



The Vital Elements for Life

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano, Head Minister

I once told Konko Sama, "This Way of Faith is really nice." He replied, "This Way of Faith is like an outhouse in the mountains. When people have to relieve themselves, they run to the outhouse. Afterward, their happiness is beyond words. Here too, the sick come, receive divine blessings, and become happy" (GII:Unknown:4.1).

It can be a bit embarrassing, but I would like to share a story. I went to San Francisco to attend the annual Grand Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami and the 50th Spiritual Birthday Celebration of the late Rev. Shinko Fukuda, held on Sunday, June 2, 2024. Since my son, Rodney has spent 20 years in San Francisco serving as assistant head minister of the church, I wanted to join the service in appreciation of the blessings received.

Whenever I visit the church in San Francisco, I always notice how beautiful and functional it is.

After the service, Rodney and his wife, Fong, took me to a famous restaurant specializing in crab. The crabs were giant, and we also had a plate of noodles. We put on aprons and enjoyed the meal. Afterward, we had time to enjoy the view of the Golden Gate Bridge. When we arrived at the viewing spot, I felt the call of nature but couldn't find any restrooms. I told Rodney I needed to use the bathroom and hurried to find one.

The only available bathroom was back at the restaurant where we had eaten. The restaurant was closing at 6 pm, but we managed to get

there just five minutes before closing, and I was allowed to use the bathroom.

I always try to express gratitude for the presence of toilets and the natural bodily function of being able to discharge waste. I remember my father would extend a prayer before using the bathroom by pressing his hands together. Rev. Fumio Yasutake, the second Head Minister of Amagi Church, also expressed his thanks by clapping his hands before using the bathroom.

The fourth Konko-Sama used to say that anything we have and anything we can do are blessings from Kami-Sama. We often say that we do things in our daily lives, but the ability to do anything is only possible because we are given the gift of bodily functions.

In the Konkokyo faith community, we use the expression "*sasete itadaku*," which implies that we do things with humble acknowledgment of the elements that make it possible for us. For example, when partaking in a meal, we say "*Shokuji wo itadaku*" instead of the more casual "*taberu*," meaning we eat in gratitude. Even when making offerings to Kami-Sama, we say "*Osonae sasete itadaku*," expressing our gratitude for the opportunity to make an offering. When visiting the church, we say "*Omairi wo sasete itadaku*," showing gratitude for being able to visit.

The fourth Konko-Sama, Kagamitaro Konko, simply put it: 世話になる全てに礼を言う心 平和生み出す心といはん。 This can be translated into English as, "The heart that naturally responds with gratitude for all elements of interdependence will bring about peace in the world."

Bathroom Prayer



Voice of the Universe...

1. 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

2. Heaven and Earth continue to live. Because Heaven and Earth are alive, all people are able to live.

III Jimkyu Kyogoroku 104

Bulletin Board

July 2024

- 1 Mon -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 4 Thr -Shingyo Kikan Intensive faith practice starts
- 7 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Tanabata bamboo tree decorations (after svc)
- 14 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
- 21 Sun -Monthly Memorial Svc (9 am)
- 28 Sun -Back to School Service (9 am)

August 2024

- 1 Thr -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Rotary Hanashikai on ZOOM (10:30 am)

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- Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis. The next activity will be on Fri, July 5 @ 10:30 am
 - KMH Kyōten Study Group via Zoom Voice of the Universe Join us: July 10 and 24 (Wed. 5 pm-6 pm) on ZOOM
 - KMH Beach clean-up and BBQ at 10 a-2 p, at Haleiwa Ali'i Beach Park (Jodo Mission side)
 - KMH MWSS 50th Anniversary Gathering at Waipahu Church Wednesday, July 17 from 10 am to 4 pm

- KMH Minister's Gathering Saturday, July 20 from 2 pm-4 pm
- KMH CEOC Meeting ZOOM on Monday, July 22 at 3 pm.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

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

July

Shimeno Iwasa	7/1/1966
May Shimao	7/30/2004
Masao Yoshihara	7/12/2002
Yasuo Hayashida	7/5/1998
Miyamoto Asa	7/23/1933
Rev. Yoshie Yoshino	7/21/2005
Randy Yamamoto (Robert Walker)	7/5/2014 7/15/2015
Wesly Katsumi Ooyama	7/4/1981
Masae Baba	7/20/1987
Mary Elizabeth Valmoja	7/13/2022
Hiroshi Kumasaka	2/18/2019
Joseph (Kaoru Makiguchi's pet dog)	7/13/2016

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 Konko Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto and published by Konkokyo Theological Research Center in 1980. Many biographies about the life of the Founder Konko 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. (continued from the previous issue)

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Bunji reported to Kami that he had finished sowing the seeds of barley. Kami responded, "With the barley sown, I am rest assured. Go and buy five sheets of colored paper." After buying the sheets of paper, Bunji informed Him of the purchase. Kami-Sama instructed, "Stack the five sheets and make seven, five, and three creases respectively on the edge strips of the resulting paper hangings that are to be

attached to a sacred staff. Make a staff two shaku and five sun long. Place the new sacred staff on the altar." When Bunji made the sacred staff, he sought Kami-Sama's approval (Oboegaki 9-2). Kami-Sama spoke, "*Konshi Daimyojin*, with the completion of this sacred staff, I will end your farming career. Please understand. When you are out farming, the person at home has to go out and call you whenever someone comes with a request. After you relay the request, you have to go back out again. You have to keep going in and out of the field. This gives you little time for farming, and the worshipper must also wait for you. Both you and the worshipper are being inconvenienced. Won't you stop farming? When you were gravely ill at forty-two, the doctor gave up hope. Everyone was worried about you. You prayed to the kamis and buddhas and were blessed with a complete recovery. Regard this event as your death. Dispel all desires and assist Tenchi Kane No Kami. Also, your wife should consider herself a widow. This is better than being a real widow, as she can still talk to you and discuss matters. She should take the children with her to do the farm work. There are many people like yourself who have sincere faith in kamis but still have many problems. Help these people by performing Toritsugi. This will help Kami and save people. Man exists because of Kami, and Kami exists because of man. Thus, Kami supports man as Kami's children, and man supports Kami as his parent. There will be eternal prosperity through aiyo kakeyo" (Oboegaki 9 3-1, 2, 3).

Kami discreetly held His determination to save people in distress and was finally able to reveal it to Bunji.

Kami identified Bunji as a prominent candidate who could fulfill His purpose of saving people in accordance with His way by granting him the title of "*Shitaba no ujiko*," allowing communication between Bunji and Kami. Bunji overcame any hard encounters arranged by Kami with sincere heart and without any doubts, fulfilling Kami's expectations. Eventually, Kami gained confidence in Bunji and granted the divine title of "*Ichi no deshi*," meaning the first disciple. Living in compliance with this title meant

leading a Kami-centered life, both physically and spiritually. Bunji successfully forged a religious spiritual foundation, breaking away from the social and traditional boundaries of the village community. Kami consecutively granted the divine titles of "*Bunji Daimyojin*" and "*Konshi Daimyojin*." Compliance with these titles meant that Kami would train Bunji to develop his spirituality by finding ways to help and save people through actual encounters dealt with in the manner of Toritsugi-Mediation.

During the two-year period of evolving divine titles, Kami intently guided Bunji to fulfill His intentions. Bunji responded to Kami more than expected. During the intense interactions between Bunji and Kami, Bunji experienced some unexpected blessings. Kami also witnessed an unexpected promising eventuality in which Bunji would be able to save people in distress. Kami's expectations for Bunji seemed to mature.

Kami ordered Bunji to construct the sacred staff with five sheets of colored paper, called "*bei*." From ancient times, people believed Kami shows up on the sacred staff called "*yorishiro*." Granting a "*bei*" sacred staff was regarded as granting a person the status of a religious figure. In this regard, the symbolic construction of the sacred staff meant that Bunji was elevated from an ordinary individual to a savior.

(to be continued)