



Wahiawa Konko Mission Children's Newsletter



Konko Mission of Wahiawa
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*How many eggs
can you find?*

April 2025, Volume 33



WAHIAWA KONKO MISSION MONTHLY SCHEDULE

April 2025

- 1 Tue -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama (7:30 pm) 天地金乃神様 月例祭
- 4 Fri -St Francis JPN Program (10:30 am)
- 5 Sat -Church clean-up for the Grand Ceremony (8 am)
- 6 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Honolulu Church Grand Ceremony (11 am)
- 9 Wed -KMH Kyoten Study Group on Zoom (5-6 pm)
- 13 Sun -Wahiawa Church Spring Grand Ceremony (5 pm)
天地金乃神様御大祭 *Naorai dinner to follow
- 19 Sat -Hawaii Gunpla Workshop @HNL Church (12 noon to 6 p)
- 20 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Waipahu Church Spring Grand Ceremony (10:30 am)
-Rev. Mitsuko Yasutake 5th Year Memorial Service at WPH
- 21 Mon -KMH CEOC Meeting on Zoom (9 am)
- 24 Thr -KMH Centennial Planning Mtg on ZOOM (5 pm)
- 26 Sat -Ehimemaru Memorial Mikan maintenance at Kakaako (9 am)
- 27 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service 月例霊祭 (9 am)



May 2025

- 1 Thr -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama (7:30 pm) 天地金乃神様 月例祭
- 2 Fri -St Francis JPN Program (10:30 am)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)



Spring Grand Ceremony

In honor of Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama

Sunday, April 13, 2025 @ 5 pm

Sermon: Rev. Edna Matsuoka

Please join us to give thanks to the source of our blessedness. Naorai fellowship dinner will follow.

"Service days are important for you to not forget your faith. You will receive divine blessings as long as you don't forget these service days. If you forget, there will be no divine blessings. These service days are like the memorial service days for not forgetting your deceased parents' favors for everything." (Gorikai 1 Ichimura Mitsugoro 1-35-1,2)

Mahalo nui loa for your great help in making the 2nd impromptu garage sale of the year held on March 8th a great success! Including generous monetary donations, we have raised \$1449.16 which will go to the church maintenance fund. We will be pausing our garage sales for several months as we have many upcoming events at our church. During this time, we apologize that we will not be able to accept item donations. But, I'll be sure to let you know again when we plan our next one.

Sunday School Oath

I will advance my faith through understanding the Founder's teachings and will strive to become a more useful person to society.
Sincerity is the essence of my faith, and its basic principles are courtesy, kindness, and devotion in everything I do.



In commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Honouliuli National Historic Site, the Konko Mission of Wahiawa will hold a public tour of the church on **Saturday, May 17, at 10 a.m.** for approximately an hour. During the tour, we will introduce the late Rev. Haruko Takahashi, the founding minister of our church. She was arrested on December 14, 1941, on suspicion of disloyalty to the United States and was interned at Honouliuli Internment Camp until her release on July 7, 1944. If you are available to volunteer on this day, we would greatly appreciate your support. Please contact Edna sensei for more info.

HAWAII GUNPLA WORKSHOP

SAT. 4.19.25

12 PM-6 PM



Konko Mission of Honolulu
1728 Liliha Street

#hawaiiGUNPLAworkshop
Hosted by Clayton Matsuoka & Michi's Toy Box



Konko Mission of Wahiawa Annual Schedule for 2025

- 5/4 Sun -Spring Grand Service at Wailuku Church 11 am
- 5/10 Sat -KMH Board Meeting 10:30 am @HNL and Zoom
- 5/17 Sat -Introduction of Konko Mission of Wahiawa to Public (10 am)
- 5/18 Sun -Spring Grand Service at Hilo Church 11 am
- 5/26 Mon -Memorial Day visit to Punchbowl
- 6/18 Wed -KMH MWSS at HNL. Guest: Rev. Sachiko Yasutake (10 a-4 p)
- 6/19 Thr -KMH Ministers Gathering w/Rev. Sachiko Yasutake (2-4 pm)
- 7/4-6 Fri -KCNA/KMH Joint Conference in Sacramento CA
- 7/19 Sat -KMH Ministers Gathering (10:30 am- 2 p)
- 7/20 Sun -Back-to-School Service 9 am
- 8/3 Sun -KMH Rotary Hanashikai at Wailuku Church 10:30 pm
- 8/9 Sat -KMH Board Meeting 10:30 am @Honolulu Church ZOOM
- 8/16 Sat -Introduction of Konko Mission of Wahiawa to Public (10 am)
- 8/24 Sun -52nd Memorial Svc for the late Rev. Masayuki Kodama 9 am
- 9/6 Sat -KMH Faith Enrichment Gathering on ZOOM (1:30 p-3 p)
- 9/14 Sun -Honolulu Church Autumn Memorial Service 10 am
-Late Rev. Sugako Yoshino 3rd Year Memorial Svc at HNL.
- 9/21 Sun -Wahiawa Church Autumn Memorial Service at 10 am**
- 10/5 Sun -Autumn Grand Service at Honolulu at 11 am
- 10/12 Sun -Autumn Grand Service at Waipahu at 10:30 am
- 10/13 Mon -Autumn Grand Service at Wahiawa at 5 pm**
- 10/19 Sun -HCRP Peace Prayer at Honolulu Church (4 pm)
- 10/26 Sun -Autumn Grand Service at Wailuku Church (11 am)
- 11/9 Sun -Autumn Grand Service at Hilo Church 11 am
- 11/15 Sat -KMH 5th International Yatsunami Gathering (ZOOM HST)
- 11/22 Sat -KMH Board Mtg 10:30 am @HNL Church
- 11/30 Sun -27th Memorial Svc for the Late Rev. Kikue Kodama 9 am
- 12/21 Sun -53rd Mem Svc for the late Rev. Haruko Takahashi 10 am**
- 12/28 Sun -End of Year Service 9 am**
- 12/30 Tue -34th Mochi Pounding at Wahiawa Church



Kyoten Study Session, two times a month, usually on Wednesdays at 5 pm (Zoom)

Snapshots from my recent trip to Japan with my mom for Grandma's celebration of life. Beautiful sakura and tulips were in bloom everywhere. I'm grateful for the staff who handled Grandma's remains with such care and for the various places Uncle took us to around Oita and Beppu. We also visited Hirao and Amagi Church.



In Loving Memory Minako Yano



With deep respect and gratitude, we announce the passing of Mrs. Minako Yano, mother of Reiko Sensei and grandmother of Edna Sensei, at the age of 96 on **March 23, 2025**. A former Japan Red Cross nurse, she later built a dairy and produce farm alongside her husband, Masataka Yano, overcoming hardships through steadfast faith. May her spirit continue to guide and comfort us.

Editor's Note

Dear Friends,

I hope you are doing well! I want to share something special that happened recently. It feels as if meaningful moments have been occurring in my life so often these days.

My mom and I recently returned from Japan after attending my grandmother's funeral. It was one of the most profound trips I have ever experienced—filled with remarkable blessings from start to finish.

My grandmother, **Minako** passed away peacefully at the age of 96 on Sunday, March 23rd, the same day as our church's Spring Memorial Service. The timing felt deeply significant. In Japan, cremation usually takes place within three days, and there was no guarantee that the family would wait for us if we delayed our departure. Years ago, when my grandfather passed away in 2013, my mom and I arrived six hours too late, and she was devastated to have missed his funeral. This time, we didn't want to relive that painful experience. Interestingly, other relatives who attended grandpa's funeral mentioned how terrified they were of the extreme weather conditions of that day—where the thunder and lightning were booming left and right. It was as if grandpa's Mitama spirit was angry that the service could not be held off until our arrival from Hawaii.

At 3:30 a.m. on Sunday morning of March 23rd, I received the news from my uncle. Without hesitation, I booked the last two available seats on the flight. My mom and I ended up sitting a row apart, but in a blessing of okage, we both had aisle seats—which was especially helpful for me since I tend to get up frequently.

Before takeoff, I recalled a lesson from **Rev. Joanne Tolosa** of the Konko Church of San Francisco. She once shared that whenever she sits on the aisle during a flight, she introduces herself to the person next to her and assures them that they can wake her up if they need to use the restroom. She had learned this from a difficult experience when she desperately needed to get up but hesitated to wake her sleeping neighbor. Inspired by her wisdom, I introduced myself to the gentleman seated beside me and gave him the same reassurance. He laughed and said he'd probably be knocked out the whole flight, so I needn't worry.

What unfolded next was nothing short of amazing. This stranger turned out to be one of the most comfortable and easy-to-talk-to seatmates I've ever had—almost like talking to my brother, **Rodney Sensei**. As we conversed, we discovered an uncanny series of similarities in our journeys.

He had booked the last two tickets the day before I did. He was traveling with his sister, just as I was traveling with my mom. He was visiting his uncle, and I was going to visit mine. He was attending a three-year memorial service, while I was attending my grandmother's funeral. He was visiting his ancestors' graves, and so was I. We both had connecting flights, and we both missed them.

And in a final twist of fate, as we rushed to our rearranged flights, we ran into each other again—him and his sister, my mom and me—right before heading to our new gates.

My mom and I arrived in Fukuoka from Haneda Airport about an hour and a half late, but thankfully, we were able to rearrange our flight and catch another one just 10 minutes before departure. It was late when we arrived at Hakata Station, but we were immensely grateful to have made it that night. If all else had failed, I was prepared to travel from Tokyo to Kyushu via a 12-hour journey on the regular train and shinkansen bullet train.

The next morning, March 26th, we headed to my mom's hometown in Oita, Japan. We arrived in time for a light lunch before the funeral service at 1 p.m.

The private funeral, performed in Konkokyo traditions by **Rev. Mitsutake** and his son, **Rev. Shinji**, was intimate and deeply moving. All 10 of us, including relatives from Shikoku, shared brief but meaningful memories of **Grandma Minako**. I shared that the day of the funeral happened to be my birthday, and I felt deeply grateful for the life given to me by my parents, grandparents, and countless ancestors who came before me. It is because of them that I exist.

I also shared how spiritual my grandma was—she prayed for us every day, even when she was thousands of miles away. Her prayers were the source of our happiness, health, and protection. Now that she has become a Mitama spirit, free from her physical body, I believe her presence will be even stronger. She will continue to watch over, guide, and comfort us always.

During the service, I noticed a katana (sword) wrapped in a cloth cover was placed on her coffin. I later learned that this practice is part of Shinto-style funerals for those with ancestral ties to samurai warriors. The katana represents the deceased warrior's spirit, honor, and protection in the afterlife. I thought this was incredible! I would love to have a katana on my coffin one day, as my ancestors were samurai.

After the service, we each took flowers from the arrangements and placed them around Grandma's body in the casket. Then, we proceeded to the cremation hall for our final farewell. Witnessing the entire process was profoundly moving, as this was my first time attending a Japanese funeral from start to finish.

At the cremation hall, we watched as the casket was wheeled into the incineration chamber. The doors closed automatically, like an elevator, as we bowed our heads in final respect. While waiting, we were taken to a quiet room where we shared tea and more cherished memories of Grandma. Though we could have been crying, we instead found ourselves laughing at all the joyful memories she left us. We felt only gratitude.

About an hour later, an announcement signaled the completion of the cremation. All along the hallways of the



cremation facility, the staff came out and bowed deeply to our family in respect as we passed them by. We were escorted to the room where Grandma's ashes and bones were brought out. Following Japanese tradition, we used long bamboo chopsticks to pick up her bones and place them into the porcelain urn. I selected small bones from her foot, some from her spine, and a shoulder ball joint. Each immediate family member had a chance to participate. When the urn was filled, the cremation staff carefully placed it in a beautifully wrapped box with such meticulous care that it brought me to tears. Seeing the reverence with which Grandma's remains were handled made even the staff cry alongside me.

People often say, "I'm sorry for your loss," but I didn't feel a sense of loss at all. Instead, I felt a deep and overwhelming sense of gratitude. Rather than losing Grandma, I felt I had gained her spirit within my heart. Her presence was with us from the moment she passed.

Now, I truly understand the teaching of Konko Daijin: "People are born amid divine blessings, live amid divine blessings, and die amid divine blessings" (Gorikai II Toshimori Shino 1).

Though I will miss seeing Grandma, hearing her voice, and feeling her warmth, the memories she left us are invaluable. More than anything, we felt gratitude—to her and to Kami-Sama. She was indeed a person who was born in blessings, lived in blessedness and passed away in blessedness.

The day after the funeral, my uncle took us to visit the Konko Church of Tateishi, my mom's hometown church. We also visited various ancestral sites, including graves and a small museum showcasing old photos of the gold mine where my great-grandfather, **Genroku**, worked. We even went to a shrine he once frequented. These were places I had never known existed.

Later, we visited a picturesque windmill atop Mt. Kōno, where the sakura cherry blossoms were in full bloom. Grandma loved sakura, and it was so meaningful that she passed just as they began blooming. Her *okurina* (posthumous name) was *Hatsuzakura Ouna No Mitama No Kami*—"Mitama Spirit of an Elderly Woman in the First Blooms of Sakura." It was perfect. My uncle used to take Grandma to that mountain to see sakura.

We were fortunate to see sakura in full bloom—a rare opportunity. I hadn't seen them like this in Japan since my seminary days 23 years ago, and my mom hadn't seen them in nearly 48 years.

My Grandma survived solely on IV hydration for 80 days—not even TPN (total parenteral nutrition), just lactated Ringer's solution. As a nurse, I have never seen a patient endure so long without any other source of nutrition or fluids. It was as if she held on for us until the sakura were beginning to bloom, so by the time we arrived in Japan, we could witness nature's breathtaking gift in its full glory. The timing could not have been more perfect.

When we first landed at Fukuoka International Airport, a massive advertisement caught my eye. It read, "Welcome to Hell." It was an ad campaign promoting the famous geothermal hot springs of Beppu, about an hour from my

mom's hometown. Seeing that sign and the stunning images of hot springs, I wished I could visit—but given that we had come for a funeral, I dismissed the thought.

To my surprise, my uncle later asked if we were interested in visiting the Hells of Beppu. I could hardly contain my excitement! Having studied basic geology in college, I have always been fascinated by geological wonders like geysers and hot springs. We visited Umijigoku, a stunning aquamarine blue onsen with a powerful geyser, and Chinoike Onsen, known as "Bloody Hell" due to its striking red waters. We visited a few other onsen that were in the same area. Each site we explored left me squealing in amazement and delight.

I could feel my Grandma's spirit encouraging us to embrace joy rather than grief. This trip became a journey of celebration, not just of her life but of the beauty surrounding us.

Uncle Masami and his family went above and beyond to ensure we had an unforgettable experience, and we are deeply grateful for their kindness.


On the morning of our return to Hawaii, we had an early breakfast before visiting the Konko Church of Hirao. The senseis welcomed us with warm smiles and uplifting energy, as they always do. One of their dedicated church members kindly offered to drive us an hour and a half to the Konko Church of Amagi.

At Amagi Church, we were greeted by **Rev. Hikaru Yasutake**, who was seated at the okekai mediation desk. The moment he saw my mom, he boomed, "OH!! I was wondering who this aunty was!!" His booming voice and animated reaction had us all bursting into laughter, the sound echoing through the grand worship hall. It felt so good to reunite with him and the other trainees we had known since our spiritual training days—more than 25 years ago.

After visiting the church, we went up to the Okutsuki, the Konkokyo-style mausoleum where the urns of senseis and church members are placed. We offered our prayers and admired the fully bloomed sakura that adorned the grounds, a final, breathtaking reminder of nature's fleeting yet profound beauty.

Reflecting on this journey, I cannot help but recognize Kami's unseen yet profound guidance. From securing the last two plane tickets to crossing paths with someone whose experience mirrored ours, every step felt divinely orchestrated. This trip was to bid farewell to the physical body that housed Grandma's spirit and celebrate her transition into the spiritual realm—it was a journey of remembrance, connection, and gratitude. It was a reminder that we are never alone in our paths and we are always watched over by our ancestors with love.

Whew! With all that said, I have one important reminder for you. Please mark your calendars for our annual Spring Grand Ceremony on **Sunday, April 13th, at 5 PM**. I invite you to set aside just a few hours to express gratitude for the source of our blessings. I'll be delivering the sermon that evening, and afterward, we'll share in a **naorai** fellowship dinner. I hope to see you there!

 With gratitude, *Edna*