All of the people we saw on this day throughout all of Kauai are still bright in their minds with Kami-Sama. They still keep close to the radiant teachings of the Reverends Okuno. I was moved just in listening. I bowed in awe. The Kauai Gatherings are a real inspiration. Please let us strive to continue to support the buoyant Faith of our members on Kauai. Let us strive to find a way to keep both candles, theirs and ours, brightly burning.



Let's Narrate Our Own Sacred Stories!

By Dr. Yotaro Miyamoto

Associate Professor of Religion at Kansai University

Introduction: How to bring our *keiki* to church?

First of all, let me ask you some questions. How many of you have children? And how many of you have grandchildren? So how many of you visit a Konko church with your children or grandchildren every week?



How many of you have ever received divine blessings? Have you ever thought about what the best way to thank Kami-Sama for the blessings you received? Offerings? Yes. What kind of offerings do you think Kami-Sama prefers? I think Kami-Sama prefers any offerings from our sincere heart, but especially when we offer Kami-Sama our children and grandchildren. This is not in the sense of a sacrifice, like Abraham and Isaac in the Old Testament, but in the sense of gratitude, gratitude for the prosperity of the descendents. For instance, my parents have five children, and all of them are involved with Konkokyo, including three ministers. In this religion, to offer children to Kami-Sama means to let them thank Kami-Sama by themselves.

However, it is not always easy to bring our children and grandchildren to church. It becomes more difficult as they grow up. Fortunately, I don't have such difficulty yet because my daughter is not old enough to make a decision on whether to go to church with me or to stay home and watch TV or go out with friends, and etc. But sooner or later I will run into this problem.

Why is it so difficult to bring our children to church? Why are most of them not willing to go to church? It is not only because of "freedom of religion" nor "secularization" of a modern rationalistic society, but it's also because the effective ways to pass on the Konko faith to our children don't work very well. I believe one of the most effective ways to pass on the faith is to narrate our own sacred stories to our children and grandchildren, our *keiki*. That is why I chose this topic for today.

Of course, I admit that some church activities, such as bazaars and summer camps, are quite helpful to bringing our children to a church. Those activities will be great fun for them. To be honest, I loved summer camp when I was a child. I can't forget how fantastic and exciting the campfire was. However, it is not enough, as you may know. They may go to "a" church but it does not necessarily mean that they go to church. Do you get my point? It is not same, for instance, between go to "a" school and

go to school. You can play when you go to a school, but you are supposed to learn when you go to school. To make it short, children will not go to church voluntarily if they do not have faith. And it is through listening to sacred narratives, I think, that children learn what faith is and how important it is.

What is a narrative? Why a narrative?

Now, what is a narrative and why is a narrative so important for passing on the faith? According to a dictionary, a narrative is something that is told as a story. First of all, a story is a description of an event or how something happened. All of us have experienced many things, some good and some bad. You may have had an extraordinary experience, which changes your way of life as a result. You can't help remembering the experience without wondering what it meant to you. This kind of experience requires not an explanation, or reasoning for it, but an interpretation, that is, understanding the meaning of the experience, as we are taught, "Kami will never let you have an experience which has no meaning" (*Voice of the Universe* 28).

Let me tell you a story to make the difference clear. There was a young couple who just got married. They were in the happiest time of their lives. However, when they were taking a drive on a freeway for the honeymoon, a terrible traffic accident took place and, as a result, the bridegroom was killed, while the bride was wounded and hospitalized. At the hospital, she asked a doctor why her beloved husband should pass away. The doctor explained that he died from blood loss. But she could not be satisfied with that answer. Then she asked a policeman why her dearest husband should die. The officer accounted for the accident by saying that her husband drove too fast resulting in losing control of his car. This answer did not make sense for her, either. When she was bowed down by grief, an old janitor told her that it was his fate. After some consideration, she finally accepted the answer and decided to live as a nun. The story is fiction, but we can learn something from it.

A hundred years ago, many people insisted that the 20th century should be the century of science, and that religion would be too old-fashioned. Now, living in the first decade of the 21st century, we know that science is not almighty and there are many things which cannot be reasoned by science alone. For instance, science let humanity create tremendous weapons which can destroy a whole city, but on the other hand, science could not console the grief caused by the use of those weapons. Ironically, the 20th century is now called not the "century of science" but rather the "century of war." We, having gone through the century of war, came to understand that what we really need to realize that a peaceful world comes not from knowledge, but wisdom. While knowl-

edge is transmitted by describing and explaining the “what” of a certain thing or event, wisdom is transmitted by narrating the “why” of that thing or event. In other words, the objective facts are important for explaining, but the narrative is significant for telling the truth, a subjective truth. This is the difference we can read from the aforementioned story of the bride and groom.

For thousands of years, human beings transmitted wisdom in the form of myth, and later, in the forms of philosophy and religion. Our ancestors transmitted wisdom by narration based on personal relationships. It is not wisdom to just live but wisdom to live better as seen in a famous phrase from the Christian Bible, that is; “Man shall not live by bread alone.” Do you know what follows after this phrase? It is as follows, “but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4: 4). This phrase is very implicative for us because it indicates the symbolic meaning of narrating.

Then, we should realize why Konko Daijin left so many words in the form of “*go-rikai*,” or teachings. *Go* is a polite prefix and *rikai* literally means understanding. As Konko Daijin taught again and again, we must understand what Kami-Sama requires of us and how we should live. Fortunately, thanks to pious fol-



lowers of Konko Daijin, many of his words have been transmitted to us. What’s important is that most of his words were narrated to his followers through metaphors and citing episodes from his own experiences. Because it is based on his life story, we can comprehend the divine wisdom from the bottom of our hearts and not merely see it in our minds.

Thankfully, Konko Daijin also left his autobiography, *Konko Daijin Oboegaki*, or Memoirs of Konko Daijin. It was written under the instruction of Kami-Sama starting from when Konko Daijin was in his sixties. We should consider why Kami-Sama ordered Konko Daijin to write down his experiences, because those experiences have fundamental meanings for his followers. The founder of each church in Japan as well as in Hawaii also had impressive experiences. Those experiences are significant for the members of each church. I have learned from Dr. Tamashiro’s dissertation that the founders and pioneers of the Konko religion in Hawaii had impressive experiences, too. We cannot read or listen to them without a sense of deep gratitude.

How to narrate your own sacred story

I believe you now understand why a narrative is so important for passing on our faith to our future generations. We can teach a living faith to our children only

through a living story, the story of our real experience of Kami-Sama’s blessings. Because it is a story of a divine experience, it is a sacred story. Each of us has our own sacred story because we have different divine experiences. It is you who can narrate your own sacred story in the most meaningful way.

I made an outline of how to narrate a sacred story. First of all, please pick out a few events, maybe two or three, that are most important for your faith. Then, arrange them chronologically and consider the meaning of each event. The point of consideration is how your faith changed through those events respectively. Then, try to produce a short story of your faith using the events as the plots of the story. The leading motive is how your faith has developed through the events. Finally, let’s narrate the story and tell what Kami-Sama’s favor is throughout the events.

For this process of story making, you must recall when and how your faith was established, what challenged your faith, how you overcame those challenges, and what Kami-Sama taught you through those events. This is not merely remembering what happened to you, but rather interpreting the meaning of what happened to you through each event.

However, the most important part of the process is the act of narrating because by narrating you tell your own sacred story not only to the listeners, but also to yourself. You can listen to the divine words “that proceed out of your mouth.”

My story

Now, let me tell you my own story. Because we don’t have much time, it is a short version.

1. Awakening

When I was thirteen years old, my father was killed by asthma attack. He was only thirty-nine at that time when he left his young wife as well as five children, ranging from age’s thirteen to four. He was the head minister of a Konko church after he succeeded it from the founder of the church one year before his death. When my father passed away, the church had several hundred members. However, many of them left the church after two head ministers died in less than a year. On the other hand, a few of the members remaining behind urged me to become a minister and succeed my father. As an impressive boy, I was very sad not only because I lost my father, but also because many of the members left the church just for the reason that my mother did not have enough authority to be a head minister. What I learned from this experience is that to keep true faith is quite difficult. It was though this event that enabled me to realize

the importance as well as fragility of faith.

2. Vocation

The second event which is of significance for my faith history was an *otoritsugi*-mediation by *yondai* Konko-Sama, the fourth Konko-Sama. When I was a graduate student of education, I encountered Prof. Araki at the headquarters of Konkokyo. He had studied the history of religions and taken his doctorate degree at the University of Chicago. He is now the president of Kansai University of Social Welfare, the only university whose idea of education is based on the teachings of Konko Daijin. When I first met him, he was teaching at the University of Tsukuba and he strongly advised me to study the history of religions under him. Although I was very much interested in the subject, I thought I should become a minister and help my mother. When I talked about it with my mother, she did not ask me to come back, but instead asked an *otoritsugi*-mediation of Konko-Sama. When my mother and I went to the *okek-kai*, the mediation seat, I was ready to be told to become a minister and help my mother. However, Konko-Sama said; “being a minister is an important job, but from Kami-Sama’s point of view, the work of a clerk as well as a postman, for instance, are important jobs, too. Being a researcher is the same. If you become a minister, you can be useful for your church, while if you become a student of religion, you can be useful for the *omichi*, Konkokyo. You would be better off working for Konkokyo.” This *otoritsugi*-mediation decided my life indeed. It was the vocation for me. Thereafter, I have two kinds of tension in my mind: the tension between a scholar of religion and a believer of Konkokyo. There is also a tension between being a university professor and becoming a minister in the future.

3. Mission of my own

The third and most recent important experience was an *oshirase*, or a revelation from Kami-Sama about a match. Two years ago, I was single and searching for a wife. On November 12, I attended *daisai*, the Grand Ceremony, of the Habikino church in Osaka. During the ceremony, I suddenly had a strong feeling of confidence in my mind that I would find a wife. When I came home, I found that I got an email from a lady, with whom I married three weeks later. She had no knowledge about Konkokyo when we first met. In the following year, I attended the spring *daisai* of the Habikino church with my wife to show gratitude. At the church, we met Iwamoto sensei of the Otoshima church and my wife was very impressed when talking to him. Now she asks for *otoritsugi*-mediation by Iwamoto sensei almost everyday by means of email. She is eager to seek the



Konko faith. This is one of the divine blessings that I’ve welcomed the most. We also received the blessing of the birth of our baby last year, which I had been waiting for more than twenty years.

Several years ago, I asked my mother what she prayed to Kami-Sama when she was pregnant with me. She answered that she had requested Kami-Sama to use the coming baby for Konkokyo. When I heard that, I could understand why Kami-Sama let me study religion. Since then, I have been trying to be useful for the Konko religion as much as I can. However, I also can’t help worrying about my mother’s church in Japan. But nowadays, my wife got more and more concerned about my mother as well as her church. This is another divine blessing I’ve welcomed the most.

Final remarks

Couple of decades ago, Jean-François Lyotard, a French philosopher and one of the pioneers of the theory of postmodernism, proposed that “postmodern” is the era of an “incredulity towards meta-narratives,” or grand narratives “such as the progress of history, the knowability of everything by science, and the possibility of absolute freedom.” He also insisted that we should be “alert to difference, diversity, the incompatibility of our aspirations, beliefs and desires.” I think he is right. In this century we are living in, it becomes more and more difficult to share a grand narrative; a narrative knitting a community together. It is all the more the reason of why we should try hard to share our sacred story with others. Then, the *Oboegaki* will be the grand narrative of the Konko religion, the story of the founder of a church will be that of the church, and your own story will be that of your own family, your *ohana*.

Let me end my talk with two teachings of Konko Daijin. First; “What should be the goal in practicing faith? The sick come to pray for a cure, while the healthy come to pray for a good harvest or for a prosperous business. But these goals are only temporary. When practicing faith, you must look forward to a future free of anxiety, or else your faith won’t continue. In order to free your future from anxiety, not only must divine blessings be received by you, but also it is important that you practice a faith that will be passed down to future generations” (*Voice of the Universe* 310).

And second; “A person lives for only a generation, but his or her name can live on for many. During your lifetime, do things that will have your name live on after you die... Practice faith so that young people will come up to you and say, ‘Grandfather, grandmother, please tell me some stories’” (*Voice of the Universe*, 308).

Please tell your story to your beloved *keiki*. Thank you for listening. Mahalo!

KMH Local Church News

Konko Mission of Honolulu

Autumn Grand Service: The Mochi making to offer to the altars was held on 10/11. The Autumn Grand Service was held on 10/12. We enjoyed eating the Naorai lunch together after the service.

Rev. Kikue Kodama's 11th Year Memorial Service: The 11th year memorial service for Rev. Kikue Kodama was held following the Monthly Service on 11/23.

Funeral of Rev. Katsuo Yasutake: Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake (Konko Church of Amagi, Japan) performed the funeral and 10 days service for the late Rev. Katsuo Yasutake at the Konko Mission of Honolulu on November 11. Rev. Koichi Konko had previously performed the Senrei service for the late Rev. Katsuo Yasutake at the Hosoi Garden Mortuary on 11/3.

Sunday School:

"Candle Light!" was held on 10/28. We enjoyed making wax Jack-o-lanterns.

-The meeting for the 2009 Sunday School Annual Schedule was held on 11/16.

-The Year End Children's Festival Potluck Party was held on 12/14 after the Sunday Service. We enjoyed games such as "Fruit basket" and "How Many Christmas Things Can You List." We also enjoyed ono food.

Board of Directors' Meeting was held on 12/7.

Shintokai Members Association Meeting was held on 11/30. The Birthday Sunday Celebration was also held before the meeting. We sang "Happy Birthday!" to all the members who were born in the months of October and November.

80th Anniversary Conference Committee meeting was held on 11/19.

Testimony:

-On 10/26, Ms. Minnie Fujita shared her wonderful experience of her pilgrimage tour to Japan in October to see Konko-Sama, our Spiritual Head at the Headquarters Main Worship Hall.

-On 11/2, Mr. Scott Kilousky talked about his experience at the Faith Training Institute at the Konko Church of Gardena, LA. He expressed his passion about Konkokyo.

-On 12/21, Ms. Paula Higuchi talked about the serious illness of her relative. However, she could face this with a positive heart and is feeling a lot of blessings now.

Revs. Masahiko and Sugako Yoshino went to Japan (10/24-11/9): Revs. Masahiko and Sugako Yoshino attended the Anniversary service of the Konko Church of Hirao (60th) and the Konko Church of Kunisaki (105th) in Japan. The Head Ministers of both churches are Rev. Masahiko's brothers.

Memorial Service for the Members :

The Memorial Service for the Sato family was held on 11/18.

The Memorial Service for the Fujiwara family was held on 11/30.

The Memorial Service for the Ota family was held on 12/23.

Jill Yano 1 Year Birthday Celebration:

-Members planned a 1 year old birthday celebration party for Jill Yano (the 2nd daughter of Revs. David and Megumi Yano) on 10/19. Everyone shared their smile with each other. Happy Birthday, Jill on turning 1!

Study Group:

Rev. Todd Takahashi conducted the monthly study group to deepen our Konko faith on the following days: 10/8, 11/12, and 12/10 after the 7:30 p.m. evening prayer.

Ikenobo Style Flower Arrangement Class:

-Rev. Sugako's Ikebana classes were held on 10/9, 10/16, 12/4, 12/19, and 12/30.

Konko Mission of Hilo

Church clean-up for Daisai:

Held on 11/2.

Annual Konko Daijin Taisai:

Held on 11/9. An inspiring ohanashi was delivered by Rev. Saijiro Matsuda.

Kanshasai Service:

Year End Thanksgiving service on 12/28.

Konko Mission of Waipahu

Condolence:

On 11/1, we were so sad to hear of Rev. Katsuo Yasutake's passing. He was such a kind and gentle person who loved his family and animals. He also loved music and friends and traveling with his wife Judy and visiting his son Kevin, wife Sarah. He was so happy to see his twin granddaughters when they came for the Waipahu 70th anniversary celebration in June of this year. We miss his presence at church because he saw the goodness in Kami-Sama's blessings. He fought courageously to live and endure many medical hardships with the support of his family. His funeral was held on 11/11 at the hiromae of the Honolulu Konko Mission where his friend, Yoshino Sensei talked lovingly of Kat-chan. In the presence of his family and friends, Rev. Tetsuro Yasutake, his brother, memorialized him at the 50th day service at Waipahu Konko Mission.

Retirements:

-Elaine Indei worked for 35 years or longer as a cafeteria manager at Pearl City Elementary School and celebrated her retirement in October. Her long career and

service was acknowledged by the legislature. She will continue to serve her community by supporting her husband with the activities of Aisen Shiatsu Chiryō Doin. Kudos for a job well done.

-HPC Foods Ltd. will be sorry to see Masahiko Taniguchi go. He will be retiring at the end of 2008. He has helped to grow HPC Foods as a loyal employee and sales manager. Mako also was recognized for having many years of perfect attendance which is quite an accomplishment these days.

Congratulations for your many years of service and loyalty.

Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Godaisai: The Wahiawa Church Autumn Grand Ceremony was held on 10/13. Renee Yano, age 6 (Daughter of Revs. David & Megumi Yano) danced her debut Kibimai sacred dance alongside her aunt, Rev. Edna Yano. The sermon was delivered by Rev. Roy Yasutake of the Wailuku Church, Maui.

Condolences: The late Mrs. Shizue Yamamoto passed away on 10/6. She was 93 years old. Funeral was done in the Buddhist tradition.

Fundraising: The Wahiawa Church held its Bazaar on 10/26 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Customers came from near and far. Mahalo to the people who helped make the Bazaar a great success.

HCRP Peace Prayers: The annual Peace Prayer was held at the Hawaii Gedatsu Church on 10/2 at 4 p.m. Thirteen different religious traditions and about 70 people gathered in unison to pray for world peace. Displayed at the site were about a hundred peace mugs hand-glazed by members of the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace (HCRP). Thirteen peace mugs were painted by Wahiawa Church members. Wahiawa Church also participated in the food drive.

Halloween Pumpkin Carving: Fifteen people, adults and children participated in the Halloween pumpkin carving and party on 10/30.

Bread-making: The Wahiawa Church held a cooking session on 11/30 after the regular Sunday Service. We made delicious home-made bread.

1 Year Memorial: The 1-year memorial service for the late Mrs. Hilda Yamamoto was held on 12/12. A baby grand piano had been donated to the church in her memory. Mrs. Keiko Matsuda—professional pianist (KMH Center Director's wife) came and played a couple classics by Chopin on the piano coincidentally (or well planned by Kami-Sama) on 12/14!

Recap of Blessings 2008: 2008 was filled with many blessings. The church members of Wahiawa gathered after the Sunday Service on 12/14 to write memories of 2008 on a piece of paper. The categories included blessings of: Myself, Family, School/Work, Society/World, and Things to improve on. We were each re-inspired by the blessings we received. One member noted that she was "Thankful for Konkokyo".

36th Memorial for Late Rev. Haruko Takahashi: The service to commemorate the passing of the late Rev. Haruko Takahashi was held on 12/21 at 10 a.m. Tamagushi offerings was placed before the Mitama altar. Naorai fellowship lunch was held after the service.

Volunteer Activity: The regular monthly volunteer activities at the Wahiawa General Hospital long term care facility was held at 10 a.m. on 10/17, 11/14 and 12/19, respectively mainly for Japanese speaking people.

End of the Year Service: The Wahiawa Church End of the Year Service was held on 12/28 at 9 a.m. Tamagushi offerings will be placed at the altar.

Mochitsuki: The annual New Year's Mochi pounding was held on 12/30 from 8 a.m. The sweetness of the mochi rice is enhanced as we utilize the traditional mochi-making process of the *kine* (wooden mallet) and *usu* (mortar).

Konko Mission of Hanapepe

Kauai Gathering:

Held on 10/23 in Hanapepe, and 12 members took part. Revs. Setsuko Okuno & Saijiro Matsuda flew in from Honolulu.

Konko Mission of Wailuku

On September 27, Cy Chikao Yasutake was born to Jon and Ginny Yasutake as their third child. Upon congratulating them and asking if there was a possible fourth child in the future, Jon said this was the last one while Ginny didn't comment. They now have three, very healthy boys and as their uncle, perhaps I can understand Jon's wariness to add another rascal to the family. – Roy

On November 3, we observed our Autumn Grand Service for Ikigami Konko Daijin. The keynote speaker was Rev. Saijiro 'saimin' Matsuda, Director of the Konkokyo Hawaii Center. His sermon was especially touching to us as he shared the blessings surrounding his baby girl's birth and his Mother's divine virtue.

When we think that this was the last sermon we will receive from him, we can't help but feel a little sad. However someone pointed out that no one but Kami can be sure and instead let's look forward to seeing him and his family again in the future.

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).

2009 KMH Activity Plan

2009 KMH Theme: Getting Energized through Konko Daijin

-Redefining Our Faith through the Divine Call-

1. Pilgrimage to Honbu for 150th Anniversary Ceremony
2. Ohana Gathering
3. Ohana Camp
4. Kauai Gathering
5. Faith Enrichment Meeting
6. Ministers' Gathering
7. Young Ministers' Training Workshop
8. Speech/Leadership Development Program
9. Vision Committee
10. Support for Volunteer Activity
11. Konkokyo Movie on TV
12. The Publishing of our Newsletter Malamalama

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To: