



# KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

Konko Mission of Wahiawa, 207 Muliwai Avenue, Wahiawa, HI. 96786. Phone/Fax: (808) 621-6667, Cell: (808) 226-9594  
E-mail: [konkowahiawa207@yahoo.com](mailto:konkowahiawa207@yahoo.com). Also, find us on Facebook. Head minister: Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. Vol. XXXII, No. 1, February 1, 2020

## 80th Anniversary Celebration



By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano

Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa

This year, Konko Mission of Wahiawa will be commemorating the 80th Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. The Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake, who is the Head Minister of the Konko Church of Amagi in Fukuoka will be the Head Officiant during the ceremony. The theme for this auspicious occasion is "*Konnichi made no orei*" or Extending appreciation for the blessings received till this day. This year's anniversary celebration is the fifth anniversary we are going to hold since accepting the responsibility of the operation of the church on September 28, 1977.

The founding minister of our church, the Rev. Haruko Takahashi initiated her missionary work in Wahiawa as a branch church of Konko Mission of Honolulu on January 14, 1940. One year later, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Seven days later, on December 14, she was taken into custody and was held at the war-time relocation camps at Sand Island and later transferred to Honouliuli. She was released from the internment camp on July 7, 1944 and returned to Konko Mission of Honolulu to assist with the operation of the church with the Rev. Kikue Kodama. She reopened the church in Wahiawa at 207 Muliwai Avenue, the current location on January 1, 1948. Rev. Takahashi served the faith community in Wahiawa for 32 years, including the period she was detained at the internment camps. She passed away on December 24, 1972 at the age of 62.

For approximately five years, the church was kept intact through the involvement of the Konko Missions in Hawaii Administration who stationed the Rev. Hiromichi Ishii (a staff member of the office) to Wahiawa Church for some time. It was also through the support of the Takahashi family, including Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Tadashi Takahashi, and sister Ms. Francis Takahashi and regularly attending church adherents that the church was maintained.

Both my wife and I flew to Hawaii just one day after our wedding ceremony held at Konko Church of Amagi. We came to accept the responsibility of the Wahiawa church operation on September 28, 1977. I still vividly remember the people who showed up at the entrance of the church, the site of the church building, the sweet fragrance of flower leis, the scent of the worship hall and the living quarters. When I first entered the worship hall, the light of the room was not on. I turned on the lights and proceeded to extend my initial prayer at the altar. The same chairs I sat down in the sanctuary are still intact. From that day on, I try to exercise the concept of "*Konnichi made no orei*" or extending thanks for this day spent in gratitude. I still keep trying to uphold this spirituality of "*Konnichi made no orei*" till today. And virtually, nothing else has changed in this church facility in the last 43 years. Adding concrete to the driveway and widening the entrance area was the only visible change of the entire church premise.

But the operations of the church have evolved much in responding to the ever changing circumstances. To be straight forward, we had to deal with the limited financial resources of the church. I was prepared for any situation in the operation of the church. I didn't do any prior research of the financial status of the church for our day to day living or try to find out the number of believers there were when we got there. In those days, it was almost taboo for the resident ministers to find a side job to supplement their financial situation. Ministers were required to

survive off of what was offered by the church members. For the first 10 years or so, we experienced great financial difficulties. At one occasion, when we held a regular monthly service, the only offering we could place in the altar was omiki, rice and a wild pumpkin harvested from the yard. Soon after that service, I thought about our situation and believed that even if the offerings placed in the altar were limited, I could still hold the regular services. From that time on, whenever we have held our regular church service, I make a visit to our parent church, Konko Mission of Honolulu in appreciation of the blessing that we could hold the service. In the last 43 years, we have perpetuated this tradition of making a visit to Honolulu Church along with the monthly "Otodoke" or Toritsugi-Mediation through sending out messages of appreciation and an offering to both the Konko Church of Amagi and Gohonbu. Being able to show our prayers of gratitude in this manner could be the solid foundations of our practice of faith.

Soon after we arrived, one of the senior ministers told me in conviction, "This is not Japan! This is America. It is impossible for children of ministers to become Konko ministers." If I truly believed what she said, I wonder if our three children would have evolved to become Konko ministers. The moment she said that to me, I held my own conviction that "Because this is America, our children will keep the Konkokyo tradition and speak Japanese for their own benefit. Otherwise, they may get lost spiritually and encounter hardship in life." It is a known fact that language and religion are the two most vital elements that maintains one's identity and core values. Foreign invaders initiated tactics to abolish the native language and the spirituality/religion of the country they wished to colonize. Somehow, I knew that language and religion were the vital elements that shape our life. I still remember the Rev. Fumio Yasutake, "Oyasensei" of Konko Church of Amagi once told me, "When you get blessed with children, let them become Konko ministers." We sent three of our children to the Konko Church of Amagi for their religious trainings to become Konko ministers right after their graduation from high school. People might think we are crazy for sending our young sons and our daughter to a

totally foreign environment. But they accepted the path of spiritual training straight out of high school, rather than going straight to college. For six years, Oyasensei, Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake and their church took care of our children. During the six years, I kept faxing my speech scripts for church services in English. In blessedness, all three of our children got enrolled at the Konkokyo Gakuin Seminary. They returned home and enrolled in colleges one after another and all received blessings of graduating college. It was not impossible for the children of Konko ministers in America to become ordained ministers. In blessedness, all three of our children have found their better halves. It is a fact that without the presence of our children in the faith community at Wahiawa, we would not have witnessed new developments in the way we operate our church.

One of the compelling thoughts that fills my mind in those days is the message expressed by the 4th Konko-Sama, Rev. Kagamitaro Konko. He used the expression, "shinjin sasete itadaite iru mono ga" that implies those who practice faith devotedly live as school teachers, nurses, office workers, business people. In my understanding, even Konko-Sama also identified himself in serving the position of Principle Toritsugi-Mediator as a believer. We need a core group of such believers who exhibit unyielding solid belief in pursuit of faith. Actually, we already have such believers in the faith community at each local church. Those believers who live the faith unwavering regardless of the ever changing circumstances can contribute in perpetuating the operation of the churches in Hawaii. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the unwavering believers who helped the operation of Konko Mission of Wahiawa for 80 years and extend my sincere appreciation for their exhibited contributions through their engagement in pursuit of the Konko faith. As long as we have core believers in the faith community, we are to continue to exist and have potentials to thrive hereafter.

Please join us in celebrating the 80th Anniversary Celebration of Konko Mission of Wahiawa on March 15, 2020 at 10 am.

## Konko-Sama Says . . .

Although people live between heaven and earth, they are unaware of Kami's blessings. Shrines, temples, and houses all stand on Kami's land. Without realizing this, people consult the Days and Directions and are disrespectful to Kami. They suffer hardships due to these offenses.

No one is aware of the blessings of Heaven and Earth which enables people to live. Kami shall have people become aware of the blessings of Heaven and Earth by having Konko Daijin be born throughout the world. (Oboecho 26-22-3)

The Founder Konko Daijin prayed Tenchi Kane No Kami, "When the people of the world pray to Ikigami Konko Daijin with a sincere and single-heart, please fulfill whatever request they have." (Gorikai II Unknown 7)

## Bulletin Board

### Church Services for February, 2020

- 1 Sat -Monthly Service (7:30 pm)
- 2 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 9 Sun -Monthly Service for the Founder Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
- 16 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 23 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)

### March, 2020

- 1 Sun -Tenchi Kane No Kami Monthly Svc (9 am)
- 15 Sun -80th Anniversary Celebration (10 am)

### Volunteer Activity

The regular monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility will be made on Friday, February 14, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

### KMH

- The KMH Community Engagement and Outreach Committee Meeting will be held at Konko Mission of Honolulu on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 6 p.m.
- KMH-KCNA Joint Conference Committee Meeting will be held on Friday, February 21 at 5 p.m. at Konko Mission of Honolulu.
- KMH General Meeting will be held on Saturday, February 15, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. at Konko Mission of Honolulu.

## Honoring the Mitama Spirits

### February

Umi Yasuyo	2/3/1965
Ichiro Yano	2/5/2006
Dennis Fujio Tamashiro	2/6/1998
Thomas Takahashi	2/9/2005
Yoshiyuki Momotomi	2/10/2003
Betsy Tomie Maesaka	2/10/2016
Rev. Yukio Hiramoto	2/10/2012
Mildred Chiyoko Oka	2/12/2004
Jiro Oho	2/14/1937
Rebecca Jean Burns	2/14/2013
Robert Yoshikazu Hirota	2/16/2014
Norma Teruko Katsura	2/18/2008
Elisa Albarran	2/20/1977
Rev. Michio Miyake	2/21/2017
Kay Yamamoto	2/22/2015
Marilynn Olsen	2/22/2009
Suetsuki Toyofuku	2/24/1995
Terry Anne Takase Shlaes	2/27/2018

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

### Sakura in Wahiawa currently in bloom up in the heights

