



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com. Also, find us on Facebook. Head minister: Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. Vol. XXX, No. 3, March 1, 2018

The **Annual Spring Memorial Service** will be observed on Sunday, March 25, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. 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 join us in commemorating this vital function of the Konko faith in person and on time. A fellowship lunch will follow the service.



A pressure cooker similar to this one was used to cook the soy beans for miso making at my native town in Ehime.

Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

From time to time I recall the State of Hawaii emergency false alert of a Ballistic Missile threat inbound to Hawaii on January 13th of this year.

The incident reminded me of a close call that the entire Yano family encountered some 35 years ago in October of 1983. I took my whole family, including my three children to a pilgrimage tour to attend a grand service in commemoration of the centennial memorial service of the Founder held at Headquarters Church. During the stay in Japan, we extended our journey to make a visit to my native town in Ehime and spent a few days with my parents and my other family members. It was late autumn. My family was making their annual supply of “miso.”

The whole family helped when it came to making miso. We had a special family recipe and made miso with barley and soy beans. One of the main ingredients was soy beans. They soaked the soy beans in water and then cooked it using a huge pressure cooker. In the yard they fired up a stove and placed the pressure cooker filled with water and soy beans.

I helped with watching the fire and added more firewood if necessary. I enjoyed watching the pressure cooker cook the soy beans. I believe I put too much firewood into the stove and fanned the flames to deliver intense heat to the pot. All of a sudden, I heard a loud and most dreaded whooshing sound coming from the pressure cooker. Then, in no time at all, the pressure cooker started to dance on the stove and began to shoot out a boiling hot paste of cooked soy beans like a barrel shooting out soda. Then the pressure cooker took off from the stove and began spinning around in the yard in an erratic manner. All of us were mortified that the pressure cooker could explode any second. Everybody took shelter behind the house wall. The spinning pressure cooker came to a complete stop after several minutes. We came out to see the terrible incident that had developed in the yard. The walls of the house were painted with soy bean paste. Several of the Yano children and grandchildren were covered with soy bean paste. I went into the house and sat down before the house altar and extended a prayer in gratitude.

My father who did not witness what had happened showed up and shouted out in anger, “If the pressure cooker exploded, it could have generated enough power to equal a one-ton bomb. This could have been a major disaster!” He also went into the house and extended a prayer in appreciation of blessings for having a major misfortune turned into a minor one instead.

The cause of the explosion was identified to be a defective part of the pressure regulator placed on top of the cooker. The old fashioned pressure cooker was made out of a large cast iron barrel, approximately 15 to 16 inches in diameter. The originally installed movable part of the bronze regulator was missing. To replace it, a large and long iron nail was placed upside down and bended the top end. Because I fired up the stove too much, the paste of the cooked soy beans plugged the vent. As it turned out, the rubber ring around the rim was partially defective. Thanks to the broken rubber ring, the pressure was relieved with the spraying of soy bean paste from where the ring was weak. If the rubber o-ring around the rim was intact, the pressure cooker would have exploded and the devastation would have been unimaginable. The entire Yano family could have perished at that occasion. When I remember the January 13th false missile threat, I get chills up my spine just like the time of the pressure cooker incident 35 years ago.

I never say “lucky” or “unga yokatta” that the worst did not happen. The incident could be a divine reminder for me and the whole family that has thrived through the engagement in the Konko faith initiated by my grandfather, Tōsuke Yano some 100 years ago. I see Kami-Sama’s work and the prayers of all those people who have ever been connected to us in one way or another.

From day one of our missionary work at Wahiawa 40 years ago, my wife and I have extended daily prayers in expressing thanks for any elements in life that have sustained and helped us to continue in our missionary work.

The Founder reminded us, “People must receive divine blessings even when they have no problems. In a time of crisis, they need to receive more divine blessings. Receiving divine blessings is not guaranteed unless they have held fast to their faith so that they do not have to look for it during crucial times. If an emergency arises it is all right to pray, ‘Konko Daijin, please help me.’ Even if you are naked or are in the middle of a field, you will soon receive divine blessings” (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 17).

Konko-Sama Says . . .

Although people live between heaven and earth, they are unaware of Kami’s blessings. Shrines, temples, and houses all stand on Kami’s land. Without realizing this, people consult the Days and Directions and are disrespectful to Kami. They suffer hardships due to these offenses. Tenchi Kane no Kami has sent Ikigami Konko Daijin to provide blessings and teachings so that mankind may prosper. Kami is Kami because of man, and man is man because of Kami. Both are fulfilled through this mutual relationship (Konko Kyoso Gorikai No. 3 in Kyoten Gorikai III).

Although Kami cannot be seen, you are constantly walking within and through the midst of Kami. Even while fertilizing a field or walking along a path, you are in Tenchi Kane No Kami’s hiromae. The whole world is Tenchi Kane No Kami’s hiromae (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 6).

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services for March 2018

- 1 Thr -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 11 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
- 18 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Honolulu Church Spring Memorial Svc (10 am)
- 25 Sun -Wahiawa Spring Memorial Service (10 am)

April 2018

- 1 Sun -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (9 am)
- 13 Fri -Wahiawa Church Spring Grand Svc (6:30 pm)

Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace

The regular monthly meeting will be held on Monday, March 5, 2018 at Palolo Kwannonji Temple at 12 noon.

Volunteer Activity

The regular monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility will be made on Friday, March 9, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Garage Sale for Ohana Camp

We will hold a garage sale on Saturday, March 17, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The preparation for the

garage sale will be held on Friday, March 16 at 9:00 a.m. All proceeds will be deposited to the church educational fund for the 8th Summer Ohana Camp scheduled for July 7 and 8, 2018.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

March

Sandy Abe	3/4/2014
Richard Fujio Tamabayashi	3/7/1999
Edith Lin Hai Noguchi	3/7/2016
Matsuyo Arikawa	3/8/1995
Thomas Toshito Yamamoto	3/16/1991
Mitsuko Suwa	3/21/2012
Yoshikazu Hirota	2014

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 Matsutarō Kōsaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference pages 335, 336and 337)

No. 335: When you come here and think you are receiving blessed teachings, your heart becomes tranquil. But when you are at home thinking about various things, you get angry. And your heart becomes disturbed. When you get angry, your face, even your lips change color. Those with weak bodies will succumb immediately and may experience headaches. Convulsive people will suffer from stomach pains. These maladies occur because when they get angry, their bodies stiffen, constricting the flow of bold. After one begins to cool off, the constricted blood starts to circulate again. When you are angry, reform yourself by praying to Kami to polish the mirror in your heart. Practicing faith to ward off sickness is having your heart save you. (I Yamamoto Sadajiro 59-1, 2, 3 Kyoten page 395)

Having your heart save you

The quoted message from Sadajiro Yamamoto is a partial excerpt from a much longer statement. The original message begins with a line, “It is his friends that make or mar a man. When you come here think you are receiving blessed teachings, your heart becomes tranquil.”

Many believers experience the virtuous effects of attending church where they can converse with fellow believers in comfort. They enjoy peacefulness in the given circumstance.

While they return home, their priorities become fulfillment of their needs and wants and show little reservation in the way they interact with other family members. They become easily upset by subtle elements of negativities in the family life. When they get angry, the blood circulation would be affected; their muscles become constricted and encounter consequential physical disorders. It is interesting to know that the Founder seemed to have a rich knowledge about these physiological elements.

The Founder seemed to develop such a deep and wide insightful spiritual power to see through people’s minds so clearly. It could be attributed to the way he lived in dealing with many difficult encounters in life as he was adopted into another family (at the age of twelve). The Founder could be an ordinary person who made such an outstanding spiritual transformation.

Some of the teachings found in Konkokyo Kyoten Scriptures could be derived from the quoted message, such as “Tenchi Kane No Kami protects both pure and impure places. Do not have impurities in your heart” (III Shinkun I General Principles 7); “Do spiritual training rather than ascetic practices” (III Shinkun I General Principles 8); “Whether you save or kill yourself depends upon your own heart” (III Shinkun II How to Develop Faith 12).

I. Faith and Folk Beliefs

No. 336: When I asked for an amulet, Konko-Sama replied, “There are no amulets. People make amulets their object of worship, but amulets don’t give divine blessings. Though Kami cannot be seen, Kami is all around you. You are walking within and right through Kami. You can even present your requests to a wall.” (II Tsugawa Haruo 3 Kyoten page 626)

No amulets

Haruo Tsugawa was born as a son of a merchant who was granted an official privilege to conduct business with the Ashimori Clan. He got engaged in village office and got a job as a secretary and then served as village head.

When he made a pilgrimage to see the Founder for the first time, he asked for an amulet. It was a common established religious practice of those days that anybody who made visits to shrines and temples asked for amulets. Even today, the people of Japan adhere to this custom. It is a common phenomenon that even people who have no religious affiliation with the religion flock to make visits to shrines and temples in celebration of New Year’s Day and purchase amulets; during the seasonal high school baseball tournaments, most of those student baseball players who reached the level to play at the famed “Koshien” baseball stadium will hold one of these “omamori” amulets on them in wishing to win their ball games. When the annual college entrance examination season arrives, they get “omamori” from the Tenmangu Shrine that is well reputed for successful academic achievements.

It is believed that each “omamori” amulet is a sacred item in which the deity dwells. The holder of the amulets is said to get protection and special blessings from the deities. If the holder of the amulets do not enjoy any positive results, they casually discard the amulet and get other popular ones. It is said that the owners of cars who place amulets in their vehicles would be divinely protected from accidents. They discard the ineffective amulets and try to get popular ones, too. It seems that the sales of amulets could be affected by the number of car accidents.

Those established religious observances have been deeply rooted in the lives of the Japanese people because of a fear factor. If they do not care about the tradition of “omamori” and encountered mishaps, they try to attribute the accidents to the ignoring of the “omamori” tradition. Because of this, it would be comfortable for them to hold “omamori” rather than living in fear of some unknown elements that could affect their lives in some ways.

The Founder boldly ignored the practices and stated to Hachitaro Shimamura, “An amulet contains only ink. Prayers vanish as they are chanted. Teach people the best you can, and have them receive divine blessings” (I Shimamura Hachitaro 18).

The Founder lived in this conviction, “Though Kami cannot be seen, Kami is all around you. You are walking



within and right through Kami. You can even present your requests to a wall.”

No. 337: If you depend on Kami by practicing your faith, you need not worry about superstitions. Because the Chinese character for “four” can be read as “shi,” which means death, people think it’s bad. Think of it as the “shi” of “shiwase,” which means happiness or as the “yo,” which also means “four” of “yoi” which means good. If people practice faith thinking positively about all things, Kami will turn everything into divine blessings. (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 116-3 Kyoten page 855 to 856)

Superstitions

Japanese people have been obsessed with superstitions. But even in the western cultures, they have some negative notions about the number 13 and “Friday the 13th” because of the day Christ died. People try to avoid traveling on the day of Friday the 13th. Some buildings do not even have a 13th floor. We can be so vulnerable to such superstitious elements we encounter in life and try to deal with them.

But the Founder believed in Tenchi Kane No Kami, the Divine Parent of the Universe who always tries to save us. Even today, some notions of fear about the number “4” prevail in our life because the number could be pronounced “shi” –implying death. There is no room #4 in the modern hospital facilities. But the Founder interpreted the number “4” in a drastic manner. He stated, “Think of the number 4 as ‘shi’ of ‘shiwase’ (which means happiness) or as the ‘yo’ (which also means four) of ‘yoi’ (which means good).”

We used to clap hands four times before the Kami altar, and two times before the Mitama altar. In corresponding to a drastic organizational reform that took place in the past, we clap our hands together four times even before the Mitama altar. This practice of clapping hands shows a symbolical meaning of “shijyuu shiwase” or always enjoying happiness in gratitude.

The quoted message is a partial excerpt of a much longer original dialogue. The first half of the messages reads, “People avoid marrying someone who is four (pronounced ‘shi’) or ten (pronounced ‘juu’) years different in age because they believe it is unlucky. However, you need not follow these practices if you practiced faith in Kami. People visit shrines and lay out sacred lots wishing for good luck. The lucky fortune *shijuu shiwase* (constant happiness) is an example where both words start with the sound ‘shi.’ The character ‘shi’

(which means ‘four’ in Japanese) is not ominous. From now on, put four sacred paper hangings on the sacred rope that hangs in front of the altar. This is why there are four sacred paper hangings on Konko Daijin’s sacred rope, and everyone is still able to receive divine blessings” (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 116-1, 2).

