



You are cordially invited to attend the
Spring Memorial Service

On Sunday, March 19, 2023 @10:00 am

A light naorai lunch will follow.

The service will be streamed on Facebook Live, if
you are not able to attend in person.

Honor Your Ancestors

Immortality is important for humans.

Immortality is when others keep praying for you
after you die. (*Gorikai II Kondo Tsuru 1*)

An Indispensable Encounter

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano

Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Both my wife and I were able to attend the 60th Anniversary Celebration of Konko Church of Tokiwadai in Tokyo on February 11, 2023. I have attended the anniversary celebration of the church held every 10 years. If I did not meet the head minister of the church, the late Rev. Michio Miyake, I would not have been serving in Hawaii as a Konko minister. I made a flight reservation in October of last year for this trip to Tokyo. Just one week before the departure, my daughter, Edna informed us that an affordable flight to Tokyo was available only in the month of February. I had intended to go alone, originally. But because of this opportunity that had come up, I asked if my wife, Reiko would like to join the trip with me. She of course said “Yes, I want to go too.” I immediately logged in and bought my wife a round trip ticket as well. And through much okage, we were able to both fly to Tokyo.

One of the things that surprised me about the service was that it was conducted with such strict COVID restrictions. Only a limited number of church believers and a few visitors from other regions of the country were present. Masks were mandatory, and we were all told not to recite the prayers audibly.

The Head Minister of Konko Church of Izuo delivered the main sermon for the anniversary. The Izuo Church is Tokiwadai’s parent church. Some believers expressed their surprise for our visitation from Hawaii. Some of them have visited Hawaii in 1991 with the Rev. Michio Miyake in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Pearl Harbour attack by Japan.

The 60th Anniversary was a service of about two hours, but we were able to appreciate their devotion for their faith life and dedication for the accomplishment of the 60th Anniversary. The weather was gorgeous that day without a single cloud in the sky.

But it was quite cold in Tokyo, and it had snowed heavily a couple days before we landed. Rev. Michito Miyake, the head minister of Tokiwadai Church was so happy to see us. Everyone welcomed us with warmth and hospitality, and it felt so good to be able to attend in person.

The reason why my wife wanted to go in an instant could be attributed to an episode. When I heard the passing of the Rev. Michio Miyake 6 years ago in February, I attended his funeral service held at the church shortly after his passing in accordance with the Konkokyo tradition. At the exact same time I was at the funeral service in Tokyo, a large “stealth bomber” type black moth appeared out of nowhere and landed on my wife’s left side of her chest in Hawaii. This happened in the house. The moth stayed there for a considerable amount of time and didn’t fly away. She carefully went out of the house and gently released the moth. She felt like it could be the Mitama Spirit of the late Rev. Michio Miyake. This could be one of the reasons why she was eager to attend the anniversary service.

Also, on our way to Hawaii for our missionary work, 45 years ago, we both went on a pilgrimage to the church. I would like to extend my thanks to the Rev. Michio Miyake of the Konko Church of Tokiwadai who gave me a message in celebration of our departure for our missionary work in Hawaii when we made a courtesy visit to greet him. He has provided a momentous opportunity for me to get engaged in ministry of the Konkokyo faith when I was in Tokyo. He jotted down a message on the cover of the wrapping of goshinmai sacred rice. The message reads, 「有り難きこの思召いつまでも忘れずに行け人助けの道」. I have interpreted this message in this manner, “Never fail to appreciate this wondrous divine mission granted to you for saving people” dated September 27, 1977. I have placed this Goshinmai sacred rice packet at the Toritsugi-Mediation Desk to serve as my daily reminder. Thankfully, the message has never faded away.

We say “aien-kien” or a fortunate encounter and a twist of fate. The same expression is commonly used in our daily living. How can I explain the reason why I have spent about 45 years in Hawaii in taking care of the Konko Mission of Wahiawa with my wife Reiko-sensei. How could it be possible for us to be at the same location for nearly half a century? How was it possible for our marriage and family to be so blessed for this long?

The first time I visited Hawaii was some fifty years ago when I was still a student at an English language school in Tokyo. I had no idea I would be returning back to Hawaii as a Konko minister to take care of the Konko Mission of Wahiawa after the passing of the founding minister, the Rev. Haruko Takahashi. How was this all possible?

It could be a divinely arranged course of my fate to be guided to the Konko Church of Tokiwadai while I was in Tokyo. I met the late Rev. Michio Miyake, the founder of the church. There I had a faint thought of wanting to be involved in the Konkokyo

organization. That some way, somehow, I wanted to be of help using my English skills I had obtained.

An interesting thing happened. Just as I was about to move in to the Konko Church of Tokiwadai for spiritual training under the guidance of Rev. Miyake, I got denied acceptance as a spiritual trainee, just one week before I moved in. He just said, "I'm sorry, I cannot accept you at this church." I did not question his decision. I had a feeling that this was all meant to be. So I instead went to the Konko Church of Amagi for my spiritual training.

The minister at the local church my family attended, Kawanoishi Church, came from the Amagi Church in Fukuoka. The only image I had of Amagi was a fish called "amagi" used for sushi making. I also remembered my parents and the minister of the Kawanoishi Church saying that the life at the Konko Church of Amagi is so strict and severe.

My thinking was, "If the church is so strict, it could be the best place to receive spiritual training." And without any hesitation, I picked up the phone and talked to my father. My father responded in joy and expressed, "The Mitama Spirit of Hosaka sensei would be in great joy." That was the initial response of my father and parents. They talked to Hosaka Sensei who made arrangements for my visit to the Konko Church of Amagi as a student. He made a thorough research of the ministers who had been trained at the institution. The Rev. Toshihiko Hosaka concluded that the only way I could survive at Amagi Church was for me to present myself as an offering in appreciation of the Yano family's many blessings. Rev. Hosaka used the term of "Osonae to shite" as an offering in appreciation. He could find one of the misters who was an "Osonae" to Kami-Sama through the church.

Interestingly, I knew the term of "Inochi no Ohatsuho" or an offering of a family member in appreciation of the blessings received by the family when I was attending a church in Tokyo. Casually, the expression referred to a daily visit to church. But at that stage I had no idea of the meaning of the term. I thought I would get something.

Anyway, the Rev. Hosaka took me to the Konko Church of Amagi. It was my first visit to the church. The first impression was the size of the facility. It was so big with many building on the site. The Rev. Hosaka introduced me to the Rev. Fumio Yasutake, Head Minister.

I entered at the Konko Church of Amagi on September 29, 1974. A few days later, while I was cleaning the yard with a bamboo sweeper, an elderly man approached me and said, "Yesterday, on our way back from visiting Konko Church of Kokura by microbus, the Rev. Fumio Yasutake told us, 'There was an Osonae of a shinja' or an offering of believer.' Through our human perspectives, we do not know what kind of people Kami-Sama use for divine purposes."

Later on, I understand that the Rev. Yasutake accepted me as an offering of shinja and forwarded me to Kami-Sama in that manner. I have learned to appreciate the grateful nature of my acceptance to the church in that manner as years pass by.

For me, encountering the Konko Church of Tokiwadai was an indispensable transitional point in my life. We have been grateful we could have made a pilgrimage in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the church in blessedness.

Konko-Sama Said...

Konko Daijin said, "People have often wondered why a man who is honest, doesn't do anything bad to others, and is like a kami or buddha, is often afflicted with many misfortunes. This is because he has somehow shown irreverence to Kami.

[GIII:Jinkyu Kyogoroku/ed. Kataoka, Jiro:105.1]

2 No matter how honest and good he is, he is apt to commit irreverence to Kami if he does not practice faith. There is a difference between having a good personality and showing reverence to Kami." [GIII:Jinkyu Kyogoroku/ed. Kataoka, Jiro:105.2]

3 No matter how good he is, if he doesn't practice faith, he will not receive divine blessings. [GIII:Jinkyu Kyogoroku/ed. Kataoka, Jiro:105.3] |Misfortune| |Kami, Irreverence toward| |Faith practice| |Human characteristic, Honesty|=



Honoring the Mitama Spirits

March

Richard Fujio Tamabayashi	3/7/1999
Thomas Toshito Yamamoto	3/16/1991
Matsuyo Arikawa	3/8/1995
Mitsuko Suwa	3/21/2012
Sandy Abe	3/4/2014
Yoshikazu Hirota	2014
Edith Lin Hai Noguchi	3/7/2016
Gregg Sadao Miyasaka	3/5/2019
Fukaya, Ronald	3/14/2021

If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

Bulletin Board

Church Services for March 2023

- 1 Wed -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 5 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-KMH Rotary Hanashikai Mtg @10:30 am
- 12 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9:00 am)
- 19 Sun -Spring Memorial Service (10 am)
Naorai lunch will follow
- 26 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

April 2023

- 1 Sat -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 p)

Announcements:

●Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis

The next activity will be on Fri, March 3rd @ 10 am

●KMH Rotary Hanashikai at Wahiawa Church in-person and on ZOOM on Sunday, March 5, 2023 (10:30 am) *Curry lunch will be served.

ZOOM ID: 847 4142 7204 **PASS:** 063254

●KMH Kyoten Study Group via Zoom. The main reference book will be "Voice of the Universe." Please join the study session and deepen your understanding about the messages of the Founder on March 8th and 22nd (Wed. from 5 pm to 6 pm)

ZOOM ID: 815 2952 9465 **PASS:** 914385

●KMH CEOC Meeting on Zoom on Friday, March 24, 2023 (3 pm)

●KMH Minister's Gathering on ZOOM on Saturday, March 25, 2023 (2-4 pm)

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 titled, "Konko Kyoso no Shougai" or "The Life of the Founder Konko Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto, and was published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center. The publication was made in 1980. There are many biographies about the life of the Founder Konko Daijin. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (Page 84 to 88) (continued from the previous issue)

Divine Blessings

Bunji went to see Shige`emon at his residence four days later. As farmers the season was the busiest period in the year. But the construction of the house had already begun. Bunji helped for the construction of the house. He has carpentry skills.

Because of his help at the construction site, Bunji experienced swollen arms on October 20 and took a rest for the whole day. The condition was not that serious. He could do some farm work and household chores. Eventually, he regained good health without any complications.

During this period, Bunji experienced a few unusual phenomena. When Bunji responded to help the construction work at Kameyama, he felt his hands became

lighter and it seemed to be raised up-ward. Bunji had never experienced such an unusual thing before. At another occasion, this episode happened when Bunji visited Kameyama. Bunji felt as if Shige`emon said, "I believe my brother (Bunji) would come to help the construction work and I am waiting for his visitation." Shige`emon had not asked about his visitation. But Bunji responded to that imaginary calling and visited the construction site at Kameyama. Bunji talked with Shige`emon about the matter and learned that it was Kami-Sama that guided him to Kameyama through the voice of Shige`emon. Those strange phenomena made Bunji become keenly aware of any thoughts he felt in his mind as some kind of message from Kami-Sama and tried to figure out Kami-Sama's intent.

On November 9, Shige`emon moved to live in the newly built house and installed Konjin in the house. As soon as he settled down at the house, on that day, Konjin spoke through Shige`emon, saying, "I am Konjin. All of the family members, listen to me well. This time, Konjin helped the Year of the Sheep (Shige`emon) to rise above by using the Heavenly rope. You have endured prolonged hardship. But the hardship you have endured is your spiritual training. Kami shall let you be reborn for His purpose. As of today, you shall give up farming. Family members be patient, for your family life would get better gradually. You should not regard him as the household head, nor your husband. Don't think of him as your parent. Leave him as a child of Kami." (Kandori Konkokyo) From that day on, Shige`emon followed the divine message and began to serve Kami at the worship place of the house. Shige`emon became the founder of the religion called Kandori Konkokyo.

Bunji helped Shige`emon become functional for his service to Kami by sending a keg of sake in celebration of the newly built house; and some cash allowances for household financial assistance.

A while later, in December, Bunji's wife Tose experienced some physical abnormalities for some days. She was expecting to give birth, but her condition was unusual. Bunji pondered about his wife's condition and responded to visit Shige`emon at Kameyama for the matter. Shige`emon responded to the message forwarded by Bunji and extended a prayer. Shige`emon got a prompt response from Kami, "Ujiko (referred to Tose) has a mistaken thought. She thinks the child should not be raised. I will make your wife healthy again from today. If this child is not raised, misfortune shall befall the parents. Raise this child. I will have this one be the last" (Oboegaki 4-4-2).

Bunji went home and conveyed this instruction to his wife. She confessed, "Since we already have many children, I felt that this one should't be raised. But because of

Pictures of our Trip to Tokyo to attend the 60th Anniversary of the Konko Church of Tokiwadai on 2/11/23

Konjin's instruction, let's raise this child" (Oboecho 4-4-3). They had four children. In those days, four children in a family were common. As a farming household wife, Tose had to manage the family life in a practical manner. Tose was concerned about her husband who was deeply involved in the practice of Konjin faith, and made some huge donations for the construction of the shrine for Shige`emon. But she could not say anything about Bunji getting involved in his pursuit of his faith in Konjin. In responding to the difficult financial situation, she could have reached a conclusion that she would not raise the child to be born since she had already four children. But deep inside her mind, she was hesitating to abort the child. The insight forwarded by Shige`emon was a shock and deeply moved her heart. While listening to the message related by her husband, Tose made up her mind and said, "I shall raise this child."



60th Anniversary of Konko Church of Tokiwadai

Tose's irreverent thoughts about her pregnancy was also a serious matter for Bunji as well. The matter seemed to be a personal issue of his wife, but there lied some fundamental issues Bunji had to deal with. He became aware that he could have held some mistakes and misconceptions in his daily living. The message delivered by Shige`emon deeply moved his heart. He apologized to Kami for the mistaken perception of his life and his own ignorance of the situation.



Ms. Fumie Miyake dancing Kibimai (daughter of Miyake Sensei)

From the following day, Tose regained her usual life again, and could perform household chores, such as weaving. Psychological pressure might have affected Tose who experienced physical disorders.



Rev. Michito Miyake (Head Minister)

In concluding the section of the writing in "Oboecho" Bunji jot down, "We were grateful for this blessing and gave thanks" (Oboecho 4-4-4).

The expression of appreciation for the blessings received did not refer only for the restoration of his wife's good health, but the expressed words of appreciation could be a reflection of Bunji who felt overwhelmed in acknowledging the presence of Kami, and the work of Kami that had deeply affected his own faith life. The expression of his deep gratitude for the blessings from October of that year 1857 could be the most appropriate in concluding the year.

Bunji had tried to aspire to know Kami's true intentions for a long time. His wish was actualized through an unexpected encounter with Shige`emon. Shige`emon showed Bunji about the nature of Konjin who held personal aspects of character. Through the encounter of his serious illness at the age of 42nd, and his faith in Konjin, Bunji's many cherished thoughts in his heart suddenly seemed to have become activated like a lively fish that was revived in a fresh supply of water.



Revs. Yasuhiro and Reiko Yano with Tokiwadai Church members