



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

Konko Mission of Wahiawa, 207 Muliwai Ave., Wahiawa, HI 96786 Phone & Fax: (808) 621-6667 Cell: (808) 294-6331
E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com Rev. Yasuhiro Yano Vol. XXIII, No. 10 October 1, 2011

You are cordially invited to attend the **Autumn Grand Ceremony**

Date: Thursday, October 13, 2011

Place: Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Sermon: Rev. Dr. Todd Zenji Takahashi

Kibimai: Miss Hope Morihara

Koto: Rev. Edna Yano

Naorai fellowship dinner will follow. Let's receive the divine arrangements of being able to worship on this very important day.

The following is a speech script contributed by Mrs. Donna C. Toyofuku who shared her thoughts about her involvement in the practice of the Konko faith on Sunday, September 11, 2011.



Testimonial of Blessings

By Mrs. Donna Chikako Toyofuku

As we were little kids growing up, I remember mom used to always call Takahashi sensei whenever we were very sick. She would ask Takahashi sensei to pray for us and when we got better we would go to church and say thank you. Mom would also give us *goshinmai*, make *man man san bubu* (warm water with small piece of *goshinmai* - that's what we used to call it and still do) for us to drink. As we grew older she would call Yano sensei and ask him to pray for us also. I know that *goshinmai* really works. There were times when I would be driving home from work and I would have either a sore stomach or a very bad headache, I would take the *goshinmai* and just tear it and take it constantly while I was driving and

pray for the pain to go away. Sometimes, I would take two packets of *goshinmai* and before I reach home I would be pain free. This is something I believe in since I've had many times when this situation would arise and I would reach for the *goshinmai*. I do take *goshinmai* whenever I feel that I need to although I know mom used to say you can take it anytime of the day or night. It doesn't have to be to help you feel relief from pain just to say thank you or to give to someone who is in pain and pray for them. I remember whenever we went on the airplane, she would give us each a piece and she would pray for us to have a safe journey to and from our destination. Mom was really a strong believer in this and I guess I am also but not as strong as she was but I learned from her on taking the *goshinmai*.

The following is an English translation of an article found in the monthly publication of "Shin-ai" issued on September 3, 2011 by the Konko Church of Amagi. The original copy of the story is printed in the publication titled "Shion" issued by the Konko Church of Yobuko in commemoration of the 80th Anniversary of the church. The Rev. Yuujiro Yamane who was practicing spiritual training at the Amagi Church, took notes of the messages delivered by the Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake, the mentor. The book is a compilation of the recorded messages of the Rev. Yasutake by Rev. Yamane. The episode shows a vivid example of the work of Toritsugi-Mediation by the founding minister, the late Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake of Konko Church of Amagi. For your reference to the practice of the Konko faith, the episode is introduced to you. The translation is made by the Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

Give me that "goshinmai" sacred rice

By the Rev. Yuujiro Yamane

(Quoted from the Amagi Church Newsletter, Shin-ai)

Mr. Zenjiro Inanaga who lived at Miwa-mura in Asakura County was the husband of the elder sister of the Rev. Yasuji Horio, the founding minister of the Konko Church of Hita in Ooita.

On New Year's Day of 1905, Mr. Inanaga was enjoying the traditional New Year's "zoni" soup with mochi. For some reason, the soup bowl he was holding cracked in half. He was nicknamed "Kotsupon" of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist sect and was so deeply involved in the practice of the religion. In witnessing the soup bowl split in two, he stated, "I am going to die this year." His wife consoled him by saying, "Don't worry, that could have happened to anybody's soup bowl." Soon after her talk, one of her new pair of chopsticks

she was holding snapped in two without applying any pressure. In witnessing the broken chopstick of his wife, Mr. Inanaga spoke, "I am going to die for sure within this year. You are going to become a widow because one of your chopsticks is broken." He believed a pair of chopsticks represents husband and wife. And a broken chopstick superstitiously means the wife will lose her husband.

Since that ominous episode, Mr. Inanaga devotedly made a daily pilgrimage to the temple he belonged. Once, a preaching monk from Kyoto stayed at the Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine and engaged in ceremonial services for one week. He also asked his wife to attend the services for the whole week. His earnest devotion to get involved in his faith derived from his strong conviction that he was to die within this year.

In mid-May of the year, he went into the mountain to harvest grass for the cattle. When he finished his work halfway, he experienced a sudden wave of pain in his left cheek. He halted his work in the field and returned home. He went to see the dentist. The doctor diagnosed that the pain was caused by a disorder of the bone. He went to see a specialist. He stated that the pain was caused by periostitis of the facial bones. He was so shocked to be informed of the nature of the pain. The persistent pain grew even worse. The entire left cheek became swollen and red. He could not eat any food at all.

Mother of Rikichi Horio (who was also mother of wife of Zenjiro) in Amozu, Yasukawa in Asakura County went to see Mr. Inanaga at the hospital. She encouraged him to get involved in the practice of the Konko faith by sharing a story, "Yasuji in Hita suffered from a severe chronic stomach ailment for a long time. He tried to get as much medical attention as available, but it was to no avail. He became emaciated. But because of the blessings he received through Konko-Sama, regained good health. I am convinced you also can get blessed for your illness if you rely on Kami-Sama single-heartedly." For the mother, he was a dear son-in-law as well as her dear nephew. Because they were cousins, she was much enthusiastic to convince him to get involved in the practice of the Konko faith. But Zenjiro was obsessively involved in the Shinshu Buddhist sect. He stated, "Okaasan, I understand the reason why I became sick. It is my destiny. Please accept any developments because of my destined fate. I know there would be no way I can escape death." He refused to accept the "Goshinmai" sacred rice and "Omiki" sacred wine forwarded by his mother-in-law. He also firmly stated, "The medicine Yasuji was taking years ago has shown its healing effects now. Getting involved in religious faith does not heal the illness."

His condition deteriorated. He could no longer eat any food and lost his vitality to live. He could not open his mouth by himself. His mouth had to be pried open by chopsticks and some liquid food had to be forced through his mouth. The cheek showed an acute inflammation.

While Zenjiro was suffering in such a manner, his mother went to see the Rev. Yasutake at the church and sought help at the Toritsugi-Mediation Desk. In responding to the forwarded

message, the Rev. Yasutake told her, "You may not be able to force anyone to take 'Goshinmai' sacred rice. If that person asks for it, please give it to him." And he handed a packet of "Goshinmai" sacred rice for him.

Under an acute condition in which he suffered from unbearable pains in his cheek, he could not speak nor swallow any food. He managed to express, "Okaasan, I will get involved in the practice of faith, so please give me that 'Goshinmai' sacred rice."

Mother-in-law was prompted to act by his expressed plea for help. In responding to the message, she soaked the inner wrapping paper of the "Goshinmai" sacred rice with "Omiki" sacred wine and placed it over his swollen cheek. In about half an hour, the reddish swell and pain in the cheek subsided dramatically. Eventually, some pus-like material mixed with blood and some chips of bone were discharged from the mouth. In one week he gained much strength and went to see the minister at church in appreciation of the recovery. On his way to church, he experienced some wooziness till he arrived at Yorii-Shinn-Machi. But he gained much strength after that point and arrived at the church.

When he extended his message of appreciation for the healing of the illness, the Rev. Yasutake stated, "You are so blessed to receive the blessings of recovery. Because you showed an example of healing from the illness, there would be many people who would be saved from the same illness hereafter. If you had not healed, many people hereafter may not get healed, too." Mr. Inanaga responded, "Sensei, as you have mentioned, my uncle experienced excruciating pain and suffering from the same illness I had. He became insane and died of the illness."

Konko-Sama Says . . .

After being saved from a desperate situation or misfortune, everyone says that they will never forget the blessings they received. However, people tend to be unaware of the divine blessings that they receive daily. Regardless if people are alive or dead, they are always receiving Kami's blessings. (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 90-1, 2)

People talk about blessings, but blessings are merely the shadows cast by the sincerity of each person. Therefore, if you show great sincerity towards Kami, you can receive great blessings. You cannot receive great divine blessings with a little sincerity. The shadow cast by sincerity will follow the shape of sincerity. (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 21)

Bulletin Board

Regular Church Services for October 2011

- 1 Sat -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane no Kami 7:30 pm
2 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
8 Sat -Church clean up for the Grand Svc at 8 am
9 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
-Honolulu Church Grand Svc at 11 am
13 Thur -Wahiawa Church Grand Svc at 6:30 pm
16 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
-Waipahu Church Grand Svc at 11 am
23 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service at 9 am
-HCRP Peace Prayer at Gedatsu Church at 4 pm
30 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
-Waipahu Church 3rd year memorial service for the
late Rev. Katsuo Yasutake at 10:30 am
-Halloween Pumpkin Carving at 2 pm

Volunteer at Wahiawa General Hospital

We made a biannual visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility on Sunday, September 4 for our volunteer activity. Eleven people participated in the program. A special presentation of viola by Keelan Okazaki was made. Thank you for your help. We will make a monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility on Friday, October 21 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 annual observance the interfaith Peace Prayer organized by the H.C.R.P. or Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will be held at the Gedatsu Church of Hawaii on Sunday, October 23 at 4:00 p.m. This year's prayers will focus on "Homelessness in Hawaii." The guest speaker will be Mr. Curtis McLean who revived from the state of homelessness. And the "Cup-full of Peace" decorated by children and adults will be displayed at the meeting place. We are also collecting non-perishable food items to be donated to the Weinberg Village and Salvation Army. Please try to experience the setting of interfaith gathering for your own enrichment. Dinner and refreshments will follow after the program.

Scheduled Grand Services in the Faith Community

Honolulu Church	Sun, Oct. 9 at 11:00 a.m.
Wahiawa Church	Thurs, Oct 13 at 6:30 p.m.
Waipahu Church	Sun, Oct 16 at 11:00 a.m.
Wailuku Church	Sun, Nov. 6 at 11:00 a.m.
Hilo Church	Sun, Nov. 13 at 11:00 a.m.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits for October

Founder, Konko Daijin	10/10/1883
Hiromi Ishii	10/4/2003
Shizue Yamamoto	10/6/2008
Richard Mankichi Hirota	10/8/1990

Henry Yoshiichi Uyehara	10/10/2007
Francis Toshiji Suwa	10/12/1996
Saku Hasuo	10/12/1996
Isamu Tokumoto	10/14/1995
Kazuyoshi Kidani	10/2006

If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

Kyoso-Sama Volume 2 (#30)

The following is 30th of the series of the English translated excerpts from the second of the two volumes of "Kyoso-Sama" a biography of the Founder of the Konkokyo Religion, authored by the Reverend Shinsei Konko for young readers. The publication is a compilation of articles in series featured in the monthly publication, "Wakaba" or "Young Leaves" issued by the Administrative Office of the Konkokyo Youth Organization. The first article was published in 1950. Translation by the Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference to "Kyoso-Sama Volume 2" pages 297 to 305)

(13) Departure

Departure

Konko Shijin-Sama passed away on December 20, 1893 at six o'clock in the morning. He was 40 years old. His posthumous name was addressed as "Konko Shijin Tsurayuki no Kimi." He had official titles of "Jun-Itto-Shuushin-Kogi", "Gon-Sho-Kosei" "Kyokan" and "Shinji-Kacho." His funeral service was observed on December 23. The chief officiating minister was the Rev. Shinichiro Shirakami. The chief mourner was the 3rd-Konko-Sama (Setsutane Konko).

Two days prior to his departure, at around 7:30 o'clock in the afternoon, Konko Shijin-Sama expressed his last words to the family members. Konko Sanjin-Sama, Takakiyo-hime, and 3rd-Konko-Sama were also present in the room. Konko Shijin-Sama stated, "I was spared of my life when I was six-years-old from the brink of death because of my parental single-hearted prayers to Kami. I am convinced I really was saved through divine intervention. I have been enabled to enjoy my life till this age of 40 years old. I have witnessed growth of eight children into adulthood. I also enjoyed savory meals every day. Even the richest may not have enjoyed this much of a blessed life as I have. I do not care about my own death. If I had died at the age of six, there would be no life. I have no regrets for the life I have lived thus far. People may gossip that I died in the middle of my life. That's the only regret I would have. But please look forward in witnessing the work of Setsutane in the future. Elder brother, please, do not worry. Worrying is hazardous for your health. As long as the three 'Sensho' officers (Shininchiro Shirakami, Fujimori Kondo, and Norio Sato) keep their cooperative relationships among them, there shall

be no problems. Elder brother, I don't think you would be able to serve at the worship hall. Please show up at the worship hall from time to time and help Setsutane to fulfill his duties. Give him any instructions and use him for your purposes. I believe Setsutane has grown up enough to be able to fulfill some errands in the worship hall." This was the last words expressed by Konko Shijin-Sama.

In this manner, Konko Shijin-Sama expressed his strong prayer for the 3rd-Konko-Sama who reached the age of 13 years and four months. He stated, "Setsutane has grown up enough to be able to fulfill some errands in the worship hall."

The 3rd-Konko-Sama served as the Principal Toritsugi-Mediator. It was controversial to identify who would be the next Principal Toritsugi-Mediator after the passing of Konko Shijin-Sama among the family members as well as the executive officers of the organization. The Rev. Kiyono Fujii who was granted the divine title of Mukai-Myojin was one of those people who advocated and supported the ascendance of the 3rd-Konko-Sama to the vacant position.

The 10-day memorial service for the late Konko Shijin-Sama was observed on December 29. From this day, the 3rd Konko-Sama initiated to serve at the designated place of Toritsugi-Mediation at the Headquarters Church. That year marked the 8th year since the Konkokyo Religious Organization gained official recognition. And the year marked the 34th year since the "Rikkyo Shinden" or the "Divine Call to the Founder and His Family" was revealed. The organization began to functionalize smoothly, and many branch churches were also established in many cities in Japan.

The passing of Konko Shijin-Sama overwhelmed the faith community with great sorrow. Many people held deep concerns for the future perspective of the religious tradition. Under such circumstance, the 3rd Konko-Sama began to serve as the Principal Toritsugi-Mediator. In celebration of the auspicious occasion, the Rev. Norio Sato composed Japanese verses. He sent the copy of the verses to Komonosuke Okamoto as a form of New Year's greeting card. The copy of the letter is as follow:

December 29, 1893 (November 22 in accordance with the lunar calendar)

In celebration of the wonderful organizational transition that the eldest son, Setsutane Konko took over the responsibilities held by the late Konko Shijin-Sama.

*Norio,
Disciple*

At the beginning of January, 1894

To Okamoto-kun

今日よりは、千代にさかえん若松に、いのりをかくる、道のはじめよ。

(A rough translation: I extend my sincere prayer that from this day on, in commemoration of a new beginning of the

religious organization, the young pine tree will continue to grow and thrive from generation to generation.)

くれ竹の、世々に伝えんみ世継ぎと、さだめたまえる、きみぞとうとき。

(A rough translation: In praise of you who are destined to perpetuate the religious tradition for generations.)

冬ごもる草木のなかに、梅が枝は、はなのかおりを、いまやひらかん。

(A rough translation: The plum tree endured the coldness of the winter together with other plants in the yard is about to expand flowers to sent off fragrance.)

右うつしを、本年の賀状にかえたしと。めでたく、かしこ。

I would like to substitute the copies of the verses in place of the New Year's greeting card.

Sincerely yours,

Norio (Sato)

Through those expressed verses, we can assume the Rev. Norio Sato wished to forward his main thought, "The passing of Konko Shijin-Sama overwhelmed the entire faith community. But the ascendance of 3rd Konko-Sama to take over the vital responsibilities held by Konko Shijin-Sama shall be celebrated by all for the sake of sound operation of the religious organization hereafter."

Looking back at the ten years

Let's try to look back at the 10 years since Konko Shijin-Sama got engaged in executing the function of Toritsugi-Mediation. Konko-Sama, the Founder passed away when Konko-Sama III reached the age of four. Konko Shijin-Sama took over the position held by Konko-Sama, the Founder as the Principal Toritsugi-Mediator.

In two years, the Shinto-Konkokyo was officially established. This development laid a foundation for the expansion of the organization to be made thereafter. The wife of Konko-Sama also passed away in that year. In corresponding to the expansion of the religious work, the number of pilgrims increased. To accommodate the ever expanding faith community, the worship hall had to be renovated.

Consequently, the old worship hall used by Konko-Sama, the Founder was replaced with a new building. Office rooms for administrative tasks were also built. The pilgrim-oriented business services, such as lodging, emerged in town. The Sanyo Railway Company extended its route to Konko in 1891. Some pilgrims used the train to visit the Headquarters Church. The new worship hall, and other facilities were built to provide better function of Toritsugi-Mediation. The town also gradually changed its appearance into the form of "Monzen-machi" or pilgrim-oriented town. That was the circumstance around the worship hall in that age.

While Konko-Sama, the Founder was serving, they could not obtain official recognition for the religious organization.

They had to deal with many difficult issues. They became overwhelmed with the sense of accomplishment when they got an official recognition of the Konkokyo Religious Organization.

The official recognition of the religious organization prevented the governmental harassment and intimidations for the religious work; they could engage in their missionary work without any restrictions; and the religion gained substantial growth. The branch churches were established in Tokyo and other major cities throughout the country from Hokkaido to Kyushu.

(14) Dedicated services and personality of Konko Shijin-Sama

As for the dedicated services to Kami-Sama and the personality of Konko Shijin-Sama, it would be appropriate to quote descriptions shown in the book titles, "Konko Shijin-Sama" published by the Konkokyo Headquarters in December 1962. Konko Shijin-Sama got out of bed at four o'clock in the morning and engaged in his daily prayer to Kami-Sama. At the break of dawn, he served at the designated seat the whole day. Just a short span of time before his passing, he didn't show up at the worship hall. Other than that occasion, all the believers who met Konko Shijin-Sama expressed that they never failed to see him upon their visitation to the worship hall.

Konko Shijin-Sama always neatly combed his hair, dressed properly in cotton "haori" and "hakama." From time to time, in responding to the group of pilgrims assembled in the worship hall, he stood up from the seat and proceeded to the front of the altar and extended a prayer. Other than that they never witnessed him leaving his seat. He never seemed to use the restroom and ate lunch.

Konko Shijin-Sama never used a hand warmer even in the coldest day in winter. He never attempted to take comfort from the hottest day in summer. He never tried to get rid of swarming mosquitoes. He always responded to visitors unconditionally. He communicated with them calmly and tried to provide easy to follow messages. He never lost his temper nor talked in a rude manner and never used bad expressions that could hurt others.

The Rev. Hata described the personality of Konko Shijin-Sama as follows: Konko Shijin-Sama always tried to let the believers understand the messages. He had a distinctive sense of dignity being emitted from his presence. Whenever we met him in person, we were naturally inclined to bowing our heads in humility and respect.

When inside the worship hall became dark, Konko Shijin-Sama left his seat. He seemed to convince himself that because farmers engaged in their laborious farming during the day and night, he could not indulge himself in comfort. He engaged in daily routine of services till midnight. When he had some extra time off from his work, he helped to do some domestic chores for the family. He sometimes fixed the strings on the clogs.

One day, Kamonosuke Okamoto accompanied Konko Shijin-Sama for an excursion to the beach at Sami for swimming. Konko Shijin-Sama took off his "haori" coat and handed it to Komanosuke and said, "Use this 'haori' for your seating on the ground." Komanosuke was so afraid to use the "haori" with the family crest on it for his seating comfort and didn't follow the instruction of Konko Shijin-Sama. Konko Shijin-Sama dived quite a while. He grabbed a sea bream sleeping in the bottom of the bedrocks with his bare hands and came up to the surface with his catch. In witnessing Komanosuke was not using the haori for his seating, Konko Shijin-Sama scolded him by saying, "Why don't you use it for your seating as I told you to?" Komanosuke responded, "It would be too much of a disgrace if I used your haori with the sacred family crest for my seating." Konko Shijin-Sama responded, "'Okamoto, answer me which would be more irreverent, either to use my haori coat with the sacred crest or hurt your body?'"

When the worship hall underwent renovations, the main building was taken down. Konko Shijin-Sama served at the newly built room in the east. The room faced a cliff to the east side. That condition contributed to extreme heat in summer and coldness in winter. One summer day, a visitor asked Konko Shijin-Sama, "Don't you feel uncomfortable in this hot condition?" Konko Shijin-Sama replied, "Let me see, I would feel discomfort in hot and cold weather just three days in a year. But that also depends on my perception." (To be continued.)