



# KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com. Also, find us on Facebook. Head minister: Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. Vol. XXVI, No. 3, March 1, 2014

*We will observe the annual*  
**Spring Memorial Service**  
on Sunday, March 16, 2014  
At 10:00 a.m.

Through the service, we 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 join us in commemorating this vital function of the Konko faith in person and on time. A fellowship lunch will follow the service.

## **Rev. Shōhei Tsuda's workshop on Toritsugi Divine-Mediation**

*By Yasuhiro Yano,  
Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa*

At first, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and deep gratitude for the actualization of the workshop for Toritsugi Divine-Mediation held at the Honolulu Church through the coordinated endeavor and the unyielding determination by the Rev. Todd Zenji Takahashi of Konko Mission of Honolulu and the Rev. Edna Kazuko Yano and Konko Churches of North America for their sponsorship and support.

A two-day workshop for Toritsugi-Mediation by the Rev. Shōhei Tsuda from Amagasaki Church in Hyōgo has been held at the Konko Mission of Honolulu on February 22 and 23. He was assisted by the Rev. Takuma Takebe from Kōroen Church in Hyōgo and two other assistants from Japan. Six local ministers responded to take the workshop class. The message the Rev. Shōhei Tsuda wanted to share with us through his workshop was to empower the local ministers to become more effective in the operation of the Toritsugi Divine-Mediation. He believed that this is the most urgent and effective way to invigorate the current circumstances of the declining power of the entire Konkokyo faith community in Japan and abroad. He

tried to share what he has learned through his own experiences as a local Toritsugi-Mediator who has enjoyed a phenomenal surge of people who responded to seek his help. In ten years since he started to serve as Toritsugi-Mediator, the number of new people who have been introduced to the church exceeded more than 1,000 people, and the numbers have been ever-increasing year after year. The work of Toritsugi Divine-Mediation is the most vital function of each church. It could be his divine mission to share his knowledge with other ministers in fulfillment of helping others through the work of Toritsugi-Divine-Mediation initiated by the Founder Konko Daijin 155 years ago.

During the first day of the session, three ministers demonstrated their skills for Toritsugi-Mediation mimicking real episodes of Toritsugi-Mediation. The Revs. Koichi Konko, Edna Yano and the instructor Rev. Shōhei Tsuda demonstrated their way of performing Toritsugi. The Rev. Takebe played the role of a believer seeking Toritsugi Divine-Mediation. It really was an intense session. Every detailed element involved in the practice of Toritsugi-Mediation for both the Toritsugi-Mediator and the believer was put into consideration for evaluation, such as stance, apparel, eye contacts, relaxed facial and bodily posture, clear voicing, variation in responding, paraphrasing, silence and other dos/don'ts and any other inter-personal communication elements. The demonstrations and the following evaluations and discussions were deep, broad and detailed. Actually, I have never enjoyed a spiritual feast of this magnitude in any meetings and workshops I have ever attended in the past.

I have pursued in understanding the fundamental element of Toritsugi Divine-Mediation, the concept of "Ujiko wa Kami ga hikiyoseru" or Kami will guide the people to the mediator for salvation throughout my entire ministerial endeavour since I came to Hawaii some 37 years ago. One of the answers to this spiritual quest was given by one of the lay believers in San Francisco Church. He once stated that the elements of feudalism shall be eliminated in the operation of Konkokyo in Hawaii some 10 years ago.

I was born and raised in Japan and got ministerial training at the Amagi Church where the elements of feudalism were prevailing in the entire faith community where the Oyasensei or the Head Minister hold the supreme responsibility for the entire faith community. But I have not been aware of the elements of feudalism within myself, but there could be many in my thoughts and deeds. Through the demonstrations of the role plays of Toritsugi Divine-Mediation on that workshop, I felt like I understood the meaning of the message given in the operation of the church. What I was impressed the most was there was no trace element of feudalism in communicating with a believer during a demonstration by Rev. Tsuda. He demonstrated a dignified, non-discriminatory and non-authoritarian way of encountering a visitor at the designated

place of Toritsugi Divine-Mediation. Every attention is directed in positive receptiveness and understanding the needs of the person, and fulfilling the divine intent to help save the person who came to seek Toritsugi Divine-Mediation. He looked so natural in his performance of duty at the place.

When I contemplated about the impressive presentation of the ministers from Japan, I remembered an episode that could be shared with our local ministers for our endeavour of expanding the work of the Konkokyo faith in Hawaii. I attended the annual Peace Prayer coordinated by the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace at the Gedatsu Church on Sunday, October 24, 2010. I have been involved in this interfaith community for over 21 years. The theme for that year's gathering was "Appreciation." The guest speaker Dr. John Heidel, who is a Christian minister, shared an interesting story. The story was a quotation from another source. I only remember key elements in the story, but the rough outline of the story is as follows:

A young rabbi was in charge of a church. But the church congregation became small. He went to see a renowned senior rabbi who also was in charge of his own church. The young rabbi asked the experienced rabbi some advice for the troubled situation at his church. But the senior rabbi also was in trouble because the church member also left the church. He attributed the declining church congregation due to the social changes and the changes of the people's minds. In responding to the young rabbi's plea, the senior rabbi told him that there could be an appearance of a messiah among you. He had several siblings and wondered who could be the messiah. He became aware that one of them would be the messiah. Eventually, the young minister began to develop the likeness of a messiah. In corresponding to the transformation of the rabbi, the left congregational members began to return to church.

While I was listening to him, I felt like the story can be applied to the Konkokyo faith community. If each minister evolves to develop likeness of the Ikigami Konko Daijin, the phenomenal return of the church congregation can be achieved. Tenchi Kane no Kami, Our Divine Parent stated, "No one is aware of the blessings of Heaven and Earth which enable 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 where the sun shines, in every country, without exception" (Oshirasegoto Oboecho 22-2,3). Or in Japanese, 天地の間のおかげを知った者無し。おいおい三千世界、日天四の照らす下、万国まで残りなく金光大神できおかげ知らしてやる (お知らせ事覚帳 26-22-3)。

Ministers have to demonstrate the truth of the teaching first and the result will follow, since Kami-Sama stated, "Ujiko wa Kami ga hikiyoseru" or in corresponding to the spirituality of the Toritsugi-Mediator, Kami will guide the people to the church. We need to evolve to become Ikigami as has been exemplified by the Founder Konko Daijin.

In my understanding, each church represents the actualization of Kami's ultimate wish that Kami wants to help people through the work of Ikigami Konko Daijin. Kami stated, "Tenchi Kane no Kami wo tasukete kure" Or "Please help me to save the people." His extended wish could be realized only through the

presence of Ikigami Konko Daijin. Only because of the actualization of Ikigami Konko Daijin, Kami could extend a divine request for saving people. If there were no Ikigami Konko Daijin, there would have not the extended divine request. Through our ministry, we have to show the work of Ikigami Konko Daijin, not just surrender ourselves to the routine of everyday chores of the church. The continued operation of the church has proven there sure has been the manifestation of Ikigami Konko Daijin through this church since the church was founded by the Rev. Haruko Takahashi.

## Bulletin Board

### Monthly Services for March 2014

- 1 Sat** -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami at 7:30 pm
- 2 Sun** -Sunday Service at 9 am
- 9 Sun** - Monthly Service for Ikigami Konko Daijin at 9:00 a.m.
- 16 Sun** -Annual Spring Memorial Service at 10am
- 23 Sun** - Sunday Service at 9 am  
-Honolulu Church Spring Memorial Svc. 10 am
- 30 Sun** - Sunday Service at 9 am

### April 2014

- 1 Tue** -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami at 7:30 pm
- 6 Sun** -Sunday Service at 9 am  
-Honolulu Church Spring Grand Ceremony 11 am
- 13 Sun** -Spring Grand Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami at 11 am

### Garage Sale for the Ohana Camp

On Saturday, March 8 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. we will hold a church garage sale for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ohana Camp. The Ohana Camp will be held at the Camp Erdman from June 21 and 22, 2014.

### H.C.R.P. Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will be held at the Gedatsu Church on Monday, March 10, 2014 at 1:30 p.m.

### Monthly Volunteer Activity

We will make a visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility for our regular volunteer activity of interacting with the hospitalized people on Friday, March 14 from 10:00 a.m.

### Biannual Volunteer Activity

We will make a visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long Term Care Facility on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup> from 10-10:45 am. We will provide a Japanese program of singing, dancing, and storytelling. Come and join us. Lunch will follow.

## Honoring Mitama Spirits



### March

Mr. Richard Fujio Tamabayashi	3/7/1999
Mrs. Matsuyo Arikawa	3/8/1995
Mr. Thomas Toshito Yamamoto	3/16/1991
Mrs. Mitsuko Suwa	3/21/2012

*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 73, 74 and 75)*

### No. 73

**This Earth and everything else belong to Kami. Yet you think that they are yours. You think by using money you can manipulate things, without asking Kami. Therefore, your admonishment will not be irrational. Ask Kami for permission to borrow Kami’s land and apologize for your past irreverences. Then, you will be able to build without any problems.**

*(II Mimura Sano 2-2 Kyoten page 698-699)*

### Irreverence towards the Earth

In our daily living, there could be many occasions in which we are to commit irreverence against Kami. The Founder showed us what kinds of irreverence we could be committing and how we should deal with such occasions through reference to some teachings.

The quoted message in this page refers to the incurred irreverence against the ground on which house is being built. In accordance with the Konko Kyoten Scriptures, the quoted message is an excerpt from a much longer statement.

A person declared that he had no fear of Kami and dared to build a warehouse in disregard to the rules of the Days and Directions. But the warehouse collapsed the day after the completion. He tried to build another warehouse at the same spot, but that building also collapsed. He went to see Konko-Sama and related the matter to him. In responding to the extended story, the Founder gave him the quoted message. This time, in following the instructions given by Kami, he was blessed with the successful completion of the warehouse.

The Founder identified the nature of irreverence committed for the building project. The one is failure to acknowledge that “This earth and everything else belongs to Kami.” The other is the human-oriented attitude shown in such a manner as “You can use money to manipulate things.” As for the first statement, we can be relevantly understood that each and every individual can be identified through the parents as well as recognized as beloved child of Kami. The same can be said to the land which can be identified through the ownership as well as recognized as the land belongs to Kami.

Then how can we avoid committing irreverence against Kami? The Founder stated that we should ask Kami for permission to borrow Kami’s land and apologize for our past irreverence and deal with anything with extended mindfulness for the blessed nature of land.

### No. 74

**People are too self-centered. When they are born, no one says anything about lucky or unlucky days. Only after people are born do they talk about such self-centered things. When people die, they say nothing about lucky or unlucky days, but just go. (II Aoi Saki 3 Kyoten page 411)**

### Irreverent nature of observing the Days and Directions

It is a great irreverence against Kami that we consult the Days and Directions for the arrangements of wedding ceremonies, construction projects, traveling and any other events.

In the quoted message, the Founder extended his own unique understanding about the observance of the Days and Directions. His statement implies that those people who follow the Days and Directions are extremely self-centered, and the tradition of the Days and Directions are based on a false concept.

Those people who adhere to the tradition of the Days and Directions do not (or cannot) consult the Days and Directions for their own births and deaths and any other vital occasions in life, but try to follow the Days and Directions only during the time span of life between birth and death. The Founder pointed out the inconsistent nature of following the Days and Directions. In other words, those people’s sole concern in following the Days and Directions is to find ways how they can fulfill their own personal ad hoc solutions. They don’t care about the inconsequent nature of the Days and Directions. It seems to me that the Founder might have flashed an ironical smile or was fed up with the people who followed the Days and Directions blindly.

There would be little reasons to follow the Days and Directions, but it would also be wrong to ignore anything and everything and follow your own discretions in doing anything in life. It would be wrong to conceive that the observance of the Days and Directions can attribute to the

haps and mishaps of life. In the same manner it would be also wrong to act like a person who ignored anything at all and without any inhibition as has been quoted in the previous page 73.

What matters is to develop mindfulness for asking Kami's permission and help for doing anything at all instead of trying to do things on our own wisdom and power alone. We have little control of our own lives. Major portions of our lives take place within the boundaries which we have little control. The most viable way of living as limited nature of human existence is to be mindful of Kami's existence and get engaged in doing anything at all with the heart of asking Kami's permission and help.

#### No. 75

**Though people say that they do not kill others, they do so with their hearts. This is a grave offense. They think that killing someone means to shoot with a gun or stab with a sword, but this is only physical and the obvious. People often kill with their hearts, an offense invisible to the eye. Kami's heart cannot bear such offenses. When one kills physically, the government punishes. When one kills with the heart, Kami punishes. Saying that a person's illness is so serious that it cannot be cured is killing with one's heart. You really don't know if the sick person can be cured or not. There are also those who say that so-and-so should die. These people are all killing with their hearts. They should instead pray to Kami so that the people they are killing will reform their hearts.** (II Sato Mitsujiro 27-1, 2 *Kyoten page 579-580*)

#### Killing with the heart

Some thoughts we develop in our hearts can offend Kami.

A Japanese adage goes, "He looks as if he could not bear to hurt a fly" which implies that some of those people who exhibit external features as good natured people, who actually commit wrongs to others in hiding. There may be many people who commit wrongs in hiding, but there could be even greater number of people who hold wrong thoughts against others in their hearts. We may hold wrong thoughts to others, such as "killing others with the heart" consciously or unconsciously. "So and so should die!" is an example of conscious killing. When we see a person who is deathly ill with no cure in sight, we may have a tendency to think that that they should be euthanized so they don't have to suffer anymore. This is an example of unconscious killing. Regardless of the condition, the thought of killing others in the heart goes against the heart of Kami.

The reason why just holding a thought of killing others in the heart offends Kami is not because we take light of other people's death, but because of our human-oriented assumption, such as when we encounter a gravely ill person we are inclined to determine either that person will

survive or die. Death of a person is beyond human power. But we hold such irreverent thoughts like "Such a person should be put to rest already." What is wrong is the human-oriented attitude in violation of the territory governed by Kami.

As has been discussed in the previous page 74, for the matter beyond human power, we should be mindful of the limited nature of our existence and have the heart of asking Kami's permission and help. This is the way to avoid committing irreverence against Kami. The heart that feels the need to pray for troubled people to be saved and wrongful hearts to be corrected, agrees with the heart of Kami.

*Picture from Rev. Dr. Leon Webber's presentation on Grief to the members of the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace (HCRP) at the Wahiawa Church on February 3, 2014*



*Shōhei Sensei's Toritsugi Workshop February 22-23, 2014*

