Wahiawa Konko Mission Children's Newsletter

Konko Mission of Wahiawa
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WAHIAWA KONKO MISSION MONTHLY SCHEDULE

August 2025

1 Fri -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama
(7:30 pm) 天地金乃神様 月例祭
3 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am) *Okage Sharing
-KMH Rotary Hanashikai Mtg Wailuku Host (10:30 am)
8 Fri -Japanese Program at St. Francis (10:30 am)
9 Sat -KMH Board Meeting (10:30 am) @HNL Church ZOOM
-Garage Sale prep (1 pm)
10 Sun -Garage Sale (9 am to 1 pm)
-No Sunday Service
13 Wed-KMH Kyoten Study Group on ZOOM (5 pm)
15 Fri -Church clean-up (9 am)
16 Sat -Honouliuli National Historic Site 10th Anniversary Event
Wahiawa Church Public Tour (10 am)
-Hawaii Gunpla Workshop @ HNL Church (12 n-6 pm)
17 Sun -Monthly Svc. for Ikigami Konko Daijin-Sama
(9 am) 生神金光大神様 月例祭 *Okage sharing
19 Tue -KMH CEOC Meeting (9 am)
22 Fri -Church clean-up (9 am)
24 Sun -Monthly Mem. Service 月例霊祭 (9 am)
-52nd Mem. for Late Rev. Masayuki Kodama (9 am) HNL
27 Wed-KMH Kyoten Study Group on ZOOM (5 pm)
29 Fri -Church clean-up (9 am)
30 Sat -Ehimemaru Memorial Mikan tree maintenance (9 am)
-Ehimemaru Summer Ocean Safety Prayer (10 am)
31 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am) *Okage Sharing

September 2025

1 Mon -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama
(7:30 pm) 天地金乃神様 月例祭

KMH Beach Clean-up and BBQ event on 7/12/25. Mahalo for your help!

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.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Honouliuli National Historic Site, the Konko Mission of Wahiawa will offer a public church tour on Saturday, August 16, at 10 a.m. (approx. 1.5 hours). The tour will highlight our founding minister, the late Rev. Haruko Takahashi, who was interned at Honouliuli from 1941 to 1944. Volunteers are welcome—please contact Edna Sensei for details.

Konko Mission of Wahiawa Annual Schedule for 2025

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 11 am
10/13 Mon -Autumn Grand Service at Wahiawa at 5 pm
10/18 Sat -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


Night walk with the Youth Camp

Hawaii Attendees

The KCNA/KMH Joint Conference at the Applegate Jesuit Retreat Center in Sacramento, California from July 4th-6th this year.

Editor's Note

I hope you had a wonderful month in July! I certainly did! I was in California for 16 days! The first half was spent in Sacramento for the Konko Churches of North America and Hawaii Joint Conference at the Applegate Jesuit Retreat Center. The theme of the conference was: *Pray Anytime, Anywhere for Anything.* I always enjoy attending the conferences hosted in North America. I learn so much every time, and my favorite part is reconnecting with everyone there and making new friends as well.

Prayers can be formal or informal. Sometimes we need immediate blessings while we are sitting in the car, in class, or at work—sometimes we can't go to church to formally pray because there is no church nearby. But because Kami-Sama is the universal energy that surrounds us, we can basically pray anytime, anywhere, for anything.

Someone asked me the difference between praying to Kami-Sama (Life Force) and Konko Sama. I made it clear that Konko Sama is our principal mediator between the divine and humanity, so by calling "Konko Sama" when we pray, our prayers to Kami-Sama will be heard with high priority. It's like if you wish to give a message to someone famous. You'd be lucky if your letter to that famous person even reaches him or her. But if you know a friend who happens to be a direct friend of that famous person, your chances of getting your message read by that famous person will be great.

Konko Sama went through the struggles of life to gain full trust from Kami-Sama, so we don't have to. And if we mediate our prayers through Konko Sama by calling this divine name, your prayers will be heard loud and clear by Kami-Sama, the Life Force.

If you are Konko, you call the name *Konko Sama.* Without *Konko Sama,* your prayers are just prayers. If you are Christian, you may call on the "Father in Heaven" or "Jesus." If you are Buddhist, you may say, "Namu Amida Butsu." If you are Muslim, you call the name of "Allah." Different religions have different sacred names they recite to receive divine favor. In *Konkokyo,* that divine name is *Konko Sama.* So, I hope you can practice saying this name in your daily faith life as people who practice the Konko faith.

I had a great time at the joint conference. Next year, the KCNA annual conference will be in Toronto, Canada. I hope to be able to go, as I have never been to Canada before. I highly encourage anyone interested in attending the KCNA conferences.

After the joint conference, I went to San Francisco to help with their Summer Bazaar. This is the second year I have been helping. My husband did not attend the conference, but he flew to SF to help with the Bazaar. My brother, Rev. Rodney Yano, who just became the head minister of the SF Church this year, has so much on his plate, so we wanted to go to give him a hand at this busy two-day event. So many people came to help out—from the ministers, church members, and friends, to even the church Boy Scouts. Everyone worked extremely hard to get the job done. I love meeting all the helpers and customers at the bazaar. I also love playing BINGO, which my sister-in-law and her friend set up with so many amazing prizes! Some people come just to play BINGO. The SF Church Bazaar is usually held on the 2nd Saturday and Sunday of July. If you are ever in the area around that time, you should definitely check out their event!

Just recently, my mom and I had the joy of participating in the Bon Dance at Wahiawa Ryusenji Soto Mission. We're part of the *Yagura gumi*—not as musicians, but as singers. We sing the *Fukushima Ondo* and *Niigata Ondo.* This is only my second summer as a rookie singer, and it's been great fun.

There were so many people at the Bon Dance—families gathered to honor their loved ones and enjoy the atmosphere: dancing, eating, and even trying their luck at the *kingyosukui* (*fish scooping*). It was heartwarming to see such a lively turnout, all united by a shared sense of gratitude and joy.

Around 9 p.m., something special happened. I ran into my kindergarten Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP) teacher, Mrs. Catania, and her husband. For context, Japanese was the first language I learned to speak, so I was placed in this SLEP class back in the day. While the acronym might not sound exciting, to me, it was such a cool and priceless experience.

In that class, I got to work with other students who also didn't speak English fluently. I remember those elementary days so vividly—the puppet shows, the German lessons we had with Mrs. Borello, snack times, and the warm, joyful learning environment. I loved it all. I especially remember how kind, cheerful, and caring Mrs.

Catania was. She was always smiling. She never scolded or made us feel afraid.

One December, when I was in kindergarten, I got really sick and missed school for more than a week. I missed the Christmas party and was feeling pretty down about it. But then, after school, Mrs. Catania came to our house and knocked on our side door. She handed me a large Ziploc bag full of goodies—candy canes, chocolates, cookies, and handmade Christmas cards from the other students. I felt seen, remembered, and important, even as a little kindergartener. I'll never forget that moment, and I'll never forget her kindness.

That was 38 years ago—and it's still so vivid in my heart. You know, I remember the teachers who were the nicest and the ones who were the meanest. We don't always remember the academic styles or lessons, but we *always* remember how they made us feel.

And kids today are no different. They're anxious about the new school year, hoping they get the "nice" teachers. You'll hear them say things like, "I hope I don't get that teacher. She's mean," or, "I really want that teacher. She's nice."

Funny thing is—even in the adult world, a person's intelligence doesn't matter as much as how nice they are. We assume that by adulthood, we've reached a certain level of intelligence (though, let's be real—we all know some adults who make us question that!). But regardless, we still don't like difficult people. We naturally gravitate toward kindness.

At the hospital where I work, when doctors rotate in and out, everyone wants to know who's assigned for the week. Based on that, you'll hear people say, "Yay!" or "Aww, man..." Because some doctors are just scary, while others are genuinely nice. Are they all smart? Absolutely. But are they all *smart in the heart*? Unfortunately, no.

That kind of "heart smarts" is called *emotional intelligence*. Sometimes, the smarter we get in our heads, the less smart we become in our hearts. People with low emotional intelligence often struggle to cooperate, lack patience, and can't read the room—or worse, they just don't care about how others feel. They may unintentionally hurt others or make them uncomfortable without even realizing it.

When you graduate and enter the workforce, employers aren't just looking for people who are "book smart." They want individuals who are reliable, punctual, and dedicated. They want creative thinkers, people who stay calm under pressure, have great people skills, a positive attitude, confidence, efficiency, critical thinking skills, enthusiasm, and professionalism. They don't want someone who acts on emotion, explodes in frustration, or yells at a rude customer—because let's face it, there are a lot of rude people out there. The question is: how will you handle them?

Emotional intelligence starts *in the home*. How do mom and dad treat each other? How do they talk, walk, think, and behave in front of the kids? That environment plays a huge role in shaping a child's emotional foundation.

You hear stories of little kids swearing or saying racist things, and you wonder—*where did they learn that*? It almost always traces back to the parents or guardians. Kindness, gratitude, sharing, and caring aren't things that are magically picked up later in life—they need to be taught and *lived* from infancy. So much of our core personality and mindset is shaped between birth and age 3. There's a Japanese saying: *Mitsugo no tamashii hyaku made*. "The soul of a 3-year-old lasts until 100."

And the Jesuits would say, "Give me a child until the age of 7, and I'll show you the man."

In our society, there's such a strong push to make children academically successful—but often, the emotional and spiritual side gets neglected. That's why spiritual training is so essential. That's why my parents sent me and my brothers to the Amagi Church and Gakuin Seminary fresh out of high school. College came next. But they believed, deeply, that a strong spiritual foundation would lead to a life of real happiness.

And I can honestly say those two years of spiritual training were among the most priceless of my life. It wasn't "Do you *want* to go to Amagi and Gakuin?" It was "You *are* going." Not by force, but by a tsunami of prayers and deep love, with the intention of securing our happiness.

Just like how some parents say, "You *are* going to college after high school," because they want their kids to succeed in life and be financially stable. My parents' version of success included spiritual wellbeing. Because ultimately, we are *spirits* housed in a temporary body.

So, as this new school year begins, I encourage all of you—students, parents, teachers—to work hard in your academics. But also take the time to polish your emotional intelligence. Let's all strive to be not only smart in our heads, but also smart in our hearts.

To the teachers in the house: May you continue to inspire your students not just with knowledge, but with kindness, compassion, and care. You are shaping the future—one child at a time.

Sincerely, Edna