



You are cordially invited to attend the
**50th Memorial Anniversary for the
Late Rev. Haruko Takahashi
on Sunday, December 18, 2022 at 10 am**
Haruko Sensei was the Founding minister of the
Konko Mission of Wahiawa.

Okage wo Itadakankoto ni wa

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

About two weeks ago, I came across the expression: “おかげを頂かんことには” (*Okage wo Itadakankoto ni wa*) expressed by one of the local ministers. Actually, I remembered the expression was often used by the Late Rev. Fumio Yasutake of Konko Church of Amagi. So what does that expression mean? It basically means “If we do not receive blessings from Kami-Sama...” The expression can be applied to any elements of our daily living. Such as “おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot do anything at all. Being able to function normally in our day to day living, is something we simply cannot take for granted. If anything goes wrong, we cannot do anything we intend to. If just one capillary in the brain popped or got damaged, we can become instantly disabled. From the moment we wake up, we need our daily blessings to survive.

“おかげを頂かんことには” some people may not wake up in the morning.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot use the bathroom.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot eat meals.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot report the office.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot learn at school.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot drive a car.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot see, hear, smell.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot make a visit to church.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot go shopping at the nearby grocery store.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot watch TV program.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot use internet services.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot operate the Church.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot keep our good health.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot enjoy good human relationships.

“おかげを頂かんことには” we cannot keep our good financial standing. Actually, the expression of “おかげを頂かんことには” refers to fundamental blessings that sustain our lives. Just think of visiting church. In going to church, we must travel. From your home to church, we must receive blessings. If there is a road block, we wouldn't be able to visit church.

If you cannot drive a car, you have to ask someone to give you a ride, or find other means of transportation. If the church is closed, we cannot go to church. If there are no ministers and people who take care of the church, there would be no meaning of going to church. If the ministers are sick and cannot perform their duties, it would be difficult for you to go to church. If your family members prohibit you from going to church, you cannot go to church. Those are some of the conditions that may prevent you from going to church. A simple trip to the church is possible only if you are well enough to go, if you have the desire to go, and if you have the means to go.

If you experience some elements that prevent you from going to church, that may imply “おかげを頂かんことには”.

Being able to go to church itself is the ultimate manifestation of getting blessed. In other words, “おかげを頂いて” or being in the midst of blessing, church visitation is possible. In the Konko faith, we say “あつての” (*Atte no*) that can mean “because of the existence.” The Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami stated, “Kami is Kami because of people, and people are people because of Kami.” In other words, anything and all things are possible because of Kami. “おかげを頂かんことには” means being fully blessed with Kami's blessings, anything can be possible. We are grateful that we have come thus far in Hawaii in the last 45 years and can get ready to enjoy the annual end of year mochi pounding.

Konko-Sama Said...

Everyone is now able to receive the blessings of Tenchi Kane No Kami because Konko Daijin received divine blessings first. If there is one true believer in a family, then all of the family members will become believers. If there is one family in a village who truly believes in this faith, all of the villagers will begin to receive divine blessings. Practicing faith is like one seed becoming ten thousand. Therefore, those who initiate faith should sow a good seed. If the seed is bad, it will be a bad start, and it will be difficult to raise no matter how hard you try. (*III Jinkyukyogoroku 37*)

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

December

Frederick Michael Conti	12/6/2015
Francisco Bareng	12/12/2017
Hilda Kazuno Yamamoto	12/14/2007
Fumitake Yoshiiwa	12/15/2012
Lillian Tanigawa	12/16/2010
Isamu Iwasa	12/17/1943
Shizuko Takayama	12/21/2006
Rev. Fumio Yasutake	12/23/1995
Rev. Haruko Takahashi	12/24/1972
Hitoyo Higuchi	12/25/1969



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

Bulletin Board

Church Services for November 2022

- 1 Thr -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami
(7:30 pm)
4 Sun -Garage sale (9 am to 2 pm)
11 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
18 Sun -50th Memorial Service for the Late Rev.
Haruko Takahashi and Monthly Memorial
Svc (10 am)
25 Sun -End of the Year Service (9 am)

January 2023

- 1 Sun -New Year's Day Service (9 am)

Announcements:

The 50th Memorial Service for the Late Rev. Haruko Takahashi will be held on Sunday December 18, 2022 at 10:00 am. Please respond to attend the service in person or through Facebook live streaming. Rev. Todd Zenji Takahashi of San Diego Church (nephew of Haruko Sensei) will be the guest speaker. Through the 32 years of dedicated service that Haruko Sensei provided at this church, the church can be in existence today. A light Naorai lunch will follow the service.

●KMH CEOC Meeting on Zoom on Saturday, 12/3/22 (3 pm)

●The Community Engagement and Outreach Committee initiated the bi-monthly KMH Kyoten study group via Zoom. The main reference book will be "Voice of the Universe." Please join the study session and deepen your understanding about the messages of the Founder on December 14 (Wed. from 5 pm to 6 pm). The regular monthly meeting will be held on Friday, December 23, 2022 at 3 pm.

●New Year's Mochi Pounding

We will hold the annual Mochi Pounding on Friday, December 30, 2022. We will start pounding with the traditional *kine* and *usu* mortar at around 8:00 am. The first 150 pounds of orders will be accepted. All orders and payment must be made by December 20. Please make check payable to: Konko Mission of Wahiawa

The Life of the Founder

金光教祖の生涯 瀬戸三喜雄 金光教学研究所 紀要別冊教学叢書 2

The following is an English translation of a book titled,

"Konko Kyoso no Shougai" or "The Life of the Founder Konko Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto, and was published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center. The publication was made in 1980. There are many biographies about the life of the Founder Konko Daijin. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (Page 74 to 78) (continued from the previous issue)

12/1/2022

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Divine Emotional Response

The serious throat ailment Bunji experienced at the age of 42 was significantly deep. It does not mean he was spared of his life at the brink of fatal consequence, but there was more to than that. Up to the age of 42, he tried to live in pursuit of a way of life that would fulfill Kami's will. Because of the serious illness, he could encounter Kami, and gained an opportunity to develop a way of life that would fulfill Kami's will. The deep gratitude he had experienced was indispensable.

The experience of getting encountered with Kami did not end as he received the blessings of recovery from the serious illness, but would become a starting of a new path he was to pursue. About 20 years later from this episode, when Bunji tried to describe the encounter with Kami in "Konko Daijin Oboegaki" and write the first line of sentence, "On January 1, you worshipped at the village shrine and put your hands together to pray. I know what you requested. The village kami and other kamis are all here watching and listening to you" (Oboegaki 3-5-6). he was overwhelmed in gratefulness and put his pen on the side. The words of Kami, "the kamis" triggered his inner thought that welled up from within. Because the expressed word, "the kamis" vividly reminded how he had pursued faith throughout his life up to that stage in life. He remembered the days he prayed to kamis day and night; defeated in helplessness and depression; acknowledgement of committing irreverence against Kami unknowingly; acknowledgement of the fact that the kamis had come and gathered in witnessing the serious condition of Bunji had to deal with; acknowledged that he was guided into a new way of pursuing faith and so forth.

In recollection of the life-changing encounter with Kami, Bunji responded to the uncontrollable surge of emotional wave and drew a big circular image on the paper and stated, "As I write up to this point, I am filled with deep emotion" (Oboegaki 3-6-1). Bunji's overwhelming deep emotional reaction was not only his own. In responding to this situation, Tenchi Kane No Kami also responded, "Konko Daijin, these deep emotions are not only your own. If I, Tenchi Kane No Kami, were a poet, I would express these emotions through poetry. However, I am incapable of doing so. I am overjoyed, and even overcome with emotion to see how man has been able to be saved and how Kami has been able to be realized. Continue with your writing" (Oboegaki 3-6-2).

Kami's extended words in praise of Bunji was not just a response in reflection of the path Bunji pursued in the past, but in witnessing "how man has been able to be saved and how Kami has been able to be realized."

As has been stated above, for Bunji, the serious illness experienced at the age of 42 was a drastic turning point in his life and in pursuit of faith. He had his own family to be taken care of; it could not be a sudden change that took place. But it was amazing that Bunji kept moving forward firmly without any moment of pause and receding.

Kami showed up at the time of Bunji's illness at the age of 42. In concluding the descriptions about the life of Bunji at the age of 42, the author would like to refer to the Kami that showed up at the time of his illness.

At that stage in life, Bunji didn't believe in any particular kamis and Buddhas, and conventionally followed the tradition of the village community in general. It was natural for Bunji to believe in many kamis and Buddhas because they believed the more, they worshipped different kamis and Buddhas, they were viewed as religious in those days.

In getting ill at the age of 42, there were mentions of the presence of Ishizuchi deity, ujikami (the village deities) and other kamis and Konjin in village people's practice of faith. Ishizuchi deity seemed to show up in relationship to Jiro who played as a messenger of deities. It would be difficult to distinguish what deities delivered what parts of the messages delivered from the mouth of Jiro. It would be appropriate to assume that the whole message delivered was an expression of the deities. If we try to make some distinctions about the deliverance of messages among the deities, the author would like to state that it would be the ujigami and other deities that watched over how Bunji practiced faith and gathered at the bedside and helped Bunji recover from the illness. On the other hand, Konjin was always attentive of how Bunji lived his own life in the critical perspective.

At an early stage of life, Bunji perceived Konjin as a deity that governed the Days and Directions and should be avoided at all costs. Bunji learned to appreciate other aspects of Konjin that was vigilant whether people followed the rules of the Days and Directions and tried to abide by the rules. Later Bunji learned that Konjin was not just the deities that governed the Days and Directions, but tried to ask Bunji if he live a right way of life. And Konjin began to interact with Bunji to give up his family life and dedicate in his pursuit of faith. In this sense, Konjin tried to help Bunji to live a true way of life in fulfillment. Bunji could hardly perceive all those Konjin's involvements in his life. He perceived Konjin as a deity that scolded and punished severely. In consideration of the given situation, Bunji's perception of Konjin was limited to that of people in general. Through the serious illness at the age of 42, Bunji learned to appreciate Konjin's will that could have helped him to find a way for fulfillment because of the stern and reverent nature of Konjin.

Later Konjin told Bunji about the relationship with Konjin and people by using a metaphor, "When Konjin cursed people with His parental authority, they would try to confine Him in a corner of their Household altar. But Kami later began to listen to people's requests, and people began calling Him Konjin-Sama, adding Sama to show respect" (I Aoi Saki 5-6).

That message implies that while Konjin tried to let humans acknowledge His will by imposition of stern rules and punishments, they tried to find ways to avoid Him. But ever

since Bunji found a way to get connected with Him, and Konjin tried to appreciate the relationship with Bunji. As a result, Bunji responded to understand Kami's true will and help to manifest Kami's work through his presence. Kami's longing thoughts for humanity would never have changed, but through encountering the 42 years' serious illness of Bunji, Kami made a drastic change to deal with human beings thereafter. It would be an expression of parental love. Parental love without the power to scold would be a full-fledged parent love. Kami has both the power to scold and discipline and unconditional love to save people. This is Kami's love. (to be continue page 78)

Clips from the 90th Anniversary of San Francisco Church

