



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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“Ikasarete Ikiru” Life sustaining elements

By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

In the Konkokyo faith community we have an expression of “Ikasarete ikiru” or we have been allowed to live in Universal sustenance or divine sustenance. We come into existence through conception and birth. From the moment of conception, the universal power helps the womb to continue to develop into a designated shape, such as human beings and any other types of living creatures. Throughout the conception to the birth and growth of each and every step of our entire life, we have been given all sorts of life sustaining elements which help us to continue to live. We come into existence into this world which represents the whole sustaining body of any living things, be it humans and microbes we cannot see thorough our naked eyes. But there are always environmental life sustaining elements for the existence of any living creatures.

The Founder Konko Daijin stated, “Do people really know how a child is conceived and developed? People say that it is they who make children. But do they really have the power to do so? During the initial period, the fetus is like a fragile bubble which can easily break. Who makes pregnancy happen, and who named it *tsukitomari* or *hidomari*? People, who are the children of Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama, talk of Tenchi No Kami-Sama unknowingly and receive blessings unknowingly. After nine months and ten days of pregnancy, a child is born. They call the child *musuko* (son) or *musume* (daughter). Who makes such distinctions? They are taken from Tenchi No Kami-Sama. While the child is in the womb, no one feeds it. Yet it receives nourishment

through the navel and develops bones and muscles. Who is responsible for this? It is all due to Tenchi No Kami-Sama. We are not children of *Kobo Daishi-Sama* or *Amida-Sama*. We are children of Tenchi No Kami-Sama. Our bodies are endowed with a soul which enables us to live in this world. Knitting a bag is meaningless if nothing will be put in it. Like a filled bag, we have been implanted with a soul. We are a child of neither *Amida-Sama* nor Buddha (*hotoke*). We are *hodode* (to set free), so upon death, our souls are set free. The body comes from Earth, so when the body dies, it returns to Earth after releasing its soul” (II Satō Mitsujiro 15).

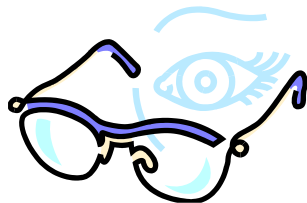
The fact of having an individual being in this world can be a wondrous result of the power of the Universe. We have not yet identified the origin of human species, but we theorize that we have evolved from apes. For the existence of my own being in this world, there has been countless number of chains of reproductions for millions of years. If one of the chains were broken, I would not be here in this manner. And it is a fact we have continued to thrive in the blessedness of the mother earth and heavenly sky. The scientists have not yet identified any planetary body that has sustained any living creatures like the human species. However, recently, they seem to have found a planet of ideal climate to sustain life forms. It is many light years away, so there is no way to verify those findings just yet. If we think about all these things, we feel in awe as to how wondrous the workings are in the limited environment of the Earth alone. Nobody can deny the fact we have been sustained by some unseen universal power. And we call the source of power as Tenchi Kane no Kami, Our Divine Parent of the Universe.

The Founder Konko Daijin stated this nature of human existence in the teaching, “Although people live between heaven and earth, they are unaware of Kami’s blessings. Shrines, temples, and houses all stand on Kami’s land. Without realizing this, people consult the Days and Directions and are

disrespectful to Kami. They suffer hardships due to these offenses. Tenchi Kane no Kami has sent Ikigami Konko Daijin to provide blessings and teachings so that mankind may prosper. Kami is Kami because of man, and man is man because of Kami. Both are fulfilled through this mutual relationship” (Konko Kyoso Gorikai No. 3 in Kyoten Gorikai III).

This statement shows the exact nature of human existence in this world. In a sense, to practice faith is to respond to this message individually and collectively. If we appreciate the nature of this message, we are to enjoy fully blessed lives as beloved children of Our Divine Parent.

And the 4th Konko-Sama showed how we can live in fulfillment of this message by the expression of “世話になる全てに礼を言う心” or extending thanks for any and all elements that help us in one way or another. He demonstrated and lived a life of appreciation and extended thanks even for the pair of glasses wears, for the pen and a sheet of paper to write with and so forth. Appreciation is the answer to fulfill the extended divine message.



Konko-Sama Says . . .

Think about how birds and animals survive, then you will understand the blessings of Kami-Sama. In winter, they don't put on anything extra, and in summer, they don't take off anything. Kami-Sama raises them without any problems. When cows or other animals give birth, the calf is not warmed by its mother, yet it grows into a large cow. Look at trees. They start from two barely visible leaves and grow into towering trees without any special care. They benefit the world, and people are blessed with wood for heating. If housewives think about this, they will understand the blessings of Kami-Sama. Everyone must understand the

divine nature of all things and practice faith. (II Yamamoto Sadajiro 5)

There is nothing you cannot receive through requests. Request through Konko Daijin. You can receive divine blessings for all your requests. (II Shiota Mohachi)

Bulletin Board

Regular Church Services for January 2012

- 1 Sun -New Year's Day Service at 9 am
- 8 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
- 15 Sun -Monthly Service for Founder at 9 am
- 22 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service at 10 am
-General Mtg and New Year's Party till 2:30 pm.
- 29 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am

Volunteer at Wahiawa General Hospital

We will make a monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility on Friday, January 13 at 10:00 a.m. by means of offering entertainment for the people cared for in the facility. The program is in Japanese.

H.C.R.P. Peace Prayer Observance

The regular meeting will be held on Monday, January 9 at the Church of Perfect Liberty at 1:30 p.m.

Church General Meeting & New Year's Party

The annual meeting of the Konko Mission of Wahiawa will be held on Sunday, January 22 following the monthly memorial service which will be observed at 10:00 a.m. After the general meeting we also hold the New Year's Party till 2:30 pm. Please bring a \$3.00 grab-bag when you come to join the party.

Mochi Pounding

The 20th annual Mochi Pounding held on Friday, December 30, 2011 was a great success with the cooperation of good weather conditions and many helpers of all ages. All 300 pounds of sweet rice was made into more than 500 pounds of mochi in about seven hours, started pounding at around 8:20 a.m. and ended pounding at around 3:00 p.m. It was a blessing that so many family oriented people

showed up to enjoy pounding and shaping mochi. The investments for the annual mochi pounding project has provided us much instruments and tools for making mochi. It is a blessing that no major accident has ever developed in the past. We have to be blessed in good health, relations and stable family life to be able to participate in this annual tradition of mochi pounding. Thank you all for your great support and help.



The Rev. Shinji Kawasaki's Visit

The Rev. Shinji Kawasaki, who has been assigned the task of overseas missionary work at the Headquarters Office in Konko Town, made a visit to Hawaii to get exposed to the environment of the local Konko church operations in December. He made a visit to our church on December 16 and discussed many interesting elements. He also demonstrated the performance of "Hichiriki" an ancient Japanese reed instrument used for the ceremonial music in the Konkokyo faith tradition.



Honoring the Mitama Spirits for January

January

- Mrs. Owari Kaneshige 1/2/1989
- Mrs. Tama Noguchi 1/17/1985
- Mrs. Tsuneko Takahashi 1/24/1997
- Mrs. Chikiko Hayashida 1/24/1940
- Mr. Alesandro Caraballo 1/17/1985

Mrs. Mitsuru Miyamoto 1/20/2007
*If you wish to have a name added to the church
Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev.
Yasuhiro Yano.*

Insight into the teachings in “Tenchi wa Kataru” or “Voice of the Universe”

The following is an excerpt of series of an English translation of “Tenchi wa Kataru—Kanwa-shu” or “Compilation of Insight into the teachings in the Voice of the Universe” which contains 400 selected teachings from the original “Konkokyo Kyoten” or the “Konkokyo Scriptures.” Three authors, namely, the Revs. Mikio Seto, Yasushi Hata and Matsutaro Kosaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference page 1)

No. 1 Heaven is Father and Earth is Mother

There are people between Heaven and Earth. Heaven is father and Earth is mother. Humans, plants, and other living things live on Earth through the blessings they receive from Heaven. (I Ishihara Ginzo 1)

Here I am holding a copy of “Voice of the Universe.” The book contains the primary 400 teachings selected from the original “Konkokyo Kyoten” or “Konkokyo Scriptures.” Each of those teachings was edited for ease of reading and categorized in accordance with the main themes. Readers within the Konkokyo faith community as well as the interested people in general public have extended their appreciation for its insightful description of the core elements of the Konko faith.

The book title, “Tenchi wa Kataru” or “The Voice of the Universe” shows the exact nature of the book that holds rich content. Let us try to listen to the divine messages given by Heaven and Earth with an open heart.

The first quoted teaching refers to the nature of Kami-Sama we worship in the faith tradition. In pursuit of any religious faiths, there is a universal inquiry about the nature of the deities being worshipped. No matter how hard we try to respond

to that question, we always find it quite difficult to explain. Let’s try to see how the Founder responded to this issue.

The Founder stated, “There are people between Heaven and Earth. Heaven is father and Earth is mother. Humans, plants, and other living things live on Earth through the blessings they receive from Heaven.” The nature of human existence is stated in such a manner that humans are embraced both by Heaven, which represents fatherly figure, who blesses us with broad and warm-hearted love and occasional episodes of strict love; and Earth, which represents motherly love.

The quoted message shows us how we can perceive the nature of Kami-Sama in such a down to earth manner. To understand the nature of Kami-Sama, or to experience the existence of Kami-Sama, we have to try to visualize that we stand on an elevated platform from which we can see things in broader perspectives. We cannot see the entire town from the limited space of an open window of a house. But when we climb up to a tall tower or at the top of a high mountain, we can get much broader view of the town.

To perceive the nature of Kami-Sama, it is vital for us to extend our perspectives to the entire workings of Heaven and Earth, and identify the existence of us being wholly sustained by the universal sustenance being provided both Heaven and Earth, and try to appreciate what make us to be able to sustain our lives. The quoted teaching shows us this very aspect of our engagement in the practice of faith.