



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com Rev. Yasuhiro Yano Vol. XXIII, No. 9 September 1, 2011

We will observe the annual Autumn Memorial Service on Sunday, September 25, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. Through the service, we extend our sincere appreciation for the contributions, support and guidance of the deceased ministers, family members and our ancestors for our blessed lives we now enjoy. Please join to commemorate this vital function of the Konko faith in person and on time. A fellowship lunch will follow the service.

Community Cleanup Program

*By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister*

On August 6, we participated in the first Project CLEAN, organized by the Honolulu Police Department for community cleanup efforts from 8 a.m. to around 10 a.m. Approximately 380 community people from the local police, military, churches, schools and some other community organizations showed up at the Wahiawa Recreation Center. They said the program in Wahiawa was the third program ever held in Hawaii. At each site they had more than 300 participants. We have been promoting our engagement in the community outreach program, and have tried to respond to this nature of community program. Four of us from the Konko Mission volunteered.

The people were divided into scores of groups for assigned areas of cleanup. One group was assigned for a paint job around the recreation center. Some people were assigned to clean up Whitmore Village. I was expecting

to get into some painting job, so I dressed in rags. But I found most of the participants had on their identical group t-shirts.

We joined a group of people to clean up the area around California Avenue. Along the way, our group, Edna, Mrs. Kaminaka, Reiko (my wife) and I also extended our clean up for the parking lots at the shopping center. We found much trash there. While I was picking up some of the litter in the parking lot, I extended my thoughts for the people who dropped those items intentionally or unintentionally. The fact that there was much rubbish means there were many people who visited the shopping center. In a sense, it can be assumed that the overwhelming trash in the area equals the thriving nature of the place. If there were few shopping customers, there would be little trash. So, in a sense, the amount of trash scattered around the place can be a good indicator to gauge if the shopping center is thriving or not. Of course if the shopping center is well managed, there would be less visible trash in the lots. While I was picking up some trash in the lot, I felt thankful for the shopping center we have in our community. We have been “*osewani naru*” or indebted to the shopping center in one way or another. Suppose if there is an electric outage, the shopping center will be closed. And we would experience an instant inconvenience.

It was a surprise that so many people, over 380 people in the community responded to the program. I enjoyed the program and would like to see further expansion of the program in this community as well as at many other communities. I had a vision or an illusion that can be called, “A tidal wave of volunteers cleaning up the whole area in Wahiawa.” If 1,000 or more people in Wahiawa Town joined the cleanup program, it would be phenomenal.

They provided so many things to comfort the participants, such as refreshments, before and after the task, music entertainers, all the items for the trash pickup, such as gloves, bags, and many patrolling police vehicles to ensure the safety of the participants. It can be a community program of the HPD to enhance their relationships to the community, but I appreciate their outreach program. To clean up the streets is one of the thoughts I always keep in mind as I witness many trash in the roadside.

Nowadays, a thought of waste being a useful resource seems to be gaining popularity. Even during the cleanup program, there were some people who tried to

pick up cans and bottles from the trash bins for recycling.

Maybe we can launch our own community cleanup program around the block sometime in the future, maybe one or twice a year for such occasions of observance of the grand services in April and October.

There can be many people who may complain about the worsening road conditions, such as potholes and cracks. But do we extend our appreciation for the road on which we travel? It can be a typical Konko way of thinking, but it is a natural response for Konko believers to extend our thanks for the road we can use.

Konko Daijin's teaching No. 3 that reads, "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).

Ultimately, we should learn to appreciate the blessings of Kami in all aspects of life. Some ministers put that thought in an expression of "Okage wo Okage tarashimeru" or identify the blessings received as such and respond to them accordingly. Konko-Sama simply put it, "Osewani naru subete ni rei wo iu kokoro" or develop the heart of extending thanks to any and all of the blessings we enjoy in life.

Konko-Sama taught us, "Those who practice faith should feel gratitude even after sitting and resting on a tree stump in the mountain" (II Unknown 23). If we extend a flash of thanks for anything we pick up, from a package, or a grocery bag, we may not throw away the wrapping in a senseless manner and there would be less trash in public. Those people who can extend such thoughts of appreciation even for such minor elements in daily life can surely enjoy a fully blessed life.

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 September 2011

- 1 Thur -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane no Kami 7:30 pm
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
-Volunteer Activity at Wahiawa General Hospital (10-10:45 am)
- 11 Sun - Monthly Svc. for Ikigami Konko Daijin 9 am
-A testimonial by Mrs. Donna Toyofuku
- 18 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am
-Honolulu Church Autumn Memorial Service at 10 am
- 25 Sun -Autumn Memorial Service at 10:00 am

Volunteer at Wahiawa General Hospital

We will make a biannual visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility on Sunday, September 4 at 10:00 a.m. by means of offering entertainment for the people cared for in the facility. We will also make a monthly visit to the facility on Friday, September 9 at 10:00 a.m. The program is in Japanese.

HCRP Meeting

The regular meeting will be held on Monday, September 12 at 12:30 p.m. at the Church of Perfect Liberty.

Autumn Memorial Service at Honolulu Church

The annual Autumn Memorial Service will be held at the Konko Mission of Honolulu on Sunday, September 18 at 10:00 a.m. Regular Sunday Service will be held at the Wahiawa Church.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits for September

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|---------------------------|-----------|
| Mikiko Yamamoto | 9/3/2003 |
| Harumi Tokumoto | 9/7/2001 |
| Ben Furusho | 9/15/1997 |
| Richard Masao Iwasa | 9/17/2005 |
| Kameji Takeshima | 9/17/2000 |
| Richard Tadayoshi Noguchi | 9/27/2009 |

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

Kyoso-Sama Volume 2 (#29)

The following is 29th 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 288 to 297)

“Haori” and “Hakama”

Ordinarily, we just take for granted items of remembrance such as “hakama” skirt and “haori” coat inherited from our family members such as our father and grandfather. But the expression made by Konko Shijin-Sama who stated, “These are the only items of remembrance I received directly from Kyoso-Sama” touched me so deeply. And his expressed thought of “I will store away them after 10 years of use as of the day after tomorrow” also deeply impressed me. While I was serving Konko Shijin-Sama, I was urged that I should have informed about the nature of the clothes provided for the entertainment to the Rev. Kondo. I made an excuse to leave my seat by saying I had to use the restroom. When I entered into the room where they were preparing for the dance, I found the Rev. Kondo had already put on the coat. I informed him by saying, “Sensei, the coat you are wearing once belonged to Kyoso-Sama. You should take care of it as such.” The Rev. Kondo was surprised and expressed, “Is that right?” When I took a closer look at the coat, the attached fastening cloth ribbons turned into just a tuft of strings because it was worn out. A piece of “mizuhiki” twisted paper thread was attached to each end of the ribbons. Because I mentioned about the nature of the coat, all the others who were there expressed their interests in wearing it once. After the dance presentation, they all took turns putting on the coat.

I witnessed that all of them exposed their bare desire of keeping some of the memorable items. Some of them removed the “mizuhiki” twisted paper string and put into their pockets. Some other people pulled off some of the strings from the ribbons. They were obsessed with the thought that the fastening ribbons with fixing “mizuhiki” strings were used by Kyoso-Sama (Founder, Konko Daijin). They even tried to keep a borrowed towel. Abe-san put the towel in his pocket. Later, he divided it into pieces and passed them to each person. We still keep divided pieces of the towel. In this manner, all the commotion in the room was over. Then the three people resumed their dancing. After the performance, they returned the “haori” coat except the towel. They expressed that they have to provide some other entertainment for Konko Shijin-Sama. But nobody showed their willingness. In responding to the situation, the Rev. Kondo took action, “If all you don’t do anything, I will do it.” He stood up, took up the lower end of the clothes and fastened the edge at the waist band exposing his back. He put on a towel around the head in a comical manner and held an umbrella. He made funny sounds of “Piri, piri” and moved to the stage up in the front. He stated, “Shinobi itaru” or I have sneaked (into a house). The expression was a typical line of monologue in the performance of “Niwaka” improvised comical performance. He asked the audience, “What do you think I have stolen?” He continued to talk, “Let me see.” Then he opened the umbrella and stated, “I have secured my safety with this umbrella which prevents the falling trap of ‘ami’ (which referred to ‘ame’ or rain, but figuratively referred to an arresting net of the police.” They all applauded the performance by clapping loudly. But Konko Shijin-Sama pulled the sleeve of my clothes and said, “I feel helpless in witnessing such a stupid performance.” I just

responded by expressing, “Hee . . .” My pulse beat rapidly, and I became worried if the Rev. Kondo did something wrong. Konko Shijin-Sama said, “Even if he could escape the arresting net from the sky above, he cannot dodge the net from the ground below. How can he ever escape the arresting from the ground below? The only way to deal with the situation is to rely on the only deity of the Konko faith that teaches we should learn to appreciate the blessings we enjoy from the ground below, more than the blessings we enjoy from the sky above.” I responded to him, “How convincing your message is.” The Revs. Kondo, Sato, Hata and Sugita were sitting across my seat, and they had no way of knowing my conversation with Konko Shijin-Sama who talked in a discreet manner. I promised myself that I shall never forget the message given by Konko Shijin-Sama by all means.

“Shinjin Shinbou” or perseverance in practicing faith

Many things developed in the meeting as the time passed by. They all seemed to enjoy drinking. To Ooba-san who was sitting far behind, Konko Shijin-Sama said, “Ooba, I will serve you a cup of sake.” A person in between responded by saying, “I will carry your cup to your seat.” Konko Shijin-Sama said, “No, no. I am asking Ooba to come over here.” He pointed to an open seat next to him. If Ooba-san sits at the pointed seat, he would be sitting above Konko Shijin-Sama. The only alternative place is right next to Konko Shijin-Sama. Konko Shijin-Sama said, “Ooba, come and sit over here with your dish tray.” A person nearby responded in bringing the tray, and Ooba-san sat next to Konko Shijin-Sama on the right. He was served by Konko Shijin-Sama. Konko Shijin-Sama held the hands of Ooba-san and stated, “Listen well, Ooba, Tokyo is the Capital of Japan where the Emperor resides. Be patient. Please be patient. Tokyo represents such a vital meaning that whatever happened in Tokyo directly affects the operations at the Headquarters. Any mishaps develop in some other local places other than Tokyo may have little effect to the operations at the Headquarters. But anything happening in Tokyo will directly affect the operations of the Headquarters. Please make every effort to prevent any mistakes in the operations of the Konko faith in Tokyo.” Konko Shijin-Sama talked to Ooba-san in such a whispering manner that nobody else could hear. But I was overwhelmed with the sense of awe by the reference of “Tokyo is Capital of Japan or ‘Ohizamoto’ which referred to the residence of Emperor.”

Konko Shijin-Sama changed his posture toward me and stated, “Do you know the destinations of both the flowing river water and the life of people?” In confusion, I responded, “Hee . . .” because I had no idea how I could respond to the extended question. Konko Shijin-Sama stated, “They all believe water always flows downward to lower places and flows into the ocean and they don’t know where the water actually ends up in the ocean. That is why they say they can tell the destinations of both flowing water and the life of the people.” The only response I could take was to say, “Hee . . .” Konko Shijin-Sama didn’t state, “In accordance with the Konkokyo faith tradition, we shall flow

water downward.”

“Kancho-Sama,” the Chief Administrator left the meeting place and before the “Ohiromae-Sama (Konko Shijin-Sama) entered the room, both the Revs. Sato and Kondo composed Japanese verses in their attempts of showing their sense of reformation for their erratic acts as had been stated in the previous description. As they showed their writing to Konko Shijin-Sama, they stated, “Konko-Sama, you gave us an excellent opportunity to discipline ourselves. Thank you very much. We feel ashamed of our lack of considerations.” Konko Shijin-Sama took a look at them and placed them on the floor behind him. While we were enjoying drinking, and became somewhat drunk, Konko Shijin-Sama talked to me from time to time in a low voice. He also mentioned about the composed two Japanese verses. I feel a great deal of reluctance to let this be known publicly, but I feel obligated to share the expressed thought by Konko Shijin-Sama. Konko Shijin-Sama stated, “Please relate this message to both of them.” I was anxiously waiting for the message spoken. He simply stated, “Please tell them, ‘書く改心が悪い’ or ‘Kaku-kaishin-ga-warui’ that can be presumably translated as, “Reformation of your heart in writing is wrong.” Then he left his seat and entered into his room behind.

A message

The following day, when I made a visit to see the Rev. Kondo in his room, he was still lying in his bed. But he was aware of my visit. He called me to enter in his room by saying, “Come into the room.” He began to talk, “You seemed to have enjoyed accompaniment to Konko Shijin-Sama yesterday. You have never shared with what Konko Shijin-Sama was talking to you. What do you say about this manner?” I responded to him by saying, “I will talk about it later on.” But he was so persistent and tried to find out about the communication between Konko Shijin-Sama and me. I told him, “There is one message Konko Shijin-Sama asked me to convey to the rest of the people.” The Rev. Kondo showed a surprise look and responded, “Just hold your talk for a minute.” He jumped out of his bed and changed into his formal dress and fixed his outfit in the bathroom. He instructed me, “You sit over there and face this direction.” I responded to him, “I don’t think I deserve that much treatment of respect.” The Rev. Kondo scolded me by saying, “What are you talking about? You said Konko Shijin-Sama asked you to convey his message to us. How could you say you don’t deserve that much respect? You represent Konko Shijin-Sama when you give us his message. Are you trying to give us his message from the lower position?” I was deeply moved by the thoughtfulness exhibited by the Rev. Kondo toward Konko Shijin-Sama. I feel like I would shed tears in awe.

In this manner, I felt hesitating to relate the message. The Rev. Kondo understood my hesitation and said, “All right, if you don’t speak about the matter from the upper seating, I will ask him directly in the worship hall.” I became so pressed and responded to him, “If you insist that much, I have to follow your instruction. I feel sorry about that.” The Rev. Kondo scolded me again by saying, “Why should you feel sorry!” I said, “Then, I will relate you the message from Konko Shijin-

Sama.” The Rev. Kondo clapped his hands loudly in the posture of worshipping and said, “Thank you very much.” I related, “(Konko Shijin-Sama) just stated ‘書く改心が悪い’ or ‘Kaku-kaishin-ga-warui’ that can be presumably translated as, ‘Reformation of your heart in writing is wrong.’” The Rev. Kondo responded, “Thank you for the message. What a grateful message indeed! This is a divine message for me.”

(To be continued.)