



# In Search of True World Peace

By the Reverend Shinkichi Kawai, Director of Konkokyo International Center

**A** Happy New Year! With the coming of the new year, I wholeheartedly pray 2018 will be fruitful for all.

The wish for true world peace to be realized was tasked to the Founder Konko Daijin by our Divine Parent of the Universe. In the autumn of 1868, a divine message was revealed from Kami stating, “Make a banner with the words ‘May there be peace throughout the world, prosperity in all countries, and safety for all people.’ and pray daily.” This was Kami’s wish for peace, prosperity, and safety for the world’s nations (communities) as well as its individuals. This wish has been handed down to each generation from the Founder’s time to the present. It is important for us to understand this prayer for peace originated from Kami.

As we dedicate ourselves to daily faith practice, we should also ask the following question, what are the ideas behind Kami’s wish and how does the mention of “peace” connect to the “Way of the Universe” in our faith? In doing so, we can begin to understand the meaning of true peace in the world.

Most people think of true peace in the world from a political viewpoint. However, from the Konko Faith perspective, spiritual peace in the world means one understands

their relationship with Kami and that everything is achieved through the function of Kami. It seems impossible to achieve true peace without realizing Kami’s wish and to pray for its realization.



The peace which Kami sought and tasked to the Founder to realize is very considerate. Kami sought a world of prosperous and safe nations, communities and individuals at peace with one another. A world wherein each level can fulfill their lives and coexist together.

To some, the true peace which Kami sought might seem unachievable, unimaginable and even unrealistic. Their views are limited by a reliance on only human knowledge and experience. However, like the John Lennon song, “Imagine,” there are those who can think beyond the limits of human knowledge and experience and pursue Kami’s wish and vision to achieve true peace. If we, of the Konko Faith, practice our faith daily, our prayers will resonate with Kami’s wish. Therefore, I will seek the mediation of our Ikigami Konko Daijin and deepen my prayer for true peace for the world and asked you to join me in this effort.

*From Kyoto*

**Which individual is more important, you or someone else? All are human beings. There is no one in this world who does not belong.**

[Gorikai III:Shinkun/Edited by Konkokyo Headquarters II How to Develop Faith 33, 34]

# The 3<sup>rd</sup> Konko International Gathering

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Konko International Gathering was held on November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at Goreichi, Konkokyo Headquarters. Altogether, 40 people from Japan, Mainland USA, Hawaii, Canada, Korea and Brazil attended.

On the first day, the Gathering got underway at the Main Worship Hall at 1:00 pm, with the recitation of Tenchi Kakitsuke, The Divine Reminder.

In Sacred Mediation, Konko-Sama gave this message, “I am grateful that we are having the 3<sup>rd</sup> Konko International Gathering at this very place where Kami revealed the Way to our Founder, on this very day. We are on the Way of Kami and People which our Founder opened up to the world. I wholeheartedly pray that everyone work together for world peace and the salvation of humanity, the wish since the Way was born.”

Following the main prayers, the tour of Konko Town began at *Rikkyo Seijo*, the restored Founder’s original Mediation Hall. In this sacred room, the group heard Reverend Kiyoji Konko, the assistant Director of Worship Hall Affairs Department speak on the spread of faith from these very grounds,



likening it to an inexhaustible fountain, from which two tributaries flowed, far and wide, transcending time and distance. One of the tributaries is the many Konko churches found in Japan and throughout the world, and the other is the many more families of believers. His talk reminded us of our blessing and also the responsibility to not only receive, but also to make sure that the fountain continues to flow.

The group then visited the Founder’s gravesite and the Konkokyo Seminary. At the Konkokyo Seminary, Reverend Horio Mitsutoshi, principal of Konkokyo Seminary gave a talk. It was tremendous hit, for it was delivered in English, with warmth and self-effacing humor.

At 4:00 pm attendees attended evening prayer and paid their respects at Konko-Sama’s *O-hiké*, the procession from the Main Worship Hall back to his home for the day.

Early that evening, a welcome party was held and participants in *Goreichi* were

## VOICE FROM PARTICIPANTS

By Reverend Stephanie Brick  
Konko Church of Toronto



It has been six years since I was in *Hombu*, Konkokyo Headquarters, studying to become a minister, and walking into town from the train station felt like coming home.

My goal for this year was to try new things, especially things that I might have been too scared to do in the past. So, I was very excited and honored to be able to attend the Gathering this year. I was especially honored to be able to take part in officiating for the Establishment Day Service. I knew that even though I help officiate services at home, doing one in *Hombu* was not going to be easy. I also had a difficult role, so that made me extra nervous. However, everyone was so very kind and helpful and everything went very well.

Of course, the most enjoyable part of the Gathering is being able to enjoy wonderful meals with other believers, seeing people I haven’t seen in many years and making new friends. One of the most beautiful things about this faith is how everyone comes together and fills their hearts with joy, making us all one big happy family. I was smiling and laughing so much my face hurt and I felt like I was really “smiling from within.”

I am so very grateful that I was able to attend the Gathering this year and that Kami-Sama allowed me to have such a wonderful trip. Thank you to all the volunteers who made it possible!

treated to a grand feast and lively conversation. There were also warm and moving speeches from the four overseas districts. Reverend Hiromichi Konko, the Director of Worship Hall Affairs Department rocked the hall, playing his guitar and singing. The Korean contingency led the group in singing “Ariran”.

In the chill of the next morning, at 3:40 am, attendees solemnly greeted Konko-Sama’s *Odemashi*, the procession to the Main Worship Hall, then walked uphill to continue

daily morning prayers at the Founder’s gravesite.

At the closing workshop, attendees sat in an intimate circle to share their own faith stories. After that the Konkokyo Establishment Day Service was held. It was a solemn service and attendees were filled with joy, to be able to receive the virtue of the service.

Later, the Gathering closed with a rousing cheer, an affirmation of the slogan, “Back to the day! Inspiring the future!”

## What is *Goshinmai* (sacred rice) and *Omiki* (sacred sake) ?

**G**oshinmai, which is put in a small white paper envelope folded in the shape of a sword point, is the washed rice given to a believer asking for Meditation. *Goshinmai* represents a blessing from the Heaven and Earth, and a wish that such a blessing is never forgotten.



From old times, it has been believed that rice has the power to revive a life and to activate a life force. Konko Daijin also offered rice at Kami’s altar and gave it to a worshiper because the sacred rice includes both a blessing from the Heaven and Earth, and represents Kami’s virtue.

A believer who received *Goshinmai* ate it, praying for recovery from an injury, an illness, or child-birth. Another believer kept the rice at Kami’s altar in his house to worship Kami, and still another believer carried it with his body, asking for Kami’s blessing.

Regardless whether there were offerings or not, Konko Daijin gave *Goshinmai* to anyone who wanted it. If money were required for the *Goshinmai*, a poor person or a weak one who needed help truly would have been excluded. Because of this thought, *Goshinmai* is given to everybody needed it.

In “Konko Daijin Oboegaki” (Memoirs of Konko Daijin) and “Oshirase-goto Oboe-cho” (Record of Revelations), on New Year’s day 1869, there was documentation regarding the purchase of white paper for *Goshinmai*. It is said that in 1860 to 1861, *Goshinmai* was been given in the same style as it is today. To make *Goshinmai*, “wash the rice seven times without touching it until the water becomes crystal clear. Dry the washed rice completely, then sprinkle it with sacred *sake* and dry it again”. [Gorikai II: Takahashi Tomie: 50]

It is also said that at the beginning, everybody called it “*Osenmai*” (the washed rice), and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Konko-Sama, Ieyoshi Konko, decided to name it “*Goshinmai*”. There is no rule how to eat it. It is a way of belief to take *Goshinmai* with

thanks as a blessing from the Kami of the Heaven and Earth.

**M**iki is a *sake* offered to the Kami. It is named beautifully and in general, it is called “*Omiki*”. In the sacred scriptures, it is preached to believer to receive the Kami’s workings and a blessing from the Kami by drinking *Omiki* and rubbing it on the body.



Because *sake* is produced from rice which is grown with a blessing of the Heaven and Earth, Konko Daijin taught that one should regard *sake* as *Omiki* (sacred *sake*).

For example, *sake* is made of rice grown in the soil of Konjin, in rain and a dewdrop of Nittenshi (the sun) and Gattenshi (the moon). Because fire of Nittenshi and water of Gattenshi are added to rice created in soil, it is preached that Kami’s workings are included in the rice.

The believer acknowledges that the sacred workings and human mind’s workings mutually give the Kami’s blessing in a time of illness, a natural disaster or child birth. Thus, it is taught that he can drink the *Omiki* with gratitude or rub it on the body.

When someone catch a cold, or when he/she is in poor health, or when he/she experiences a pain, that person can drink a little of the *Omiki* or he/she can apply a bit to the body. That believer will surely receive a divine blessing if he/she prays wholeheartedly so that the pain or injury can be taken away from the body.

What the believer should keep in mind is expressed in teachings containing a play on words with Miki as follows;

“Those who practice faith should always pray with ‘*Miki*’ in their hearts. “*Miki*” means the three “*ki*”, which are “*arigata-ki*”(gratefulness), “*osoreo-ki*” (awe), and “*mottai-na-ki*” (reverence). [Gorikai III: Jinkyu Kyogoroku: 135.2]

# Educational Institutions Associated with the Konko Faith

It is not widely known outside of Japan that there is a university associated with the Konko Faith. Actually, the Konko Faith operates several educational institutions: Konko Gakuen (Junior and Senior High School and kindergarten) in the heart of the sacred grounds in Konko Town, Okayama Prefecture, and Kansai Konko Gakuen in the Kansai area, each institution's educational activities steeped in history and tradition.

In the history of modern Japanese education, Konkokyō is one of the faith traditions which attaches importance to education. Even before the Konko Faith was officially recognized as the independent organization "Konkokyō" in 1900, the Founder's three disciples, Reverend Norio Sato (1856 - 1942), Reverend Shin'ichiro Shirakami II (1847-1910) and Reverend Fujimori Kondo (1855-1917) spearheaded the plan to establish the Konkokyō Seminary (Gakuin), to educate Konkokyō ministers. Also, Reverend Sato was instrumental in establishing a private school for young people within the general population. Thus, Konko

Junior High School (Konko Gakuen) was founded as a general educational institute in 1898. Later, the girls' senior high school was founded in Osaka, which is the origin of the Kansai Konko Gakuen Group.

## Kansai Konko Gakuen Group (as of April 1, 2017)

The Kansai Konko Gakuen (Kansai Konko Educational Foundation) now operates two Junior High schools, three Senior High Schools in Osaka, as well as Kansai University of Social Welfare (KUSW) in Ako City, Hyogo Prefecture.



Konko Osaka Junior and Senior High School



Konko Yao Junior and Senior High School



Konko Toin Senior High School



Kansai University of Social Welfare

The students of KUSW will then contribute to the creation of social welfare, education and nursing programs within society, by learning theory and practical application. With the premise that the local communities are the starting point for developing easily accessible welfare programs within society, KUSW has developed a unique curriculum which emphasizes hands on practice and theory out in the field/community.

In order to achieve its educational goal, KUSW curriculum is designed to offer a variety of unique courses, particularly field education seminars to give the students more practical experiences. Because KUSW considers intellectual learning, by itself, as insufficient, students are required to do outreach and communicate with people and various social institutions by observing and assessing the actual situations and human interactions, in order to deepen their own thought processes. Through these actual experiences in the community, the students get to familiarize themselves with the conditions and issues that people encounter in their daily lives.

Furthermore, KUSW emphasizes the Konko Faith to foster the altruistic spirit to help others and to take care of

people and themselves. For this purpose, Konko Faith-related lectures are provided. For example, in the lecture series "Education for Thanatology" and "Spiritual Support," the clergy, including Konkokyō ministers, teach about "Life and Death," "Human Rights," "Sexuality," "Poverty," and "Abuse" in order for the students to deepen their understanding of these issues and further develop their empathy for the vulnerable and/or troubled people in our society.

In all colleges, the University aims to produce graduates with a Bachelor of Arts degree armed not only with the latest theories but also with hands on experience through field instructions at various institutions contributing to the enhancement of the social welfare system. The University also offers graduate courses in all colleges. Please contact the University for further information.

Kansai University of Social Welfare

678-0255 Shinden 380-3, Ako-City Hyogo, Japan

Tel: 0791-46-2532 Fax: 0791-46-2501;

Home page: <https://www.kusw.ac.jp/>



FACE TO FAITH NO. 91 VOL. 25-1 issued by

**Konkokyō International Center**

E-mail: [kic@konkokyo.or.jp](mailto:kic@konkokyo.or.jp) Tel: +81-(0)3-3818-3701 Fax: +81-(0)3-3818-3793 Twitter: @konkokyo\_kic

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/KIC1993>

2-17-11 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku,

Tokyo 113-0033 JAPAN

URL: <http://www.konkokyo.or.jp/eng/kic/>