

# Face to Faith

November, 2024 No.109



## Funeral service for Reverend Konko Heiki Fifth Spiritual Leader of Konkokyo

*The formal funeral service for the late Reverend Konko Heiki was held on August 29, 2024, in the Grand Service Hall in Konko Town, Okayama. The service was led by the chairperson of the Formal Funeral Committee, Chief Administrative Director Reverend Hashimoto Michio. Reverend Konko Heiki, passed away on July 21, 2024, at the age of 89 years and 8 months.,*

### Address by Reverend Konko Hiromichi.

The current spiritual leader and chief mourner at the service

I am simply and solely grateful to my father for his thirty years of service as the spiritual leader of our shared faith. I am also grateful for his role as a father to me for fifty-eight years as well as his almost ninety-years of life, he shared with so many others.

I have begun to more fully realize the meaning of “rooted in appreciation”, as my grandfather, the Fourth Konko-sama used to say. I felt sad about his passing and how much I would miss my father. However, this sentiment deepened to a broader and truer appreciation for my father, as a father, a spiritual leader of our shared faith and his life. I now understand more fully the importance of



appreciation and gratitude as it pertains to the Konkokyo faith.

I want to offer my sincerest appreciation to everyone for attending the funeral service today despite the hot and rainy weather.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for the numerous expressions of kindness, friendship and encouragement provided to my father during his life.

Finally, I want to express my wholehearted appreciation for everyone’s continued assistance and support for our family.

Again, thank you all.

# Words of condolence

## Represented by all Konkokyo believers

By Reverend Nishikawa Yoshinori

When I respectfully recall the life of the former Spiritual Leader, the late Reverend Konko Heiki, I especially remember two things. First, he illuminated the Founder's faith to people of today in terms that were easily understood; that is, he clarified the relationship of Kami and people, and the workings of Toritsugi Mediation. Second, he dedicated himself to the work of our Spiritual Leader, and always served Toritsugi Mediation with his father's Mitama spirit.

The former Spiritual Leader, the late Konko-sama, respected and adored his dear father, the Fourth Konko-sama, and conducted the daily Toritsugi Mediation with his faithful prayers. In the commemorative year of both the 20th anniversary of the passing of his father, the late Reverend Konko Kagamitaro, and the late Konko-sama's twenty years of divine work as the Spiritual Leader, the late Konko-sama wrote the waka poem that his father had made on the square paperboard. It read, "I woke up with the gift of my life. The very new today has just begun with my dear father."

This waka poem was made by the Fourth Konko-sama, writing about his daily life serving Toritsugi Mediation with the Mitama spirit of his dear father, the late Reverend Konko Setsutane, whom he respected and adored as Kami of Toritsugi Mediation. Furthermore, the former Spiritual Leader, the late Konko-sama, was a sober person who also followed his father's faith wholeheartedly, serving the divine work of Toritsugi Mediation with his father's Mitama spirit.

In March of 2017, at the closing ceremony of the Konko Church Association Directors' meeting in the Headquarters, the late Konko-sama said: "The Founder said 'Konko is written with the kanji characters for 'golden light.' Any person is inclined to look toward light. Gradually, people will come toward the light'.(Oboe-cho 21-30-2)



I pray for you to receive the divine blessings in each place from now, as you gain from today's meeting."

Today, we have various difficulties in our world because of people's greed and selfishness, and irreverence to the heaven and earth. There are so many invisible problems in the background. The late Konko-sama prayed for and entrusted his hopes to us, that we brighten people's "dark in their hearts" with living

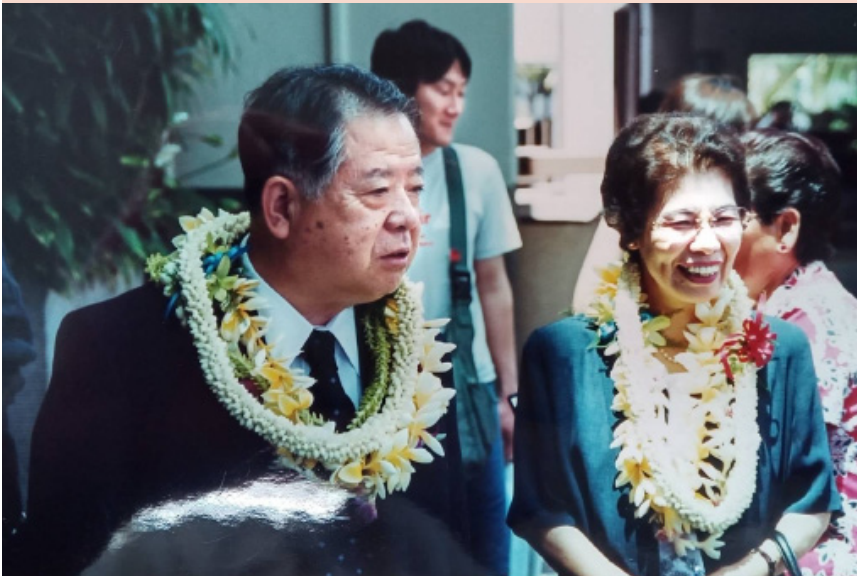
Kami's light. His prayer asked to address the hardships in the world with Ikigami Konko Daijin Toritsugi Mediation to save people who are mired in their difficulties, and to be aware that we are "the light" as we proceed with our divine work.

Although the world and society may change, we must deepen our firm faith with valuing the importance of our faith. The former Spiritual Leader, the late Konko -Sama said, "This – the Way of Kami and people – will help Kami and save people."

I humbly thank you, the former Spiritual Leader, the late Konko-sama, for your prayers and divine work of Toritsugi Mediation, when you were alive. And I reverently ask that the abundant and eternal Toritsugi Mediation by you guide us forever, after you become the Mitama spirit.



## The Message of the 5th Konko-sama at the KCNA/KMH Joint Conference in August 2000.



**M**y fellow members who have participated in the Konko Churches of North America and the Konko Missions in Hawaii Joint Conference for the year 2000, and who have attended the 100th anniversary of the Independence of Konkokyo, to all of you who have come all the way from North America, from Canada, and from the Hawaiian Islands, may I say how very happy I am to see all of you.

I had the privilege of presiding over the 100th anniversary celebration of Konkokyo Independence, which was held on June 10th and 11th at our Grand Service Hall in Japan. Over 25 thousand members took part in this memorable service.

It was with a deep and abiding impression of that anniversary celebration that my wife and I set foot in the beautiful city of Hilo, in Hawaii. We had a chance, while in Hilo, to visit the nearby Hawaiian Volcanoes National Park for a short time, and after seeing that huge, world-famous Kilauea Crater, we were awestruck at the powerful yet very eloquent mysteries of nature.

My wife and I had a beautiful view of the mountains and sea at the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel. And it was unforgettable how very warmly you welcomed us, and gave me a chance to enjoy a party with you.

I am grateful that we expressed our thanks

to Kami-sama and to the spirits of our predecessors during the 100th anniversary of our church's independence, as it was commemorated with solemn grace by the Rev. Makio Nagai, head minister of the Konko Mission of Hilo.

And in looking back over those hundred years, briefly, back to the history of the organizing of our Founder's religious beliefs, I recall that around the time when our Founder passed away, in 1883, his disciples made strenuous ef-

forts to obtain official recognition of his faith from the government of that time, in order to ensure that his faith could with honor be handed down to future generations.

And as a result of these efforts, Konkokyo was recognized as an independent religious organization by the Japanese government on June 16, 1900. This was 17 years after our Founder had passed away.

Ever since this time, our ministers have overcome many varied and difficult obstacles from both inside our organization, and outside as well.

They survived, for example, the very harrowing time of the Second World War, and with their faith intact.

After this war, and at last, the freedoms of speech and of religion were guaranteed in Japan. And so Konko Daijin-sama's liberal and very tolerant faith, which has always prayed for the salvation of all people in the world, could now be spread throughout the world without governmental interference.

In less than thirty years from the time of full independence for Konkokyo, our ministers went to North America, to Canada, and to Hawaii. There, in foreign lands, they planted the seed of a faith in Konkokyo. They believed in Kami-sama. And they suffered from racial discrimination and prejudice from the World War, as well as that afforded new

immigrants to foreign lands. Their missionary work was carried out in places where the natural environment and culture were quite different from those in Japan, and where much of their hard work was full of sweat and blood.

Especially after Pearl Harbor was attacked on Oahu by the Japanese Army, Konkokyo missionary work was prohibited. Ministers at that time who were living in North America, Canada, and Hawaii were relocated to concentration camps, or repatriated to Japan in exchange for Allied prisoners of



war. The fact that they managed somehow to sustain their faith in spite of the many and various bitter experiences of this grim time in world history did a lot to lay a foundation for our present religious movement.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to our American, Canadian, and Hawaiian predecessors. At the same time, I'd like to take this opportunity to express my great joy to all of you, to all who

are celebrating this memorable service, and to all who have been working so hard to spread our faith to non-members in the 21st Century.

In this new era which values the spirit of mutual prosperity and tolerance, I would like to walk with you on the pathway towards realizing our mutual prosperities, that of Kami-sama and people, that of people and people, that of people and nature, and all of us transcending our differences in nationality, race, language, and culture. Let us help each other always, and especially when

we have to face much suffering and sorrow in our daily lives. And let us pray for each other as fellow members of Konkokyo. And let us strive for a realization of world peace, and let us strive for a salvation of all mankind.

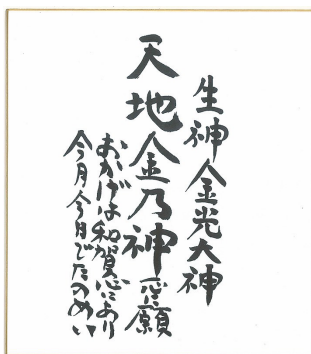
Finally, I pray for the steady growth and development of Konkokyo throughout America, Canada, and Hawaii, and for your happiness and prosperity.

Thank you. Aloha.

## The 5th Konko-sama's message to the students from Australia in June 1993.

Let me give you three Japanese words. Kami, that's God in English. Toritsugi, that's mediation. Ujiko, that's people or man. These are essential terms in Konkokyo. Kami does not attain fulfillment without man's working. And man owes his existence to kami. I'm here engaged in intermediary work or mediation between Kami and man.

Both Kami and man are in the relation of mutual dependence upon each other. Kami exists because of man and man because of Kami. As Heaven and Earth's reminder by



the founder reads: "Pray single-heartedly, the divine favor depends on your heart."

This relationship is called "Aiyo Kakeyo", that's mutual relationship.

The relationship between Kami and man is just like the relationship between parents and their children.

Man is given partial kamihood since his birth. We must become aware of Kami's existence within our hearts. That is a living Kami. When we die, we are divided into body and soul. And this soul is everlasting.



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