



“Goyō” 御用

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Last Sunday, January 23, when Rodney-sensei was here and made a speech at the monthly memorial service. He spoke about "Goyo", which could be any form of dedication to Kami-Sama or to the church. Goyo itself is a common term referring to many things. When you watch a samurai detective story in TV, you would witness a scene in which policemen with hand-held lanterns inscribed with the term "Goyo" 御用 on the surface of the lantern and they shout to the criminal "goyo, goyo" or "Surrender! You are under arrest?" A commoner ask a superior person, "Is there any Goyo? I would gladly respond to the request of goyo" and so forth.

But "Goyo" became a Konkokyo terminology. Basically, Goyo means many things done for Kami-Sama in appreciation and gratitude. It can be a form of offering of appreciation and gratitude in many ways. Typically, when we use "goyo" in the faith community, it usually refers to the act of service to the church and to Kami-Sama in gratitude. Konkokyo ministerial work can all be forms of "goyo" in service to Kami-Sama. Becoming a minister of Konkokyo can be the biggest form of "goyo" to Kami-Sama. Lay believers usually dedicate themselves for the well being of the church operations. Some believers dedicate to help clean up the church, do some yard work, help ministers for their works, guiding new people into the faith community and helping the church to grow and expand in their given condition, attending church functions, making financial contributions, welcoming new people into the faith community and supporting ministers in many ways and so forth can all be regarded as forms of "goyo."

What is fundamental about the nature of goyo in the faith community is the expression of prayers in gratitude for the blessings we receive from The Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami. We simply do engage in the act of "goyo" in gratitude and nothing else. That is the fundamental nature of "goyo."

If you have any negative notions about the goyo you do, you should stop what you are doing. It no longer becomes a goyo that is accepted by Kami-Sama. Simply speaking, all "goyo" can be a form of offering to Kami-Sama.

The spirit of "goyo" in the faith community has been built during the 163 years of history of Konkokyo. The Founder

used the term for dedicated service to Kami-Sama in response to the request of helping people. The Founder related, "Since Kami-Sama gives Konko Daijin teachings and tells him to convey them to other people, Konko Daijin does so. Listen to these teachings and tell them to children and other people. If just one of those people discovers how blessed Kami is and begins to practice faith, Kami will rejoice. And you will also be helping to serve Kami-Sama" (II Yamamoto Sadajiro 6-6, 7).

The founding minister of Konko Church of Amagi showed the very nature of "goyo." In accordance with the autobiography of "Yasutake Matsutaro Shi" pages from 23 and 24, he stated as follows. Matsutaro Yasutake made the first visit to Gohonbu, Headquarters Church at Konko Town in Okayama at the age of 21 (Meiji 24), the year he was introduced to Konko Church of Kokura in Fukuoka. He stated, "In those days, we got on board a small steamed ship from Kokura to Shimonoseki port. From Shimonoseki, we took another boat to Tamashima. A ranch helped us to reach to the land." And we walked to Gohonbu. My heart was full of gratitude for the pilgrimage. We stayed at Kibinoya Inn operated by the daughter of the Founder. We slept at another small hut. I felt so grateful for the food, which was just a side dish of pickled vegetables and tea. When I had to leave the place, I felt a bit of heartbroken to leave.

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Matsutaro felt so envious of those believers who provided whatever chores they could afford for the church and Kami-Sama. He was always overwhelmed with the thought, "If I could do anything for the church, I would feel so grateful." Concessionary, the Matsuhei Katsura offered him opportunities to do some chores for the church, such as helping to clean the church facilities, he reflectively responded to accept the offers. One of those days, while he was helping to plaster the wall of the bathroom, he contemplated, "There could be many people in this community, but those who practice the Konko faith are quite limited. Among those few believers I was chosen to do this 'goyo' of helping the plastering of the bathroom. I am very grateful." He was overwhelmed with the thought of gratitude.

The Rev. Fumio Yasutake, the 2nd Head Minister of the Konko Church of Amagi extended his thought about the nature of "goyo" as follows in the "Shinai" the church newsletter published January 3, 2022. The article was a quotation from the publication named "The First Head Ministers Shingyo-kai

Lecture" published on May 20, 1982. The title of the speech script is "Unconditional practice of faith."

At one occasion, the parent church of Amagi church, Konko Church of Kokura in Fukuoka, underwent re-roofing of the church building. The roof was made of copper which needed to be replaced with new ones. Among the church believers, there were some people who could help provide some labor works for the project of re-roofing. Nowadays, it is easy to go to Kokura by car. But in those days, the trip to Kokura was time-consuming. Consequently, those church believers who helped the project had to stay at the church for a considerable number of days. I was very concerned about the preparations of the parent church as the host for the project. The church needed to provide a place to stay, meals and so forth for the helpers. I am always keenly aware that I should not cause the host any burdens for such project referred to as "goyo." Some of them stayed a few days, some other people stayed more than 10 days. Many people, the student ministers, church members involved in the project one after another. The re-roofing project was completed successfully. Some of those people spent time cleaning up the site after the work. About four or five of them returned to church in the evening. I greeted them upon their return. I noticed they held a package wrapped in paper in their hands. They said the gifts were given by Head Minister of Kokura Church for the completion of the project.

I have always talked about the nature of "goyo" in the faith community at Amagi from time to time. We should decline accepting any rewards in return for the "goyo" we offer for any reason at all. But at that special circumstance, they could not decline the gifts from the Head Minister of our parent church. And they brought the gifts along with them. As for the goyo of re-roofing the Kokura church and for the believers who could join in on the "goyo" –this alone was considered a rewarding opportunity, and there could be nothing more grateful than that. With the consent of one of them, I unwrapped the gift. The gift was a fine blanket. I felt the gift was much too extravagant for the goyo they provided. I replied to them, "I should receive the gift you brought. Actually, the gift is a splendid item especially because they received it from the Head Minister of Kokura Church. They could give the gift to each household. If there are elderly family members, they could appreciate it for their comfort. They could cherish the item as a family heirloom. In a sense, I didn't let them keep the items for themselves. I took those items from them and kept it for the church believers and guests who would use them when they stay at the church facility. If each believer who received the gifts in return for their goyo is able to truly appreciate the nature of the gifts, it could be meaningful for them. But I was concerned that they may develop expectations for the goyo they do in the future. Even a hint of expectation that develops in the heart would be unacceptable. "Since we received a gift of a beautiful blanket

the last time in return for the goyo we did for the church and Kami-Sama, what gift would we get the next time?" The faintest thought of this reward in return for goyo can instantly banish the true sincere heart of gratitude for goyo. Therefore, it would be appropriate never to expect any rewards in return for the goyo we provide at all. The fact of being able to do goyo for the church and Kami-Sama alone can be the greatest reward and gratitude. There could be nothing more.

In this manner, I decided to have everyone surrender their blanket for church use. I am sure they had no complaints for the decision. What I have been convinced about the nature of goyo is that being able to do various goyo, being able to practice the Konko faith, being able to attend church, each of these element can be an indispensable form of gratitude in nature and important for believers to understand. If we ever develop the give and take idea, for example, "Hmm, if I do this goyo, Kami will give me blessings or I could be happier" this mentality can instantly destroy the nature of our extended goyo and does not go in line with the true nature of goyo. As for myself, I have been keenly aware of this aspect in the practice of faith and perform goyo day to day with sincerity and single-heartedness. In so doing, believers who attend church have enjoyed to get blessed for their lives one after another. The founding minister of our church at Amagi, the Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake stated, "Being dutiful to your parents shall be unconditional. The same can be true in pursuit of the Konko faith. If you hold even a bit of obligatory feelings to your parents, you are not being filial to your parents at all. The same is true in pursuit of faith.

The Rev. Fumio Yasutake made the speech on May 20, 1982. The original speech script was written in Japanese. The Rev. Yasuhiro Yano provide a translation for your reference.

Founder, Konko-Sama Said . . .

Speak ill of no religion. Everyone is a child of Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama. Having different religions is the same as having children in different occupations. A parent may have a carpenter, a plasterer, a gambler, and a merchant as his children. People may belong to different religions such as Tendai and Hokke, but they are all children of Tenchi No Kami-Sama. We all have our personal preferences. For example, some people like soba noodles, while others prefer udon noodles. Do not criticize people's preferences. Everyone around the world is a child of Tenchi No Kami-Sama. The world is full of Tenchi No Kami-Sama's blessings. Not having these blessings is like not having air to breathe. So without divine blessings, people cannot live, not even for a minute. (II Sato Mitsujiro 14)

Bulletin Board

Church Services for February 2022

- 1 Tue -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 6 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 13 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
- 20 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)
- 27 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

March 2022

- 1 Tue -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 6 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- KMH Rotary Hanashi-kai Gathering on ZOOM (10:30 am to noon) Hosted by Waipahu Church

President's Day Garage Sale

Monday, February 21, 2022 from 9 am to 2 pm
Open to the public. We will have lots of household items, clothes, stuffed animals, some plants and all kinds of Knick Knacks. Come support our mission!

The Church Doors are Open

We welcome you to make a visit to our church and church services. But please continue to wear your face mask for Covid-19 precautionary measures. You also can make an appointment for your personal visit to church anytime of the day. All services will also be recorded via Facebook Live and uploaded on YouTube as well.

Konko Missions in Hawaii

- 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.
 - February 2 (Wed at 5 pm)
 - February 16 (Wed at 5 pm)
- Community Engagement and Outreach Committee meeting will be held on Friday, February 18, 2022 at 2-3pm (ZOOM)
- General Meeting on Saturday, February 12 at Honolulu Church or Zoom (1:30- 4 pm)

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
Rev. Yukio Hiramoto	2/10/2012
Mildred Chiyoko Oka	2/12/2004
Jiro Oho	2/14/1937
Rebecca Jean Burns	2/14/2013
Elisa Albarran	2/20/1977
Marilynn Olsen	2/22/2009
Suetsuki Toyofuku	2/24/1995
Norma Teruko Katsura	2/18/2008
Robert Yoshikazu Hirota	2/16/2014
Betsy Tomie Maesaka	2/10/2016
Kay Yamamoto	2/22/2015
Rev. Michio Miyake	2/21/2017
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.

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.

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Another urgent problem Bunji had to deal with

Some of the visitors who showed up to extend their message of condolence for the departure of Makiemon noticed that the third son, Nobujiro showed some symptoms of smallpox. Bunji and Makiemon lived at a temporary hut away from the main house, and was single-heartedly taking care of the sick Makiemon, Bunji was totally unaware of the condition of Nobujiro. When Bunji took a closer look at Nobujiro and the fourth son Mohei, they showed the typical symptoms of smallpox. In accordance with the tradition of the community, the household was to follow the custom of the folk belief of the religion that dictated to enshrine the deity of smallpox at the alcove and installed "shimenawa" rope hangings and conducted a religious rite in corresponding to the situation in which one of the household members got smallpox. Bunji was totally absorbed in taking care of the sick Makiemon and failed to conduct the rite to expel smallpox from the household. In responding to the situation, Bunji placed the body of Makiemon at one of the rooms of the storage gatehouse. He had to ask other family members and relatives for the funeral functions. Bunji was tormented for the difficult situation in which he wanted to hold a formal funeral service for Makiemon, at the same time, he had to distance himself from other family members to follow the tradition of the village community that dictated him to get separated from the two sons so that he could keep the impurity of death in the family members to himself and for the sake of the well being of the other two sons. Under such a difficult circumstance, Bunji had to take care of the two sick sons. He was truly grateful for those family members and relatives who took care of the funeral functions in place of himself. He extended a sincere and generous gratitude to them all later on. Bunji also learned that his mother and other household members of the birthplace of Bunji discreetly visited the grave of Makiemon. It was totally unexpected for him and he extended his sincere gratitude for the expressed thoughts and prayers of them all.

Fortunately, the other two children experienced only light symptoms of the disease. On May 28, Bunji asked Chikuzen

Koda, a Shinto priest to hold a ceremony to send off the deity of smallpox and got rid of the "shimenawa" ropes from the house. His relatives were also invited to the function and held a meal sharing function together afterward. The Shinto priest who conducted the ceremony were also treated with a great deal of respect and gifts. For Bunji, despite one of his children succumbing to the illness, the lives of the two other boys were saved. He attributed the saved lives of the children as a blessing. He assumed that the difficulty he had to endure could have been caused by his own shortcomings, but the tragic eventualities were limited only to the death of one child alone. It could have happened that all three children could have died of the illness. The feast of food provided for the guests was his sincere expression of gratitude. But even the Shinto priest who was invited was also puzzled, "How could he ever celebrate such an occasion in which one of the family members died?" The way Bunji responded to such an eventuality was not commonly observed in the community. How Bunji could ever respond in such a festive manner in a grave situation was a great puzzle for the priest and others. The gifts forwarded for the service was something more than usual. Those other priests who were shared with gifts from the Shinto priest Chikuzen expressed their amazement, "They said that they had never received such gifts even when they had people cured. Thank you very much" (Oboegaki 2-18, 3). The reason why Bunji responded to the tragic eventuality could be attributed to the way he analyzed the situation. He contemplated that the tragic eventuality could have been caused by his own lack of thoughts. The people in the community could never respond in the same manner as Bunji did. That could be the difference between Bunji and other common people in the community.



Kyoten Study Group Session Open-zoom invitation

Next online meet:

Wednesday, February 2 from 5-6pm
Wednesday, February 16 from 5-6pm

ZOOM ID: 815 2952 9465

Passcode: 914385

Join us for a fun and enriching study group surrounding the Founder, Konko Daijin and his Universal teachings. Feel free to join us. Let's learn Konko!

Queen's wreath and Sakura in bloom in the Kyokai garden

