

# Konko Mission of Honolulu

## 2024 CHURCH SCHEDULE REMINDER



### May

Dear Konko Ohana,

As the gentle trade winds bring the vibrant colors of spring to life, our hearts here in Hawaii are filled with a renewed sense of hope and joy. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to connect with you, our beloved Konko ohana, and to share in the blessings of this beautiful season together.

#### MAY

Spring Grand Service –Wailuku 5/5, Hilo 5/12

|    |                                                                                                                |                 |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 5  | Sunday Service                                                                                                 |                 |
| 12 | <b>Monthly Service</b> – <b>Shintokai Meeting</b>                                                              |                 |
| 19 | Sunday Service – <b>Church Goyo</b>                                                                            |                 |
| 26 | <b>Monthly Service, Monthly Memorial Service</b><br><b>&amp; Rev. Masahiko Yoshino Annual Memorial Service</b> | Church Clean-up |

### April Sermon Summaries:

April 7, 2024 at Spring Grand Service

**The** Spring Grand Service sermon emphasized the transformative power of perspective and gratitude in the face of adversity. Rev. Akinobu Yasutake opened with a philosophical reflection on perception, using a glass of water to illustrate how one's viewpoint—seeing the glass as half empty versus half full—can fundamentally alter one's experience of life.

This idea was reinforced with a \$20 bill analogy, questioning whether one perceives it as a limited amount or as an ample resource, echoing a 16th-century French philosopher's notion that our circumstances simply provide seeds that our perspectives can grow.

**Central** to the sermon was the story of Mrs. Hirano, whose son suffered a severe accident at work, leading to the amputation of his arm. Despite the grim circumstances, the narrative highlighted the family's shift from initial despair to deep gratitude for the son's survival and his subsequent resilience. The son's ability to return to work, adapt to using an artificial arm, and eventually lead his division during the COVID-19 pandemic exemplified the sermon's theme of recognizing blessings in hardship.

**Rev.** Yasutake used this story to delve into the broader spiritual teachings of the Konko faith, which advocates for a focus on what remains rather than what is lost. This philosophy encourages believers to see challenges not just as obstacles but as opportunities for spiritual growth and deeper faith. The sermon cited historical figures within the faith who exemplified this attitude, including a Paralympian and a strong believer who both faced physical loss but chose to focus on their capabilities and blessings.

**This** narrative was woven together with personal reflections, including the Rev. Yasutake's account of his brother, who maintained his faith and ministerial duties despite a debilitating illness. This personal story underscored the sermon's message that true faith involves a continual reorientation towards gratitude and the constructive use of adversity.



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In conclusion, the sermon called on the congregation to adopt a perspective that sees beyond immediate misfortunes to the potential spiritual growth such challenges can foster. It was a call to embody faith that actively transforms perception, encourages resilience, and cultivates an enduring sense of gratitude, regardless of life's inevitable difficulties.

<https://youtube.com/live/BBxF5Kqbqbl>



April 14, 2024

**The** sermon begins with a heartwarming anecdote involving a young elementary school girl's response to a seemingly simple question about what happens when ice melts. While the expected answer might be "water," the girl charmingly replies that the melting of ice signifies the arrival of spring. This story is more than a cute response; it illustrates a profound understanding viewed through an innocent and pure heart, rather than the literal perception of adults. This narrative sets the tone for the sermon's theme—viewing the world not just with our physical eyes but through a spiritual lens, a central teaching found in the "Voice of the Universe."

In "Voice of the Universe," it is emphasized that those who follow the true faith should look beyond the physical and open their spiritual eyes (III Shinkun 2 8). The sermon uses this directive to challenge congregants to adopt a broader perspective, where understanding transcends what is seen and instead feels what might not be immediately obvious.

**The** body of the sermon delves deeper into this concept through the narrative of a middle school girl named Ako, crafted to resonate with the younger members of the congregation. A Sensei engages Ako in a thought-provoking dialogue about human perception. Initially, Ako responds with typical answers to questions about how many eyes a person has or what she sees in a flower. The Sensei gently guides her to recognize that true appreciation and understanding of beauty—described as seeing with the "heart's eye"—transcend mere physical observation. This interaction highlights the sermon's message about the importance of internal vision or insight, which enriches one's experiences and interactions with the world.

**Further** illustrating this point, the sermon shares a story about the growth of a bamboo stalk, which serves as a metaphor for personal and spiritual growth. Early one morning, a divine message instructs the Founder's family to observe the condition of bamboo in a grove. Despite appearing to stop growing and even dying, the bamboo resumes its growth following rain, thriving against odds. This story symbolizes resilience and the potential for new growth, mirroring the cycles of nature with spiritual development. It teaches that just as plants rely on unseen elements like rain and soil, human growth depends on invisible spiritual nourishment.

**As** the sermon draws to a close, it reinforces the necessity of maintaining faith even when divine presence isn't overtly visible. Drawing again from "Voice of the Universe," it is stated that the divine is neither seen nor heard, and dwelling in doubt can be frightening (III Shinkun 2 49). However, the true practice of faith involves overcoming these doubts and embracing the unseen forces that influence and enrich our lives.

In conclusion, the sermon calls on the congregation to embrace a life viewed through the "eye of the heart"—a life that perceives and appreciates the deeper spiritual truths behind everyday occurrences. By doing so, followers are encouraged to create positive environments and live joyfully, spreading happiness and faith. The teachings urge believers to not only cherish these spiritual insights for themselves but also to share the blessings of Kami with others, thereby promoting a community bound by shared faith and deeper understanding. This message aims to inspire the congregation to lead lives filled with faith, recognizing the unseen forces that shape existence and personal growth.

<https://youtu.be/bQOv79298jc>