

2025 CHURCH SCHEDULE REMINDER



March

2	Monthly Service – Shintokai Meeting
9	Sunday Service – Rotary Hanashikai via Zoom (10:30 a.m.)
16 10:00a.m.	Monthly Service & Spring Memorial Service
23	Sunday Service Sunday Gathering
30	Church Clean-up for Spring Grand Service

Spring Memorial Service at Konkou Mission of Honolulu

We warmly invite you to join us at **the Spring Memorial Service on Sunday, March 16, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.**, where we will honor our ancestors, families, and friends. This special service provides a heartfelt opportunity to express our gratitude and respect to those who have shaped our lives and spiritual journeys.

Reflecting on the wisdom from Gorikai II Takahashi Tomie 33, "Place fertilizer at the roots of a tree, then its branches will grow lush. Respect your ancestors and parents, then you will prosper," this service is not just a ritual but a profound act of nurturing our spiritual roots and strengthening our connections. By coming together in this observance, we not only pay homage to our lineage but also reinforce the bonds within our community.

Following the service, we will gather for refreshments, allowing time for fellowship and sharing memories, further enriching our community ties. Attending this service physically not only demonstrates your respect and appreciation but also enhances the communal experience, creating a space where support and spiritual enrichment flourish.

Please mark your calendars for this meaningful event. We look forward to seeing you there, as we collectively honor our past and draw on its wisdom to enrich our present and future. Your presence will significantly contribute to the Mitama spirit and success of this gathering.

February Sermon Summaries:

February 2, 2025

In a thoughtful sermon, Rev. Koichi explored the concept of gratitude and appreciation within the practice of faith, drawing from the "Voice of the Universe" to emphasize the importance of expressing thanks as fervently as we request divine intervention. His message underscores a fundamental principle of Konkokyo: that the intensity of our gratitude should match the desperation of our requests to truly reflect a deep practice of faith.

Introduction: The Essence of Gratitude Rev. Koichi started by quoting from the "Voice of the Universe," which challenges believers to appreciate Kami's blessings with the same intensity they show when making desperate requests. He pointed out that while making requests comes easily to most people, expressing genuine gratitude tends to be more challenging. This disparity often leads to an imbalance in spiritual practice, where the act of requesting overshadows the equally important act of thanking.

Konko Talk Podcast: A Practical Approach to Faith Rev. Koichi shared insights from a recent episode of the "Konko Talk" podcast, a platform he uses to discuss various aspects of practicing faith. In the episode, he, along with Rev. Edna and Aimee, delved into the concept of 'returning to Toritsugi mediation'—a practice where one expresses gratitude to Kami-Sama after receiving blessings. This discussion highlighted the cyclic nature of faith practice: requesting blessings, receiving them, and expressing gratitude, akin to the natural processes of inhaling and exhaling, or the cycle of the seasons.

Philosophy of Yin and Yang and the Natural Order The sermon expanded on the idea of natural

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cycles and balance through the philosophy of Yin and Yang, illustrating how these principles relate to the cycles of life and death, day and night, and the changing seasons. Rev. Koichi emphasized that just as these cycles are inevitable and beyond human control, so too should our expressions of gratitude follow naturally after receiving divine blessings.

Tenchi Kakitsuke: The Guide to Faithful Living Rev. Koichi introduced the Tenchi Kakitsuke, a directive given by Kami-Sama to Konko Daijin during a challenging period marked by religious persecution. This guide serves as a reminder to practice faith diligently and remember the cycles of requesting and thanking. It encapsulates the teaching that if one prays with a sincere heart and follows the divine directives, they will invariably receive Kami's blessings.

Conclusion: Cultivating a Cycle of Gratitude The sermon concluded with a powerful call to integrate gratitude into daily practice, not merely as a response to received blessings but as a continuous mode of living. By doing so, believers not only align themselves more closely with divine will but also foster a spiritual environment where blessings can flourish. Rev. Koichi's message is a reminder that in every moment of thanksgiving lies an opportunity to deepen one's faith, and through such practices, one can expect to receive even greater divine blessings.

Through this sermon, Rev. Koichi effectively bridged ancient wisdom with modern-day practices, urging the congregation to actively engage in a cycle of gratitude that enhances both personal growth and communal harmony. <https://youtube.com/live/bc-F15DuJxo>

February 16, 2025

In a recent sermon, Rev. Koichi Konko shared insights on the simplicity and profound impact of daily gratitude in our spiritual practices, drawing from the teachings in "Voice of the Universe." The sermon was presented against the backdrop of a gradually warming climate and a snapshot of snow-covered Konko shared by his aunt from Japan, emphasizing the contrasts of life's experiences and the constant presence of Kami's blessings.

Gratitude in Daily Practice Rev. Koichi emphasized that practicing faith is not a complex task but involves simple acts of gratitude. He referenced the "Voice of the Universe," which suggests that saying thanks when you wake up, as you would talk to your parents, is a fundamental act of faith. This acknowledgment upon waking sets a positive tone for the day, turning every morning into a moment of rebirth and appreciation for the new day.

Spiritual Lessons from the Konko Library Director Delving deeper into the theme, Rev. Koichi shared insights from the director of the Konko Library, established during World War II, which was envisioned as a cultural haven regardless of the war's outcome. The director's morning routine of gratitude—expressing thanks upon waking—activates a positive start to the day, much like a switch that energizes every cell.

Cyclical Nature of Gratitude and Life Rev. Koichi reflects on the teachings of the Fourth Konko-Sama, emphasizing the sanctity of waking each morning as a testament to the preciousness of life. He articulates that each awakening is a rebirth, an opportunity to value life anew. This gratitude extends to our sustenance, illustrated by the example of tuna sashimi, which represents a life chain where each organism depends on another, ultimately connected to the sun and earth's nurturing elements. By acknowledging the web of life in our daily routines—recognizing the interconnected sacrifices that sustain us—we celebrate our existence. Rev. Takahashi encourages us to cherish each day as a gift, understanding that our lives are supported by countless other beings, underscoring the miracle of interconnection and the cyclical nature of giving and receiving that defines our existence. This deep appreciation enhances our daily spiritual practice and reinforces our gratitude towards life's interconnected blessings.

Concluding Thoughts on Faith and Gratitude In conclusion, Rev. Koichi reiterated the importance of maintaining a routine of gratitude that aligns with the teachings of Konkokyo. He underscored that expressing gratitude is not only about acknowledging the big blessings but also about appreciating the mundane yet miraculous everyday occurrences, like waking up. By consistently practicing gratitude, we not only honor Kami but also enhance our own lives spiritually.

The sermon serves as a reminder of the profound simplicity embedded in Konkokyo teachings: that everyday gratitude is a powerful form of faith practice that nurtures both personal well-being and spiritual growth. Through these daily acts of thanks, we continue to invest spiritually in our future, ensuring a life rich with divine blessings. <https://youtube.com/live/nHLiODM4Y4k>