



# KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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The **Annual Spring Memorial Service** will be observed on Sunday, March 17, 2013 at 10:00 am. Through the service, we will extend our sincere appreciation for the contributions, support and guidance of the deceased ministers, family members and our ancestors for our blessed lives we now enjoy. Please write down the names of your family members to be celebrated through the service on a slip of paper and give it to your minister. Please join us in commemorating this vital function of the Konko faith in person and on time. A fellowship lunch will follow the service.

*By Yasuhiro Yano,  
Head Minister*

“There can be no way a believer would fail to receive blessings through the divine love, Tenchi Kane No Kami.” This is the lasting impression I have enjoyed through my visit to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Konko Church of Tokiwadai in Tokyo observed on February 11, 2013. The message was given by the Rev. Mitsuo Miyake of the Konko Church of Izu, which is the parent church of the Tokiwadai Church. He is the grandson of the founding minister, the Rev. Toshio Miyake of Konko Church of Izu. While I was listening to the presentation, I felt like I have experienced the presence of Tenchi Kane No Kami through the speaker. I can sense that he has been experiencing the presence of Tenchi Kane No Kami in his ministerial life. I truly cherished this spiritual energy I developed through attending the anniversary. I felt that we need to express the presence of Tenchi Kane No Kami in our faith life as has been demonstrated by the Founder Konko Daijin and many other people who have contributed to form the Konkokyo faith community in their given localities.

## **Pilgrimage to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Konkokyo Tokiwadai**



What made me decide to attend the anniversary of the Tokiwadai Church was the observance of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace observed at the Konko Mission of Honolulu on October 28, 2012. The Rev. Michio Miyake, the founding minister of the Konkokyo Tokiwadai came to Hawaii to officiate memorial services in extending apologies for the victimized people both at the Pearl Harbor and the National Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl in 1991 in corresponding to the commemorative year of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack by the Japanese Imperial Navy in December 7, 1941. It could not happen without the help of the Rev. Katsuo Yasutake, who was a classmate of the Rev. Miyake at the Konkokyo Gakuin Seminary, to make all the official contacts and arrangements for the services and functions intended by the Rev. Michio Miyake. It was a blessing that I could assist him for the special services at both locations. At that particular occasion, the Rev. Miyake helped to coordinate the formation of the interfaith meeting in Hawaii. WCRP Hawaii Chapter was initiated through the prayers extended by the Rev. Michio Miyake who has been deeply involved in the interfaith communities both in Japan and abroad. The WCRP Hawaii Chapter changed its organizational name to the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace (HCRP) in 2002.



The Konko Church of Tokiwadai has become a part of my life, ever since I was an English student after high school in Tokyo. I got involved in many church functions for about two years. I also have gotten involved in the interfaith community of the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace from the initiation. I feel so grateful for his guidance

to get involved in the interfaith activities for all those years. The more I learned about the nature of the interfaith communities, the more I can appreciate the vital nature of this organization, along with many other religious faiths.

When I was at a transitional period after graduating from the English language school in Tokyo, I once contemplated to get involved in spiritual training at the Konko Church of Tokiwadai where I was involved in the church. While I was involved in the church, I learned the expression of “Inochi No Ohatsuho” or an offering of one's life. Later on, the thought of “Inochi no Ohatsuho” evolved to be one of the major reasons why I got involved in the ministry of the Konko faith. It could have been divine intercession that I was declined the idea of entering that church as a religious trainee. Because of the rejection, I was prompted to go to the Konko Church of Amagi for my religious training, which I had never imagined before. What I could associate with the Konko Church of Amagi was the strict nature of the religious training and the image of a small fish called “Amagi,” used for making special sushi in my locality in Ehime. Amagi Church happens to be the parent church of the Konko Church of Kawanoishi.

I made a phone call to my parents from Tokyo that I wanted to become a religious trainee at the Konko Church of Amagi where the father of Hosaka-Sensei came from. Both of my parents expressed their joy and gratefulness for my decision. The first thought my father expressed was that the Mitama spirit of the late Rev. Hidejiro Hosaka would be overjoyed because that would mean that his prayers have been realized.

My father used to tell us about the prayer extended by the Rev. Hosaka to my parents. He said, “Yano-san, in my prayer, I am expecting one or two of your children to serve Kami-Sama directly since your family has enjoyed overwhelming blessings from Kami-Sama.” My father was always disturbed by the expressed wish of the minister. My father jokingly responded, “Sensei, you must be kidding. That idea alone is impossible.” My father was well aware of a Konko minister's life and its harsh realities. Ministers have to undergo rigorous difficulties, spiritually and physically and have little financial liberty. He had never imagined that I would ever develop such an idea of getting involved into the Konkokyo ministry. To be truthful, I didn't have any inclination of becoming a Konko minister. I simply wanted to serve the faith community through my earned English skills. It was beyond my expectation that my parents would ever express such a positive response for my involvement in the ministry. My father was especially overwhelmed with the feeling of appreciation, joy and happiness of having two of his children become Konkokyo ministers.

At that instance, in responding to my extended thought of entering into the Konko Church of Amagi, the Rev. Hosaka extended his deep prayers and consideration for my fate of becoming involved in the ministry of the Konko faith. The Konko Church of Kawanoishi became a branch church of the Konko Church of Amagi because the father of Hosaka-Sensei took over the responsibility of the church as the third generation Head Minister. Usually, it would not be appropriate for me to bypass the Konko Church of Kawanoishi and go into ministerial training at Amagi (the parent church of Kawanoishi).

For about one month, Hosaka-Sensei regarded me as a trainee under his guidance before I was transferred to the Konko Church of Amagi. We have a vital tradition of Toritsugi-Mediation which represents the spiritual function of perpetual divine-mediation by Ikigami Konko Daijin, the eternal spiritual presence of the Founder Konko Daijin. In regards to my transfer to the Konko Church of Amagi as a religious trainee, Hosaka-Sensei related to my parents that the only way I could ever survive the religious training was to dedicate myself to be an offering to Kami in appreciation of the blessings the Yano family enjoyed thus far.

The initial confirmation of the blessing the Yano family enjoyed through the Konko faith was the birth of three children to Tosuke and his wife Kajiyō. He was convinced that the blessing he received is all attributable to the blessings of the Konko faith. My father used to tell us the message that his father wished for our family to follow. Grandfather Tosuke said to my father, Ichiro, “The Konko faith is a true religion. You are never to give up the Konkokyo faith tradition.” My father repeatedly told us this wish. I find myself telling this heirloom message to our children and our church members from time to time.

When I look back at those days, I truly appreciate Hosaka-Sensei's prayers and consideration for me. It was when I entered into the Konko Church of Amagi as a trainee that I learned Hosaka-Sensei's deep consideration and prayers for me. Soon after I entered the Amagi Church, while I was sweeping the church yard with a bamboo broom, an aged male church believer approached me and said to me, “Yesterday, as I also worshipped at the Konko Church of Kokura, Oyasensei told us that there was an offering of a 'shinja' or a believer to our church.” He continued to talk, “Through a humanistic approach, we have no way of telling what type of person Kami-Sama uses.” At that instance, I just felt that the Rev. Hosaka treated me as such. But as the years pass by, I feel overwhelmed with the feeling of gratefulness for the deep considerations and prayers extended to me by the late Rev. Toshihiko Hosaka. I also feel the same for the late Rev. Fumio Yasutake (past head minister of Amagi Church) who accepted me as an offering to Kami-Sama. Though I have served here at the Konko Mission of Wahiawa for the last 35 years, I have a conviction it could have been meant for me to come to Hawaii and serve at the local church in Wahiawa by divine guidance. I am not sure if I have fulfilled the concept of “Inochi No Ohatsuho.” I simply wish and pray that people in the community would learn to appreciate the wondrous world of the Konko faith in the same manner as I have enjoyed thus far.

## **Konko-Sama Says . . .**

Few have a heart that Kami can accept. Those whose hearts can be accepted by Kami will be blessed with good health, wealth, and wisdom for three generations, resulting in a strong family lineage. Those whose hearts are not accepted by Kami may have wealth as well as wisdom, but will get sick. Those who have wisdom and good health will lose their wealth. If they do not lose their wealth, their beloved children will die, leaving no heirs. Since these people are not aware of Kami's blessings, they are always lacking one thing or another. If you practice

faith and understand Kami's blessings, you will live a peaceful and stable life. You will have descendants and gain wealth. You will receive divine blessings from year to year, and then from generation to generation. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 78).

## Bulletin Board

### KMH Missionary Women's Society Seminar

The Annual Missionary Women's Society Seminar will be held at the Konko Mission of Waipahu on Saturday, March 2, 2013 from 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### HCRP Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the interfaith community will be held at the Gedatsu Church on Monday, March 11 at 1:30 p.m.

### Volunteer Activity at Wahiawa General Hospital

The monthly volunteer activity at the same facility will be held on Friday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m. Your participation to the program will be very much appreciated.

### Annual Spring Memorial Service

The annual Spring Memorial Service will be observed on Sunday, March 17 at 10:00 a.m. Naorai fellowship lunch will follow. Please come to attend this vital service held in appreciation of the foundations of our blessed lives, the deceased family members and ancestors, in person and on time. Write down the names of your family members to be celebrated through the service on a slip of paper and give it to your minister.

### Honolulu Church Spring Memorial Service

The annual Spring Memorial Service will be observed at the Konko Mission of Honolulu on Sunday, March 24 at 10:00 a.m. The Rev. Edna Yano will be the guest speaker. The regular Sunday Service will be held at the Wahiawa Church at 9:00 a.m.

### Wahiawa Church Grand Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami

We will be celebrating the Grand Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami on Saturday, April 13 at 6:30 p.m. The Rev. Roy Yasutake from Konko Mission of Wailuku will be the guest speaker. Naorai fellowship dinner will follow.

## Honoring Mitama Spirits

### March

Mr. Richard Fujio Tamabayashi	3/7/1999
Mr. Thomas Toshito Yamamoto	3/16/1991
Mr. Matsuyo Arikawa	3/8/1995

The 15<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service for the Late Mr. Dennis Fujio Tamashiro, who passed away on February 6, 1998, will be held on Wednesday, February 6 at 10:00 a.m. at the Wahiawa Church.

*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 followings 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 37, 38 and 39)*

### No. 37

**Think of Kami as your parent and Kami will think of you as His child. You know that if a child is not with his parent, the child may be bullied. But with the parent, the child will not be bullied. Since you never know when misfortune or disaster will strike, you cannot avoid them even if you want to. But if you have faith while thinking that Kami is your parent, Kami will protect you from disasters you cannot foresee. (II Ichimura Mitsugoro 3-1, 2 Kyoten p. 442)**

### Think of Kami as your parent

In reference to the original Konkokyo Kyoten Scripture, there is a passage before the main body of the quotation. The message reads, “I (the Founder Konko Daijin) will bestow Tenchi Kane No Kami as your parent.” The Founder Konko Daijin might try to give him an assurance that through the acceptance of the message he shall enjoy parental divine protection. There are many teachings in which Kami has been identified as the Divine Parent. In this quoted message, Kami has been particularly identified as parental figure that protects the beloved child from any external harmful elements in life.

Occasionally I enjoy watching animal-featured TV programs. One day, I watched a scene where a parent bird tried to protect the newly hatched chicks in the nest from the attacks of predators. They exhibit extraordinarily courageous and reckless behaviors against the overpowering predators—just for the protection of their young ones. At another occasion, I witnessed a parent bird surrender herself as prey before the attacking predator had its attention on the young ones in the nest. I always feel overwhelmed with the sense of awe in witnessing such desperate reactions displayed by the parent birds which show instinctive deep love and care to protect their offspring. I believe the heart of a parent is the same, so is the heart of Our Divine Parent.

How did Mitsugoro Ichimura respond to the forwarded message from Konko-Sama? I assume he followed the message faithfully and revered the Divine Parent as his own parental figure. In today's modern society, what we can associate with the word “Oya-Kami” or the Parental Divinity is an abstract concept, but in those days, there were many believers who actually visualized the presence of “Oya-Kami” not in abstract figure, but in such a concrete manner that they revered the Parental Deity in the same manner as they respond to their own parents. As they recite



the name of “Tenchi No Oyagami-Sama” or the Divine Parent of the Universe, they actually experienced lively emotional and spiritual reactions in acknowledgement of the divine protection by shedding tears in deep gratefulness.

### No. 38

**Ask Kami for anything. Kami exists to receive requests. (II Komoto Torataro 2 Kyoten p. 492)**

**Kami exists to receive requests.**

The message is so simply stated, “Ask Kami for anything. Kami exists to receive requests.” But to actualize the message seems to be quite hard.

There would be no end to our wishes to be realized. For any encounters in life, we respond to extend our prayers and wishes to be able to deal with the given circumstances. As soon as we get blessed for one wish, without showing adequate thanks for the blessings received, we tend to forward prayers in request in corresponding to the pressing issues that arise one after another. Some of the prayers we extend may be inappropriate or selfish in nature. Although Kami stated that Kami exists to receive requests, in my understanding, Kami could be confused by many of the requests forwarded by us.

As part of my ministerial tasks, I take out the volumes of the prayer notebook I wrote down in one year and examine the contents in review from time to time. Through the reviewing of the record, I always find there are two elements that impress me every time. The first one is the great number of requests from the believers. The other is I have little memory about some of the blessings received by the believers and even forget about the prayers I have ever extended for some of them. Whenever I encounter such instances, I feel deep regret and extend my apologies to Kami.

I feel overwhelmed with the sense of awe and gratefulness in acknowledging the nature of Our Divine Parent of the Universe who responds to any of our requests and act as the unconditional receptor of requests of the believers. Our Divine Parent not only bestows blessings in corresponding to our extended prayers, while we fail to extend due appreciation and even forget the fact of our extended requests. What’s left to say?

What a wondrous unconditional nature of Our Divine Parent who listens to any of the requests we forward!

### No. 39

**Since Tenchi Kane No Kami is the parent kami of this world, all people who live between Heaven and Earth are the children of Tenchi Kane No Kami regardless of whether they practice this faith or not (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 32 Kyoten p. 819)**

**All people are the children of Tenchi Kane No Kami.**

So far, teachings in regard to Our Divine Parent have been introduced. A new section starts from this page primarily focused on the teachings that show the perspectives of human beings. The first teaching shows the nature of human beings through divine perspectives.

The teaching shows the most fundamental perception about human beings. The teaching defines that all people are the children of Tenchi Kane No Kami, Our Divine Parent of the Universe.

There are a few key expressions in the quoted teaching. The one is the clause, “Whether they practice this faith or not, all people are the children of Tenchi Kane No Kami.” If Tenchi Kane No Kami is confined only to the religious sphere of the Konko religion alone, that distinctively unique expression, “Whether they practice this faith or not” could not be expressed. The message can only be expressed by Tenchi Kane No Kami who represents the supreme deity for the entire Universe and who defines humanity, “All people are the children of Tenchi Kane No Kami.” The other emphatic aspect of the statement is, “All people who live between Heaven and Earth” are the children of Tenchi Kane No Kami. The statement confirms that as long as Heaven and Earth exist, and humanity continues to exist, the divine statement shall be the absolute truth which shall never be changed eternally.

Dignity, freedom, equality and peace are some of the integral elements for us to be able to enjoy a decent human life. In the religious tradition of Konkokyo, all those elements are introduced and discussed based on the religious principle that all people who live between Heaven and Earth are children of Tenchi Kane No Kami, Our Divine Parent of the Universe.

I have to admit that I have not yet developed full appreciation of the great nature of the quoted teaching. If anybody would be able to develop a comprehensive appreciation for this teaching, that believer shall experience a totally different perspective for life, and for anything at all in this world.

The quoted teaching holds such powerful potential.