



Dai-kyokai-sho (Grand Worship Hall), completed in 1921

## Music Does Hone Our Sensibilities

By the Reverend Tsukamoto Kazumasa  
Director of Konkokyo International Center

**I**t has already been half a year since the former Spiritual Leader, the late Reverend Konko Heiki, passed away on July 21st, 2024.

The 5th Konko-sama was well-versed in music. I recall an occasion when he mentioned this topic while I was receiving mediation at the main worship hall. At that time, he introduced music critic Yoshida Hidekazu's book, "Eternal Homeland," and concluded, "Music does hone our sensibilities."

Returning to my church with this understanding, I immediately bought and read the book. However, despite my efforts, I found myself unable to grasp its content. Even when listening to the masterpieces the author introduced, my naturally dull senses and lack of musical appreciation ultimately led me to set the book aside, placing it quietly on the edge of my shelf.

Even so, the understanding imparted by the 5th Konko-sama remained with me.

A few years later, the Reverend Konko Hiromichi, the current Spiritual Leader (who was the mediation hall department director at that time), gave a commemorative speech at the 160th anniversary of Konkokyo's

establishment. When the 6th Konko-sama mentioned "sensibilities" during this speech, I felt as if the dots had connected, forming a clear line.

After stating that "Music and Kami-sama are both all about feelings," he continued, "I believe it is extremely important for us as humans to polish our Kami's heart and sensibilities that were given to us at birth.

We were all given a heart that feels pity, transcending language, nations, and ethnicities. To cherish this gift, we should heighten our sensibilities instead of overthinking and allowing wisdom to take over. I imagine this importance of feeling is necessary to polish the gem in your heart. By always maintaining a fresh feeling, I want to maintain an honest and pure heart towards various things in life. That is how I believe we hone our sensibilities."

Through the understandings of both the 5th and 6th Konko-sama, I feel I have learned that by honing our sensibilities, we are better able to feel Kami-sama. From what I see, hear, and touch, and from the people I meet, I would like to practice faith and feel Kami-sama every day of my life.



# Welcoming the 100th Year

By the Reverend Wada Kazuma  
Director of the General Affairs Department

On February 22nd, 24th and 26th 1921, commemorative ceremonies for the completion of the wooden Large Buildings (*Dai-kyokai-sho*) of the Konkokyo Headquarters were held. Although the Grand Worship Hall was a magnificent building, only four representatives of each Konko church were allowed to enter it. The other worshippers stayed in the Sacred Grounds of the Headquarters.

On the 24th, the Third Konko-sama, as Vice Chief Officiant, spoke to the numerous worshippers covering the whole Sacred Grounds: “Welcome to this commemorative ceremony, ladies and gentlemen. Congratulations. I don’t know what to say about the ceremony this time. How are you feeling about it? As for me, I am overwhelmed with emotion, indeed. When people are happy, Kami, as their Parent, is also happy. Likewise, when Kami is happy, we are also happy. I always feel deeply sorry for Kami, because I am not thankful and joyful enough in everything. This memorable event will hopefully help us all improve our faith in Kami. It is my sincere hope that we will get to practice true faith which people of this world can learn from. I also pray that we will be allowed to save as many people in distress as possible.”

Later, on the night of April 14th, 1925, a fire broke out in the room where offerings to Kami



were prepared. (This room was called *Shinsenden*.) The fire soon reached the Main Worship Hall (*Honden*), the room to enshrine mitama spirits (*Soreiden*), the Sermon-Delivering Hall (*Daikyoden*) and even to the then residence of the Third Konko-sama. Sadly, all these buildings were burned down. The Third Konko-sama, however,



Site visit to the current Main Worship Hall building

performed Sacred Mediation for worshippers as usual on that day, as if nothing special had happened. To those who worried and lamented about the terrible event, Konko-sama calmly said, “Everything burned down, but no worries are necessary, because we know that Kami is still there for us.”

Everybody began to see the Third Konko-sama walk from his home to the worshipping room early in the morning and leave the worshipping room for his home a little before the sunset after this tragic fire on the Grand Worship Hall and its neighboring wooden buildings. In other words, people began to see Konko-sama’s new daily custom after



From left: Third Konko-sama, his wife, and Fourth Konko-sama

ter the Third Konko-sama moved his residence to the present-day house. The Third Konko-sama started this custom on April 15th. Konko-sama entered a quickly installed *hiromae* (worship room) which was used as the Room for the *Kancho*. (*Kancho* is a position called “In-Religion Supervisor.”) Konko-sama entered the *hiromae* early in the morning and left it a little before sunset. The path from Konko-sama’s (new) home to

Photos courtesy of the Konkō Library



the *hiromae* was neatly swept every single morning. In those days, most paths/ways were unpaved, and the sand was scored with a rake. A male middle-school student did these jobs and did them quietly and voluntarily. He later became the Fourth Konko-sama. Soon, other people joined this schoolboy and the path of (the Third) Konko-sama came to be shared by many, many people.

This year marks the 100th Anniversary since (the Third) Konko-sama began his Proceeding (*Odemashi*) and Exit/Going Home (*Ohike*). Representatives of several other religious organizations kindly attended the funeral of the late Fifth Konko-sama last sum-



mer. When I visited each of them to give thanks for their time for the funeral, one of them kindly said to me, "The Spiritual Leader of the Konko Faith is the very one who gives the most severe discipline onto himself." (The Sixth) Konko-sama prays to our Parent Kami for all of us every single day. I'd like to continue to ask for and receive Konko-sama's Sacred Mediation, so that I can contribute, even if a little, to the realization of the Third Konko-sama's words, "It is my sincere hope that we will get to practice true faith which people of this world can learn from. I also pray that we will be allowed to save as many people in distress as possible."

## The Passing of Reverend Tanaka Motoo

With deep respect and heartfelt sorrow, we announce the passing of Reverend Tanaka Motoo, the former Director of the Konkokyo International Center and Head Minister of the Konko Church of Oosaki in Tokyo. Reverend Tanaka, 81 years old, passed away peacefully on April 21, 2025, at 7:40 a.m.

We offer our sincerest gratitude for his lifelong dedication to world peace and the salvation of humanity.

He devoted his life to Kami's wish that "Konko Daijin be born in every country throughout the world."

With this vision in his heart, he traveled to North and South America, various Asian countries, and Europe. He participated in interfaith conferences, organized gatherings for Konkokyo believers abroad, and engaged in peacebuilding efforts in Cambodia.

Believing deeply in the power of firsthand experience, he made it a priority to interact with people and cultures directly, and to learn from them with humility and openness. He

also devoted himself to nurturing the next generation by sharing these experiences with younger followers.

Reverend Tanaka's warm smile, unwavering passion, and compassionate spirit touched countless lives. His legacy of faith and global outreach will continue to inspire all of us who walk the path he helped to illuminate.

With deepest reverence, we offer our prayers for his Mitama ancestral spirit to be at eternal peace.

Reverend Tanaka Motoo's Career Highlights related to International Activities:

- June 1968 Ordained as a Konkokyo Minister
- September 1970-June 1971 Studied abroad at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.
- July 1974-August 1975 Staff member at Konko Churches of North America
- July 1993-July 1997 Deputy Director of Konkokyo International Center
- July 1997-July 2001 Director of KIC





## Living Faith: a Brazilian Visit to the Heart of Konkokyo

By Gustavo Goulart Braga Maçaneiro, Butantã church in São Paulo, Brazil.

**O**n June 7th, the first of four transformative days of *Kenshū*—a period of faith training, began at the Konkokyo Headquarters in Okayama. My name is Gustavo, a believer of the Butantã church in São Paulo, Brazil, under the guidance of Reverend Miyazaki Tadashi. What

began as a simple desire to visit Japan and connect with the roots of my faith, gradually unfolded into one of the most meaningful experiences of my life.

As part of a broader trip to Japan I began organizing in 2024, I intended to include a visit to the Konkokyo Headquarters. I hoped to walk through the streets of Konko, visit the sacred places I had only seen in photos and YouTube videos, pray at the main worship hall, and attend a service to offer my gratitude for the opportunity to witness these places in person. But my itinerary didn't have a clear structure beyond that.

That changed when I shared my plans with Reverend Miyazaki. Instead of a casual visit, he encouraged me to apply for *Kenshū* at the Konkokyo Headquarters. Thanks to the kind acceptance and coordination of the Outreach Department, everything was well arranged.

The five-day program went far beyond anything I had imagined. Rather than a tourist visit, it became a journey of the spirit. Each day began early, with the Spiritual Leader, Konko-sama's *odemashi*—Konko-sama's procession to the main worship hall, followed by the first prayer of the day, accompanied by the quiet atmosphere of Konko town during the rainy season.

One of the most interesting experiences was witnessing and participating in *Chosen*—the preparation of offerings to be presented at the worship hall's altar. Observing the discipline and care of those involved revealed the deep significance

of service in Konkokyo. Equally touching was the full day I spent at the *Gakuin*—Konkokyo's seminary. Though my Japanese language skills are still limited, I was warmly welcomed. Through shared meals, activities, and conversations, I came to understand more about the path of spiritual learning. I even had the joy of being introduced to the *ryūteki*, a traditional flute used in religious ceremonies.

Unexpected blessings also shaped my journey. By divine arrangement, my visit coincided with the 40th anniversary reunion of Reverend Miyazaki's graduating class at the *Gakuin*. I was honored to attend the commemorative gathering. It was deeply inspiring to witness the joy of reunion among the ministers, whose lives have been dedicated to serving others through the Konko faith.

What touched me the most, was the extraordinary warmth and attentiveness of everyone at the Konkokyo Headquarters. Their sincere hospitality reflected one of the concepts I hold most dear: *Wagakokoro*—a harmonious and joyful heart. From the delivery of *bentō* lunch to the patient guidance of each day's activities, every gesture was filled with care. Although I often struggled to express my gratitude in Japanese, I was moved by the generosity of those around me.

At the end of the program, we were invited to share our reflections in an interview for the *Konko Shimbun*-newspaper. Even then, my mind was swirling with thoughts and emotions, still trying to process the depth of what I had experienced. And to be honest, even after returning to Brazil, I am still absorbing it all.

Before our departure, we had the chance to personally thank many of those who had accompanied us on this unforgettable path. I left Konko with a heart full of gratitude, a renewed sense of spiritual purpose, and deep admiration for the living faith I witnessed. The faith training at the Konkokyo Headquarters was an unforgettable opportunity to deepen my connection with the Konko faith.



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