



The Konko Missions in Hawaii will fulfill Ikigami Konko Daijin's vision to embrace the world with the Konko Faith.



## Kami's Wish

Part 2 of Rev. Shinkichi Kawai's FEM,  
Translated by Rev. Yomisu Oya



### Kami's wish for my "inochi" life and living with Kami's wish

*Kami's wish for my "inochi" life and living* Kami's wish is the second half of Rev. Shinkichi Kawai's lecture, *The Way of Faith – Walking with Kami*, from the Faith Enrichment Meeting in June. The first half of his lecture, *Konkokyo as "the way (MICHU)"*, can be found in the previous issue. Understanding Kami's thoughts and workings was the key theme in the first half of the lecture through the practical example of rebuilding the Church after the East Japan Earthquake. This theme continues through his personal experiences while creating the garden for his church in the second half of his lecture.

### The Master Gardener's Request

After the completion of the church and ministers' residence, Mr. Kitayama, a contemporary master gardener in Japan, was responsible for the garden. When Mr. Kitayama started to work on the garden, he asked for the name of the garden. According to him, a respectful person should name the garden. Revs. Shinkichi and Mayumi Kawai thought that the most respectful person in Konkokyo would be "Konko Sama."

However, they could not request a name from Konko Sama right away. They hesitated asking Konko Sama for such a favor. As all the Konkokyo believers know, Konko Sama dedicates his life to mediation at the main worship hall from before 4 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day. It is impossible for him to see the actual garden to think about its name. In addition, they have never heard of a local church asked him such a favor.

There are people who ask Konko Sama to name their new born baby. In the Kawai family, grandparents, father, Rev. Shinkichi, his brother, and sister had received their names from Konko Sama. Revs. Shinkichi and Mayumi Kawai's two children also received their names from Konko Sama. However, they were going to request a name for the garden, not a person. They thought that this would be inappropriate. Without giving a clear answer to Mr. Kitayama, they postponed the naming until the completion of the garden.

### The Name of the Garden

The garden was completed, and Rev. Kawai decided to ask Konko Sama a favor. Rev. Kawai visited Konko on February 19 expressing his appreciation for a wonderful garden. At that time, he asked a minister who served at the Mediation

place for Konko Sama to name the garden. He promised to come back to Konko in the future, considering that this was a sudden request.

Rev. Kawai was going to send photos and an article about the garden, which would be published in an upcoming church newsletter. He thought that this would help Konko Sama think of a name for the garden. Therefore, he was going to visit Konko and receive the name after the Spring Memorial Service. He returned from Konko to Tokyo.

On March 10, Rev. Kawai received a phone call from Honbu. Over the phone, he was asked when he would be coming back to Honbu so he can receive the name. He immediately realized that Konko Sama bestowed the name of the garden. They were so surprised. Konko Sama named the garden without seeing the garden. Revs. Shinkichi and Mayumi Kawai had been admiring the garden every day, but no names came into their hearts. They sent the church newsletter to Konko Sama along with 10 photos of the garden after the Spring Memorial Service.

On April 3, Rev. Kawai attended the Tenchi Kane No Kami Grand Ceremony at Konko. At that time, he received Mediation. Rev. Kawai received an envelope from a minister who served at the Mediation place for Konko Sama. Immediately after coming back to Nakano Church, Rev. Kawai offered the envelope to the altar. When he opened the envelope, he was stunned with the words written on the paper. It said "*Hekisui-en*" and was dated on February 20, which was the day after Rev. Kawai made his request at Honbu. In addition, the letter from Konko Sama mentioned the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama's poem on February 21 (which is the very next day). The poem was:

I see the garden thinking of life and death as one thing  
like being still and taking action is one movement.

### The Name "Hekisui-en"

Revs. Shinkichi and Mayumi Kawai were stunned. "*Hekisui*" is the name of the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama. He composed his poems under this name. Thinking how the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama encouraged Mr. Kitayama when Mr. Kitayama struggled in his early days, the name was perfect. However, they were speechless that a garden in a local church shared the same name as the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama. They also realized that the kanji letter of "*heki*" (碧) contains the character for stone (石). Mr. Kitayama's garden is famous for



its rock formations. Also, the name was perfect considering the impression that people might have from the garden is green and water.

A poem attached to the name of “*Hekisui-en*” was also meaningful and deep. There are many poems for the garden, but they wonder why Konko Sama thought about this particular poem. Rev. Mayumi remembered what she wrote as her impression of Mr. Kitayama’s garden when she was a student. She was impressed and described the garden as “The world expressed with a fine fusion of opposing characteristics such as rigidity and tenderness, or tranquility and dynamism.” After reading the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama’s poem, she felt as if the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama wrote this poem by having looked through Mr. Kitayama’s life and his works.

Rev. Mayumi sent an email to Mr. Kitayama the next day. She wrote about the name and poem from Konko Sama. The next day, Mr. Kitayama visited their church and said, “I am deeply moved.” When Mr. Kitayama learned that Konko Sama gave the name without knowing the relationship with the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama and him, he exclaimed and said, “A person like him can see all.” Konko Sama only received a request of creating the garden. He was not informed that Mr. Kitayama was working on the garden. Without having any information for Mr. Kitayama and his personal relationship with the 4<sup>th</sup> Konko Sama, and without seeing and hearing anything about the garden, he named the garden with a wonderful poem. How did he do this? They were filled with an awe-inspiring feeling.

### The Workings of “*Hekisui-en*”

The “*Hekisui-en*” brought a huge impact and changes to Nakano Church and the surrounding community. When they open the front door of the church, people can see the garden. A child clings to the rock and sees tadpoles on his way back from school. An activist who wished to serve for the people and community in Nakano ward visited and took the church family pictures. A person who worked at our neighborhood grocery store appreciated it and said that he enjoyed seeing the garden every day. A TV crew even came to film the garden. Even a foreigner stopped by and said, “Oh, beautiful!” So many people appreciated the beautiful garden, and many people came and praised the garden. They were pleased to see many people who are grateful for finding the beauty of nature created by trees and water.

This is what Mr. Kitayama’s garden is about. Desiring to make people happy and eliminating self-righteousness, he seeks thoroughly the essential qualities of the garden. This is the reason

why his garden impresses people. Mr. Kitayama aims for the true way. Therefore, these gardens are very hard to achieve and many gardeners avoid this ideal. This is why seeing his garden moves many people.

### Conclusion

We go to church to attend the service, receive Meditation, and give our prayers. During that time, directing our hearts to Kami, we appreciate, apologize and pray to review our faith. In this way, we practically try to have a better relationship with Kami. We try to understand Kami’s thoughts based on whatever happened in our daily lives. Later, the answer will be given through what happens next in our daily lives, and we understand Kami’s will.

Through the extraordinary blessings that Rev. Kawai experienced, he learned Kami’s heart in a series of events that happened at his church. He emphasized starting with a prayer and seeing what would happen. Then, he changes the prayer a little and sees what would happen. In the process of practicing faith, we could develop and deepen our understanding of Kami’s heart.

Rev. Kawai noted that practicing faith in this way makes what happens in our lives wondrous and extraordinary. We then realize Kami’s act in our daily lives.

answer will be given through what happens next in our daily lives and then we understand Kami’s will.

Rev. Kawai shared his experience in which he has been receiving extraordinary blessings at his church. He learned Kami’s heart in a series of events that happened at his church. He always started with his prayer, and saw what happened. Then he changed his prayer a little, to see what would happen. He developed and deepened his understanding of Kami’s heart in the process of practicing faith in this way.



*Hekisui-en*  
Photo courtesy of  
Rev. Yomisu Oya

## Faith Accomplishing Kami’s Desire

By Rev. Watanabe, Translated by Rev. Yomisu Oya

### I. Watanabe Family’s Meguri, Grandmother’s faith, and the origin of father’s propagation

Habikino is a satellite city located in the south of Osaka. Our church was established 42 years ago and is relatively new in the Osaka area. My parents came to Habikino to spread the Konko Faith after religious training at the Konko Church of Izuo. I was a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at that time. My parents moved to a two-story house. They made the first floor into a hiromae meditation place. The size of the rooms were 4.5 and 6 *tatami* mats. The name of this unofficial group was called “Konkokyo Minami Osaka Hosan Kai (Konkokyo South Osaka Worship Group).” I

was a freshman in high school when this hiromae received recognition as a *yobi-fukyosho* (prep-propagation hall from the Konkokyo organization and established worship hall). The first head minister, my father, passed away 9 years ago, and I succeeded his position.

### 1. “Taigan-no-ujiko” (man of Kami’s desire)

First of all, I would like to talk about “Taigan-no-ujiko.” Our Founder wrote on the last line of his “Oshirase Goto Obocchio” (record of revelations) as follows:

“*Jin-min no tame taigan-no-ujiko tasukeru tame migawari ni kami ga sasuru Konko Daijin hirei no tame*”

“Taigan-no-ujiko” doesn’t mean ministers and members who have a desire to save and help people in need. This refers to a “sanpai-sha” visitor who comes to the hiromae wanting to be saved. It doesn’t matter whether the person has faith or not. “Taigan-no-ujiko” is a “Kami-no-ujiko” (Kami’s child) who comes to Kami’s hiromae. In the Founder’s prayer note, each individual’s requests were written as “taigan.” They are pains in their eyes, feet, shoulders, sickness, marriage, business, etc. These are common requests from our daily lives. These are requests only from humans. However, once they reach Kami through toritsugi mediation, Kami accepts, and humans’ wishes become Kami’s wish. Many people only come for the Founder’s blessings. Once they receive the blessings, they never come back. The Founder even called these selfish people “taigan-no-ujiko.”

“Jin-min” is the people of the world who could not come to the hiromae without receiving Kami’s arrangements. Therefore, the Founder dedicated his life to becoming a “migawari” to help save “ujiko,” those who pray for one’s salvation and those who did not receive Kami’s arrangements. Now then, how do we pray as believers in this way of faith? Let us talk about our Faith.

If we focus on practicing faith from generation to generation, our faith will not be the same as “taigan-no-ujiko” in the Founder’s era. Our faith will grow for generations in this way. A clear goal of faith helps us understand the role that we have to play. This is how we receive blessings from generation to generation. When we think even a little further, a believer as a “taigan-no-ujiko” is a person who plays a part in the Founder’s wish. The Founder’s wish is Kami-sama’s world-wide human salvation project.

## 2. Starting from negative

My father lived one year after his cancer surgery. The day before the operation, he left a will to our members and everyone in the family. Within the will, he wrote that everyone should not be sorry, but be happy because he was going on a journey to work as a Mitama spirit. For me, he wrote that I should not want immediate fortunes, but serve for Kami and look forward to a greater future achievement. He also wrote about taking away meguri and accumulating virtue. He left the message that the purpose of practicing faith is to accumulate virtue as much as I can and leave the virtue to the next generation.

I had a chance to read sermons that my father prepared and delivered at other churches a little before he passed away. In his sermon, he seemed to talk frequently about the meguri of the Watanabe family. One of the churches recorded his sermon and gave it to me. In the sermon, he talked about how my grandmother left notes about her family. In the note, none of the ancestors are good. One made money with stocks, bought land and became a major landowner. However, he died young because of cancer. According to my grandmother’s notes, there were only these kinds of ancestors.

My father always mentioned meguri in trading. For example, a shop owner selling rolls of cloth trains their apprentices how to measure the length of cloth. They train them to measure the cloth so quickly that the customer cannot see. This way, they can gain profit. In practically any trading business, the apprentices were trained to have this kind of skill. This becomes meguri. Any business can supposedly gain profit through normal trading. But, they cheat and gain more for immediate profit. This becomes meguri for that person. They gain wealth immediately, but end up with a miserable life. The note says that these people are Watanabe family ancestors.

When my grandmother showed him this note, my father was

inspired. My father thought that although people believe they are practicing faith from zero, they actually started from some negative number. For example, those who started to practice faith after coming to church because of an incurable illness start practicing faith from a negative situation. People never come to make requests if everything is under their control. They knew that they cannot control unfortunate situations themselves. They knew that these circumstances were the destiny of their family. They came to church with a strong request to live longer and for their family to be saved. This is not starting from zero but starting from negative numbers. All the first seekers knew about this. Therefore, no matter how hard they practiced faith, they never felt that they practiced enough. No matter how much they offered to the church, these offerings wouldn’t even amount to a small piece of appreciation. In this way, they do *goyo* for the church because they believe that they started from a negative figure.

However, the first seeker of the family never talks about their reasons for practicing faith to their children. It is hard to disclose. They usually talk to their children about blessings that they have received. But, they do not explain that they started to practice faith from a negative zone. They never mention how they could not imagine what situation they would be in if they did not encounter Kami. Having received Kami’s blessings, they came back to zero, and then they are in the positive now. Because their children’s faith started from in the positive, they naturally feel that their family had no problems, and their parents are simply practicing Konko faith. This is how the children recognize faith, and the children’s faith is far different from their parents’ faith. When we talk about our own faiths, we should start our stories from the negative state of our families. And, we should explain how and when Kami guided us to receive blessings and changed our lives and our families. Otherwise, the faith cannot be conveyed to the descendants.

In my case, thankfully, my grandmother, who practiced faith and passed away at the Konko Church of Izuo, left notes. I read these notes and felt that I met my grandmother. The following things are written in my grandmother’s memos.

## 3. Saga continued (Grandmother’s Faith)

My grandfather died young because of stomach cancer. It was in 1932. My grandmother was performing *oo-daiko* at the church. At the New Year’s Day Service in 1932, my grandmother performed *oo-daiko* crying because my grandfather was in the final stages of his cancer. Then my grandfather passed away. My grandfather never practiced faith. I was told earlier about a person who made money with stocks and bought land. That was my grandfather.

When my grandmother passed away, there were 5 children. According to my grandmother’s writing, the first head minister of the Izuo Church said to my grieving grandmother, “This is a blessing.” Her notes continue, “Oya-sensei said that it was a blessing. But, I thought that I didn’t want this kind of blessings. I decided and actually practiced faith very hard to get rid of my meguri for the sake of my children and their future. Right now, I am seeing one act in a long play. I wonder how Kami-Sama would save this poor family in the final stage. Just like seeing a play, I will work hard looking forward to the future. To go through this hardship was the first huge step. I continued to pray using Kami as my cane.”

I felt grateful after reading my grandmother’s notes. It was a chaotic moment for her. She lost her husband and had 5 children to take care of. However, she was able to think that it was one of the acts from a long play. She believed that Kami



would make her life story have a happy ending since Kami makes arrangements for our lives. She was able to imagine a happy ending in which everyone would cheer for her at the end of her life. She believed that Kami would make such an arrangement. There are many scenes in any play. At first, a miserable person appears on stage makes everyone feel sad and cry. However, the scene could change at the next opening of the stage curtain, and the person could be happy. There are ups and downs in life. Even seemingly endless storms may hit us and make us think our families could meet their end. However, my grandmother inspired courage in practicing faith. She thought that the difficult time would be come to an end. She is the leading actress in her story that Kami makes. The difficult time of the period must be just one scene in a happy ending story.

She passed away peacefully a little before 90 years old. At the moment of her death, she probably thought, "One scene that I played in will be over. However, new dramatic stages will be prepared for my five children. The role that I played was practicing faith." She didn't establish a church like my father did. She didn't start a business. What she did was devotedly believe in Kami and prayed to take away meguri, accumulated offenses of the Watanabe family. She made up her mind to practice faith and earned divine virtue for her children. Therefore, I am sure that she was looking forward to seeing the new dramas played by her five children and passed away peacefully.

#### 4. Starting point of my father's faith

My father became ill in the later part of his life, and he was hospitalized for one year. However, he came back to church for all the monthly services. He delivered short sermons every time. In one of his sermons, he talked about the starting point of his faith. He said that he had several critical moments in his life. One was related to my grandmother. The other was the blessings that he received from his minister. He regained his health from lung tuberculosis.

Here is a part of his story. He was a high school student during World War II, but he lived his days in a sanatorium. He said that he saw the plane in the sky on a day the bombing took place in Osaka. At that time, he thought that he was useless because all his classmates were fighting for the country as kamikaze pilots. He thought "What am I living for?" His friends died one by one, and he was going to die the hospital without doing anything for others. He received blessings and got better. Thanks to the blessings, he started training at the Konko Church of Izuo with

my grandmother. It was after the war. He was too skinny and weak to do training at the church since he had been in the hospital for such a long time.

All trainees lined up in the front during the morning prayer service with many believers every day at the church. He said that he could not finish chanting the *obara* prayer at the time. He could not keep his clasped hands up, and he couldn't voice his prayers due to sputum building in his throat. Every morning, he could not finish chanting one prayer. His life was spared, and he became a trainee to give thanks. However, he could not chant a prayer. He was disgusted with himself and always cried laying on the *tatami* mat. One day, he thought about his mother who prayed behind him with the other believers. He thought, "I am disgusted with myself, but my mother is too. She is also crying with distress." He thought, "My tears are not only mine. They are also my mother's tears coming out of her prayer." He said that he felt so grateful after thinking in this way.

Years later when my father visited my grandmother before her passing, my father told her this story. My grandmother said, "I remember that well. It was a painful experience. I prayed with you that even if my son is half the man someone else is, please use him for Kami." My father once talked about his faith at the very later part of his life. "My starting point of faith was my mother's prayer. She prayed for me to be used even if I am only half the man some other ministers are. I was a man who couldn't chant a single prayer. My life was spared with Kami's blessings. That was my starting point of spreading this way of faith."

When I look back to my family in this way, I read the Founder's writings in the "*Oshirase Goto Oboe-cho*" (record of revelations) in quite a different way. He wrote, "taigan-no-ujiko tasukeru tame migawari ni kami ga sasuru." Kami's wish is not something huge. Kami wishes for people to be ordinary, be happy, and fulfill their lives even encountering illness. Kami wishes that even if they have little money, if they could live their lives happily and get along with others well, it would be fine. I think that this is how our Founder prayed. Kami accepts anyone's request, including those who do not practice faith, because they are all beloved children. I am sure that Kami has such a broad heart. This is why enormous amounts of requests were written in the Founder's prayer note book. With this prayer, our Founder passed away. The Founder's successors performed Toritsugi, and each local church head minister sits at the *kekka* mediation place in each church.

## HOW TRAUMA IS CHANGING MY LIFE—FOR THE BETTER

By Dr. John Tamashiro (Konko Mission of Waipahu)

I never expected to uncover the gist of the above title while reading TIME magazine, August 3, 2015—possibly a divine arrangement in disguise. In the TIME article, page 29, the word "trauma" referred to serious illness similar to mine as well as devastating violence, loss of a precious family member, etc., that an estimated 75% of all people will experience in their lifetime. How can Konkokyo help believers and non-believers rise above these disasters to achieve positive benefits? I am hopeful that our reli-

gion can sustain us through emergencies and lead us onto higher planes of happiness. I say this because Kamisama offers me many pathways of support as I strive to prevent the recurrence of prostate cancer in myself and the onset of any major sickness in my loved ones. For example, take Reverend Junichi Watanabe's sermon at the Honolulu kyokai on July 31, 2015 ably translated by Reverend Yomisu Oya. Some of the ideas in his presentation, as applied to his family history, motivated me to do the same.



To begin resolving personal health issues, Konkokyo has led me onto three pathways. First, the concept of meguri encourages personal introspection on this alarming condition. What have I done to bring about this illness that textbook science says took years in the making? Second, an important body of Konko ritual symbols (service chants, church altar, etc.) on the mitama draws attention to my Okinawan ancestors and deceased nisei parents. Can explorations of family history reveal important lessons on wellness for myself and my children? Third, in regard to the well-being of my family into the future, I appreciate my dear wife, younger brother, only daughter, my adult sons, their spouses, and grandchildren all as Kami no ujiko even though no one on this list, except my wife, is a Konko believer. I have no doubt that their prayers, when directed at Jesus or God, will be heard by Kamisama regardless of their Christian affiliation. Furthermore, if I make their health one of my primary missions (another is financial security), it is more likely that my descendants will flourish and my faith will grow.

The first pathway to well-being, meguri: searching for the meguri in my life raised questions about the causes of my cancer and correlated faith based solutions. Meguri, broadly defined as sin, but personally applied to the environmental conditions contributing to my illness, refers to a typical American diet of excessive meat, sugar, salt, and fat (think potato chips!) As well as too few cruciferous vegetables and berry fruits; other causal elements contributing to cancer include years of anxiety over disruptive students as a teacher in a public high school and lapses from loving fatherhood into mean and neglectful mistreatment. All of these vulnerabilities became apparent to me upon reflection, thanks to otoritsugi sessions that not only sustained me through the robotic surgery that removed my prostate, but started to give me the confidence to perceive my shortcomings honestly without hiding from them. Furthermore, I began reading books on cancer and consulted with my physician on how to fortify my immune system utilizing holistic medicine. In addition, I practiced otoritsugi at the Grand Hiromae in Okayama Prefecture in Japan to apologize for the anxieties within my family brought about by this malady, express thankfulness for its benefits, and pray for my extended family.

Second pathway, the Mitama: given my current health situation, though cancer free for now, the reader may understand one motive for visiting Okinawa in 2015, the ancestral home of my Mitama no Kami and the roots of my DNA. In the capital city of Naha, the genetic link to my ancestors became reality during a museum visit. My wife, Wanda, called me into a display gallery by saying, "I have something to show you!" There stood a naked wax figure in a glass case. Its skeletal frame from 10,000 years ago, had been excavated near the Minato river. However, despite the gap in time between us, prehistoric Minatogawa man could have been a distant relative with similar characteristics of double eyelids, a full head of hair, and a hairy chest. The genetic resemblance, though not scientifically verified, reminded me of Okinawa's "Blue Zone" status, a region identified by researcher, Dan Buettner inhabited by residents with a higher than average lifespan. However, my auspicious reaction to the "blue zones" was tempered by somewhat alarming news. After meeting with a lady relative similar in complexion and stature to my mom, I learned that this business woman, Shizuko, had recently undergone extensive treatment for cancer, another resemblance, this time, unfortunate. I will be reminding my children to be on the lookout for symptoms of this defect in our family tree. Hardy genes do not afford adequate protection against an unhealthy lifestyle.

Second pathway, again the Mitama: in addition to biological issues related to quality living, I wonder if character flaws can also move across generations to affect one's physical well-being. If so, then

excessively strict or neglectful behavior by a parent can be learned by the child who grows to adulthood, to then mistreat his offspring in similar fashion. Under such conditions, what if a Konko believer utilizes otoritsugi to bring about reconciliation between deceased parents and their Mitama? Might this assist the living as well as the Mitama who walk among us? I took this teaching about the extant Mitama with me on my trip to Naha, Okinawa in 2015. At the Naha kyokai, I prayed for my deceased mom, with the assistance of a Konko minister, hoping to reconcile her with her father. I had heard at mom's funeral in 2007, that, as a young woman, she had severed ties with her father when he had disapproved of her marriage. Apparently, the estrangement had continued for many years until they embraced in the hospital shortly before he died. I learned about this happy moment only a few weeks after otoritsugi engagement with Reverend Hayashi in Okinawa and believed that grandfather and mom were assuring me that their Mitama were at peace. However, I wonder whether the negative vibrations between those two somehow impacted on my psyche with repercussions on my children. Nevertheless, I will continue to pray for my parents whom I see every day in photos on my altar just as I pray they will help protect my three adult children and four grandchildren against deadly diseases. Of course, I want my children to follow my example.

Pathway three: Kami no ujiko: what can I do to shape eating habits of my descendants? Trying to do so at family dinners is a good idea, especially at our interfaith grace before meals, a rare time, when everyone is attentive so I can thank Kamisama for the culinary skills of the chefs as well as the nourishing content of each dish. I hope to do even more for my descendants by combining the Okinawan and Japanese cuisine with meals from my parents. In this regard, my wife will do more to prepare Okinawan dishes from centenarians who cook with cumin in curries, goya (bitter melon), and other vegetables. Furthermore, thanks to my daughter-in-law from Yokohama; my deceased mom, a nisei; and my church based in Okayama, we often indulge in Japanese fare that includes misoshiru, shrimp, sashimi, wakame, nori, and konbu. At parties, when my children see wild salmon on my plate, they know their father--who never liked to eat any ocean dweller--is making a special effort to emulate asian lifestyles with much lower rates of cancer.

Pathway three: Kami no ujiko: eating good food is only one important ingredient of good health. How about daily exercise for my adult children deeply imbedded in the electronic subculture for "couch potatoes?" Perhaps the best method of persuasion is to exemplify the happy longevity of our parents and ancestors through frequent activity inside and outside the home. Here, my mom's advice is relevant: in order to lose weight, just clean house and care for your yard. Heeding her advice with the family as witness I do the dishwashing after our biweekly parties. However, the bigger challenge occurs daily after meals. To avoid drowsy TV addiction that leads to growing disability and dependence on them, we try to keep moving mentally and physically (after exercise classes) by reading business mail, emailing friends, playing piano, etc. Then, too, we hope to humor and inspire our children with stories about our aiyo akeyo activities in the yard or with quasi legendary tales of my mom's tree climbing for tangerines at age eighty-five. Perhaps even more important, we need to be students again by listening to reports from our adult children about the latest developments

in medical self-help.

To conclude, the trauma that struck about three years ago, did have many health benefits. In addition to incorporating better nutrition, more regular exercise, and more deeply rewarding human relationships into my life, more than ever, I realize that Kamisama is the great timekeeper who can stop my clock at will. Because I don't know when this will happen, I am more mindful of dependence on him and more purposeful in nudging family members toward a quality lifestyle, although, so far, the results have been modest. To do more, I look to ministers and spouse to help reveal my meguri so I can utilize it to impart the folk wisdom of my ancestors into the daily routine of Kami no ujiko. Furthermore, I seek to reciprocate contemporary medical information with my adult children. To complement our roles as mediators between the past and the future, my wife Wanda will continue to serve as chief cook and recipe collector in the kitchen as well as companion at chores and recent gardener inside and outside our home—all in the interest of exemplifying the physical and mental stimulation that contributes to long life. Finally, I must continue to pray for purification of their meguri (unhealthy life conditions);

to confess to them my own shortcomings; and to testify to Kamisama's restorative power.



Photo: Dr. Tamashiro pictured extreme right in the front row next to his lovely wife, Wanda.

## "Let's Grow Our Blessings" —Inaugural Meeting

By Karen Taniguchi (Konko Mission of Waipahu)

The first gathering of the Konko Mission's Women's Group was held on August 2, 2015 at the Konko Mission of Waipahu, following the Sunday service. About twenty-four ladies from the Wahiawa, Honolulu and Waipahu churches participated. From written and spoken comments and the easy conversation and smiles, it is clear that they came away from the event inspired and refreshed.

Reverend Edna Yano was the guest speaker. She spoke on faith and how we can take control of our health. In her capacity as a nurse, she delivers medical care as well as emotional support to her patients and sometimes before the physical care can be effective, the emotional care needs to be gently addressed and nurtured. This was made evident in her retelling of how "ministering" to patients' negative attitudes, sometimes of anger and confrontation, can help them change, setting up the optimal conditions for their treatment and recovery. Even in the most difficult cases or situations, with patience and care, it is possible to help people refocus away from those behaviors that bring more chaos and stresses to the body and the people around them. Helping people recognize good things, things that they may take for granted, especially in regards to their body and health, and be appreciative of them all, is an important part of what Reverend Edna brings to her patients. That, along with medicine, are effective healing pathways. One attendee commented that the sermon was inspirational.

After the service, the women met at Sonoda Hall, which was happily decorated with flowers and banners to welcome everyone,



*Inaugural Meeting of the Konko Mission's in Hawaii Women's Group; Konko Mission of Waipahu, Sonoda Hall  
Photo courtesy of Rev. Edna Yano*

as if to a party. Yoga sensei Sheila Miles spoke briefly, tying in Reverend Edna's talk to the peace of mind and body through yoga, to achieve health, and led the group through a series of sitting yoga stretches and breathing exercises. Someone commented that we should have more physical activities like yoga, at church. Then games were played and prizes given. Positive energies flowed and continued into a healthy lunch. We were reenergized body, spirit and mind.

It is said that we are the product of the five people we are most closely connected to. Who are they in your lives? Who has influenced you most, in what you have become, maybe in small ways that eventually became your core? Who has encouraged you through difficult times? Who has brought out the best in you? Think about it. Is one of them a Konkoko teacher or believer? Can the ladies of "Let's Grow Our Blessings" be there as support and help? Maybe not one of the five, but an auxiliary five? As we plan for future meetings, we will be asking you for your input, your opinions. We hope that you will participate with your ideas and presence.

Until then, dance in the gently wind, Ladies.



# Our Volunteer Service at Kuakini Geriatric Care Center

By Wanda Tamashiro (Konko Mission of Waipahu)

On August 9, 2015, about 20 Konkokyo members from the Oahu churches, attended a volunteer community service activity at the Hale Pulama Mau Auditorium. The patients many in the late 70's, 80's, 90's and maybe even 100's were wheeled into the auditorium. There were about 100 patients. It was so nice to perform for them and to participate with them. I knew one of the patients, Mrs. Morikuni, 97, who was also a former member attending Honolulu Kyokai. She looked radiant and her skin was still so nice and she was very coherent and recognized me and also asked about Sugako Sensei and they had a very nice reunion.

This is a very worthwhile activity because of the interaction between the members and the patients. One of the highlights I think is playing the balloon toss with them. Some of the patients become physically interested in tapping the balloon like volley ball players. I know they were having so much fun. It gave us a chance to talk with the

patients.

Another worthwhile activity is engaging them in song and dances. I saw some of the people, singing Hawaii Pono and Koko Ni Sachi Ari with us. They seemed to like the bon dance Konko Ondo.

Every year, we try to add new things to the program, and this year, the Koto Group by Diane Kawamoto and her members added new interest as did the Japanese dance by Keala Takahashi.

Of course, Nancy Yamanaka's smile and warmth was shared with the audience as she performed a song, as did her husband, Ronald.

I think this is a worthwhile activity for it exposes Konkokyo to the community and doing this service project is a wonderful way to share our faith. I think when our sensei gives a prayer and we sing Shining Shimmering Light, it tells others what Konkokyo is like.



*Taking care of our Kupuna*



# Embrace the World as Hawaiian American Japanese

By Rev. Yomisu Oya (Konko Missions in Hawaii Center Director)

A warm breeze welcomed a 55 year old man while walking along the hallway. On January 12, 2009, I arrived at Honolulu Airport alone. But soon, I was introduced to many people who worked hard to accomplish a challenging goal. They were head ministers who diligently served at each church in the Konko Missions in Hawaii (KMH) and the vision committee members who gathered frequently discussing about the future of Konko faith in Hawaii.

While I was reading the minutes of the previous meeting, very familiar words caught my attention. It said, "The Konko Missions in Hawaii will fulfill Ikigami Konko Daijin's vision to embrace the world with the Konko Faith." This vision statement reminded me what I wrote for my wife and children before leaving Japan. It was August 8, 1987 when I was packing for my return to the U.S. as a Konkokyo minister. At that time I wrote on the back of the front page of a copy of the *Gorikai II*, "for embracing the World with this faith." This is a part of a teaching of our Founder's disciple and was written in *Gorikai II*.

"Sangoro, while you concern yourself with only trivial things, I am aspiring for a blessing which will completely embrace the world with this Faith." (*GII:Kunieda Sangoro:11*)

I envisioned the same goal – embracing the world with this faith. This made me be an element at KMH right away. Based on the vision and mission statements, we formed a Strategic Planning Committee. Our first step was creating new by-laws. Under the newly adopted by-laws, the first Board of Trustee Meeting was held on November 19, 2011, and I was elected as the president of the Konko Missions in Hawaii for 2012-2015. Thanks to many people's prayers and support, I was able to fulfill my task as the president and had a valuable lesson as a

Hawaiian American Japanese.

I was born and raised in Japan, and I stayed in the Continental United States before I came to Hawaii. During my nearly 30 years in the United States, I tried to be an American since I am living in the United States. However, I changed my way of thinking after many experiences with the people in Hawaii. During my stay in Hawaii, I encountered many situations that a culture could overwhelm a modern civilization. For example, I have to be ready to stop anytime while I drive a car. The car in front of me sometimes stops right in the middle of the road where there is no stop sign. I found a driver letting in another car. This never happen before while I drove in California. The unwritten and unspoken rule in Hawaii says to care for others more than the rule. Uncivilized? No. I learned that the people of Hawaii are ready to accept Kami's heart. They don't put selfish human ideals and benefits first. In this way, they try to be in harmony with nature. Approaching the end of my term as an officer of the Konko Missions in Hawaii, I am going to miss many beautiful people in Hawaii, but I learned to stay in the United States of America as a Hawaiian American Japanese Konkokyoist. Thank you so much for allowing me to stay in Hawaii for 7 years. Thank you.





# Editor's Corner

A space where the editor can share inspirational stories and informational tidbits



I have just returned from a short but sweet trip to Japan. I was blessed with an opportunity to accompany my mother and oldest brother, Roy to attend my mother's family's church, Konko Church of Futsukaichi's 100th anniversary celebration. We arrived a few days prior to the celebration to help with

any preparations that were still in progress. All preparations were going relatively smoothly with the help of so many of the Futsukaichi members coming together to welcome all the people who would be coming from near and far to help celebrate such an auspicious occasion. However, the weather was becoming a growing concern. The forecast was calling for rain. We all hoped and prayed for better weather. It was only natural to be worried that the rain would ruin all the hard work everyone had put into all of the preparations. I even feared we'd have to cancel the whole thing if it rained too hard.

However, the head minister, my uncle, Rev. Toshiyuki Chigusa reminded all of us that we were there to show thanks for the past 100 years of service that Futsukaichi Church and all its members have been blessed with till today. We were not making preparations to welcome people from near and far only if we were provided with the perfect conditions. We would hold this service and give thanks in whatever way we could, rain or shine. As long as our hearts were in the right place and we were working for Kami-sama, we would surely be blessed.

The preparations continued. There were a few bumps in the road to completion (flags being blown down in the wind gusts overnight; missing signs; etc) but with our hearts directed to Kami-sama, we were able to hold a wonderful celebration. The morning of the celebration the weather forecast called for a 50%

chance of rain. My mother said it was as if Kami-sama was still testing our faith by not showing us that it would be 100% good weather, but rather giving us just enough fair weather to not interfere with setting up, and just enough ominous clouds to remind us where we needed to keep our hearts. By the time people started showing up for the ceremony, blue skies and sunshine broke through the clouds. It turned out to be an absolutely perfect day! It was an awesome reminder of the importance of having faith and always turning our hearts to Kami in whatever we may do. Yes, we traveled far to help with the celebration because it was our duty as members of the Futsukaichi church family. But, more importantly we were there to give thanks for the past 100 years as well as the next 100 years. If it weren't for the countless blessings received through the perpetuation of the Futsukaichi church, we would not be where we are today. There are many things that happen in life that we cannot control. Whether it be the weather or our own health, we must always remember to have faith and be thankful for all that we are blessed with, for there are just some things in life that we as humans cannot control and must leave completely up to Kami.



*Sign made by the young adult members of the Futsukaichi Church for the celebration*



*Blue skies and sunshine above the newly remodeled Futsukaichi Church*



*Futsukaichi Church members' handprints and congratulatory messages*



*Family picture taken in the new Hiromae*

### **KMH Mission Statement**

The Konko Missions in Hawaii addresses the spiritual needs of the people of Hawaii by promoting the Konko faith through a better understanding of the life and teachings of Konko Daijin, and through the practice of Toritsugi (Divine-Mediation).

“Malamalama” is now available through e-mail!

For our devoted readers who would like to receive the “Malamalama” electronically, please let us know at [kmhcenter@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:kmhcenter@hawaiiantel.net).

For our readers who would still prefer a hard (paper) copy, please do not hesitate and let us know.

Thank you!

### **We're Moving!**

The Konko Missions in Hawaii Center will be moving its office from the current location, to the Konko Mission of Honolulu at the end of the year.

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Radio KNUI AM900 at 6:20 p.m., every 2nd Sunday

To: