



**Autumn Grand Service for
Ikigami Konko Daijin
on Tue., October 13 at 6:30 p.m.
The church will be opening, while
practicing COVID-19 safety precautions.
The service will also be live streamed via
Facebook Live. Please wear a facemask
and wash your hands. Take-home
chirashi bento after service.**

"Orei" Thank You to the work of Kami-Sama

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister



I would like to introduce a message from the Founder Konko Daijin. The message was given to Senda Shima.

"One day, when I went to Konko-Sama's Hiromae with Mimura Sano-san of my branch Hiromae, Mimura-san asked, 'Konko-Sama, since I have been receiving many divine blessings, I would like to offer thanks to Kami-Sama. What could I offer that would please Kami-Sama the most?' Konko-Sama answered, 'Mimura-san, if it were possible to give thanks to Kami-Sama for your divine blessings by offering things, you would never be able to offer enough. Offering such things won't make Kami-Sama happy, and he doesn't ask for them. Tell about the divine blessings you have received to those who are unaware of Kami-Sama's blessings. Then those people will be saved. Giving thanks this way will make Kami-Sama most happy' " (II Senda Shima 3).

Aside from this quoted message, today (September 28), both my wife and I have celebrated our 43 years of life in Hawaii. Actually, I arrived at the Honolulu International Airport on this day, September 27, 1977. When I stepped on to the land of Hawaii, I was overwhelmed with the faint sweet scent of tropical flowers. I can still recall the fragrance vividly in my memory.

It could be a divine call that I have ended up settling down at Wahiawa in Hawaii with my wife, Reiko-sensei. The day I entered the Amagi Church for spiritual training happened to fall on the birthday of the Founder, Konko Daijin, on September 29. The Rev. Toshihiko Hosaka,

Head Minister of Konko Church of Kawanoishi in Ehime, a branch church of Amagi, accompanied me to the Amagi church for the first time. I still remember a cat walking in the church yard. I felt that even the cats there seemed to be blessed in that given premise. The hallway of the newly constructed "Michiwake kaikan" hall was installed with a beautiful canary colored carpet and I was introduced to the late Rev. Fumio Yasutake for the first time.

Soon after I started a new life at Amagi church, I heard that there was a need for a minister in Hawaii. One of those days, while I was sweeping the yard in the morning, an aged man approached me and related, "Yesterday, on our way home from making a visit to the Konko Church of Kokura, Oyasensei announced to the believers in the microbus that there was an *osonae* (an offering) of a *shinja* (a believer) to our church." He then told me, "*Kami-Sama wa donoyouna hito wo otsukai ni naruka wakarimasenkarana* (We have no idea what kind of person Kami-Sama uses for His purpose)." Sometime later, I was called to the room of Oyasensei. He asked me, "A minister is needed at a church in Hawaii. Will you go over there?" And without even thinking, I accepted the request and responded by saying, "*Wakarimashita*, Yes." It was a requirement that in order for a minister to work in Hawaii, he/she will need at least two years of experience. I fortunately had some English proficiency and I am a third generation Konko believer. I simply believed that Kami-Sama will somehow bless me in my ministry in Hawaii.

I did not do any prior research about the given conditions of Konko Mission of Wahiawa. I didn't ask how many church members were there, nor was I concerned about how much money I will have to make ends meet in Hawaii.

One of those days, a minister in the faith community who was very familiar about the situation of the Wahiawa Church in Hawaii point blankly asked me, "Omae wa bakaka?" or "Are you out of your mind?" He knew the dire nature of the missionary work at the church. But I didn't care about his concerns and replied, "Baka desho" or "Yes, I probably am out of my mind." The minister then responded, that spirit of honesty or "Sunao" is good.

We got married on September 24, 1977 at the Konko Church of Amagi, and the following day, we departed from the church for our new destination at to the Konko Mission of Wahiawa. The founding minister of the church, the Rev. Haruko Takahashi departed in 1972, five years prior to our arrival. Our trip to Hawaii was nicknamed "The never

ending honeymoon” by some people. The Rev. Kikue Kodama, the former Head Minister of the Konko Mission of Honolulu, the parent church of Wahiawa Mission provided for us to stay overnight at a room at the Honolulu Church. Then we were accompanied by the local ministers, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Takahashi, elder brother of the Rev. Haruko Takahashi and some Honolulu church members. Around a dozen church members of the Wahiawa Konko Mission showed up to greet us on the morning of September 28, 2020. Those believers were the core members of the church who remained to take care of the church during the absence of the resident minister for five years.

Soon after the passing of the Rev. Haruko Takahashi, the Rev. Hiromichi Ishii, a staff member of the Konko Missions in Hawaii at that time, temporarily stayed at the church in Wahiawa for about three years. After he left Hawaii, the church was taken care of by the siblings of the Rev. Haruko Takahashi, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Takahashi and Ms. Francis Shigeno Takahashi for about 1.5 years till we arrived.

When I was introduced to the worship hall of the church for the first time, I noticed the ceiling lights were not on, so I turned them on. I proceeded to the sanctuary and sat down on the chair and extended my first prayer facing the Kami altar. From that day on, I have tried to extend my thanks to Kami-Sama for the blessings received till this day, namely, based on the perception of "Konnichi made no orei" for the day spent in blessedness. Actually, everything we needed was prepared and we have never complained about the given condition at the church. I have never imagined that I would be able to celebrate our 43rd year anniversary in Hawaii in this manner. I simply could not imagine the extent of blessedness that we have today. Somehow, both my wife and I could have upheld this spiritual tradition of "*Konnichi made no orei*" (Giving thanks till this very day) from the day of our arrival in Wahiawa.

One of the compelling elements of our perpetual services in the last 43 years is the presence of my wife, Reiko-sensei. Believe it or not, I have had some fears in our missionary work. The first fear was if my wife got tired of missionary work and wanted to go back to Japan and left the family. This would mean an automatic termination of our missionary work. I made a promise to her father in responding to his extended thought of what I would do if we ever encounter a divorce. I simply responded, I would quit ministry. In blessedness, I did not have to terminate our missionary work thanks to Reiko-sensei's support and prayers. The second fear of mine was regarding our children. What if I would not be blessed with children whom I would be able to pass on the Konko faith tradition

to? Kami-Sama responded to my prayer by blessing us with three children. They all responded to our prayers and evolved to become Konko ministers.

I didn't care much about financial stability. I just believed Kami-Sama would take care of our needs, as long as we were diligent in our service to Kami-Sama. But in reality, this financial issue was the biggest concern from the initial stage of our missionary work. Even today, there is no assurance for the financial security but to rely on Kami-Sama. Somehow, Kami-Sama has provided just enough for our day to day survival without relying on government financial assistance. We did not even have health insurance until just recently. But Kami-Sama kept us safe and healthy for all these years.

When I look back at our 43 years of services in our missionary work, I feel compelled in witnessing a new generation of ministers who would be able to carry on the missionary work and a newly emerging generation of church believers who would be able to continue their involvement in the practice of faith. Expansion of the faith community at Konko Mission of Wahiawa and the faith community in Hawaii is one of the prayers I would like to fulfill someday.

Konko-Sama Says . . .

There was a rich man from Nagasaki who fell seriously ill. He spent money on various treatments, but to no effect. Then he heard about the Ikigami-Sama of Otani, Bitchu Province, and went to Otani. He found lodging and went to worship every day. Konko-Sama asked him, "Would it be enough just to cure you?" He answered, "All I need is to have my illness cured; nothing else." The next day, Konko-Sama again asked, "Would it be enough just to cure you?" Again he answered, "All I need is to have my illness cured; nothing else." He was blessed with a cure for his illness, and returned to Nagasaki. But some time later, he passed away. (II Unknown 12)

Bulletin Board

Church Services for October 2020

- 1 Thr -Monthly Service, Tenchi Kane No Kami
(Facebook Live 7:30 pm)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (Facebook Live 9 am)
-Honolulu Church Autumn Grand Service (11 am)
- 10 Sat -Church clean up for the Grand Service (8 am)
- 11 Sun -Sunday Service (Facebook Live 9 am)
-Waipahu Church Autumn Grand Service (11 am)
- 13 Tue -Wahiawa Church Autumn Grand Service
(Facebook Live 6:30 pm)**
- 18 Sun -Sunday Service (Facebook Live 9 am)
- 25 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (Facebook Live 9 am)

November 2020

1 Sun -Monthly Service, Tenchi Kane No Kami
(Facebook Live 7:30 pm)
-Wailuku Church Autumn Grand Service (11 am)

The Church Door is Open

We welcome you to make a visit to our church and church services. Please wear your face mask for Covid-19 precautionary measures. You can make an appointment for your personal visit to church anytime of the day.

KMH

In much sadness, we announce the passing of the Rev. Makio Nagai, Head Minister of Konko Mission of Hilo on Sunday, September 13, 2020. He was 87 years old. We extend our deep prayers for the Rev. Yoshie Nagai and the church congregation. The Rev. Yomisu Oya from Konko Church of Sacramento, with the assistance of the Rev. Kei Kunito from Konko Church of Yao from Osaka conducted the funeral functions on September 21, 2020. Rev. Makio Nagai served the faith community in Hilo for 43 years. He also served as Chief Administrative Minister of Konko Missions in Hawaii. We pray for his spiritual salvation as well as the continuation of his legacy in the operation of the Konko Mission of Hilo.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

October

Founder Konko Daijin	10/10/1883
Janet Kimie Faggard	10/3/2012
Hiroshi Ishii	10/4/2003
Shizue Yamamoto	10/6/2008
Richard Mankichi Hirota	10/8/1990
Henry Yoshiichi Uyehara	10/10/2007
Sangwoo Shim	10/09/1982
Francis Toshiji Suwa	10/12/1996
Saku Hasuo	10/12/1996
Isamu Tokumoto	10/14/1995
Pasqualine Webber	10/21/2010
Kazuyoshi Kidani	10/ 2006
Donald Takeshi Katsura	10/31/1953
Edith Hisayo Tamabayashi	10/31/2014

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

Sharing of Faith

The following is an excerpt of the original narrative message delivered by the Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake, the founding minister of Konko Church of Amagi. The quoted episode found in the pages 36 to 38, actually took place at the church was edited and inserted into an official publication titled, "Toritsugi ni Ikiru III" published by the Konkokyo Headquarters Office in 2013. An English translation was provided by the Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

A guide to the work of Toritsugi-Mediation

By Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake, Head Minister of Konko Church of Amagi

Pray to Kami with a sincere and single-heart for any difficult encounters

I believe this episode took place on March 21, 1907. A believer named Kakuhei Sato from a place called Chikugo Kumanoue came to seek help for a difficult circumstance. He showed me a letter by saying, "Sensei, please take a look at this letter." The letter was from Sue Imaizumi, who was a younger sister of his wife Tomo. Sue lived at Sumiyoshi in Osaka and was at the age of 32. The message read, "Onesuan (my elder sister), I am sorry to cause you to worry about me since I succumbed to a serious illness. Medical treatments have shown no improvement at all. My condition has been deteriorating day by day. And the doctor seemed to have given up hope for my recovery. I cannot eat any food at all. I have been experiencing weakness and fatigue throughout my whole body. I am sure I would not be able to survive this time. I wish to see you again before my departure. I know you have been kept busy. I am desperate to see you in person while I am still alive. I want to convey my departing message for you. Please try to fulfill my final wish to see you again." In the closing paragraph, she addressed, "Last year, my elder brother-in-law (Kakuhei) had a brain stroke. I learned that you asked Konko-Sama at Konko Church of Amagi for help at that time. I understand he was saved through the work of Konko-Sama. I have six children who need my help. I don't want to die leaving my six children. If there could be such a virtuous Kami-Sama, please ask for my recovery from illness."

While reading the message forwarded in desperation, I felt overwhelmed in empathy that she had to encounter with her own death while she had been consciousness. I could not hold back tears. Kakuhei also shed tears and asked, "Sensei, are there any ways she could be spared of her life?" I responded, "I understand the forwarded message from your sister-in-law. I will pray for her." In corresponding to the message, I had some conviction in dealing with the urgent situation that Kami-Sama would heed my prayer to help the innocent six children who would be left in a desperate condition if their mother died.

I proceeded to the sanctuary and forwarded my prayer to Kami-Sama so that Kakuhei would also understand the expressed message in the prayer. "Ikigami Konko Daijin-Sama and Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama, Kakuhei Sato came to church for help for his sister-in-law named Sue Imaizumi at Sumiyoshi in Osaka, aged 32 years old. This time, she

encountered a serious illness. She got medical treatments and asked for healing through relying on various Kamis and Buddhas in desperation. She has been slipping into a terminal condition. She is prepared to accept her own death. But she cannot give up taking care of her beloved children. For the sake of her children, she wants to prolong her life. She asked her brother-in-law, Kakuhei Sato to forward her desperate message of help. Please prolong her life for the sake of the children. She is ready to accept her own death, but wish to see her elder sister before her departure. She expressed her desperate message in that manner. Sue Imaizumi has never acknowledge the infinite divine blessings of Heaven and Earth till this day. She had never extended a prayer in appreciation of the work of Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama. Even though she had never worshipped Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama, she is your beloved child and her six children were born through Your blessings. They were born through Your blessings, not her own power. You rendered Sue to care for her children. If Sue would ever depart from her children at this stage, who would take care of the children thereafter? Sue may have committed some irreverence and offenses against you for failing to acknowledge blessings given from you unknowingly. But the six children are totally innocent and have committed no irreverence and offenses. It would be pitiable in witnessing departure of the mother and the children would encounter a great deal of ordeals without a caring mother. Please give Sue the last opportunity to fulfill her divine duty of caring for her children. If her life can be spared through divine intervention, yet she doesn't show any form of gratitude for the infinite blessings given through the work of Heaven and Earth, I shall never ask for you to help her again. As for the practice of the Konko faith, I will ask the believers, Kakuhei Sato and his wife to help guide Sue in pursuit of the faith thereafter. I sincerely and single-heartedly ask you to prolong the life of Sue. She would not be able to overcome the crucial condition if she keep on suffering from excruciating pains and without food intake. Please take away her pains at this very moment and allow her to consume food. Please allow her to consume food for her own sustenance of life. I turned my position to face Kakuhei Sato and related, 'Sato-San, you heard my extended message in prayer to Kami-Sama for Sue. Please follow my extended prayer and also pray to Kami-Sama with a sincere and single-heart for the sake of Sue.'

I gave him two packets of Goshinmai sacred rice. One goshinmai was intended to be delivered to Sue through mailing service with a return message; Kakuhei took the other one to be given to Sue in person. The following day Kakuhei and his wife traveled to Osaka. I had a reason why one packet of Goshinmai Sacred Rice was delivered through mailing. I had a conviction that Sue would be healed through the first packet of Goshinmai Sacred Rice

she would receive. The wife of Kakuhei was depressed and shed tears all the way to her destination in Osaka with the feeling of doom of not being able to see Sue again while she was alive. Upon arrival at the destination and seeing Sue, they were overwhelmed in disbelief in witnessing Sue's condition improve with lesser pains and was able to consume food. The time Sue experienced a drastic improvement coincided to the time while I was praying to Kami-Sama at around one o'clock in the afternoon."

Although Sue Imaizumi recovered from her critical condition through the work of Kami-Sama and prayed to Kami-Sama on her own, was never made a visit to the Hiromae. She died eight years later with little appreciation for the grateful nature of the Konko faith.