



“Being Mindful and Appreciative of Food’s Life Force”

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano,
Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa

The annual 25th interfaith Peace Prayer organized by the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace and co-sponsored by The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii was observed on Sunday, October 21, 2018 at the Konko Mission of Honolulu from 4:00 p.m. I felt grateful to be able to hold this year’s function at the Honolulu Church. The church is beautiful and functional for this kind of event. We can also introduce the Konko faith to the people of other interfaith communities in one way or another by providing the venue for the function.

Personally, I have gotten engaged in this interfaith community from the stage of inception that took place at the Honolulu Church on November 25, 1991. The Rev. Michio Miyake of Konko Church of Tokiwadai in Tokyo made a visit to Hawaii and held services of apologies for the victimized people because of the Pearl Harbor attack by Japan on December 7, 1941. He offered a service on board the Arizona Memorial and at the National Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor Attack. In corresponding to his visit to Hawaii, he provided the initial thought of establishing the interfaith meeting in affiliation of WCRP or the World Conference of Religions for Peace in Hawaii. He was actively involved in WCRP in Japan. The first interfaith meeting was held in 1992 at Chaminade University of Honolulu. The first annual Interfaith Prayer for Peace was held at the State Diamond Head Crater Park in 1993. I felt grateful in witnessing the emergence of the next generation of people emerging in the interfaith community functions in the last quarter century.

The theme for this year’s gathering was, “Being Mindful and Appreciative of Food’s Life Force.” Seventeen religious and peace-oriented organizations showed their intent to extend their prayers for peace. On behalf of the Konkokyo faith community, the Rev. Dr. Todd Zenji Takahashi, an associate minister of Konko Mission of Honolulu performed the “Oonusa” purification rite and offered an impressive prayer for peace.

The keynote speaker, Mr. Glen Kila, Project/Program Director of Koa Ike, made a presentation. His speech was based on his Hawaiian cultural tradition. The food cultural tradition of Hawaii that had sustained good health and longevity of the native Hawaiians in the past has been affected by the introduction of the non-Hawaiian diet, such as fast foods. Many of his family members and the community people have died early, which could be attributed to the “ono” fast foods

with excessive nutrition, processing and preservatives. He jokingly exclaimed, “Fast food is Ono, but, Oh No!” definitely not good for our health.

I made the initial proposal for this year’s theme for the food related subject. Food is such a common and universal element that can be the foundations of any religious faiths. At one occasion, I thought to myself that the conversation of food can become controversial in an interfaith community, especially where food consumption rules differ depending on certain religions. Some faiths do not accept “omiki” or sacred rice wine, coffee or caffeinated beverages. Among the interfaith community, there are faiths that avoid meats and try to promote vegetarian dishes. It is a known tradition that some Buddhist believers try to refrain from meat and adhere strictly to vegetarian dishes called, “shojin-ryouri.” Jewish believers adhere to Kosher foods.

My daughter, Edna, mentioned about her experiences in middle school and high school. She vividly remembers some of the students totally disrespecting food. She saw people slamming apples against the wall, throwing dinner rolls at each other, and just tossing a full plate of food into the trash can. These images were so disturbing and wasteful that she did not eat lunch in middle school. She felt sad for the food being treated like that and was upset at the students who had no respect for life’s sustenance. She just couldn’t bear to watch.”

I have noticed that the initial signs of troubles in the family show up in the way families have their meals. Maybe people who slams apples against the wall or people who throws dinner rolls at each other and abusing food might not have enjoyed food with their families. It would be disturbing to think about how these people came to be as adults while holding the same disrespect towards foods.

The first food we take into our body as soon as we are born could be mother’s breast milk. Everything needed for the newborn to survive is provided in breast milk. In civilizations where a newborn could not drink breast milk, there would be no way to survive. In a sense, the breast milk is divinely blessed food for the newborn. Kami-Sama prepared the food for the newborn to survive and continue to live. Any foods we may take for granted, water, vegetables, meats and other elements have the same nature of mother’s breast milk. They are all provided for the sustenance of our lives.

In the Konkokyo faith community, we recite teachings of the Founder Konko Daijin pertaining to food consumption as follows:
All food is provided by Tenchi Kane No Kami to sustain our lives. Let us be thankful for whatever foods we may eat or drink. Pray for good health, for good health is the foundation of all things.

Jiroshiro Kataoka stated in Jinkyukyogoroku, “There is nothing more irreverent than to waste food. It takes a long time to prepare the food before it can be eaten. Why is it that people work hard? They work hard so that they will be able to feed themselves without anxiety, nevertheless, they waste or throw away food. That means they are wasting Kami’s blessings and people’s hard work. You should look around. Are there any healthy people who waste food? No one who wastes food succeeds in society. They all have to leave their occupations because of their wastefulness (III Jinkyukyogoroku 100). Let us be mindful and appreciative of the blessed nature of any foods and drinks we enjoy.

Konko-Sama Says . . .

Food becomes medicine or poison depending on your heart. (III Shinkun 2-14)

Humans are made by what they eat, so if they don’t eat, they will soon get thin. When ill, they will be unable to eat their favorite foods. While having this disability, do religious training by not complaining and worrying about your predicament. Don’t be dissatisfied. Pray wholeheartedly to Kami for all matters, and polish your heart for it to receive all matters gratefully. You will receive divine blessings sooner (I Yamamoto Sadajiro 41-1)

Eat a lot of your favorite foods because they are like medicine for the body. However, eating too much will make you throw up. It is said that you should fill only eighty-percent of your stomach. Try and fill a bowl eighty-percent with water. The water won’t spill even if you take the bowl and run a little. This is a natural law. Remember that eating more of your favorite foods after you are full is being irreverent to Kami. (I Kondo Fujimori 43-1, 2, 3)

When people eat and drink and think they’ve had enough, it is Tenchi Kane No Kami informing them of their limits. Those who go beyond these limits by eating and drinking more, end up getting sick. This is being irreverent to Kami. And those who throw up after overeating or overdrinking are also unthinking. Those practicing faith should always respect Kami’s protection and not disregard it in everything they do. Pushing others to overeat or overdrink is not being generous. For the sake of the country and for other people and yourself, practice a sincere faith that is not wasteful. (I Yamamoto Sadajiro 66-1, 2)

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services for November 2018

- 1 Thur -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 3 Sat -Mini Bazaar and Rummage Sale (10 am-2 pm)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Wailuku Church Autumn Grand Service (11 am)
- 11 Sun -Montly Service for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
- 18 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)
- 25 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-21st Memorial Svc. for late Rev. Kikue Kodama (9 am)

December 2018

- 1 Sat -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 2 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace

The 25th Interfaith Peace Prayer organized by HCRP and co-sponsored by The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii was held on Sunday, October 21, 2018 at Konko Mission of Honolulu at 4:00 p.m. About 63 people attended. Thank you very much for the Rev. Koichi Konko and the congregation for providing the venue for the function. Thank you all for your gifts of non-perishable food items. They were donated to the Institute for Human Services and Holomua Na ‘Ohana.

Volunteer Activity

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

Mini Bazaar

We will conduct the church Mini Bazaar and Rummage Sale on Saturday, November 3, 2018 from 10:00 am through 2:00 p.m. All proceeds will help in the operation of the church functions. White elephant items, plants, crafts and baked goods will be available.



KMH Board Meeting

The last KMH board meeting of this year will be held on Saturday, November 24, 2018 at Konko Mission of Honolulu at 10:30 a.m.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

November

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Katherine T. Kawaguchi | 11/7/2016 |
| David Suyeki Oka | 11/8/2006 |
| Rev. Takashi Inagaki | 11/9/2004 |
| Ronald Minoru Miyatake | 11/14/2000 |
| Chieno Hirota | 11/17/2009 |
| Nobuko Yano | 11/18/2016 |
| Crandal Ancog | 11/21/2008 |
| Toshihiko Hosaka | 11/20/2008 |
| Cecilia Asako Soma | 11/24/2003 |
| Tei Yoshiiwa | 11/24/1973 |
| Yoshitoshi Uyehara | 11/25/2000 |
| Rev. Kikue Kodama | 11/28/1997 |

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 359,360 and 361)

No. 359: Though I am called Ikigami Konko Daijin, my physical body has subjected me to heat and cold. But since I will leave my body to become a true kami, I will be able to protect all people at a glance.

(I Shimamura Hachitaro 11 Kyoten page 328)

Becoming a real kami after departure

The subject of the quoted message is similar to the previous page about the Founder’s perpetual nature of helping people even after his departure. The Founder’s unyielding determination for his mission of helping people was lively depicted in the statement.

The extended message, “Though I am called Ikigami Konko Daijin, my physical body has subjected me to heat and cold” implies that he could be of much help in the work of helping people if he would not be disturbed by the elements of heat and cold. It is natural for ordinary people to feel discomforts and disruptions of heat and cold. The Founder didn’t care much about his own discomforts of heat and cold and dedicated as much as possible to the task of helping people. Yet he had to mention about the elements of heat and cold in his performance of helping people. The expressed message sounds like he felt sorry for his own physical body that could limit his ability to help people because of the elements of heat and cold. His determination against the task of helping people sounds extraordinary.

The Founder stated, “But since I will leave my body to become a true kami, I will be able to protect all people at a glance.” The message implies that despite the fact he was identified as a kami while he lived as an ordinary person. For the Founder, departure from his physical body helped him to liberate from any limitations he experienced and transformed him to become a true kami.

The death of an individual can be perceived in various manners. Some people experience a deep sorrow for the passing of their loved one. Some people believe that the death means a journey into the other world. Some people believe in the perpetual life as a Mitama Soul after death. But for the Founder who was identified as a kami while he was alive, his death was perceived as a transformation into a true kami who was not subject to any physical limitations.

The Founder stated, “I will be able to protect all people at a glance” seemed to show fulfillment of his determination and prayers he held while he was alive.

For the Founder, his departure meant liberation from the limitations of physical body and transformation into a kami who could respond to any calls of help from him.

No. 360: The moon may disappear behind clouds, but it is still there. Konko Daijin also has a physical form, and before long the day will come when it will also disappear. Even though my body is gone, I will still be here. Konko Daijin shall live forever. Without flustering over whether my physical form exists or not, practice faith single-heartedly and sincerely. Your life will blossom like a beautiful flower and be filled with the fruits of virtue

(II Fukushima Gihe’e 22-1 Kyoten page 680- 681)

Eternal life of Konko Daijin

The subject of this page also discusses the death of the Founder and his working after death.

Let’s try to find out the death of the Founder and his perpetual workings even after death. The Founder clearly showed the relationship of his departure and his eternal working even after his passing. The Founder stated, “The moon may disappear behind clouds, but it is still there.”

It could be assumed that the Founder who stated, “Konko Daijin also has a physical form, and before long the day will come when it will also disappear. Even though my body is gone, I will still be here. Konko Daijin shall live forever,” might feel overwhelmed in looking back at all of his life. At the same time, Gihe’e Fukushima, who listened to the Founder, might also feel overwhelmed by the extended message from the Founder in awe.

Occasionally, we may experience such episodes that we feel impressed by the words poured out of our own mouths, specially, when we find some messages could be identified as if they are from Kami-Sama or they tell the truth about Kami-Sama. The statement, “Konko Daijin shall live forever (for the work of Toritsugi-Mediation)” could be the truth forwarded to other people, at the same time, it could be the Founder’s own confirmation of the blessings actualized up until that stage in life.

The Founder’s message, “Your life will blossom like a beautiful flower and be filled with the fruits of virtue” sounds like a farewell message to Gihe’e Fukushima. The message was given in January of 1883, the year the Founder departed. The message could also be forwarded to any believers who believed in the eternal life of the Founder even after his passing.

No. 361: For the sake of all people, and of the people who have requests of Kami, Kami will sacrifice Konko Daijin. This is for the eternal dignity of Konko Daijin’s divine workings. (Oboe-cho 27-15-2 Kyoten page 179)
Kami sacrificed Konko Daijin

**Pictures from the HCRP Peace Prayer
Held on Sunday, October 21, 2018
At Konko Mission of Honolulu**

The message could be considered as the last message ever delivered by the Founder. The message seemed to show the meaning of the Founder's departure from his physical existence. The message is consisted of some uncertain terms, such as "migawari" or substitution or sacrifice. When the term "sacrifice" is used, we naturally try to identify who would be the one intended for the sacrifice. Depending on the identification of "who," the interpretation of the message could differ.

Two alternatives could be identified in regard to the statement. One is that Kami sacrificed the Founder for the sake of people. The other is that Kami sacrificed the Founder for Kami.

If Kami sacrificed the Founder for the sake of people, the divine message revealed on October 10, 1873 gives the answer. "Tenchi Kane No Kami wants to say the following: 'Though they live between Heaven and Earth, people are unaware of Kami's blessings. Shrines, temples, and homes stand on Kami's land. Unaware of this, people only examine the Days and Directions and commit irreverence to Kami and encounter hardships due to their accumulated offenses' (Konko Daijin Oboegaki 21-21-4)." In this message, the Founder would be sacrificed in place of all those people who could hardly be salvaged on their own. The format of Toritsugi-Mediation could be interpreted that the Founder would function as the believers who sought help for their personal issues that could not be resolved on their own and deal with Kami.

On the other hand, if Kami sacrificed the Founder for the sake of Kami, the answer could be found in the message discussed in the previous page of 352 of this book. The message reads, "In an emergency, you need not say Tenchi Kane No Kami. Just say, 'Konko Daijin, please help me.' Then you will immediately receive divine blessings (II Kondo Fujimori 3, 5)." Kami seemed to treat the Founder not just as Toritsugi-Mediator, but as a kami who could manifest the power of Kami. Another relevant message is the one discussed in the previous page of 359 of this book. The message reads, "But since I will leave my body to become a true kami, I will be able to protect all people at a glance" (I Shimamura Hachitaro 11). The message also implies the nature of the Founder as a substitute of Kami.

The answer could be either of the two alternatives discussed or there could be some other alternatives. The author has been in search of the definitive answer for this matter sometime in future.

