KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

We say "aien-kien"—a fortunate encounter, a twist of fate. It's a phrase we often use in daily life, but how else can I explain why I've spent about 47 years in Hawaii, taking care of the Konko Mission of Wahiawa with my wife, Reiko-sensei? How could we have remained in one location for nearly half a century? How have my wife and I been able to sustain our married life for so long without major disruption?

Perhaps it was a divinely arranged path that led me to the Konko Church of Tokiwadai while I was in Tokyo. There, I met the late Rev. Michio Miyake, the founder of the church. I had only a faint thought—just a spark—of becoming involved in the Konkokyo organization. Maybe, I thought, I could offer some help with the English skills I had developed.

But just one week before I was to move into the facility as a student minister, or *shugyosei*, I was told I could not train there. Rev. Miyake simply said, "I cannot accept you at this church." I didn't ask for an explanation. Instead, I immediately accepted the situation and expressed my desire to go to the Konko Church of Amagi for spiritual training. The minister at the local church my family attended was originally from the Amagi Church in Fukuoka.

Back then, the only image I had of "Amagi" was a kind of fish used for sushi. I also remembered my parents and our minister saying that life at the Konko Church was strict and demanding. My thinking was, "If the church is that strict, then it must be the best place to receive proper training." Without hesitation, I picked up the phone and called my father. He was overjoyed and said, "The *Mitama* spirit of Hosaka-sensei would be so pleased." That was his immediate reaction. My parents then spoke with the minister, who arranged for my visit to the Konko Church of Amagi as a student.

Rev. Toshihiko Hosaka, who made the arrangements, did a thorough review of the ministers who had been trained at Amagi. He concluded that the only way I could be accepted there was if I were presented as an offering in appreciation of the Yano family, who had been saved through the Konko Church of Kawanoishi and its dedicated ministers. He used the term *"Osonae to shite"*—an offering of thanks. He even found a precedent—someone who had been offered to Kami-sama in this way through the church. Interestingly, while attending a church in Tokyo, I had learned the term *"Inochi no Ohatsuho"*, or "the first offering of one's life." It referred casually to daily church visits, but I didn't truly understand its depth at the time. I naïvely thought I might gain something.

Rev. Hosaka eventually brought me to the Konko Church of Amagi—it was my first visit. I was struck by the size of the facility. There were many buildings on the grounds. He introduced me to the Head Minister, Rev. Fumio Yasutake.
I entered the Konko Church of Amagi on September 29, 1974. A few days later, while I was sweeping the yard with a bamboo broom, an elderly man approached me and said, "Yesterday, on our way back from visiting the Konko Church of Kokura by microbus, Rev. Yasutake told us, 'There was an *osonae* of *shinja*'—an offering of a believer. Through human eyes, we can't always understand who Kami-sama chooses for His purpose.'"
Later, I came to realize that Rev. Yasutake had accepted me as an *osonae of shinja*, and offered me up to Kami-sama in that spirit. As the years pass, I've grown more and more grateful for having been accepted into the church in such a meaningful way.

Voice of the Universe…

1. There are people between Heaven and Earth. Heaven is father and Earth is mother. Humans, plants, and other living things live on Earth through the blessings they receive from Heaven.. *I Ishihara Ginzo 12.*
2. Heaven and Earth continue to live. Because Heaven and Earth are alive, all people are able to live. *III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 104*

Bulletin Board

June 2025

1 Sun -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama (9 am)
8 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
15 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin-Sama (9 am)
22 Sun -Monthly Memorial Svc (9 am)
29 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

July 2025

1 Tue -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama (9 am)

- KMH Kyōten Study Group via Zoom Voice of the Universe Join us: Wed, June 4 and 25 at 5 pm
- Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis The next activity will be on Fri, June 6 @ 10:30 am
- Dinner Gathering with Rev. Sachiko Yasutake from the Konko Church of Amagi, at Honolulu Church on Tues. 6/17 from 5 pm. Potluck dinner! You are welcome to come!
- KMH Missionary Women's Society Seminar at Honolulu Church on Wed. 6/18 from 10 am to 4 pm. Special Guest Speaker: Rev. Sachiko Yasutake.
- Rev. Sachiko Yasutake will be the guest speaker for the KMH Minister's Meeting on Thur. 6/19 at 10:30 am-2 pm at Honolulu Church.

June Memorials

Florence Tamaribuchi	6/10/1997
Matsu Suzuki	6/2008
Clara Kimiko Hiromasa	6/10/2014
Edith Suzuyo Noguchi	6/14/2014
Nancie Chieno Ooyama	6/3/2013
Katherine Sumiko Araki	6/5/2013
Rev. Kouji Hiramoto	6/1/2018

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 etitled, "Konkō Kyōso no Shougai" or "The Life of the Founder Konko Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto and published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center in 1980. Many biographies about the life of the Founder Konko Daijin exist. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (continued from the previous issue)

Page 178-180 (continued)
Under such demanding circumstances, Kami gave Bunji an instruction to build a shrine in 1864.

Chapter 13

On January 1, 1864 (February 8), Kami-sama instructed:
"There is no shrine nor place where Tenchi Kane No Kami can be worshipped. Build Me a shrine, square in area. I will look after the safety of the people. No government rules Tenchi No Kami. However, the government rules you. Ask your assistants to apply for the approval of the construction.

Ask Kawate Yasuhei and Morita Hachiemon of this village to be your assistants. As for the carpenters, employ Kawasaki Motoemon of Akura and his apprentice, Endo Kunitaro of Rokujoin Nakamura. Have the carpenters hold the construction initiation ceremony on the auspicious day of January 4 (February 11).

If the wood is already prepared and the government does not approve of the construction, don't mind it. The wood can be given to someone who needs it. Start preparing the wood promptly.

If the government does approve, you can build the shrine, and it shall be yours. Should I, Tenchi No Kami, enter this shrine, the world shall turn dark. This shrine is where people can give requests and thanks.

Through your Toritsugi mediation, Kami, as well as people, will be fulfilled. Kami is Kami due to man, and man is man due to Kami. Parents pray for their children, and children pray for their parents. Like Heaven and Earth, practice the mutual reliance of *aiyo kakeyo*." (Oboegaki 13-1)

The message is clearly stated: "There is no shrine nor place where Tenchi Kane No Kami can be worshipped. Build Me a shrine, square in area."

The message detailed the construction project, including the reason, objective, process, size, site, and Kami's utmost wish. What would be Kami's true intent for this project?

Kami clarified the reason for the construction in this manner: "There is no shrine nor place where Tenchi Kane No Kami can be worshipped." In those days, the government allowed public religious activities only at officially established religious facilities, such as Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples. People tended to judge the legitimacy of religious faiths based on the presence of formal facilities.

The reason Bunji had to face segregation and suppression by the authorities was that he did not have the proper credentials for his religious work; the building he used could not be recognized as an authentic religious facility.

On the other hand, Kami stated, "Should I, Tenchi Kane No Kami, enter this shrine, the world shall turn dark." In this way, Kami made it clear that He did not need a shrine for Himself. Rather, Bunji needed an identifiable religious facility where people could visit and practice their faith.

The instruction also mentioned that even if the authorities did not grant permission and the building were completed, it was of no concern. The building could be given to others who needed it. Based on that statement, it can be assumed that Kami instructed Bunji to build a house that could replace the existing building he used. The issue at hand was that the building used as *Hiromae* could not be approved as a religious facility by the authorities.

Additionally, Kami referred to *okami*—the governmental authorities—many times in the statement. Kami may have intended for Bunji to engage directly with the authorities regarding his religious work.

Considering these elements, the intent behind Kami's instruction was for Bunji to secure a proper *Hiromae*—a place where he could carry out his religious work securely—and to seek government recognition of that work. Kami clearly stated that the shrine was for Bunji's use, a place where people could offer their requests and thanks. The facility should function as a place for *Toritsugi* mediation, but this could only be realized with official government approval.

The primary purpose of the instruction seems to have been to obtain official recognition of Bunji's religious work. Kami's intent was not simply to build a new *Hiromae*, but to build a facility that could be officially acknowledged as a shrine.

To be continued.

Pictures from Memorial Day Visitation 2025