



# KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

Konko Mission of Wahiawa, 207 Muliwai Avenue, Wahiawa, HI. 96786. Phone/Fax: (808) 621-6667, Cell: (808) 226-9594  
E-mail: konkowahiawa207@yahoo.com. Also, find us on Facebook. Head minister: Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. Vol. XXXI, No. 9, September 1, 2019



## Vital Nature of Gratitude

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano

Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa

We felt grateful in attending the 90th Anniversary Celebration of Konko Mission of Honolulu held on Sunday, August 25, 2019. As far as I can remember, this could be the first time in decades that they observed the anniversary function at their own church facility. Commemorating the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the beautiful sacred sanctuary of Honolulu Church was truly a blessing.

Scott Kilousky, chair of the anniversary committee stated during his closing message that he was grateful for the all the elements that have already been prepared for us by our predecessors, like the facility itself, the kitchen, the large gas stoves, etc. He mentioned that it was all possible due to the people involved in the past and present who had practiced faith. All he had to really do was purchase food materials for cooking because everything else has already been prepared for use. I felt deeply impressed and overwhelmed with his seemingly brief remarks that summed up the successful anniversary celebration.

Konko Mission of Wahiawa will also commemorate the 80th Anniversary Celebration on March 15, 2020 with the presence of the Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake of Konko Church of Amagi in Fukuoka. Both my wife and I would be celebrating our 42nd years of our services at the Konko Mission of Wahiawa this month. We arrived in Honolulu on September 27, 1977. The late Rev. Kikue Kodama made an arrangement for us to spend one day at Honolulu Church. The following day, on September 28, we arrived at Konko Mission of Wahiawa. I still vividly remember the moment I stepped into the church worship hall. The ceiling lights on the hall were off. I reached to the switch board and turned on the light and proceeded to sit down on the chair and extended my first prayer to Kami-Sama. Both my wife and I were only 26 years old. It could be reckless for a newlywed young couple with limited experience and insecure financial condition as ministers to get engaged in our missionary

work at a church in Hawaii. The founding minister of the church, the Rev. Haruko Takahashi departed five years prior to our arrival. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Takahashi, brother of the Rev. Takahashi helped us to get initiated in our life in Hawaii. My first impression of the church life was that everything we needed to live has already been prepared. The storage place behind the Toritsugi-Mediation seat was filled with canned foods, bottles of omiki Japanese sake and other non-perishable items. I extend my thanks for what have been provided for us to start our life in a totally new environment.

While I was under spiritual training at the Amagi Church, one day, the Rev. Fumio Yasutake asked me to see him at his office. He asked, "There is a church in Hawaii. Will you go to serve at the church?" I simply responded, "Hai." He didn't elaborate much about the situation of the church. What I knew was the founding minister departed three years ago and needed someone to take over the responsibility of the church. I probably could have asked someone in Hawaii to research about the condition of the church, such as the number of believers and financial conditions and so forth, but I didn't. Since I gained some English skills, I was looking forward to be able to serve at the church. About 10 years later, one of my relatives revealed that they were expecting us to return back to Japan within one year.

When we started our missionary work, one of the biggest concerns was the relatively few numbers of believers who respond to the church functions and the financial condition of the church. Basically, the church has been operated only through free-will monetary offerings from the church congregation. In general, it has been said that to support one minister and the family, there needs to be at least 50 members. Both my wife and I believed our lack of virtue was the direct result of the low number of believers.

Even today, after spending 42 years in Hawaii, the number of the believers that show up to church functions stays almost the same. There could be some reason for this. But it is also a fact that the church has been in operation in the last 79 years regardless of the limited congregation. We look forward to commemorating the 80th Anniversary Celebration of our church in Wahiawa on March 15, 2020.

Whenever I sit down facing the alter for my daily prayers, I always extend my thought that I have been enabled to sit down in this manner because of the presence of the church established by the founding minister, the late Rev. Haruko Takahashi, and many local ministers in the past and present who have dedicated their services at their designated places and many people who have come and gone till this day. I also believe it was possible due to the presence of the Japanese-American population in Hawaii. I am thankful for the State of Hawaii, the United States of America that allowed us to propagate this church. It would be almost impossible to operate Konkokyo in China, Russia, and in

any other countries that impose restrictions for foreign religious activities.

Anything could evolve in the given condition we may take for granted, such as WWII and the consequences of the unexpected eventualities. Based on these given conditions, we can operate, we can say the name "Ikigami Konko Daijin and Tenchi Kane No Kami" and freely practice faith.

When our anniversary of arrival draws near, I always remember the message of "Inochi no Shin no Hataraki" that was shared with us by the Fourth Konko-Sama, the late Rev. Kagamitaro Konko, when we sought Toritsugi Mediation one day before heading out to Hawaii to continue the Wahiawa Mission.

Konko-Sama elaborated the thought by saying, "When a baby is born, everybody exchanges congratulatory messages of 'Omedeto Gozaimasu' and 'Arigato Gozaimasu.' When that baby grows, at every stage of growth, such as birthday, entering school, graduation from school, getting a job and getting married, we keep on exchanging congratulatory messages in celebration of the blessings. It is the same function we can find in the life of plants and any other living things. The roots of a plant take up water and nutrients up to the stems and leaves, and the leaves create the food through the work of light and send down the food to every part of the body. Once the plant is cut from the roots, the vital core function of the tree would be terminated and, wilt and die sooner or later. The same can be said in our lives. If we cease to express and exchange thoughts of appreciation, gratitude, congratulations and celebrations for the elements of blessing in life, we are to encounter difficulties in life."

Once we encounter major negativity in life, we may react in such a disorderly manner that we put a pinch of appreciation on the vast ocean of worries, complaints, negativity, in assuming that we have been offering our utmost sincere prayers to Kami for our spiritual salvation. This is not the formula we activate in the practice of the Konko faith. But this may not result in positives because "*junjo ga chigau*" as Konko-Sama put it, meaning the sequence is wrong. The foundation of extending our prayer to Kami for any of our personal concerns shall be the heart of thanks and appreciation. Konko-Sama put the thought in this manner that we forward our "onegai," or personal requests to be dissolved on the tray of "appreciation" and ask Kami to grant us blessings. We need to put "onegai" on the tray of appreciation as we face Kami in prayer. "*Inochi no Shin no Hataraki*" may mean this much profound spiritual applications for us as Konko believers.

**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. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 3)

## Bulletin Board

### Monthly Services for September, 2019

1 Sun -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane No Kami (9 am)  
8 Sun -Monthly Svc. for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)  
-Rotary Hanashikai at Waipahu Church (10:30 am)  
15 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)  
-Honolulu Church Autumn Memorial Service (10 am)  
22 Sun -Wahiawa Church Autumn Memorial Service (10 am)  
29 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am) Founder's 205<sup>th</sup> Birthday

### October 1, 2019

1 Tue -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)  
6 Sun -Honolulu Church Autumn Grand Service (11 am)  
**12 Sat -Wahiawa Church Autumn Grand Service (6:30 pm)**  
13 Sun-Waipahu Church Autumn Grand Service (11 am)

### Volunteer Activity

The regular monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility will be made on Friday, September 20, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

### HCRP Meeting

The Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will hold the regular meeting on Monday, September 16, 2019 at Palolo Hongwanji Temple at 1:30 p.m.

### Interfaith Community Clean-up Program

The Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will coordinate the annual Interfaith Community Clean-up Program at Kakaako Waterfront Part on Saturday, September 28. We will gather at the entrance to the park at 10:00 a.m. and clean up the entire premise of the park. Trash bags, some pick up tools and water will be provided. The purpose of the program is to spread the awareness for the blessed nature of the land that is the very foundation of our life. It is a small act of expressing our gratitude for the blessings we enjoy from earth.

### KMH Meetings

•The KMH Community Engagement and Outreach Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday on Friday, September 20, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. and the 2020 KMH-KCNA Joint Conference Committee Meeting will be held on Friday, September 27 at 4:30 p.m. at Konko Mission of Honolulu.

### Rotary Hanashikai Meeting at Waipahu

The second Rotary Hanashikai meeting will be held at Konko Mission of Waipahu on Sunday, September 8, 2019 from 10:30 a.m. Featured activities are discussion, a calligraphy session and lunch. Please join the meeting and strengthen the Konko community power.

# Honoring the Mitama Spirits

## September

Mikiko Yamamoto	9/3/2003
Harumi Tokumoto	9/7/2001
Tatsuyuki Kataoka	9/7/2007
Hiroko Toyoda	9/10/2018
Ben Furusho	9/15/1997
Takehige Ootsuka	9/15/1998
Richard Masao Iwasa	9/17/2005
Kameji Takeshima	9/17/2000
Richard Tadayoshi Noguchi	9/27/2009

*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 388, 389 and 390)*

**No. 388: If a farmer checks the water in his neighbor's paddy while checking his own, that neighbor will do the same for him. Being kind to each other will Kami and people happy. (III Gorikai Shui 13-1, 2 Kyoten page 801)**

### Be considerate to each other

For rice farming, water is vital. When there would be an extreme drought, the farmers become desperate in dealing with their life and death situation. In ancient times, people battled and lost lives over the water rights.

While the Founder got engaged in his farming, gained trust of the village people. He was assigned to manage the irrigation system of the village. People in general become self-centered in time of need and tried to enrich themselves. The Founder fairly distributed water to the farmers.

They appreciated his honesty and fair management of his given duties. He also gained Kami's trust and was of service in fulfillment of divine task.

They say, "A good turn deserves another." If we try to get some reward for the extended kindness for others, we would become endlessly greedy. As Konko believers, we should try to be kind and considerate to others with a pure sincere heart, then we would naturally be able to enjoy a true and mutually fulfilling relationship that would also be Kami's enjoyment.

The concept of liberal economy seems to be expanding around the world. People seem to enjoy economic prosperity. But some

people seem to be driven to become greedy only to gain their own prosperity by defeating others. Some people in the world called the Japanese "economic animals" for their greediness. We should be mindful of such criticisms directed to the Japanese.

Because of the confusing world situation, it would be more important for us to show our sincere thoughtfulness to others. In the Konkokyo faith community, we have expressed our prayer, "Try to actualize the world in which we enjoy a mutually fulfilling interdependent relationship with one another." We should strive to pursue practice faith to get praise from Kami-Sama.

## Section 4

### Spreading the True Way

**No. 389: There is no one who knows of the blessings of Heaven and Earth, which people are allowed to live in. Kami will let people know the blessings of Heaven and Earth by letting Konko Daijin be born in every country throughout the world where the sun shines without exception. (Oboe-cho 26-22-3 Kyoten page 173)**

### Konko Daijin be born throughout the world

This message was revealed to the Founder early morning of November 24, 1882 (October 14 according to the lunar calendar), one year prior to his departure.

In the same year, the Rev. Shinichiro Shirakami, who initiated his missionary work in Osaka, also departed on April 24, 1882. Shinkichi, the second son of the Rev. Shirakami, accompanied by his father's disciple, Yasubei Wada, who would become the Head Minister of Konko Church of Utusbo later on, made a pilgrimage to see the Founder on November 14.

The Founder gave them a long talk. "After my father died, I went to see Konko-Sama and asked what I should do. Konko-Sama replied, 'What do you want to do?' 'I would like to succeed my father and spread the Way of Faith, but since I have been only a merchant, I don't know anything about the Faith. This I feel uneasy.' Konko-Sama said, 'It is natural for the child to succeed his parents. Your heart is in the right place, and doing so will certainly be good.' I requested, 'Then could you grant me the ability to give hand divinations?' 'That depends on your heart. You needn't do such things in the beginning, just impart teachings to believers,' said Konko-Sama. 'Please teach me how to give teachings.' Teachings are given at certain times to certain people. I cannot teach you how to give teachings ahead of time. But don't worry. Just practice faith wholeheartedly and you will eventually learn.' Succeed your father without relying on others. Kami-Sama will teach you. Say what comes to your mind. Kami-Sama will make whatever you say come true.' After hearing this, I made up my mind to succeed my father in serving the faith (II Shirakami Shin`ichiro II 1)."

Early in the morning on November 16, Kami gave a teaching to both of them, "Your father, Shirakami Shinichiro, is a kami and

will be revered. You, his son, are to succeed him. Both of you can also become a kami. They left on the afternoon of November 17 (Oboe-cho 26-21)."

One week later, Kami gave a revelation, "Early in the morning on November 24, Kami-Sama imparted, "Those who have faith should not worry about the unexpected. There will be unexpected illnesses not only in summer, but also in winter. 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 (Oboe-cho 26-22)."" The message sounds like Tenchi Kane No Kami praised the contributions of the Founder who dedicated in fulfillment of the vast divine endeavor of helping people in the world.

**No. 390: The Way of the Universe is collapsing. Broaden the Way. Teach the Way which can help people in trouble. (Oboe-cho 20-16-2 Kyoten page 124)**

### **The Way of the Universe is collapsing.**

This divine message was revealed early morning of August 13, 1876 (June 24 according to the lunar calendar). The original message begins with a line, "Konko Daijin, endure even if other people urinate on you. I shall clean you up. Be patient no matter what people say."

The Founder encountered many difficult issues throughout his religious work. As Japan entered into Meiji era, four years later in 1871, a rumor spread in the area, that "Konko Daijin committed burglaries in collusion with his disciples (Oboe-cho 15-4-1)." In 1873, the authority prohibited him to engage in his religious work and ordered to empty the worship hall.

After the divine revelation in 1876, in October, the police tried to interrogate the Founder for his religious work. At one occasion, they took the offertory box in the worship hall. They even planned to arrest him.

Even in such a depressing circumstance, Kami-Sama tried to console and encourage the Founder by saying, "Konko Daijin, endure even if other people urinate on you. I shall clean you up. Be patient no matter what people say. The Way of the Universe is collapsing. Broaden the Way. Teach the Way which can help people in trouble. You may tell others that I, Nittenshi-Gattenshi-Konjin, do not care how people treat me (Oboe-cho 20-16-2)."" The author understands the anger and frustration of Kami-Sama in the expressed message. Kami-Sama's reliance on the Founder seemed to become even more stronger in fulfillment of the divine endeavor of helping people in the world.