

## Foreword

### Welcoming the 100th Year

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On February 22nd, 24th and 26th of the year 1921, a commemorative ceremony for the completion of the wooden Large Buildings (Dai-kyokai-sho) of the Konkoko Headquarters was held. Although the Grand Worship Hall was a magnificent building, only 4 representatives of each Konkoko church were allowed to enter it. The other worshippers were in the Sacred Grounds of the Headquarters.

On the 24th, Day 2, the Third Konkoko-sama, as Vice Chief Officiant, spoke to the numerous worshippers covering the whole Sacred Grounds as follows:

"Welcome to this commemorative ceremony, ladies and gentlemen. Congratulations! I don't know what to say about the ceremony this time. How is your feeling? As for me, I am overwhelmed with emotion, indeed. When people are happy, Kami, as their Parent, is

also happy. Likewise, when Kami is happy, we are also happy. I always feel deeply sorry for Kami, because I am not thankful and joyful enough in everything. This memorable event will hopefully help us all improve our faith in Kami. It is my sincere hope that we will get to practice true faith which people of this world can learn from. I also pray that we will be allowed to save as many people in distress as possible."

Later, on the night of April 14th of 1925, a fire broke out in the room where offerings to Kami were prepared. (This room was called "Shinsenden.") The fire soon reached the Main Worship Hall (Honden), the room to enshrine mitama spirits (Soreiden), the Sermon-Delivering Hall (Daikyoden) and even to the then residence of the Third Konkoko-sama. Sadly, all these buildings were burned down. The Third Konkoko-sama, however, performed Sacred Mediation for worshippers just as usual on that day, as if nothing special had happened. To those who worried and lamented about the terrible event, Konkoko-sama calmly said, "Everything burned down,

but no worries are necessary, because we know that Kami is still there for us."

Everybody began to see Konkoko-sama walk from his home to the worshipping room early in the morning and leave the worshipping room for his home a little before the sunset after this tragic fire on the Grand Worship Hall and its neighboring wooden buildings. In other words, people began to see Konkoko-sama's new daily custom after the Third Konkoko-sama moved his residence to the present-day house. Konkoko-sama started this custom on April 15th. The Third Konkoko-sama entered a quickly installed hiromae (worship room) which was used as the Room for the Kancho. (Kancho is a position and it is so-called "In-Religion Supervisor.") Konkoko-sama entered the hiromae early in the morning and left it a little before sunset. The path from Konkoko-sama's (new) home to the hiromae was neatly swept every single morning. In those days, most paths/ways were unpaved, and the sand was scored with a rake. A male middle-school student did these jobs, and this boy did them quietly and voluntarily. He later became the Fourth Konkoko-sama. Sooner or

later, other people joined this schoolboy, and the path of (the Third) Konkoko-sama came to be shared by many, many people.

This year marks the 100th Anniversary since (the Third) Konkoko-sama began his Proceeding (Odemashi) and Exit/Going Home (Ohike). Representatives of several other religious organizations kindly attended the funeral of the late Fifth Konkoko-sama last summer. When I visited each of them in order to give thanks to them for their time for the funeral, one of them kindly said to me, "The Principal Mediator/Spiritual Leader of the Konkoko Faith is the very one who gives the most severe discipline onto himself." (The Sixth) Konkoko-sama prays to our Parent Kami for all of us every single day. I'd like to continue to ask for and receive Konkoko-sama's Sacred (Toritsugi) Mediation, so that I can contribute, even if a little, to the realization of the Third Konkoko-sama's words/wishes, "It is my sincere hope that we will get to practice true faith which people of this world can learn from. I also pray that we will be allowed to save as many people in distress as possible."

## Handing Our Seniors' Desires/Aspirations Down to Future Generations

The Commemorative Ceremony for the Independence of the Konko Faith Is to Be Held

**The Konkokyo Headquarters will hold the Commemorative Ceremony for the Independence of the Konko Faith at the Konkokyo Headquarters' Grand Ceremony Hall on June 8, 2025 (at 13:30). Following the Ceremony, we will hold "(Annual) Convention for All Konkokyo Ministers and Members" with the Sixth Konko-sama and his wife in presence.**

**In this article, we would like to publish our wishes that are embroidered in the June Ceremony and the following (Annual) Convention.**



## The Purpose of this (Commemorative) Ceremony

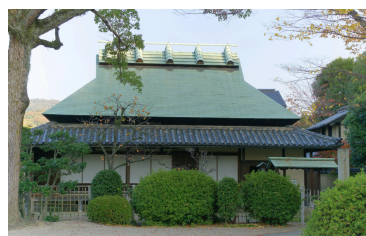
The Konko Faith (Konkokyo) became independent as a religious organization in 1900. We hold the Commemorative Ceremony for the Independence of the Konko Faith in order to give thanks to our numerous seniors for their ardent desires and earnest endeavors dedicated to the independence of Konkokyo. We hold this annual ceremony also because we would like to pray to our Parent Kami for the Konko Faith to become even more prosperous from now.



Our Founder, Konko Daijin, received the Divine Call (Rikkyo Shinden) in 1859, when our Parent Kami spoke to him, "There are many people like yourself who have sincere faith in Kamis but still have many problems. Help these people by performing Sacred Mediation." This Call led to the beginning of Konko Daijin's Sacred Mediation, and our Founder began to devote himself to serving Kami as a Toritsugi Mediator. The Founder taught each of his worshippers about the mutual fulfillment (aiyo kekeyo) between Kami and people. Some of those people volunteered to become Toritsugi Mediators, which led to the birth of Konko Daijin's hiromaes (worship halls) here and there in Japan. Konko Daijin's faith spread in this way.

Sometime during the final years of the Edo Period, the Founder obtained an official license as a professional Shinto priest by becoming one of the disciples of the Shirakawa School of Shinto. He performed Sacred Mediation with this license for a while, but the license became void with the arrival of the Meiji Period. Konko Daijin was no longer a professional Shinto priest accordingly. Surveillance by local authorities began, and Konko Daijin's worshippers came to worry about the Founder's unstable social status. Some of them even offered some help to the Founder, saying that they would work hard so that Konko Daijin would be able to obtain an official approval from the government and spread his faith to people freely. The Founder, however, didn't give them a permission, telling them that "It is not the time yet."

Under such a circumstance, one of the Founder's (direct) disciples, the Reverend Norio Sato, the Founding Minister of Konko Church of Geibi (in Hiroshima Prefecture of Japan), visited the chief priest of the Nunakuma Shrine in Fukuya-ma City of Hiroshima Prefecture in August, 1882. The Rev.



Sato said to the chief priest, "I would like to establish this faith as an independent religion." Then the priest asked, "Do you have doctrines?"



Here, "doctrine" stood for "itemized teachings of a founder." Rev.Sato reported what he'd heard from the Nunakuma priest to the Founder, who said, "It does not matter whether this

faith becomes independent or not, as long as people can be saved." The Rev. Sato did not want to back down with Konko Daijin's words, and he politely countered his mentor, "Things will be fine as long as you are living. But after you die, people will think that this faith is temporal unless we have some written teachings." Then Kami spoke to Konko Daijin, "It is better to write down the teachings of Kami." These words of Kami pleased Konko Daijin very much. In this way, the Founder's teachings began to be written down. In the following year, Kami (or Konko Daijin) said, "Write down this teaching," "Write down this one also," and the Rev. Sato was able to collect a number of Konko Daijin's teachings.

In Osaka in those days, a few of Konko Daijin's (direct) disciples worked hard and obtained an official governmental approval for their hiromaes as small local stations of Shinto's Administrative Branch of Osaka. In June, 1883, the Rev. (Second) Shinichiro Shirakami (Konko Church of Osaka, Osaka Pref.), the Rev. Fujimori



Kondo (Konko Church of Namba, Osaka Pref.) and the Rev. Norio Sato had a meeting and they decided to report the (then) current situation in Osaka to their mentor, Konko Daijin. The

three of them agreed to invite an officer of the Shinto Administrative Branch of Osaka to the Founder's hiromae. The three men visited their mentor and spoke to Konko Daijin about their plan. Konko Daijin was pleased and said "Both sides have come together."

Here, "both left (west) and right (east) are ready" is said to mean "The time has come." It is said that with these words, Konko Daijin meant that "both west and east are ready with the Otani Village of the Bicchu Province being in the center of a circle" and "the three disciples of Konko Daijin were mentally united as one for the sake of Konko Daijin's faith."

On July 12th, 1883, an officer from Osaka visited Konko Daijin and suggested he make his hiromae a branch of shrines that enshrine a deity, Kanayamahiko No Mikoto. The Founder, however, declined this offer, saying, "This Kami is different. It is not possible" The Founder said so with polite yet firm attitude.

Sadly, Konko Daijin and his followers could not obtain an official approval for propagation from the government during the Founder's lifetime. But Konko Daijin's faith spread even more and more vigorously after Konko Daijin's passing. Under the leadership of Mr. Hagio Konko (the fourth son of Konko Daijin), Rev. Shirakami, Rev. Kondo and Rev. Sato became the main force to negotiate with the government. In 1885, the congregation of Konko Daijin's faith was able to get an official approval for propagation as Konko Church of Shinto which belonged to the "Headquarters of Shinto." This was a big step forward but it also had its own limitations: "Konkokyo" in those days found it quite difficult to tell people about Konko Daijin's teachings just as they were. The three main ministers knew



that their work wasn't really finished yet. Therefore, they organized Konko Daijin's followers and they worked hard in order to put the organization in

place. At the same time, they treaded upon a path toward independence. On June 16th of 1900, the Founder's faith finally became independent of the Headquarters of Shinto as "Konkokyo" (the Konko Faith).

The above-mentioned three ministers were obviously the main driving force to make it come true, but there were many other people who shared the same desire and worked hard with them. They were literally united as one. Thanks to their unity, the function of the Konko organization became even more firm and solidified. Since then, the Konkokyo organization has cherished its horizontal tie among member churches and we have sought our Founder's faith together.

Today, nobody violates Konko Daijin's faith. Today, nobody obstructs Konkokyo's various activities. We can help people in difficulty openly and freely. We can also continue to tell people Konko Daijin's teachings just as they are. These things are possible today because all of our seniors did their very best. Every time we hold the Commemorative Ceremony for Konkokyo's Independence including this time,

we would like to give thanks from the bottom of our hearts to our Parent Kami, our Founder, the successive Konko-samas and all of our seniors who dedicated themselves to the independence of the Konko Faith. We, at the same time, would like to pray to our Parent Kami so that we will be allowed to hand down Konko Daijin's faith to even further, future generations, asking for and receiving Konko-sama's Toritsugi Mediation.



During the ceremony, we will commend ministers with 40-year (selfless) service to our Parent Kami as Toritsugi Mediators. We will also officially appoint Gakuin Seminary graduates Konkokyo ministers. 63 ministers will be commended this time, and all of them have contributed to the spread of the Konko Faith for many, many years. 25 people will be newly ordained as Konko ministers. Including these people, I sincerely pray that all of us will be allowed to keep working hard towards "world peace and the fulfillment of all humanity."



### The Purpose of the (Annual) Convention for All Konkokyo Ministers and Members

The Basic Policy of the Konkoku Faith (Konkokyo) Organization for this year (AD 2025) is "Let us keep the content of the Divine Reminder/Tenchi Kakitsuke in our mind and put it into practice. By doing so, let us try to become the (bright) light for world peace and the salvation of all people."

We come across various events in our daily lives. However, no matter what kind of situations we may find ourselves in, we can discover something we naturally feel grateful and joyful about, as long as we base our lives upon our ties with Kami, cherish our connection with others and reflect upon our relationships with things around us. And we get to perceive that our heart gets invigorated accordingly.



This is because we can take notice of blessings we constantly receive from Kami and express our joyful heart by practicing faith. Kami prays that we brighten our society by shining upon people around us with the ray of light called 'gratitude and joy.' In other words, Kami hopes that we will be saved with people around us all together. Kami also hopes that this positive energy will be passed on to many generations from now and that it will be expanded.



In the New Year's broadcast of the radio program for Konkokyo, which was aired on New Year's Day of 2025, the 6th Konko-sama delivered a fantastic story with the title, "Relay of Life." The 4th Konko-sama (the current Konko-sama's grandfather) handed down his faith to his family member not with words but with visible behaviors and attitude. The 6th Konko-sama remembers his grandfather deeply and fondly, and the baton of faith (in Kami) has been handed down from the 4th Konko-sama to the present Konko-sama without fail. The 6th Konko-sama himself is quite creative in his effort to hand down his faith to his children. Konko-sama's

family regularly cleans the Kami Altar in their residence. Konko-sama regards this task as selfless service (goyo) which all of his family members can engage".



The Founder teaches us, "If you are happy every day, there will be no discord in the family." Just as this teaching shows, peace will emerge in our homes when each of us embraces a grateful and joyful heart and lives

healthily both physically and mentally day to day. When others see us live our daily lives, those people will also gradually come to have such a heart and this positive movement will expand to many, many others. The Konkoku Faith has constantly had this positive movement and the ray of light called 'salvation' has been handed down to us living today.



In the (Annual) Convention for All Konkokyo Ministers and Members this time, Konko-sama and his wife will kindly be with us for the event. And a Konkokyo believer will make a presentation. In his/her presentation, he/she will talk about a true story where Konkoku Daijin's faith has been handed down to next generations through his/her serving our Parent Kami and that people of different generations are allowed to have a lively, happy heart. The believer will also refer to his/her activities to let others know about this positive way of living. Our hope is that this believer's presentation will become something big for each of you to start making efforts to hand down your faith to your next generations, being creative in your daily life from now. We pray that each one of us will make our footsteps forward, 'emitting' light of salvation and contributing to the realization of Kami's wish, "world peace and the salvation of all humanity" gradually but steadily.



## Living Up to the Wish of our Parent Kami of the Universe

- The Graduation Ceremony of the Konkokyo Gakuin Seminary (Regular/Standard Course) for the (School) Year of 2024 -

On April 15th of 2025, when we see new, green buds, the Konkokyo Gakuin Seminary held a graduation ceremony for the school year of 2024. 14 Seminary students attended this ceremony after a 11-month study and training.

Prior to the graduation ceremony, the students took a deep bow and greeted the 6th Konko-sama politely and graciously for his 3:40 AM Proceeding (Odemashi) from his residence to the Konko Faith Headquarters' Central Worship and Mediation Hall. Following the 4 AM prayer service in the Hall, the Gakuin students had their own prayer service that was led by the Rev. Shinji Oshiro, the Principal of the Seminary. The Rev. Oshiro then said words of gratitude to Konko-sama at the Mediation Seat (Okekai) on behalf of the entire Seminary. Konko-sama then gave some kind words.



The Graduation Ceremony started in the Seminary's Worship Hall (Gakuin Hiromae) at 9:30 AM. After a prayer service and an oral recitation of "Goshinden" (the Divine Message), the Rev. Oshiro, the Principal, handed a Graduation Certificate to each student. The Rev. Oshiro delivered a short speech, then Rev. Michio Hashimoto, the Chief Administrative Director of Konkokyo, made a greeting. The Rev. Koichiro Takahashi, the Director of the Konko Library, represented the guests and he made a congratulatory speech. Then all people recited the "Prayers of and for Gakuin students" together. The Graduation Ceremony was concluded with a prayer service.

