



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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3rd Konko Ohana Camp



*By Yasuhiro Yano,
Head Minister*

We held the 3rd Summer Ohana Camp at Camp Erdman, Mokuleia on June 22 and 23, 2013. Twelve people out of 19 people who registered could respond to enjoy the two-day program. Interestingly, most of the attendees had little exposure to the Konko faith tradition before they attended the program. They had no idea about the teachings and the basic elements we routinely conduct in our faith life. But in two days, at the closing of the program, it was obvious they really enjoyed their involvement in the program and some of them expressed their willingness to looking forward to next year's retreat.

The theme for this year's program is, "ABC's of Konkokyo: Blessed Food." The Rev. Dr. Todd Takahashi introduced the subject in such a unique manner that incorporated the Founder's teachings in his interactive presentations. We enjoyed the presentation and learned how we appreciate blessed foods in accordance with the Konko faith tradition. Reciting a grace for meal in Konko way alone might impacted the participants. They learned not to waste blessed food and took care of the leftover food on the table to minimize waste. It was a mind-boggling statistic to learn that over 40 percent of the foods prepared in the United State go to waste. We also noticed how other people show little mindfulness for throwing leftovers into the trash bins during the two-day stay at the site. It was a big step for us to be mindful of whatever foods and drinks in appreciation of the blessed nature of the vital sustenance from Our Divine Parent.

During the first day of the program, some enjoyed swimming in the pool. We enjoyed Donut Eating Contest, water balloon tossing and archery. In the evening, we were divided into three groups. The Rev. Edna Yano instructed everyone to draw as

many as 100 elements that are integral part of our lives. We become more mindful of the precious and blessed nature of everything we take for granted through the activity. We also enjoyed campfire. We became thrilled and excited in crab hunting excursion on the beach.

In the morning there was a morning prayer, followed by breakfast and rock-painting. We strolled along the sandy beach and enjoyed some sand-scribing. The camp disbanded at the scheduled time of around 2:00 p.m.

The initial idea for this annual program is to facilitate the family-oriented learning program for the purpose of extending our faith community in Wahiawa. It is obvious we cannot pass on the faith tradition if the family members have not gotten involved in church functions, such as the annual church retreat. This is based on my own personal experiences as a believer who was raised in a family-oriented involvement in the practice of the faith. I am a third generation Konko believer. My grandfather initiated into the practice of faith because he encountered an impasse in being blessed with children who could perpetuate the family lineage. My parents were blessed with eight children, five boys and three daughters. When I was born, my mother took me to church for any regular church functions from a very early stage of my life. All of us children got involved in the church functions at the Konko Church of Kawanoishi not just for the regular church functions such as monthly services, but also for all youth-oriented programs. My parents supported our involvements in the church functions, like youth camps and pilgrimages to the Headquarters Church at Konko Town in Okayama from time to time. In this manner, the Konko faith has become a part of my family life, and we naturally became integral members of the faith community. The family religious tradition has been naturally passed down to the next generation.

I wish to witness this phenomenon evolve in the faith community at our church in Wahiawa and the entire faith community in Hawaii. Holding the annual Ohana Camp could be a small step for this dream come true, but without any action taken, nothing will evolve. We are resolved to continue the tradition of annual Ohana Camp as long as we have participants and wish to see the expansion of the program as years pass by. And we are looking for a new different venue for the future Ohana Camp with much enriched educational program as years go by.

Konko-Sama Says . . .

Humans first inhabit the mother's womb. The mother's favorite foods and drinks are provided by Earth through the divine grace of Heaven. They nourish the mother's body which becomes pregnant through Tenchi No Kami-Sama's blessings.

In ten months, when the child is born safely, the mother is blessed to produce milk. By drinking this milk, the child grows by the day. And through parental care, the child reaches adulthood. The child also receives an education and training.

While knowing these natural principles, isn't praying to Tenchi No Kami-Sama a natural way of practicing faith during times of sickness or other troubles? Even things like furniture are repaired by the person who made them. This same principle should make you realize that your body, which was created by Kami-Sama, can be cured by praying to Kami-Sama for divine blessings.

Telling you this makes it clear that those who eliminate their doubts and are pious will receive boundless divine blessings. Receiving divine blessings depends on one's individual heart. (I Yamamoto Sadajiro 29)

There is nothing more irreverent than to waste food. It takes a long time to prepare the food before it can be eaten. Why is it that people work hard? They work hard so that they will be able to feed themselves without anxiety.

Nevertheless, they waste or throw away food. That means they are wasting Kami's blessings and people's hard work.

You should look around. Are there any healthy people who waste food? No one who wastes food succeeds in society. They all have to leave their occupations because of their wastefulness. (III Jinkyukyogoroku 100)



Bulletin Board

Monthly Services

- 7/1 Mon For Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama at 7:30 p.m.
- 7/7 Sun Sunday Service at 9:00 a.m.
- 7/12 Sun For the Founder at 9:00 a.m.
- 7/21 Sun Back-to-School Service in conjunction with the Monthly service for Mitama Spirits at 9:00 a.m.
- 7/28 Sun Sunday Service at 9:00 a.m.

Ehimemaru Memorial Clean up

Volunteers of the newly reorganized Ehime Kenjin-Kai will make a visit to the Ehimemaru Memorial site and help clean up the site on Saturday, July 6 at 9:00 a.m. Both, Revs. Yasuhiro and Reiko Yano will participate to the activity.

HCRP Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the interfaith community will be held at the Gedatsu Church, July 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, July 12 at 10:00 a.m. Your participation to the program will be very much appreciated.

Volunteer Activity at Kuakini Medical Center

The Honolulu Church and other local churches in Oahu will organize a volunteer activity at the Hale Pulama Mau Auditorium at the Kuakini Medical Center on Sunday, July 21 at 1:30 p.m. Besides the regular activities, a special performance will be presented by the members of Little Star Dance from Tokyo.

Back-to School Service

The annual Back-to-School Service will be held in conjunction with the monthly service on Sunday, July 21 at 9:00 a.m. Please fill out the prayer form and join the service in person on time and enjoy sound school year.

Honoring Mitama Spirits



July

Shimeno Iwasa	7/1/1966
Yasuwo Hayashida	7/5/1998
Masao Yoshihara	7/12/2002
Rev. Yoshie Yoshino	7/21/2005
Miyamoto Asa Iratsume	7/23/1933
May Shimao	7/30/2004

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 following 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 49, 50 and 51)

No. 49

To be human is to help others. When a child has fallen down, someone will promptly help the child up. A child who has fallen into the water will also be immediately pulled out by someone. As they say, since man is the lord of all living things, people can move at will and help others. Isn't this something to be grateful for? Cow, horses, and other animals cannot pull out their offspring that has fallen into the water. But if a human sees this, the offspring will be saved. If an ox, horse, dog, or cat is wounded, any human would help nurse the wound. When people suffer from sickness or disaster, they are saved by Kami and other people. Be aware that saving people in distress is to be human and practice faith. (I Yamamoto Sadajiro 65-1, 2, 3 Kyoten page 399-400)

To be human is to help others.

Through the study of many teachings we have learned so far, we have learned that the most compelling perception about the nature of human existence through the Konko faith is that each of us is the beloved child of Kami. But the quoted message shows a bit different perspective about the human existence we have learned so far. Let try to take a closer look at the message.

The primary message in the quoted passages is focused on helping others. The statements, "To be human is to help others" and "Be aware that saving people in distress is to be human and practice faith" sound like the conviction of the Founder for the perception of the human existence.

In general there have been many ways to perceive the nature of human existence. They say the reason why humans resides as the lord of all living things and what separate us from other animals can be found in the human-oriented elements such as rational mind, intellect, tools, languages and so forth. But the Founder definitely stated that the most compelling value of humans is the ability to help others. The Founder identified what makes us humans can be found in helping others. What an extraordinary perception for humans the Founder exhibited! Such a convincing definition for humans can only be made by a person like the Founder who dedicated for the work of helping others throughout his entire life.

But there is one vital element we should be mindful that we do not help others through our own human-oriented motivation and powers. The perception of "helping others" in accordance with the Konko faith is the manifestation of the divine will extended by Our Divine Parent who wants to help any and all those people in need (core element for helping people). We can help each other in understanding that we are all beloved children of Our Divine Parent (inevitability for helping others), and we exercise the inborn heart that can respond to feel pity for those people in need and the given abilities that can help others (power for helping others). Through the Konko faith perspective, we

can help others in activation of elements provided by Our Divine Parent.

No. 50

You cannot control your life as you wish. (III Shinkun 2-42 Kyoten page 777)

You cannot control your life as you wish.

There is a well-known ancient Greek proverb which goes, "Know thyself." When we pursue how we would live, especially when we try to pursue a religious path, it is vital for us to identify who we are. In pursuit of a religious faith, to know who we are is inextricably linked to understand the nature of the deity we worship. By knowing ourselves, we can naturally understand others.

Majority of ordinary people take whatever they do freely in their lives for granted. We can enjoy eating when we feel hungry; we can enjoy watching TV programs anytime we want to; we can go to work on our own; we can go to sleep when we feel sleepy. We have vast range of freedom for whatever we do. But from time to time, we may encounter a situation in which we cannot go to work and sleep for some reasons.

Besides physical hindrances that prevent the routine behaviors, when we put our hearts into consideration, we become aware that there are many instances in which we feel restricted in whatever elements we have taken for granted in our daily living. We try to reform our heart to the better, but find out it is quite difficult. We try to be kind to others, but we cannot. There are so many instances in which we can hardly control our own bodies and minds.

The freedom of our bodies and minds mentioned beforehand are relative. On the contrary, the Founder's statement, "You cannot control your life as you wish," implies an absolute limitation of our own existence. We can visualize that state of absolute limited nature of our own existence when we try to see a situation in which we are placed in the infinite boundary of sustenance. If we learn to appreciate the fact that our lives are enabled to through the infinite work of Our Divine Parent, we can appreciate that the freedom we enjoy are possible within this infinite sustenance, which can be referred to as the deep divine love.

Those who practice faith could be constantly reminded to appreciate the limited nature of human existence throughout their faith life.

No. 51

Realize that you have limitations. You cannot see through closed doors. (III Shinkun 2-19 Kyoten page 775)

Limited human knowledge

Similar to the previously stated message in page 50, this message also shows the limited nature of human existence, especially the limitation of intellectual power.

The Founder pointed out the limitation of our intellectual capacity in such a manner that we can hardly see through what exists behind a shoji-screen door. Although the Founder simply quoted an ordinary element in daily living, but the message provides a warning for us who boast the access to almost unlimited knowledge in today's society and believe in our ever-expanding capability of intelligence.

We can identify two perceptions of ourselves. One is the perception that we have unlimited access to knowledge about anything at all. The other is the limitation that we cannot see through what exists in the other side of a closed door. Which perspective represents a true nature of us? What do we know? And what we do not know?

Let's try to find out some examples in our daily living. We seem to be able to understand tangible things, such as our own physical bodies. But we encounter some difficulty in understanding intangible elements, such as our hearts or mind. We can see external features in our living spheres. But we have some difficulty in understanding ourselves. We can predict things to develop in an immediate future, but can hardly tell what would happen ten years from now. Generally speaking, we seem to be able to understand tangible elements but have some difficulty in understanding intangible elements and ever-changing elements.

There are so many vital elements for us in intangible form, such as love, trust, courage, prayers and so forth. The truth is there seems to be more important elements in the things we cannot see through with our eyes. It would be necessary for us to understand that our human-oriented knowledge is limited and there would be a different way to be able to identify elements of importance for us rather than merely being focused in expanding knowledge for the sake of intellectual gains.

Other Snapshots from June events



The Adkison Family returned to Hawaii for a visit and joined us for lunch and Origami Tanabata Star Festival Bamboo decorations on Sunday, June 30th.



Trisha and the boys arrived a few days earlier than Jason and came to Omairi straight from the airport! 6/3



We celebrated Alex's 10th Birthday after service! Jayden and Bryce also helped blow the candles.



We celebrated Father's Day by having delicious desserts and singing the Happy Father's Day Song!