



Ohana-Gathering - Stone Painting

Reported by Rev. Edna Yano
Konkokyo Hawaii Center

Everyone brought out their artistic creativity during the stone painting activity. The Family Gathering was held on August 18, 2007. We gathered for a prayer at the Konko Mission of Honolulu first, and then we took a stroll along the lush greenery of Lili'uokalani Gardens. There we selected the river stones that met our fancy. A total of 14 people were able to participate. We were worried about the occasional downpours, but it didn't stop us from putting down our paintbrushes. Since this activity was being held as a continuation of the Ohana Camp on Maui this past summer, the theme of the gathering was "Together with Kami."

The purpose of this activity was to grasp a feeling of being together with Kami. It's not often that we are exposed to nature with our busy lifestyles that rely mainly on the latest technologies like computers and cell phones. The sounds of the rustling trees and trickling water were able to direct our hearts back to the primitive principles of nature.

With scowl lines on the foreheads of the participants—they were seriously thinking of what to paint on their stone in one hand, and their paintbrush in the other. Seven year old Nicholas Furusho of Konko Mission of Wahiawa knew exactly what to paint on all three of his stones. He proudly colored the backdrop a solid color, and then



he painted a fancy kanji character “金” to symbolize Konkokyo. It is interesting how everyone has a different way of looking at a blank canvas. Similarly, it must also be different how we perceive Kami-Sama.



After everyone was done painting, we left the stones to dry. Then we took a lunch break of many onolicious delicacies like fried rice, wiener croissants, crispy *gaugee*, pizza and donuts. After lunch the young ones gathered to play a game of dodge ball and sweated off a few calories.

Then it was time for “show and tell.” Everyone had a chance to share their work of art. They had to explain what they had painted and what inspired them. Some people, like Nicholas, painted inspiring words on their rocks. Others transformed their rocks into animals, bugs, and even food. After the show and tell, we cleaned up and headed back to the Konko Mission of Honolulu, located only a few blocks away. There, we watched the video presentation of the Ohana Camp on Maui, held in mid-June of this year.

We closed the program with an ending prayer and headed home with not only our works of art, but also divine blessings that we received by attending the Family Gathering.



Let's Keep Enriching Our Faith Together!

By Rev. Saijiro Matsuda
Konkokyo Hawaii Center Director

Our KMH, we're located in the middle of the Pacific Basin, and in the middle of the Pacific Ocean! Should we not then play the role of international counterpart for Konkokyo world propagation? We can one, contribute out here in Hawaii to the building of the Konkokyo message, which goes beyond the Japanese, or the Americans, or any 'otherans' for the salvation of humanity. We can two, nurture international human resources who will propagate our mission in the world. And we can three, encourage our membership to get involved in the art of Konko Daijin's Toritsugi-Mediation.

Now here are two items that we hope will be of interest to us all:

With the blessings of Kami-Sama, we sent Reverend Edna Yano (of our Konko Mission of Wahiawa) to the Sacred Land of Konko to develop her administrative skills, and to study human resource development programs. During her three-month stay in the heart of Konkokyo, it was wonderful to behold our Reverend Edna leaping high at this opportunity to enhance her ministerial training.

Lucky for us all, on September 8th she shared the fruits of her experience in Japan with us. We set a theme for our get-together that was entitled, "What is Virtue?" And why this? Because Reverend Edna has gone through not only administrative training, but also has lived through events in her journey to Japan that have to do with the many virtues of our Sacred Land. And so we wanted to inspire all our



members to link events she'd been a part of at the heart of Konkokyo, to events that we go through every day in our lives in our local churches.

Reverend Edna gave a wonderful presentation. She covered ground, a lot of ground. She used power point. Which got us going, really going - that's for sure. She got us all really pumped up and inspired! And we exchanged our experiences, and we shared our faith with one another, and we all went back and forth on a two-way conversational boulevard. We enjoyed all the seeking of ways to acquire worthy virtues together. At the end of our "What is Virtue?" presentation, we were more than very eager and ready to pass on our Konkokyo Faith to future generations, and in our own words. Many mahalos, Reverend Edna, and many mahalos, everyone!

And now here is the second item:

As you probably know, on October 27th we will welcome as the guest speaker to our Faith Enrichment Meeting Reverend Shinji Yamada, Director of the Konkokyo International Center. And Reverend Yamada will speak on the theme:

"Konkokyo World Propagation and KMH." Reverend Yamada has been traveling throughout the world these past few years. And he is coming over here to share with us his up-to-date information of what's going on in the world of Konkokyo, and in Konkokyo in the world.

So let us update our Konkokyo worldview, and attend this Faith Enrichment Meeting. Let's be as one in our Faith. And let us seek out the roles we can play to better fit our Faith into our lives. Let's share aloha with Reverend Yamada! I'm looking forward to seeing all of you there!



Pilgrimage to Gohonbu

Mrs. Flora Higuchi was inspired to write about Gohonbu because of Rev. Edna Yano's presentation at the Faith Enrichment Meeting.

By Mrs. Flora Higuchi
Konko Mission of Honolulu



With the blessings of Kami, I have been going to Gohonbu with Reverend Yoshino, Reverend Sugako and Keihiro for the past few years. This year was some how special, since the Yoshinos are having problems with their legs, they needed wheelchairs. On February 28, 2007 we arrived in Osaka. The next day we took the *shinkansen* to Kurashiki.

As we went to the station, Reverend Sugako ordered two wheelchairs. We had some time before the *shinkansen* arrival time. As the time came, two men came with the wheelchairs. They took us on the elevator and then to the platform, exactly where the train would stop. The service in Japan is great, they even help you on the train. As we arrived in Kurashiki it was the same thing. Two men with the wheelchairs were waiting for us. They took us all the way to the taxi stand. Then we took the taxi to Gohonbu. Gohonbu is surrounded by Konko town. Gohonbu has a huge yard covered with white pebbles. Two huge worship halls, one is used for the grand festivals that could hold about 15,000 worshippers at a time and the other one for daily use. We were blessed this day that we could give our thanks to Konko-Sama. Sometimes he is not sitting at the Gokekai. The feeling meeting Konko-Sama is something you must experience for your-



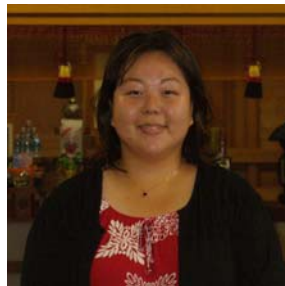
self. After that, we went to pay our respects to the founder's grave, which is situated on a hill. Today they have an elevator for the worshippers that cannot walk up the stairs. As we were walking on the hill side, we saw some cherry blossoms in bloom. Did you know that cherry blossoms need the cold and then the warm weather to bloom in full? Then we went to the book store, where we met Reverend Kazuko Tottori and Reverend Masahiko Oka and his family. It was nice to see Yoshiharu and Yoshiaki and how much they have grown. Before leaving Konko town we had the chanpon at this restaurant and bought some Konko Manjyu that is run by Konkokyo members. Let's all go on a pilgrimage to give our thanks in October 2009. Thank you.

Konkokyo 150th anniversary (Konkokyo founded 150 years ago) will be held in October 2009.

HAVE FAITH

This year marks the 15th year memorial anniversary for Rev. Kiyotaka Yasutake at Konko Mission of Wailuku on November 24, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.

By Miss Aimee Yasutake
Konko Mission of Wailuku



December 27th marks 15 years since my father, the late Reverend Kiyotaka Yasutake, passed away. As many of you are aware, he passed away due to complications stemming from Muscular Dystrophy. In the end, his liver failed, and he lost his 8-year battle with Muscular Dystrophy.

Today, I choose to write about his life, not his death. I want to write about the father I remember. Each member of my family has their own special memories of my father. Each person remembers my father in their own way. My two older brothers have memories of my father when he was still healthy and strong, before the disease took over his body. My younger brother and I only have memories of our father after he was stricken with the disease. I was probably only 5-years old when he was first diagnosed with Muscular Dystrophy, so Alvin was more like 2 or 3-years old. We all have our

own memories. I'd like to share a little bit of my memories and the lessons he has left me.

As I think about what I remember about my father, there are a lot of memories of going driving. I would always ride in the car with him to drive over to Lahaina or Kaanapali to go shopping for 'osona'e' at Nagasako, or pick-up my mother from work when her office used to be located in the Marriott. He also passed on his love of music to me. I started playing the Tenor Saxophone because that's the instrument he played. Even after his death, I continued to play, partly just to keep a part of him with me. Although I've stopped playing the Saxophone, I still love all kinds of music, and I feel like that's something I can thank my father for. He also taught me to cook. We spent many nights in the kitchen preparing dinner together.

Looking back, I realize my father has taught me a lot of valuable life lessons in the short 13-years I spent with him. He taught me to persevere, even in times of hardship. I never saw my father depressed or angry about the disease that was slowly eating away at his body. He never complained about the pain he must have been feeling everyday. He always had a very positive outlook on life. He insisted that he was living with Muscular Dystrophy,

not dying from it. Any time I am struck with hardship of challenges that seem too great for me to handle, I not only pray to Kami-Sama, but I also find myself asking for my dad to help give me the strength to get me through it. I am always reminded of how he never gave up even in adversity.

I often wonder where he found the strength to live under such trying situations. Then, I remember the most important lesson he left me. That is to always have faith. I believe it was his undying faith in Kami-Sama that helped him through all those difficult years. He always taught us to never forget

that we exist because of Kami-Sama, and that we must always give thanks for the blessings we receive. Every day is a blessing and we must be grateful for the life that we have received from Kami-Sama.

Having complete faith in Kami-Sama is something that is easier said than done. There are many times when I find myself doubting Kami-Sama. These are the times when I must remind myself to remember what my father wanted for all his children: to trust in Kami-Sama wholeheartedly.

Chad's Interview

Chad Pangorang of the Konko Mission of Wahiawa attended the Konko Churches of North America Young Adult Seminar (YAS) and Conference at Santa Barbara representing the Konko Missions in Hawaii from



August 8th through the 12th. With the theme of the conference being "Inspiration," many thoughts were brought forth. As Chad attended the seminar, he learned many new ideas of the Konko faith. Rev. Saijiro Matsuda interviewed him regarding his experience at Santa Barbara and was inspired by him.

Saijiro: Overall what was the best part of the trip?

Chad: Well, the theme; everyone was able to give their opinions for the theme "Inspiration." There were six YAS members: Carly, Brian, Miho, Steph, and Chika and I. We listened to a three hour lecture by Reverend Masako Kikekawa. It ran longer than expected, but afterwards we headed to the pier and had lunch.



The lectures were good though. Reverend Kikegawa talked about how the religion came to be. The three disciples she mentioned were: Juemon Saito, Norio Sato, and Tomie Takahashi. She focused on the three because they had the most hardships. She went in depth in talking about the disciples.

Each participant had to give a mini sermon. I

talked about work, and how work inspires me to quit (hahaha).

The public speech lecture was also a good help. We had a little discussion about public speaking, and the instructor was Erin Kiyomura since she is a teacher.

Thursday morning was my sermon. I talked about how Kami can inspire me. When I go to work, I encounter a lot of stress. Sometimes I feel like yelling at the customers like "Shut up", or "Get out of here." But I feel I just gotta relax, and take a deep breath and go to the back and say a little prayer. Everyone did a great job when they spoke.

We started to interview the KCNA youth campers. We did a little video on Inspiration, and what inspires us. We decided to get feedback from the

youth campers. It started off as a joke. We were just sitting around, and then it turned into a real video.

We focused on the founder's comic strip. And we did a little comedy show. I was Konjin. By the end of the seminar, we were all pretty cool, and we felt like we knew each other for a long time. Everybody was real cool.

Chika and Brian and Steph and Miho, they know the faith a lot and they even attend the FTI (Faith Training Institute). I want to learn a little bit more about the faith. I want to go to the FTI. The more I learn about the faith, the more I want to be a part of the faith. My family is of Catholic background. I

am the first to be introduced into this religion. I got introduced because I knew David, Rodney, and Edna then. I want to be a part of this faith. Konkoko I understand more than any religion. This religion makes a lot of sense to me.



The youth campers had some really good words to say, but it was too bad that there was not enough time to share the whole video. There were about 15 Youth campers; a lot more than the young adult seminar.

Saijiro: Wow! Happy to hear that! If there is a chance, I want to let you go to the FTI.

Chad: I was talking to Rodney the last time I was at the seminar. I felt that I should follow Rodney. To become a reverend, I know it takes a lot of steps to get into the seminary, but I heard there is a lot of work involved. Just the fact that we have to go through all of that surprises me.



Saijiro: Never mind! You can do it. I really hope you'll follow Reverend Rodney!

Chad: Before I went, I was wondering what I was going to do, what I was going to learn. But after I came back, I really learned a lot, they really explained it well to me and I understood a lot. Reverend Todd Takahashi talked a lot, but I asked Rodney to explain to me a little bit more of what Reverend Todd said. In the group discussion there was a question, if anyone was offended with what he said. According to Reverend Todd, the Founder was not the founder; he was an inspirer. The Founder in Tenchi Kane no Kami, Konkoko Daijin revealed inspired people about the wonders of Kami-Sama.

My brother Channon inspires me; he strives to be the best. When he was in the military, he was the best. Now he works as the helicopter mechanic for News 8. Even though people think he cannot do it, he tries to prove people wrong, and he has been doing that ever since, and now he has a commendable job. I don't think I can go up to him and tell him that I respect him, but one way or another he knows that I respect him.

We talked about what will inspire us in the future. I think that in general, Kami will inspire you. From day to day I think about Kami or when I go somewhere. Koichi handed me a book so I read it and it inspired me. Maybe sometimes I gotta do something, but not sure of it. But then I do a little prayer and then Kami inspires me to do the things I need to do, right.



Koichi: Rodney said that this year's conference was one of the best conferences, and it was really an inspiration. Even the conference in Portland was a great success.

Erin talked about public speaking; Reverend Kikekawa talked about the past. The disciples were inspired by the Founder's teachings. Tomie Takahashi got divorced and she went home, and she founded Konkoko Daijin and became the right hand of Konkoko Daijin and gained a lot of respect and trust from Konkoko Daijin.

Chad: I like the locations where you guys have these things. It is away from the crowd and so we can focus on the faith more. Besides young adults I made friends with some of the youth campers. They were interested about life in Hawaii. Rodney was surprised that I was talking straight English and not pidgin.



Saijiro: Thank you for sharing your experience at Santa Barbara today, Chad.

Chad: Thank you very much.

Life Story of the Founder of Konkokyo

Our Founder Ikigami Konko Daijin passed away on October 10, 1883. This article is to acknowledge him. This is an English translation by KMH of the Konko Shinbun article of January 6, 2002. (page 6-7)

The founder of Konkokyo left this world after devoting his life to Toritsugi Mediation about 120 years ago. His early life and his humble beginnings led to the “Way of Mutual Fulfillment between Parent Kami and Humanity.”

Birth and Boyhood

The founder of Konkokyo, Ikigami Konko Daijin was born as Genshichi Kandori to a farmer’s family in the village of Urami, which is now the current Okayama prefecture, Asakuchi city, Konko town, Urami on September 29, 1814.

Urami was a quiet village, just one and half miles away from Konkokyo Headquarters. As a child, his father carried him on his back and took him to shrines and temples to pray.

At the age of twelve, he was sent as an adoptive son to a couple named, Kumejiro and Iwa Kawate, in Otani village (Current Konkokyo Headquarters, Gohonbu). During this era, except for the first son, farmers’ children were sent away to work, be adopted, or used as servants of the family. After Genshichi was adopted, his name was changed to Bunjiro Kawate.

From the age of 13-14, he was sent to Mitsuemon Ono of Otani Village to practice penmanship. Mitsuemon Ono was the village head and a prestigious scholar in the district. His influence was a great asset to the founder in later years.

Youth

Death of Adoptive Father and Step-brother.

The founder was not very healthy. Looking back, he wrote an autobiography, “*Konko Daijin Oboe Gaki*.” He described how he had suffered from stomach pains. He had tried several *kyu*, or moxibustion treatments and medication, but to no avail. Despite his problems, he worked diligently, gathering firewood for a tile store and was able to accomplish more than the other workers. Also, he joined groups to work on road repairs, irrigation canals and making ponds. He soon gained the trust of

the villagers.

In 1831, a child was born to the founder’s adoptive parents, whom they named Tsurutaro. The founder was seventeen at the time. But happiness was very short-lived, as Tsurutaro suffered severe stomach pains and convulsions, which led to his death at six years of age. The grief that burdened the family was devastating. Less than a month later, the founder’s adoptive father died from acute dehydration from diarrhea following his son.

Upon the death of his adoptive father, the founder, at the age of twenty-three, inherited the family estate. His name was then changed to Akazawa. Considering that the Kawate family’s name had history behind it, the founder couldn’t use it since he was from another village. That same year, he welcomed Tose Furukawa as his wife.

As a Farmer

Continuous Tragedies

At the time when the founder was adopted, Otani village had one-hundred families, with a population of 470; a small scale village. The original inherited farmland was 0.6 acres. In twenty years time, the founder had increased his farmland to nearly double the area and was the tenth in ranking from the top of the village. During this time he renovated both the main house and barn. He put his heart and soul into this construction. The villagers respected him for his sincerity and diligence.

He was assigned to deposit the taxes to the clan office and also accompanied the village head for important governmental duties. On the other hand, misfortune had been occurring. After two and a half years of marriage, his first son, Kametaro, was born, but only lived for four years. Two months later, his second son was born. Later, he was blessed with three sons and three daughters, but his second son and first daughter died of illness. Above that, two oxen also died from illness. During those days, oxen were as significant as a member of the family. In a fifteen-year time span, having to experience seven deaths in the family was more than the founder could bear.

The founder realized that he had disrespected Kami-Sama in the construction of the home. He felt uneasy of his actions, even though he followed the days and directions to the best of his ability. Through the suffering of



his critical illness, he met Parent Kami.

In 1855, the founder's critical year arrived when he was forty-two years old. During those days, it was considered a very unlucky year for a man to turn 42. As soon as the New Year came, he started to focus on exorcism at not only local shrines and temples, but also more prominent ones such as the Kibitsu Shrine. Nevertheless, at the end of April, he felt physical discomfort and stayed in bed. He was unable to drink even warm water. He apparently suffered from a very bad case of tonsillitis. The doctor informed his family that he was critically ill and expected his death. Although they were skeptical about his recovery, relatives gathered by his bedside. His brother-in-law, Jiro Furukawa who had the status of mountain priest said that disrespecting Konjin during the construction and moving caused this illness. Although critically ill, he forced himself to face the altar and asked, "What direction did I disrespect? I am an ordinary person and was unaware of what I did to insult you, please forgive me," and apologized.

The founder took many precautions while consulting the days and directions, in which way to build. Even though there was no disrespect intended, the founder took it upon himself personally and apologized to Konjin. Konjin urged the founder to the front of the altar, he crawled to the altar, and then Konjin said, "With the sincerity of your heart, Konjin will save you." This was the turning point that started the relationship between Kami and humanity, in which Aiyo Kakeyo mutual fulfillment can be manifested throughout the world.

Toritsugi Mediation

Accepting Kami-Sama's Wish Wholeheartedly

In this critical forty second year, everything in life was done accordingly to Kami-Sama. During this time, November 15 1859, Kami-Sama requested him to pray to save people from problems through Toritsugi mediation. The founder wholeheartedly accepted the task and made his home the worship place (*Hiromae*) for mediation. This request is known as the "*Rikkyo shinden*," the Divine Call to the founder and his family in 1859 was the beginning of Konkokyo. Since the founder was doing a favor for Kami-Sama, people constantly came to him with their problems, but this created opposition and disturbances upon himself. Through this training he was able to strengthen his belief.

With the transition of the Edo era to the Meiji era, society changed drastically. During the first year of the

Meiji Era, 1868 the divine name "Ikigami Konko Daijin" was given to the founder. Also, the words "World Peace", "Well-being and Safety for All Countries", "Peace and Well-being for All People in the World" were written on banners and raised in front of the house and prayers were given daily.



As pious as the founder was, the county did not give him propagation rights and he was met with watchful eyes. Then, in 1873, the village head ordered the founder to remove the altar fixtures.

Propagating the Religion Saving Humanity

In the next room of the worship hall, the founder quietly sat facing a blank wall. Kami-Sama said to the founder, "Don't lose faith, take a rest," and thanked the founder for his service. The founder was sixty years old.

Twenty days after removing the altar, a message from Kami-Sama was received, "You shall change, and be born again as Konko Daijin." Next, the Divine Reminder, received by Kami-Sama became the focal message of Konkokyo. It goes, "Through Ikigami Konko Daijin (Toritsugi Mediator), To Tenchi Kane no Kami (Parent Kami), Pray with a single heart. The divine favor depends upon one's own joyful and peaceful heart. On this very day pray."

A new divine title has been given to the once fearful Konjin. The deity has been renamed to Tenchi Kane no Kami—or the Divine Principle and Parent of the Universe.

Approximately a month later, propagation resumed, but police reappeared and the interference continued. The founder was convinced of his mission, to help save humanity and the world. As the founder gained the divine title of Ikigami Konko Daijin, he wished to spread the faith to the world and make the divine favor clear. To this he realized how important it was to nurture his disciples.

On October 10, 1883, the founder passed away peacefully at the age of 70. The founder wrote in his "*Oshirasegoto Oboecho*", his record of revelations, from 1860 until nineteen days before his death. Concluded in his notes was the following message, "For the sake of all people and to save those who have requests of Kami, I shall be sacrificed. This is for the eternal dignity of Konko Daijin's proposition and divine virtue."



FEM with Rev. Yamada

Theme:

Konkokyo World Propagation and KMH

Date:

October 27, 2007 (Sat.) at 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Place:

Konko Mission of Honolulu Social Hall

Guest Speaker :

Rev. Shinji Yamada

Director of the Konkokyo International Center

(Former KMH Administrative Staff)



Let's update our information of Konkokyo world propagation and become more confident and proud of our religion!!

KONKO MISSIONS IN HAWAII

- HONOLULU 1728 Liliha St., Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: (808) 533-7173
Fax: (808) 521-7423
E-mail: Konko-Honolulu@hawaii.rr.com
- HILO 58 Huapala Lane, Hilo, HI 96720
Phone: (808) 935-3239
Use same # for Fax.
- WAIPAHU 94-106 Mokukaua St., Waipahu, HI 96797
Phone: (808) 677-3716
Use same # for Fax.
E-mail: kmh-waipahu@peoplepc.com
- WAHIAWA 207 Muliwai Ave., Wahiawa, HI 96786
Phone: (808) 621-6667
Use same # for Fax.
E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com
- WAILUKU 2267 Mokuhan Rd., Wailuku, HI 96793
Phone: (808) 244-4738
Fax: (808) 242-7603
- HANAPEPE c/o Rev. Setsuko Okuno
1544 Molehu Dr., Honolulu, HI 96818
Phone: (808) 423-7707

KONKO CHURCHES OF NORTH AMERICA

Administrative Office

5319 Sherbrooke St. Vancouver,
B.C., V5W 3M3, Canada
Phone: 1(800)719-5262 Fax: (604)-876-4326
E-mail: kcnaoffice@konkofaith.org
Website: <http://www.konkofaith.org/>

Konko Missions in Hawaii

Malamalama Editor: Rev. Koichi Konko

1744 Liliha Street, Suite 304, Honolulu, HI 96817

Phone/Fax: (808) 536-9078 E-mail: kmhcenter@hawaiiantel.net

Website: <http://konkomissionshawaii.org/>

Konkokyo Hour : Radio K-ZOO AM 1210 at 7: 00 am, every Sunday

To: