



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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You are cordially invited to attend the
**Spring Grand Ceremony
For Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama**
天地金乃神様 御大祭

Date: Saturday, April 13, 2013

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Sermon: Rev. Roy Yasutake (Wailuku Church)

Naorai fellowship dinner will follow. Let's receive the divine arrangements of being able to worship on this very important day.

The following is an English translation of an article found in the Konko Shinbun issued on March 17, 2013. The article was based on true story contributed for publicity from a believer. In consideration of privacy, only the name of the person involved was changed. The English translation was provided by the Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

A divine guidance to get re-connected to Kami-Sama

A person named Kazuhiko-san, aged 54, was deeply afflicted with anxiety and uncertainty for his future life because of his encounter with a grave circumstance. He was absent-mindedly wandering along the street in the shopping arcade in a town. Incidentally his eyes were drawn to the Konkokyo Religious logo called the "Yatsunami" which represents the eight petals around the Kanji character "Kin" or gold on the wall of a building.

His parents and many siblings have been deeply involved in the family religion of Konkokyo. But Kazuhiko-san alone hasn't followed the family tradition and lived apart from the religious way of life for some reason.

After graduating from high school, he went to town and got a career as a construction contractor. He once got married but eventually got divorced. One of those days, he suddenly collapsed while he was working in Nagano Prefecture. He was hospitalized for four months thereafter.

In corresponding to the disabled circumstance, he asked one of his colleagues to take over the responsibility of the construction project in place of him. But he failed to handle the work and Kazuhiko-san had to take over a huge financial debt. Overwhelmed with the prohibitive financial debt, the only way

he could deal with the troubled situation was to drink excessively. After he was released from the hospital in Nagano, he returned to his residence in Tokyo. At that stage, his dormant hepatitis-C he contracted years ago afflicted his liver with cirrhosis, which turned into liver cancer. His body and mind were excessively tormented.

Under that circumstance, he became re-connected to the Konko faith. His parents and siblings encouraged him to get engaged in the practice of faith by saying, "Do not ever get disengaged with Kami-Sama. You've got to go to church." But he showed little response to the forwarded concerns and prayers for him. Through the incidental encounter with the familiar Konkokyo "Yatsunami" crest, shining on the building, he got reminded to "Go to church and get engaged in the practice of faith." He followed the calling in mind and opened the entrance door of the church gingerly.

Kazuhiko-san proceeded before the minister serving at the Toritsugi-Mediation Desk and began to state, "I have assumed that I worked very hard for my professional career for all those years. But my friend betrayed me and I was trapped with a huge financial debt. I have assumed that I had done whatever I could to get healed of my illness through my practice of faith and prayers." The minister abruptly interrupted his talk and responded to Kazuhiko-san by saying, "You can assume that you are doing the right thing, but if you are serious for your own salvation, you should get engaged in the practice of faith with a resolved heart. You should demonstrate your single-heartedness in your belief in Kami-Sama."

The message forwarded by the minister enlightened Kazuhiko-san in such a manner as he recalled, "I was wrong in the way of living based on a false assumption or 'tsumori' that bring nothing in fruition." He became resolved and asked desperately for help, "I want to be saved. I need Kami-Sama's help."

He resolved he would start his life anew from scratch. He declared personal bankruptcy and cleared off his financial burden. As for the illness, he surrendered his life to Kami-Sama and receive care from his doctor unconditionally.

He now makes a daily visit to church. Eventually, he responds to provide some building maintenance work at the church and in request from the believers. When he came to church for the first time, he looked so ill with a weak physical posture and pale color of the skin. Several months later, the doctor told him "Your hepatic function test showed some improvement in numbers." Kazuhiko-san regained his smiling.

Kazuhiko-san stated in conviction, "Kami-Sama makes no mistakes." He has devotedly engaged in the practice of faith. One year later, his physical strength improved to be able to receive surgery for the liver cancer.

Because Kazuhiko-san was alienated from the practice of faith, his relationship with other siblings became weak. The minister

encouraged many of his siblings to extend their help for the troubled Kazuhiko-san who was scheduled to get surgery for the cancer. They responded to synchronize to extend prayers for the time of the scheduled surgery at their own localities. The surgery was successful.

Soon after the surgery, the minister shared his thought to Kazuhiko-san, "I have been praying that you will serve as a "Hokyo" in appreciation of the blessings you have enjoyed through the virtuous work of Heaven and Earth." "Hokyo" is a lay volunteer who helps spread the Konko faith through being actively involved in local church and official organizational functions. Kazuhiko-san responded to the offered invitation in gratitude and took an orientation training session called "Hokyo Shigansha Koushuukai."

In reflection of the drastic development, he stated, "I feel so grateful and appreciative for all of the blessings I have enjoyed as I have become re-connected to the way of life based on the Konko faith." He continues to get in the practice of faith even more devotedly and tries to offer any services at the church as much as possible.

Konko-Sama Says . . .

Few have a heart that Kami can accept. Those whose hearts can be accepted by Kami will be blessed with good health, wealth, and wisdom for three generations, resulting in a strong family lineage. Those whose hearts are not accepted by Kami may have wealth as well as wisdom, but will get sick. Those who have wisdom and good health will lose their wealth. If they do not lose their wealth, their beloved children will die, leaving no heirs. Since these people are not aware of Kami's blessings, they are always lacking one thing or another. If you practice faith and understand Kami's blessings, you will live a peaceful and stable life. You will have descendants and gain wealth. You will receive divine blessings from year to year, and then from generation to generation. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 78).

Bulletin Board

Spring Grand Service Schedule

Sun, April 7 Honolulu Church at 11 a.m.
Sat, April 13 Wahiawa Church at 6:30 p.m.
Sun, April 14 Waipahu Church at 11 a.m.
Sun, May 5 Wailuku Church at 11 a.m.
Sun, May 12 Hilo Church at 11 a.m.

HCRP Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the interfaith community will be held at the Church of Perfect Liberty, April 15 at 1:30 p.m.

Volunteer Activity at Wahiawa General Hospital

The monthly volunteer activity at the same facility will be held on Friday, April 19 at 10:00 a.m. Your participation to the

program will be very much appreciated. The seasonal volunteer activity at the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Facility will be held on Sunday, May 5 at 10:00 a.m. following the regular Sunday Service. Curry lunch will be served after the function.

Spring Grand Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami

We will be observing the annual Spring Grand Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami, Our Divine Parent of the Universe on Saturday, April 13, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. Please make every effort to attend the service in person and on time for this special service. The Rev. Yoshiaki Fukuda, the founding minister of Konko Church of San Francisco reminded in the book "Live With Faith" as follows: The Grand Service is the time for the entire congregation to combine their prayers of appreciation for Kami's blessing. A successful Grand Service should be well attended. Therefore, not only should you attend, but you should encourage your family, friends and acquaintances to attend as well. A devoted believer is one who helps as many people as possible to attend the Grand Service.

Honoring Mitama Spirits

March

Mitsuko Suwa 3/21/2012

April

Gilbert Toshio Iwasa 4/9/1999
Zenji Takahashi 4/12/1966
Yoshiro Kamitono 4/16/2000
Kiku Takahashi 4/26/1967
Robert Mendoz 4/27/2006
Shinichi Furushima 4/30/1996

*The Annual Spring Memorial Service was held at the church on Sunday, March 17.

If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

Insight into the teachings in "Tenchi wa Kataru" or "Voice of the Universe"

The followings are excerpts of series of an English translation of "Tenchi wa Kataru—Kanwa-shu" or "Compilation of Insight into the teachings in the Voice of the Universe" which contains 400 selected teachings from the original "Konkokyo Kyoten" or the "Konkokyo Scriptures." Three authors, namely, the Revs. Mikio Seto, Yasushi Hata and Matsutaro Kōsaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference pages 40, 41 and 42)

No. 40

All people are children of Kami. There is no one who does not belong. (II Sato Mitsujiro 12, Kyoten page 572)
All people are children of Kami.

The quoted message is closely related to the message I already have discussed in the previous page 39 and clearly identifies we are children of Kami. Try to focus our attention to the statement, “children of Kami” and the original Japanese statement, “amega shitani tanin wa nai” that literally means that there shall be no strangers under Heaven.

“Ujiko” originally referred only to the descendants of a particular “ujigami” that is a guardian deity of a local community, such as a village. But in general, the term “ujiko” refers to the local community people under the protection of the village guardian deity. In essence, “ujiko” refers to those people who have established connectedness to a particular deity who provides protection in return. The term is not distinctive to the Konkokyo religious faith, but has strong affiliation to the Jinja-Shinto tradition. What is interesting about the term “ujiko” does not simply refer to “human beings” or “children” but shows the distinctive nature of the people who develop a close relationship with the deity they believe in their locality. Because of this distinctive nature of the term, we retained the original Japanese expression of “Kami no ujiko” at several instances in “Tenchi wa Kataru” or “Voice of the Universe” which is a concise compilation of selected teachings from the Konkokyo Kyoten Scriptures.

The expression, “Kami no ujiko” refers to three elements in accordance with the Founder. First, it means “Children who receive divine love and compassion.” Second, it means “Children who have been endowed with ‘wake-mitama’ or the given divine soul.” Third, it means, “Children who have been granted the potential to become kamis or blessed beings who would manifest divine work.” All three elements hold very profound meanings. We have to extend our serious thoughts as to how Kami-Sama loves us and expects our fulfillment of the divine potential shown in the expression of “Kami no ujiko.”

The statement that each and every individual shares the same connectedness to Kami as His beloved children can be understood that all people are brothers and sisters under the care of the Divine Parent. Whether we can fulfill the truth of the nature of “Kami’s beloved children” can be tested depending on how well we uphold and actualize the message, “All people are children of Kami. There is no one who does not belong” in our faith life.

No. 41

Which individual is more important, you or someone else? All are human beings. (III Shinkun 2-2, Kyoten page 776)

All are human beings.

When our human interactions become more intense, we are likely to encounter the situation shown in the quoted message. In such a complex and conflicting circumstance, we have to make decisions either to place much interest to ourselves or to the other. If we side one party, the other side would be ignored. In such a confusing circumstance, how should we respond?

The Founder gave us a direction. He stated to go back to the fundamental perspective of human existence. He directed us to see that all people share the commonality as human beings.

Recently, a parent came to church and sought help for her child who said he didn’t want to go to school for some reasons. As they tried to communicate, they both got emotional and confrontational. There was no way to communicate with each other. How can they apply the quoted message, “All are human beings” to deal with the situation?

Through the course of Toritsugi-Mediation sessions, the parent came to understand that she had to let go of her parent-oriented consciousness toward her child. She understood that her authoritarian tone of attitude and imposition of her opinions toward the child derived from the parent-centered consciousness. She also became aware that negative attitudes of the people in the community and her relatives contributed to the troubled situation. She also learned that her negatively inclined definitive perspective of the issue also aggravated the situation to the worse.

In corresponding to her effort to set herself free from restrictive elements that she has acquired through the course of her life, she became convinced that she should stand by her child in support under any circumstance. In corresponding to the changed heart of the parent, the child began to communicate with her.

Each and every individual is different and unique. The Founder inspired us that regardless of personal differences, there can be a way to appreciate the differences of each other and live in harmony together through the actualization of the concept, “All are human beings.”

No. 42

Practice the true way of faith and eliminate doubt. You are allowed to live in the midst of divine virtue. (III Shinkun 1-33, Kyoten page 773)

We are allowed to live in the midst of divine virtue.

As I already have elaborated about the message in the previous page of 12, in today’s modernized world, we give credence only to what we can verify through our physical eyes and try to develop thoughts and theories in reference to those elements of scientific credibility and evidence. But that practice may prevent us from appreciating intangible elements. The Founder, who stated, “eliminate doubt”

might be directing us to depart from the conventional thoughts and deeds which emphasize only tangible elements.

When we try to see our own lives, we seem to be in control of all tangible elements. But is it true?

When I try to explain about the work of Heaven and Earth and the relationship between the divine virtue and the contributions of human beings, I always try to introduce how we can see things. When we try to see things, we direct our eyes to the object. But our visual power alone does not bring out the image of the object. The presence of light around the object is a vital element. We are quite aware the action of directing our eyes to the object, but have little awareness about the presence of light that makes it possible for the image to be processed in our brains. The light around the object can be likened to the work of Heaven and Earth and the divine virtue which can be intangible, but they are the vital elements for the sustenance of human life.

In this sense, all of our physical functions, such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking and thinking are possible only through the combined effect of the work of Heaven and Earth and our given functional abilities. Whatever work we may get engaged, such as farming, industrial productions, retailing business can be possible only through the combined effect of Heaven and Earth and our given functional elements. The Japanese expression of “Ikasarete ikiru” or “Our lives have been enabled in the given sustenance,” can be the actualization of the endless chains of fusion of work of Heaven and Earth and exercise of our given functional abilities.