KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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Family Faith Talks

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

The other day, while I was reading a booklet, I encountered a remark made by the late Rev. Kagamitaro Konko, the 4th Konko-Sama. He said in Japanese, 信心はやってみなければわからんからな, which means, "You can't appreciate the wondrous nature of the Konko faith unless you practice it." This remark has remained in my heart for so long. Even today, I am still trying to figure out its meaning.

Our church congregation is quite small, but we have dedicated church members who show up almost every Sunday to join the regular Sunday Service, Monthly Services, and so forth. I have been witnessing those people who have attended church functions for so long and been exposed to the teachings of the Konko faith through ministers' speeches and the reading of the Kyoten Scripture. Through their long-lasting attendance at church functions, they have practiced and learned to identify elements of the blessings we receive from Kami-Sama. Simply put, they appreciate blessings in their daily lives through the perspective of the Konko faith principle. This could only be achieved through their practice of faith.

There are many children of families of Konko believers, but it is rare for them to understand and appreciate the teachings of the Founder of Konkokyo. This is true not only in the United States, in Hawaii, but also in Japan. We often fail to pass on faith to family members. But this is not easy—it depends on whether they will accept the practice of faith within the family.

Three of our children have become Konko ministers. I am not bragging about my family, nor am I putting down the ministers who have children but were unable to pass down the faith to their descendants. It could be a matter of communication within the family about the practice of faith. In the past, I have told our church congregation that it would void the meaning of my service in Hawaii as a Konko minister if our children showed little interest in our services as Konko ministers, and if they did not understand, did not appreciate, or found little valid meaning in our ministry. That has been my conviction since I came to Hawaii to serve Kami-Sama almost half a century ago.

While I was undergoing spiritual training under the supervision of the late Rev. Fumio Yasutake, he used to tell us, "If you are blessed with children, encourage them to become Konko ministers." That message became deeply embedded in my heart. I never aspired for our children to be highly successful in their choice of career, but I hoped they would follow the Konko faith tradition in Hawaii. Both my wife and I tried to include our children in the practice of faith in our daily lives. After the birth of each of our children, from the hospital, Reiko-sensei brought all three of them—since infancy—to the hiromae to join the daily prayer sessions and feel the energy. They joined us in the monthly visitations to our parent church, the Honolulu Church, to attend the services until they graduated from high school. Soon after graduation, we sent all three of our children to the Konko Church of Amagi for their spiritual training and the Gakuin Seminary.

During their stay at the Amagi Church, they enrolled in the Konkokyo Gakuin Seminary and then returned home. When we tried to send our second son, Rodney, to Japan, our financial situation hit

rock bottom. As a last resort, I asked Rev. Masahiko Yoshino of the Honolulu Church for a loan of $500 for his travel expenses. He lent me more than that amount, and we were later able to pay off the loan. That son now serves as the Head Minister of the Konko Church of San Francisco as of this January. We are humbled with a feeling of awe and gratitude for all the blessings thus far. After my three children returned from Japan, they pursued college education. Kami-Sama surely arranged everything for their lives thereafter.

This is just the tip of the iceberg regarding how we tried to involve them in the practice of faith in our daily lives. My wife, Reiko Sensei, is the main influencer of the Konko faith practice in our family. Even today, my daughter Edna enjoys endless talks about faith with Reiko Sensei.

If we had displayed only small actions and had no talks about the Konko faith, it would have been difficult for them to appreciate the wondrous nature of the Konko faith. Actions speak louder than words. Church visitation could be one of the most powerful ways to pass on the faith.

Voice of the Universe…

1. There are people between Heaven and Earth. Heaven is father and Earth is mother. Humans, plants, and other living things live on Earth through the blessings they receive from Heaven.. *I Ishihara Ginzo 12.*
2. Heaven and Earth continue to live. Because Heaven and Earth are alive, all people are able to live. *III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 104*

Bulletin Board

September 2025

1 Mon -Monthly Svc. Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama (7:30 pm) 天地金乃神様　月例祭
7 Sun -Monthly Svc. for Ikigami Konko Daijin-Sama (9 am) 生神金光大神様　月例祭
14 Sun -No Sunday Svc (HNL Autumn Mem Svc and Late Rev. Sugako Yoshino's 3rd Year Mem Svc at HNL church (10 am)
21 Sun -Autumn Mem. Svc 秋季霊祭 (10 am)
28 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

● KMH Faith Enrichment Gathering at Honolulu Church on Saturday, September 6 from 1:30 pm to 3 pm. Guest: Rev. Yōki Sekiguchi (Hilo Kyokai)
● Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis The next activity will be on Fri, September 5@ 10:30 am
● KMH Kyōten Study Group via Zoom Voice of the Universe Join us: on Wednesday, September 10 & 24 at 5 pm on ZOOM
●HCRP Clean-up at Kakaako Waterfront Park (10 am) Bring water bottle and hat. We will provide clean-up articles.

In Loving Memory: September

Fumiko Hamai	9/25/1997
Harumi Tokumoto	9/7/2001
Richard Masao Iwasa	9/17/2005
Mikiko Yamamoto	9/3/2003
Kameji Takeshima	9/17/2000
Ben Furusho	9/15/1997
Takeshige Ootsuka	9/15/1998
Richard Tadayoshi Noguchi	9/27/2009
Tatsuyuki Kataoka	9/7/2007
Hiroko Toyoda	9/9/2018

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, "Konkō Kyōso no Shougai" or "The Life of the Founder Konko Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto and published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center in 1980. Many biographies about the life of the Founder Konko Daijin exist. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (continued from the previous issue) Page 186-188
(continued)

Kami Used Bunji for His Purpose

Kami instructed Bunji to stop taking cold and heated baths. Bunji served at the designated place of the Toritsugi Mediation desk seriously on a daily basis. On June 10, 1864, Kami instructed him not to use regular water or heated water for bathing and cleansing his body thereafter. He was 51 years old. Later, in 1873, Kami allowed him to take a bath on two occasions. That was the last time he bathed, and he never took another bath until his departure 20 years later. Kami instructed Bunji in this way for his longevity and good health. This practice of training was considered one of the most difficult practices he had to follow. Yet people remarked that he always looked healthy and clean. During the unrest in society caused by the transition of government,

Bunji also underwent changes in how he practiced faith, adapting to the social confusion brought on by the governmental shift from the Edo period.
On October 24, 1873, Kami granted Bunji the divine title of "*Konko Daigongen*." Kami also gave his wife, Tose, the title of *Isshi-Myoujin* for the first time.

Practice of Martial Arts by His Children

The ever-changing force of society affected the lives of Bunji's children. During the transitional period from the Tokugawa government to the Meiji government, the regional authorities encouraged even farmers' children to practice martial arts, such as kendo. Some highly skilled individuals could apply for the rank of samurai and be hired as such.

Asakichi, the son of Bunji, devoted himself to the practice of kendo from an early age and advanced in his skills. In April of 1814, Asakichi made a pilgrimage to the Ise Shrine and was exposed to a wide range of social life. Through this journey, he made up his mind to aspire to become a samurai. The following year, he volunteered to enlist with the Asakura Clan. He was assigned the rank of *nami-ashigaru* (ordinary foot soldier, the lowest samurai rank) and was given a stipend of one *koku*. He belonged to a group headed by the clan leader and was assigned to guard the area of Kyoto. Asakichi was 21 years old.
A younger brother of Asakichi, Ishinojo (Hagio), also practiced kendo in accordance with Kami's revelation: "Start practicing kendo as well as *taijutsu* (body skill) when he turns 17 years old."

The Funeral for the Adoptive Mother

On September 8, 1866, Bunji's adoptive mother suddenly died. Her passing occurred in such a peaceful manner that she asked the family members, "I want to eat some dumplings." While the family members were preparing the dish, she ceased breathing quietly, without anyone noticing at first. Bunji responded to the situation with prayer to Kami. Kami instructed, "You shall never stop praying, not even for a moment. And do not go out to visit the household of the deceased." That evening, Kami further instructed Bunji: "You should conduct a temporary funeral function tomorrow evening. Tell this to Asakichi in Kyoto. When he returns home from Kyoto, hold a formal funeral service for her."

On the following day, September 9, Uhei Hashimoto visited Bunji to inform him about his scheduled trip to Kyoto. Bunji asked him, "Please meet my son Asakichi and inform him about the funeral functions." It seemed to be Kami's arrangement that Uhei Hashimoto visited Bunji at the time of Iwa's passing. Asakichi returned from Kyoto on October 8 and awaited Kami's instructions.

Early on the morning of October 12, Kami instructed Bunji, "Hold a formal funeral service for your adoptive mother on October 13." Prior to this, on October 11, the clan office had instructed Ishinojo to report to the office. He returned home from this visit on the afternoon of October 12 and reported, "I was advanced to the *Yuushi-gumi* and allowed to wear swords and a family name," a form of *myouji-taito*. Because of this development, both Asakichi and Ishinojo, now employed as samurai, wore swords during the funeral procession.

Bunji had lived with Iwa for about 40 years, ever since he was adopted into the family at the age of 12. Iwa's primary wish for Bunji had been the prosperity of the household. At one point, she may have felt unfulfilled because Bunji devoted himself to his religious pursuit instead of household prosperity. Bunji tried to fulfill Iwa's wish by holding the finest possible funeral service in appreciation of her contributions to his life. In this sense, the dignity of having two of his sons, now samurai, join the funeral procession with swords could be considered the finest gift Bunji could offer Iwa.

Bunji served at the designated place of Hiromae in accordance with Kami's instruction: "You shall not visit the dead." He asked Asakichi to take charge as head of the funeral functions, while Kami instructed Bunji to isolate himself and not engage in emotional relationships with others. Kami arranged matters so that Asakichi could take responsibility for the funeral functions, and he carried them out with ultimate thoroughness and warmth. It seemed that Kami had made precise arrangements to ensure the dignified funeral service for Bunji's adoptive mother.