



## Spring Grand Ceremony

**Date: Sat., April 13, 2024 Time: 5pm**  
**Speaker:** Rev. Akinobu Yasutake,  
Head Minister of Konko Mission of  
Waipahu.

Konko Mission of Wahiawa is delighted to invite you to join us for the annual Spring Grand Service honoring The Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami. We warmly welcome you to participate in this significant celebration in person and on time, as we come together to offer our gratitude and reverence. Following the service, please stay and enjoy the Naorai fellowship dinner. We look forward to your blessed presence.

*The following is a speech script delivered at the annual Spring Memorial Service of Konko Mission of Honolulu on 3/17/2024 by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano, Head Minister of Konko Mission of Wahiawa:*

**"Konnichi made no orei"** (Continuation of thanksgiving from day one of our given life.)

Good morning to all those who have joined us for today's annual Spring Memorial Service. Your presence here is truly a wonderful display of gratitude and appreciation, honoring the connections we share with the individuals who have touched our lives and contributed to this church and faith community in Hawaii.

Each time I attend the memorial service here, I am deeply moved by the countless individuals who have been part of this church's journey and have been honored through this service. The sheer number of people who have found their way to this church over the past 95 years is remarkable. They are the very foundation upon which this church stands, much like the sturdy roots of a towering banyan tree. Once, a

towering banyan tree stood in the corner of the church yard, its flourishing branches and leaves symbolizing the church's powerful presence. Just as the tree was supported by widely spread roots underneath the ground, so too is this church upheld by those who embrace the Konko faith, becoming its solid foundations.

As the main branch church in Hawaii, this church has touched the lives of many, and in return, they have become the essence of Mitama Spirit, supporting and enriching our community. I am filled with gratitude for the dedication of our ministers, from the founding ministers, Revs. Masayuki and Kikue Kodama, to the succeeding ministers, Revs. Masahiko and Sugako Yoshino, and Revs. Koichi and Seiko Konko, who have devoted their lives to their missionary work. When we gather for these services, we not only honor the memories of our loved ones but also invite their Mitama Spirits to join us. Though we may not see them with our physical eyes, we believe they are present, responding to our love and attention. Just as we cannot see the wind but can feel its presence, we understand the presence of Tenchi Kane No Kami and Ikigami Konko Daijin through our faith. Their divine presence surrounds us, responding to our prayers and supplications.

The importance of directing and calling out their names is rooted in our belief that a sincere heart in prayer will reach Kami. Even after the physical departure of Founder Konko Daijin, his spirit continues to guide us, ensuring that our prayers are heard and answered. The Founder Konko Daijin once said, "Instead of saying that a person has died, say that he has fallen silent." This perspective reminds us of the eternal nature of the spirit.

I have been deeply moved by the daily prayer recorded by the Founder Ikigami Konko Daijin, where he prayed for the sincere hearts of people to be fulfilled. This message continues to resonate with us, even after his physical departure. Attending church and participating in services is a profound act of prayer and devotion. Your presence here today is a blessing, not only for us but also for the Mitama Spirits of your beloved family members and close associates.

I wanted to share with you another subject of faith practice. The subject is “Konnichi made no orei” or extending thanks for the blessings received every day and up to this moment. Both my wife and I came to Hawaii for our missionary work on September 27, 1977. On the day we arrived, Rev. Kikue Kodama accommodated us to stay at the Honolulu Church for one night. The following day, we arrived at Konko Mission of Wahiawa accompanied by some local ministers and church members. When I was introduced to the Ohiromae, the worship hall, and proceeded to the altar area, I extended my prayer for the first time. From that day on, I have tried to say “Konnichi made no orei”. I have tried to keep that spirituality of “Konnichi made no orei” up to this moment. The expression “Konnichi made no orei” was one of the signature expressions of the 4th Konko Sama. It is a very powerful thought that can apply to any facet of our life. The life I have lived up to 26, our marriage, our given opportunity to serve at the church, preserved church properties, the presence of the faith community, good health, family relationships, finance, community engagements and countless number of elements of life, I have tried to extend thanks for all those elements. When babies were born, we placed them at Ohiromae every night while we were engaged in our daily prayer in gratitude.

There was a time when we could only offer a pumpkin on the altar for our monthly service. I could still be grateful for the service we could hold. I was able to make a visit to our parent church, every time when we could hold our church services in gratitude till this day without exception for over 45 years. I keep the record of the church prayer notebook every day. Nowadays I write down about 100 people’s names and add a line of “Konnichi made no orei” to each individual. Even if some of them encounter difficult situations, such as illness, relationship issues and so forth, but in the past they have been blessed with good health, good relations, and good finance, so I give thanks. Both my wife and I would have served at the local church in Wahiawa for 47 years in September of this year. We are grateful we are still in good health, enjoy healthy relationships and find comfort in serving Kami-Sama and the faith community in Hawaii. I am not sure how long we would be able to enjoy our life, but I would like to extend my thoughts of “Konnichi made no orei” for all the blessings we have enjoyed thus far. Kami-Sama seems to have responded to our extended

thoughts thus far. Some of our church members have responded to visit church almost every Sunday from afar in gratitude. Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake said, 信心は過去の清算 that can mean the same thought of “Konnichi made no orei”. Extend whatever thank you for any due elements of appreciation and extend apologies for any elements of irreverence we could have committed knowingly or unknowingly. Thank you for being here today and for your participation in this meaningful Spring Memorial Service. Your presence is truly appreciated.

**Konko-Sama said...** Konko-Sama always prayed, “When the people of the world pray to Ikigami Konko Daijin with a sincere and single heart, please fulfill whatever requests they have.” (II Unknown 7)

For faith, daily renewal is most important. Live each day with the same happy heart you have on New Year’s Day. When the sun sets, think that it is the last day of the year. When the sun rises, think that it is New Year’s Day. If you are happy every day, there will be no discord in the family. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 35)

## Bulletin Board

### April 2024

- 1 Mon -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 7 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)  
-Honolulu Church Grand Service (11 am)
- 13 Sat -Wahiawa Church Grand Service (5 pm)**
- 14 Sun -Sunday Svc (9 am)
- 21 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)  
-Waipahu Church Spring Grand Service & 50<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service for the late Rev. Santaro and Mrs. Sueka Sonoda (10:30 pm)
- 28 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

### May 2024

1 Wed -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)

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- Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis The next activity will be on Fri, April 5 @ 10:30 am
- KMH Kyōten Study Group via Zoom Voice of the Universe Join us: April 17 (Wed. 5 pm-6 pm) ZOOM
- KMH CEOC Meeting ZOOM on Friday, April 26 (3-4 pm).

## Honoring the Mitama Spirits

*If you would like to have your deceased loved one memorialized by registering their names with the Konkō Mission of Wahiawa, please contact the Rev. Yasuhiro Yano and we will be honored to add them.*

### April

Shinichi Furushima	4/30/1996
Yoshiro Kamitono	4/16/2000
Robert Mendoz	4/27/2006
Gilbert Toshio Iwasa	4/9/1999
Kiku Takahashi	4/26/1967
Zenji Takahashi	4/12/1966
Frances Shigeno Takahashi	4/13/2009
Richard Yoji Noguchi	4/28/2017
Rev. Masato Yoshino	4/30/2021
Alyce Yoshie Yamamoto	4/12/2022
Jean Fusae Noguchi	4/17/2022



### **The Life of the Founder 金光教祖の生涯 瀬戸三喜雄 金光教学研究所 紀要別冊教学叢書 2**

The following is an English translation of a book titled, "Konkō Kyōso no Shougai" or "The Life of the Founder Konkō Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto and published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center in 1980. Many biographies about the life of the Founder Konkō Daijin exist. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (Page 130-133) (continued from the previous issue)

While Bunji was resting at the Hiromae following the instructions of Kami, he pondered many things about his life. "In the past, whatever requests I forwarded to Kami, He never responded to my prayers. Now, Kami has responded to my prayer. How grateful I am. Even if she would not have died, I shall accept her death as a blessing. In the past, I caused many troubles to relatives and neighbors and made them spend a lot of money."

Bunji recalled the initial divine message and it helped him deal with the situation in such a manner that he would be able to accept the imminent death of his daughter as a blessing.

In a desperate manner, his wife said, "There is no hope left. Give prayers once more as a last attempt."

Bunji turned to Kami, and Kami responded to him, "It will make no difference whether you pray or not. You can pray if you want to. It might be better than not doing so." Bunji gave harai prayers and recited the Shingyo Sutra five or six times" (Oboegaki 7-7-6).

Bunji was tormented by his wife's desperate plea for their child and a stern statement from Kami. He continued to ponder what he should do under the circumstances. He inclined to the thought of possible consequences for the child who would die eventually. He anticipated that the people in the village would rumor, "Even if Bunji was so much devoted to his belief in Kami, another child would have died." He was about to give up by saying to himself, "Many people in the world would have experienced the same fate. I cannot do anything for the given situation."

His only salvation in that given situation convinced himself to accept the situation that he had followed Kami's instructions faithfully up to that stage, and difficult encounters evolved. He felt grateful he didn't have to exhaust financial resources even if he had to deal with the sick child. He had a faint idea that if the child would die, the child would be buried during the night.

These thoughts were interrupted when Bunji heard, "Mommy, I have to relieve myself." It was Kura. Bunji told his wife, "Look at that. It's a divine sign. Carry her back into the house." She carried Kura into the house and put her to bed. Kura fell asleep right away (Oboegaki 7-7-9).

The next morning on May 28 (June 28), Bunji gave thanks to Kami-Sama. His wife checked on Kura and reported, 'Kura has smallpox!'. But Kami-Sama insisted, 'Don't say it's smallpox. Saying so will cause more worries. Have breakfast, then go to work on the paddies.' His wife and Bunji went to work on a paddy. There, she reiterated, 'It is smallpox.' When they returned for lunch, Bunji checked on Kura. She had developed red spots. Bunji left her as she was and went back to the paddies. Bunji looked forward to

what Kami-Sama would tell him when he was to give prayers that evening. When Bunji gave prayers and thanks that evening, Kami-Sama spoke, ‘This morning, I said it wasn’t smallpox so you would not worry.’ (Oboegaki 8-1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Kami continued to say, “Let your children take care of the deity of smallpox in place of you. This Kami (Tenchi Kane No Kami) is different from other kamis who would claim that the cause of smallpox is rooted in taboos of impurity and refraining from eating specific foods in hope of good health.”

Bunji wrote down detailed accounts about Kura at that stage in many pages of the record book. He meticulously recorded the experience of dealing with Kura’s illness so extensively about the circumstantial elements such as how the parents’ thoughts to a sick child, emotional exchanges between husband and wife, Kami’s response, and so forth that brought about detailed and vibrant movements in the family. He could have that much of an impact on himself through dealing with the sick child. Kami might have a designated intention for Bunji about the onset of illness of the child from the very beginning. Kami said, “Go out and engage in your field work even if your child would die.” Kami’s stern instruction did not reflect the busiest season for the farmers. Later Kami instructed Bunji to take a rest for half a day. Kami never gave Bunji a promise that He should heal Kura for sure. Instead, Kami said there would be no difference whether you pray or not. What could that mean?

***The Spring Memorial Service held on March 24<sup>th</sup> was conducted safely.***



*The Hawaii Ehime Kenjinkai held their annual New Year’s Party at the Wahiawa Church on Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. Yano Sensei who is part of the Ehime Kenjinkai did a mochitsuki demonstration with the group and enjoyed freshly pounded mochi.*

