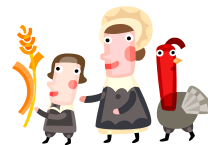




# Wahiawa Konko Mission Children's Newsletter



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## WAHIAWA KONKO MISSION MONTHLY SCHEDULE

### November 2011

- 1 Tue -Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama Monthly Svc. (7:30 pm)**  
天地金乃神様 月例祭.
- 3 Thur -Revs. Yasuhiro & Reiko Yano will make a pilgrimage**  
To Gohonbu, Japan & Iwatani Church 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- 6 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am) and Share Okage stories**  
-Overview of the November schedule
- 11 Fri -Veteran's Day Holiday**
- 12 Sat -Revs. Yasuhiro & Reiko Yano returns from Japan**  
-Church clean up (2 pm)
- 13 Sun -Monthly Svc. For Ikigami Konko Daijin Sama (9 am).**  
生神金光大神様月例祭  
-Share Okage stories till 11 am.  
-Hilo Church Grand Service (11 am)
- 18 Fri -Monthly Volunteer Activity at WGH (10-10:45 am)**
- 19 Sat -Church clean up (9 am)**  
-KMH Board of Trustee's mtg. at HNL Chr. (10:30 am)
- 20 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am) 月例霊祭**  
-Share Okage stories till 11 am.  
-Rev. Dr. Todd Takahashi's study session at Hawaii  
Center (6:00 pm) Potluck dinner.
- 24 Thu -Thanksgiving Day Holiday**
- 26 Sat -Chorus practice at HNL Church (2-4 pm)**
- 27 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)**  
-Share Okage stories till 11 am.  
-14<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service for Late Rev. Kikue Kodama of  
Honolulu Church (9 am)
- 30 Wed -Church clean up (9 am)**



### December 2011

- 1 Thu -Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama Monthly Svc. (7:30 pm)**  
天地金乃神様 月例祭

## Konko Daijin says...

Don't think that the future will be miserable and difficult. Instead, give thanks for this day. And give thanks to Kami-Sama for providing a roof over your head and not letting you go hungry or cold. (*Gorikai II Kashinabara Toku 7*)

**Editor's thoughts:** People amass great fortunes and try to save as much money for the future, but without faith, no amounts of money will relieve you when you are at the moment of despair. Give thanks for what you have right here, right now. There is no telling what will happen in the future, but if you are thankful now, you needn't worry about the future, since how we conduct ourselves now will continue—leading into the future. If we always worry about the future, we can never be at peace.

## Sunday School Oath

I will advance my faith through understanding the Founder's teachings and will strive to become a more useful person to society.



Sincerity is the essence of my faith, and its basic principles are courtesy, kindness, and devotion in everything I do.



## Happy Thanksgiving!

**T**hank you for my daily blessings as well as those extraordinary ones.

**H**elping others realize Kami's blessing is...

**A** great way to make Kami-Sama happy.

**N**inety percent of the time we tend to focus on things we are not thankful for.

**K**now that being thankful at least 90% of the time is something we must improve on.

**S**uccessful people are usually positive and thankful in their daily living.

**G**ood things happen when we are thankful.

**I**ncrease your appreciation for all things in life.

**V**isualize your future with positive expectations.

**I**t's important to be thankful everyday!

**N**o one can live without the blessings of Heaven & Earth.

**G**ive thanks to the Divine Parent.



## How to unclog slow draining sinks...

Calling the plumber to have them snake down your pipes could end up costing you about \$250. Do not use caustic drain cleaners... There is an environmentally friendly way to solve slow drains. Purchase and use the natural powder Enzyme type drain care. But before that, what seems to work quick is to boil a large kettle of water and pouring it down the drain. It melts away the sludge buildup in the pipes. Repeat twice for better results. But be careful not to get burned from splashes.



## Wahiawa Konko Mission Annual Schedule at a Glance

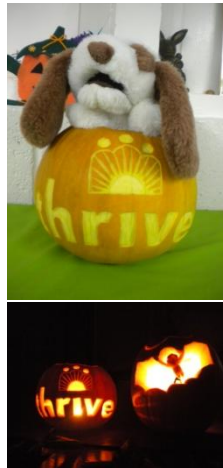
12/18 Sun -39<sup>th</sup> Mem. Svc. for Late Rev. Haruko Takahashi (10 am)  
 12/25 Sun -End of the Year Service (9 am)  
 12/30 Fri -Wahiawa Church Mochi Pounding (8 am)



### Konko Sama says...

To be human is to help others. When a child has fallen down, someone will promptly help the child up. A child who has fallen into the water will also be immediately pulled out by someone. As they say, since man is the lord of all living things, people can move at will and help others. Isn't this something to be grateful for? Cows, horses, and other animals cannot pull out their offspring that has fallen into the water. But if a human sees this, the offspring will be saved. If an ox, horse, dog, or cat is wounded, any human would help nurse the wound. When people suffer from sickness or disaster, they are saved by Kami and other people. Be aware that saving people in distress is to be human and practice faith. (Gorikai I, Yamamoto, Sadajiro 65-1,2,3)

## Halloween Pumpkin Carving 10/30/11



## Happy Birthday

To all the people born in November  
 Please continue to receive  
 Infinite divine blessings from  
 Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama and  
 Ikigami Konko Daijin-Sama



Image credits: <http://komagome-okasiya>

**Rev. Masahiko Yoshino**

(Konko Mission of Honolulu)

**Rev. Mitsuko Yasutake**

(Konko Mission of Waipahu)

**Doreen Hirota**

**Philip Oliveros**

**Sharon Toma**

**Jensen Toma**

**Merle Abe**

**Erasto Caraballo**

**Lyann Makishima**

**Kenneth Makishima**



## 2011 HCRP PEACE PRAYER 10/23/11 @GEDATSU CHURCH OF HAWAII

Peace Prayer and Peace Cup pictures courtesy of Rev. Tatsunori Kamiya (Gedatsu Church)



## Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

Happy Thanksgiving! I am thankful for Konkokyo and its wonderful teachings. I am thankful for Konko Daijin who showed us the way of happiness and spiritual wellbeing. I am thankful for all the people in my life, my family and friends, the people that pray for me, the job I have, the car I drive, the bed I sleep in, the home I live in, the clothes I wear, my shoes and slippers that protect my feet, the food I eat and all the blessings of heaven and earth. I am thankful that I am healthy and happy. I am also very thankful for my guardian spirits that are watching over me. There is so much to be thankful for in life. It's good that there is at least one day of the year dedicated to giving thanks. But as Konkokyoites, our goal is to be thankful every single day.

I would like to share a story that I am thankful for. It is about the koto (Japanese Zither). I learned how to play a few songs on the koto in a half year period when I was in the Gakuin Seminary (Okayama, Japan) 10 years ago. It was my dream to be able to play the song, "Ametsuchi" (Heaven and Earth) on koto. I remember the first day of koto lessons. My teacher was Rev. Akari Konko. We put on our koto nails, and I was immediately told, "Yano-san, your nails are on backwards!" I apparently had them faced on the same side as my actual nails. I pulled off my three koto nails for readjustment. I was told to wet my thumb, index finger, and middle finger with my spit, so it acts like grip for the leather banded koto nails. Now we were ready to learn the koto.

At first, the notes were impossible to read. The words and numbers were squiggly Chinese characters, and I was already becoming anxious whether or not it would be possible for me to even learn. Practice went on once a week. But for me, I was determined to be able to play the koto well, so I practiced in the music room (sareishitsu) every hour or two till 9 p.m. after the Gakuin evening prayer. I swear, sometimes I heard strange noises come from the music room closet—like the sound of a huge rodent scrambling in there. Or I would see a dark shadow peek through the windows from outside and disappear as soon as it caught my eyes. Once when I was practicing, a huge palm-sized spider fell from the ceiling and landed right in front of my koto. I freaked out, but I continued to play regardless of these strange happenings. I felt that Kami-Sama was testing my determination.

I was able to play all the songs in about a month's time. I was proud of myself. Akari sensei could sense that I was getting confident, but she warned me that I needed to be able to sing while simultaneously playing the koto—because merely being able to pick the strings was not enough. Her words made me even more determined in my koto practice. Koto lessons ended after six months. And now I was on my

own. I still went into the music room by myself—passing through the gloomy, dark and scary wooden corridors of the Gakuin learning hall.

While in Gakuin, we had 4 major ceremonies for which we had to play live Tengaku music. There were other instruments in our orchestra, which included the Sho, Shichiriki, Ryuteki, Koto and the Gong. I intensely practiced for these ceremonies so I do not mess up on any notes. In every ceremony, there is one Oya (Parent) who is responsible for starting the ceremonial music. The Oya is usually a well experienced Koto player. Me being chosen as the Oya was completely out of the question, but I practiced with the determination of wanting to become the Oya one day.

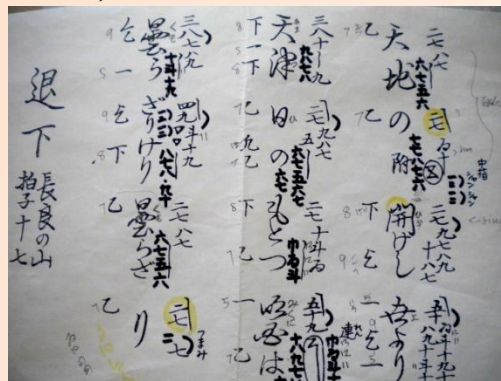
The Autumn Memorial Service passed, and I played as a general koto player. Then the Autumn Grand Ceremony came. I was chosen to dance Kibimai instead. I danced "Ametsuchi"! What a blessing. I only know two Kibimai dances well, and Ametsuchi

happened to be one of them. Then the Spring Memorial Service came by, and I played as a general koto player. Every time the ceremonies came near, a name list of the orchestra roles were posted on the bulletin board of the hallway. The Spring Grand Ceremony, the grandest of them all came near. Knowing that I would be playing as a general koto player, I quickly scanned the Role list—and found my name to be the Oya (Parent). I was in disbelief until another classmate walked past me and gave me a nudge with her elbow, telling me, "Hey Edna, you're going to be Oya for the Spring Grand Ceremony! Congratulations!" I was half super happy, yet half super nervous. I started to practice even more. I practiced for hours on my days off, and was determined to nail this task with perfection.

The day of the Grand Ceremony arrived. Akari sensei gave one clap with the wooden kachi clappers, and my task began. We played several songs with our Tengaku orchestra throughout the ceremony. The whole ceremony ended flawlessly. Akari sensei was very proud of the whole orchestra and how it all went so smoothly. I later went up to her to personally thank her for giving me the role of Oya, and for teaching me koto in

Gakuin. Akari sensei said with a smile, "I can clearly see how much you have improved on your koto skills in this short amount of time. It is my wish that you take the koto skills back to Hawaii and establish and maintain the tradition there." I was so happy.

Since returning to Hawaii, I started going to Leeward Community College. While I was there, I was in the intensive writing Magazine Production class. There was a writing contest for best essays, poems, and works of art. I wrote about my experience of learning to play the koto. Surprisingly, my essay won first place, and I won \$100! It was published in Leeward's Harvest Magazine, which then was read by people on the mainland. Interestingly, Cengage



Learning, an English Writing Textbook company contacted me several months later and asked for permission to use my koto essay for their English textbook. I was very happy, and of course I said “Yes”. They gave me \$200, plus a free copy of their textbook for gratuity.

It was my wish to be able to play the koto in Hawaii, but the only problem was—I didn’t have a koto! I had the nails, notes and skills, but not the instrument itself. To purchase a decent koto would cost me an arm and a leg. But since I really wanted to keep my words to Akari sensei, I prayed to Kami-Sama for a koto.

As you know our church 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was held in March of last year. During that time, it was my wish to be able to play “Ametsuchi” live on koto when my niece, Renee and Hope Morihara dance Kibimai. Kami-Sama certainly listens to my prayers. My father went to Japan a few months before our anniversary and brought home a beautiful koto from his mother, who owned 2 koto. Grandma Nobuko played the koto as an offering for the services at her church in Kawanoishi, Shikoku. She has since aged, and retired from playing koto, so she happily gave me one of hers. I was ecstatic. It cost \$500 just to have it as an extra luggage item in the airplane!—But I knew it was for a good cause, so it hurt my wallet for a little while, but more than anything, I was happy to have a real koto in my possession. This is my treasure from my grandmother. I truly appreciate her generosity, and give thanks for Kami-Sama for listening to my wishes.

Since I had not touched a koto in several years since returning from the Gakuin, my skills were a bit rusty. But I was determined to play the koto for our church anniversary, so I practiced much again. Our anniversary came, and I was able to play the koto without any mistakes, and all went smoothly.

For our Grand Ceremony on April 13<sup>th</sup> of this year, I played koto live again with Hope Morihara dancing Kibimai. My fingers slipped, and my mind went blank for a few seconds while I was playing live. I was in extreme shock. I was so shocked, I was scared to touch the koto again. I left the koto sleeping after that and lost my determination to play. I made up my mind that for the Autumn Grand Ceremony, I will not play the koto, but use the CD recording instead.

Kami-Sama was not happy with that...About a month before our Grand Ceremony, I received an e-mail from Cengage Learning who wanted to post an on-line version of the English textbook. They wanted to renew my permission to use my essay yet again, which will be available for an audience of 120,000 students in five years time. The earlier

request was for a published textbook for an audience around 50,000 students. I was so happy again. They offered me another \$200. In this way, Kami-Sama did not want me to lose my enthusiasm for playing the koto. It was at this moment that I decided, “I am going to play the koto, even if I mess up again.”

Our Autumn Grand Ceremony arrived (10/13/11). I practiced for this ceremony again. I played—but I messed up yet again! My mind went into a sudden state of panic and my fingers slipped and I lost track of my notes. I was reliving the shock from the previous Grand Ceremony’s mess up. However, the shock didn’t last as long. I was able to pick up where I messed up and finished the song till the end. Although I messed up again, I was grateful that I played. It was unfortunate that it wasn’t a perfect koto offering to Kami-Sama, but through these many happenings, Kami-Sama makes sure I keep my words. I must say, it made me realize not to give up no matter what happens. Even if I must fall 10 times, I must get up 10 times and keep on going. I really want to thank Kami-Sama for



being my motivator.

Interestingly, the \$500 that I spent to have the koto flown over to Hawaii came right back to me! From winning that essay contest, to having the textbook companies use my article twice. Kami-Sama is amazing!! There were many lessons I learned from this experience. The first one is to stay determined. The second lesson is, practice makes perfect. When I was in Gakuin, I insanely practiced the koto, every single day for at least an hour. Come to realize it now,



professional musicians also practice daily. But lately, I haven’t been practicing as intensely as my Gakuin days, which explains why I made mistakes when I played the koto live. The third lesson I learned was, Kami-Sama compensated me as I spent the money, time, and energy for the church. The fourth lesson is not really a lesson, but it is a confirmation that Kami-Sama listens to every prayer request I have—as long as it is in line with Kami’s wishes as well.

We had many activities in the month of October. Our Grand Ceremony was held. The Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace—Peace Prayer was held. And we also had our Sunday School Halloween Pumpkin carving a day before Halloween. Here we are in November already. Time passes by ever so quickly.

As a gift, my parents will go to Japan from November 3-12 for an appreciation pilgrimage for their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday (They both turned 60 this year). I pray that they will have a safe and meaningful trip. More news when they come back from Japan. In the meantime, I will be watching the church, so please bear with me.

*Aloha, Edna Yano*