

Tenrikyo

newsletter



As we have mentioned in our monthly announcements, you can view the “Stories Inspired by Oyasama” on our homepage. Also, we have been uploading videos from last year’s “SoulFire,” and we have set up a page for information pertaining to this year’s 90th Anniversary Celebration! You can find more information on the “News & Announcements” page, under the PR Committee.

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

February 2024

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

— *The Rising of the Sun* —

Japan had a very difficult start to the year, with a major earthquake on the Noto Peninsula on January 1, followed by a plane crash at Tokyo Haneda International Airport the next day. Looking elsewhere in the world, there are various countries that have suffered major disasters in the past year, and the war in Eastern Europe is still ongoing, and conflicts are continuing in many countries. I can only hope that the world will settle and we will be able to see the joyous life world soon.

The Tenrikyo Disaster Relief Hinokishin Corps was deployed to the Noto Peninsula after the earthquake. To support the relief efforts, we started fundraising from our spring grand service last month, and will continue until our March monthly service. All donations will be given to the “Tenrikyo Disaster Relief Hinokishin Corps Fund” in April.

On the 26th of last month, the Spring Grand Service was held at Church Headquarters in memory of Oyasama who, on January 26, 1887, shortened Her natural term of life by 25 years and withdrew from physical life in order to urge humankind’s

spiritual maturity. From that day onward, Oyasama stepped out to the world as the ever-living Oyasama. Let us always recall this, and continue to strive to share the fragrance of the teachings and salvation work.

Our 90th Anniversary is only about four months away. We hope that the minds of all those in our congregation unite as one to celebrate this anniversary and make it meaningful so it will lead to our bright future.

Recently, from time to time, we have had power outages at Mission Headquarters. Some may find it hard to believe that power outages would occur in modern Los Angeles, but we had several last year (2023).

When the power goes out, we first check the traffic lights at the intersection in front

(continued on page 18)

Coming Up

* **March Monthly Service Sermon (3/17)**

- Rev. Masahito Kimura (E)

* **Three Day Course (2/23~25)**

- Application deadline: Feb. 18

EDITOR: Robert Yuge **STAFF:** Ikuko Yuge, Ryo Wong, Raymond Morishita

PRINTING STAFF: Hironobu Kaneko, Akino Yokoyama, Sawa Hayashi, Chisei Nakabayashi, Masao Tanaka

COVER DESIGN: Jun Nakagawa

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2727 EAST FIRST STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90033

Phone: (323) 261-3379 / Fax: (323) 261-8659

E-mail: ameden@tenrikyo.com / Website: www.tenrikyo.com

Spring Grand Service Prayer

January 21, 2024

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, who is enshrined in this altar, I, Hiroshi Alexander Fukaya, Bishop of the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, due to Your intention to see human beings lead the Joyous Life and to share in that joy, You created this world and human beings where there was no form. At the arrival of the promised time, You received Oyasama as Your shrine and revealed Yourself to the world and taught us the ultimate Teaching.

Since that time, this Teaching has spread to the world and in this land of America and Canada, we are blessed with those who rely upon Oyasama's Divine Model and walk on the path of singleheartedly helping others be saved.

This is the meaningful month in which Oyasama shortened Her natural term of physical life by 25 years, in order to level the ground of the world. From now, receiving the truth of Jiba, we service performers will unite our minds and joyously perform the seated service and service dance for our Spring Grand Service.

Looking forward to this day, yoboku and followers have gathered here to give thanks for Your daily blessings. Asking for Your continued blessings, we shall sing the service songs spiritedly, and in witnessing this, please become spirited as well.

This month, church head ministers, Yoboku, and followers of our diocese will be returning to Jiba for the Spring Grand Service at Church Headquarters. Please nurture them to be able to receive the truth of Jiba with spirited minds and to return to their respective locales to further engage themselves in their missionary and salvation work.

Next month, on the 17th, we plan to hold the Salvation Work Promotion Meeting for Head Ministers and Spouses for the leaders of our diocese. May this serve as a springboard in the second year of our "three years, one thousand days" activities toward Oyasama's anniversary.

We ask for a successful 90th Anniversary, which will be upon us in less than half a year, as well as a meaningful second year of our "three years, one thousand days" activities leading towards Oyasama's 140th anniversary. To receive this blessing, we of this diocese, with a unity of mind, pledge to endeavor towards spiritual growth, to spread the teachings to the world, to devote ourselves to do salvation and missionary work, and to progress toward achieving the Joyous Life world.

Dear God the Parent, please accept our sincerity, so that this world be transformed, even one day sooner, into a world where all people's minds are purified and free from greed. In unison with the congregation, I humbly pray, that You bless us so.

Spring Grand Service Sermon

by Bishop Fukaya

~Saving Others~

I am grateful to have just successfully concluded our Spring Grand Service together with all of you. For those whom I am seeing for the first time this year, Happy New Year!

I sincerely thank you for your diligent work for the path and our Mission Headquarters in the past year, and for this year, I ask for your continued and even greater support.

As we have just performed our spring grand service, I would like to share some of my thoughts in today's sermon. I ask for your kind attention.

As you know, this month on the 26th, the Kagura Service and the Teodori service dance will be performed at Church Headquarters for its Spring Grand Service. Just now, we have completed our own spring grand service, which receives the truth of this Kagura Service and Teodori performed at Jiba.

The significance of conducting the Spring Grand Services lies in remembering that Oyasama withdrew from physical life on January 26th, 1887 – shortening Her natural term of life by 25 years – to encourage the spiritual



Bishop Fukaya delivering his spring grand service sermon.

growth of all humankind, Her children.

Therefore, our spring grand service here is also performed with similar significance. But this begs the question: Why did Oyasama have to withdraw from physical life?

You will be able to understand this matter by reading the Life of Oyasama. To summarize, from around 1874 until the time that She hid Her physical presence, whenever the disciples performed the Kagura Service or Teodori – which She had been urging – Oyasama was either detained or imprisoned by the police, or the risk for that was very high.

Thus, our predecessors hesitated to do the Service. Because of this,

Oyasama withdrew from physical life, so that our pioneers could perform the Service without having to worry about Her physical well-being.

However, Oyasama did not merely withdraw from physical life. Immediately after Her withdrawal, the following Divine Direction was given by Her:

Sah, sah, I shall level the ground. Has everyone assembled, has everyone assembled? Listen and understand well. All that I have said until now was put into a container of truth. But now God has opened the portals and stepped out. Because of My love for you, My children, the Parent shortened Her life by twenty-five years to step out and save the world from now. Observe well. Observe well what the path has been and what the path will become. When I asked whether I should open the portals or keep them closed to level the ground, you answered, "Please open the portals and level the ground." I have done as you wished. Sah, there was a thing I had intended to give to My children but I was not able. I shall bestow this truth on you step by step hereafter. Remember this well.

Osashizu, January 26, 1887 (Lunar

calendar)

Life of Oyasama, P. 240

As stated here, Oyasama let us know that despite withdrawing from physical life, She would continue working for the salvation of the world, just as before. Further, Oyasama stated that She would now bestow the truth of the Sazuke, which She was not able to do freely while She was physically present. Indeed, afterward, a great number of people received the truth of the Sazuke, and this continues to this day.

Although we can no longer see Her, Oyasama is still actively working for the salvation of the world.

Two year ago, in the Instruction Four, the Shinbashira stated:

...On the lunar-calendar date of January 26, 1887, Oyasama withdrew from physical life by shortening Her term of life in order to hasten the spiritual growth of all humankind, Her children. Yet, She remains everliving at the Residence of Origin, providing Her workings and guidance at the forefront of world salvation.

The significance of observing an anniversary of Oyasama, therefore, is to respond to Her parental love by making decisive progress in spiritual

growth, with each and every Yoboku raising his or her awareness of being Oyasama's instrument.

Instruction Four, p. 2

Further,

The period of “three years, one thousand days” that leads up to an anniversary of Oyasama is a time for us to actively move forward on the path of single-hearted salvation by implementing the teachings with our sights set on the Divine Model.

Instruction Four, p. 3

As mentioned here, in order to respond to Oyasama's parental love that continues to work for world salvation, we have set a “three years, one thousand days” period to decisively engage in our activities toward Her 140th Anniversary. Now is the season to actively promote our efforts to show Oyasama the tangible fruits of our activities at the time of Her Anniversary Service.

Oyasama's intention is entirely dedicated to the salvation of the world. Her only desire is to transform this world into one of the Joyous Life. For those of us who practice the Tenrikyo faith, we must firmly settle this in our minds, and as Yoboku, who are Oyasama's instruments, we need to advance toward

world salvation.

To achieve this, we perform the service and administer the Sazuke. In other words, we help others to be saved.

As you know, our 90th Anniversary will be held on June 30th of this year. We only have about five months remaining until then, and I'm sure that you are also aware of our anniversary slogan and our goals for spiritual maturity.

Our slogan is, “Share Our Joy of Faith with Our Family, Friends, and Communities!” and we have set three goals for spiritual maturity. Today, I would like to talk about the concept of “saving others,” which is one of our goals:

“Let's work for the salvation of others!”

In Tenrikyo, “saving others” means to “save people's minds,” which ultimately leads to negative causality being transformed into a positive one, thereby leading to the Joyous Life. In Instruction Four, it states:

If we find people who are suffering from illnesses or other problems, let us reach out to them with love and care and pray for a solution through performing the service. We can administer the Sazuke to those who are ill and let them know that there

is a path by which they can truly be saved.

Instruction Four, p. 6

First of all, let us take a good look at those around us – our family, colleagues, or others we encounter regularly. If they have not yet embraced our Tenrikyo faith, please try to talk with them. Even if you don't talk about the teachings directly, try to incorporate your daily life of faith into the conversation and make an effort to impart the fragrance of our teachings upon them.

Furthermore, if someone is facing illnesses or problems in life, the first step is to listen to their “innermost heart.”

While many of us may want to convey the teachings of Tenrikyo to them, so that they can somehow be saved, it is important to restrain from this impulse. Instead, I want to ask you to start by listening to their story, which will remove what can be called the “mud” accumulated in the “water” of their minds.

For example, let's imagine that there is a cup filled to the brim with muddy water. Consider this “cup” as their “innermost heart,” and the muddy water as the “root cause” of their illnesses or problems.

Now let's imagine that you want to remove this “muddy water” from their

“minds” by pouring into the “cup” clear water, which represents the “teachings.” In other words, because you want them to be saved, you convey the teachings to them.

However, let's think about this. No matter how much clear water is poured into a cup filled with muddy water, the mud may get diluted, but it will never become clear water. If your goal is to have the cup filled only with clear water, you would need to remove the muddy water first and then pour in the clear water.

One method to remove “muddy water” from the “cup” of people's minds, is to listen to the innermost heart of those facing illnesses and difficulties in their lives.

In other words, we first need to listen to them, in order to be able to help them free their minds of complaints and dissatisfaction, which is the “muddy water” within the “vessel” of their minds. I believe that this is what meant in Instruction Four, when the Shinbashira said:

“Reach out to them with love and care.”

During this process, there may be occasions when you perform a special prayer service for them, or administer the Sazuke to those who are ill. However,

when doing so, it is crucial for us to pray for the salvation of their minds, which is the root cause of their illnesses and problems in life, and ultimately, let us aim for the elimination of their negative causality.

To achieve this, I believe it is crucial to first listen to their innermost heart, which will remove the “muddy water” from their minds – and only after that, should we convey the teachings so that they will settle them in their minds. Help them understand that if they embrace the Tenrikyo faith, their minds can be saved, and that their negative causality can be transformed into a good one.

Through this understanding, please guide them toward the path of their salvations. It is essential to guide them so that eventually, they will become people who can work together with us for the salvation of the world.

An example of this concept was featured in a “special article” in the last November issue of “Michi no Tomo.”

It is a story about two non-Tenrikyo men who had rescued a woman drowning in a lake. The woman’s family was very grateful and the two men were very happy about their good deed. However, later on, they learned that this woman had said, “No one understands how I feel” and would end up taking her own life.

They lamented that while they had saved her life, they were unable to save her mind. Distressed, they sought guidance from a Tenrikyo head minister. They told him that they did not know how to save a person’s mind.

This story can provide us with various rich insights.

We often find ourselves focusing solely on the salvation of people’s illnesses or problems in life. Helping people be saved from illnesses and problems is, of course, important. But the true essence of salvation in Tenrikyo goes beyond this. The salvation of people’s mind is primary. True salvation lies in the elimination of one’s negative causality and transforming it into a positive one.

At last year’s Autumn Grand Service, the Shinbashira said:

...the first thing we must remember is that Oyasama never stopped trying to nurture people no matter what happened over the course of fifty years. This, I believe, must also be borne in mind as part of the Divine Model.

Michi-no-tomo, January 2024, p. 6-7

The Shinbashira is saying here that Oyasama dedicated Herself to guiding and nurturing our predecessors for a

period of 50 years. This also is a part of Her Divine Model.

While it may be easy to say the words “save others,” the content of these words require many years to achieve. I believe it’s like raising children – it takes decades to guide and nurture them until they mature into adults.

When viewed in this way, ever since the establishment of this faith, Oyasama had worked diligently for 50 years continuing to nurture our predecessors, including Her family and relatives.

Moreover, Oyasama is ever-living and is actively working for the salvation of the world. Therefore, it can be said that She is nurturing us as well.

Viewed in this light, we can see that Oyasama’s parental love for us is not something that we should take for granted.

While it may be difficult for us to match Oyasama’s dedication in nurturing people, let’s follow Her example and steadily work to guide people who are beset by illnesses or problems to become saved in mind.

In his message at last year’s Young Men’s Association Convention, the Shinbashira said:

If there are people who cannot believe in the existence of God the Parent, Oyasama opens their minds

through instances of wondrous salvation and conveys the original intention of God the Parent—who created human beings—patiently guiding them until their minds are replaced with a mind of saving others so that they can implement the Joyous Life.

Likewise, it is vital for us to be mindful of spreading the fragrance of the teachings on a daily basis, earnestly administer the Sazuke to those who are ill, perform the service in prayer for the salvation of those beset by other problems, and continue sincerely guiding them until they can settle the teachings in their minds. Such is the salvation work of the path. In this way, more and more people will be able to live the Joyous Life by implementing the teachings in the spirit of single-heartedness with God. This is what it means to work for single-hearted salvation.

Michi-no-tomo, January 2024, p. 6

I believe that salvation in Tenrikyo is to help guide people to be able to transform their minds to practice the Joyous Life and eventually want to help save others. This is what we are aiming for when we try to “save others.”

I would be delighted if you could

remember this point when implementing our 90th Anniversary Goal for Spiritual Maturity of:

“Let’s work for the salvation of others!”

Now, let me change the topic a bit.

Last year, in preparation for Oyasama’s 140th Anniversary, followers in each region collaborated for their “Action Day for All Yoboku” events and engaged in their joint activities. The second round of this “Action Day” is scheduled to take place in early June of this year. I encourage everyone to reach out to your local district leaders to confirm the date, time and venue for your activities. I hope that as many people as possible will participate. I thank you in advance for your best efforts.

Lastly, as I mentioned earlier, on June 30th of this year, we will be conducting our 90th anniversary commemorative service. Additionally, the day before, on 29th, we will hold a joint-convention commemorating the 70th anniversary of both the Women’s Association and the Young Men’s Association of America and Canada.

We will be honored with the presence of Mrs. Harue Nakayama, the president of the Women’s Association, and Mr. Daisuke Nakayama, the president of the Young Men’s Association.

With our slogan and goals for spiritual maturity settled in our minds and implemented, let us demonstrate our spiritual growth on the day of our anniversary. Over the next five months, I trust that followers within our diocese will unite their minds and take steps towards spiritual growth.

On the day of the event, I hope that as many people as possible will gather, and that we can celebrate our anniversary with joy in our hearts.

Also, for the joint convention for the Women’s Association and the Young Men’s Association in America and Canada, I hope that as many members as possible from both associations will participate. To that end, I kindly ask each association member to invite all your members to attend.

With these requests in mind, I would like to conclude my talk for today.

I thank you for your kind attention.

News and Announcements

1) FEBRUARY MONTHLY SERVICE (2/18)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Satoru Onishi, Takahiko Hayashi Attendants: Motohiro Iwahashi, Jonathan Nomachi

Director: Tomoyoshi Tanaka Offerings Officiant: Yoichi Fukui Sermon: Toshihiko Okui (J)

2) CHURCH AFFAIRS

* Divine Sanctions:

Utah Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction: March 26, 2024 Head Minister: Masayo Obayashi Enshrinement Service: April 21, 2024

Canada Church: Request for Special Service, Request for Temporary Change of Service Date

Divine Sanction: April 18, 2024 90th Anniversary Commemorative Service: December 1, 2024

Chicago Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction: April 18, 2024 Head Minister: Yohsuke Kimura Enshrinement Service: July 28, 2024

Titan Church: Request for Relocation & Special Service

Divine Sanction: April 26, 2024 Head Minister: Lynn Mitsuno So Enshrinement Ceremony: July 27, 2024

Enshrinement Service: July 28, 2024

Ontario Fellowship: Address Change

3) ALL YOBOKU ACTIVITY DAY

We ask all District Representatives to submit their All Yoboku Activity Day plan for the second event to the Mission Headquarters Secretaries by the end of February, 2024.

4) SALVATION WORK PROMOTION MEETING FOR HEAD MINISTERS AND SPOUSES

As we enter the second year of the pre-anniversary activities leading up to the 140th anniversary of Oyasama, the “Salvation Work Promotion Meeting for Head Ministers and Spouses” will be held at the Mission Headquarters on February 17, 2024 (Sat) from 2 PM, to promote further efforts towards single-hearted salvation. We encourage all head ministers and their spouses, as well as all those that the bishop has deemed eligible, to make their best effort to attend this gathering.

5) THREE DAY COURSE

The Three Day Course will be held at the Mission Headquarters from February 23 (Fri)~ 25 (Sun).

Applications are due by February 18 (Sun). The English course will be held if there are at least four applicants, and the Spanish course will require at least two applicants.

6) SPRING MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Spring Memorial Service at the Mission Headquarters will be held on March 16 (Sat), from 7PM.

7) 85TH AMERICA SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SHUYOKAI)

The 85th Spiritual Development Course at the Mission Headquarters is currently scheduled to be held from July 21 (Sun) to August 17 (Sat). These courses will be held if there are at least two applicants for the English or Japanese course, or five applicants for the Spanish course, as of one month prior (June 16).

8) NOTO PENINSULA DISASTER RELIEF

The Mission Headquarters has set up a box in the office to collect donations for the earthquake disaster that affected the Noto Peninsula, until March 17 (Sun). Please write checks to “Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America” and write “Noto Earthquake” on the memo line. Please do not send cash by mail. If you require a receipt for tax purposes, please write your name, address, donation amount, and “Noto Earthquake” on a slip, and include this with your check or cash donation. Thank-you letters will be sent out from the Mission Headquarters at a later date.

All donations collected will be sent to the Church HQ Disaster Relief Corps, which will then be used towards the Noto Peninsula earthquake disaster relief.

9) SERVICE ROSTER

Currently, we are confirming the attendance of service performers for the Mission Headquarters monthly services every six months, and waiting for final confirmation of their attendance until about the second Sunday of that month. As a result, the service roster is distributed after the second Sunday, and we find ourselves in a situation where we are receiving numerous calls to confirm the service roster roles. From this year (2024), we would like to distribute the service roster by the beginning of each month, therefore we request service performers to communicate their final availability to the Mission Headquarters by the end of the month prior to their attendance. For example, please communicate your final availability for the March monthly service by the end of this month (February 31, 2024).

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Construction Committee

- *Door installation on the second floor of the Tenri Kaikan.
- *Remove the asphalt around the office and lay concrete.
- *CMU wall removal, with finishing done by TYMANA.
- *Weed removal at the Biotope Garden and at the parking lots.

Nurturing & Educational Committee

- *New TSA Cabinet Introductions

-President: Genevieve Yuge
 -Vice President: Annie Geosano
 -Vice President: Akira Okazaki
 -Secretary: Lauren Yukimoto
 -Treasurer: Yosuke Kayama

*Application forms have been sent out to students who are eligible to attend this year’s Oyasato Seminar in Jiba. The application deadline was February 15.

*The TSA Spring Conference is scheduled to be held in May on Memorial Day weekend, at the Mission Headquarters.

Public Relations Committee

*We have incorporated an ongoing section in the Ichiretsu/Newsletter to highlight everyone’s efforts and activities leading up to the 90th anniversary of the Mission Headquarters so that we can share our events & ideas with all of our congregation members. Therefore, we would like to request churches,

fellowships, districts, and individuals to submit your activity reports & pictures to us (Kawakami: kamishuyo@hotmail.com or Hayashi: takhayashi@gmail.com).

*Mission HQ Homepage

-The monthly service sermons that are on the Mission Headquarters homepage are now viewable in both English and Japanese, beginning with the August 2023 monthly service sermon video.

-There are currently five videos titled "Stories Inspired by Oyasama" on the Mission Headquarters homepage.

-Video records of the SoulFire are now available for viewing. There are currently six videos available.

Women's Association

*106th Tenrikyo Women's Association Convention April 19, 2024 (Fri), from 9:30 AM at the Church HQ Inner Courtyard

*The TWA America 70th Anniversary Commemorative photo album, and the joint-convention, are under preparation.

*Meetings with Committee Heads by the Chairwoman are currently being held.

Boys & Girls Association

*The BGA America Service Convention will be held at the Mission Headquarters on August 17 (Sat). Please provide the information regarding service roles and garment. Details will be included on a separate sheet in this month's distributions.

*Children' Pilgrimage to Jiba General Group: July 24~30. From this year, the America-Canada and Hawaii groups will be combined and participate in the general group together. We will be distributing applications in March-April. Please contact Rev. Iwahashi for more details(moto1884@gmail.com).

*The International Boys & Girls Hinokishin Corps will be held from July 25~30, and application forms will be distributed in March-April. We are also looking for counselors, so please reach out to prospective candidates.

*We are recruiting new koteki members! Would you like to join your Tenrikyo friends to do koteki (fife & drum corps) activities in a unity of mind? We are conducting activities that teach mutual help and the joy of exerting one's sincerity for the salvation of others. Please contact a BGA committee member for more details .

*Let's share stories about Oyasama with BGA members! Visit your churches as a family and engage in hinokishin together.

TYMANA

*July 18~24: International Hinokishin Corps

NY Center

*February 25: Service Garment Dressing Workshop (sponsored by YWG)

*We have begun the three year, one thousand day period leading up to the 50th anniversary of the New York Center, in 2027.

*Share Our Joy of Faith! My 90th Anniversary
And on Towards Oyasama's 140th Anniversary*
Foster the positive spirit of hinokishin

As we near the 90th anniversary celebration, Mr. Junichi Hamada, head of the High Shasta Fellowship, is touching up and refinishing the benches in the worship hall! Thank you for your hinokishin!



~SoulFire Recap~



Please find SoulFire Videos Here!



90th Anniversary

SHARING OUR JOY OF FAITH
Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters
in America

Saturday
**JUNE
29**

1:30 - 3:30 PM

70th Anniversary Joint
Convention
Young Men's and Women's
Associations
Attended by Mrs. Harue
Nakayama and Mr. Daisuke
Nakayama

3:30 - 9:00 PM

Commemorative program
and Dinner Reception

Sunday
**JUNE
30**

10:00 AM

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters
in America
90th Anniversary
Commemorative Service

1:30 - 3:00 PM

Reception and
Entertainment



For Further Information, visit our website at tenrikyo.com
Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters · 2727 East 1st St · Los Angeles, CA · 90033

Church History

San Mateo Church

San Mateo Church was established as a new church in January 1998, and with the blessings of God the Parent and Oyasama, the Third Shinbashira granted the sanction. At that time, we had also established three mission stations. Before obtaining the church sanction, the Third Shinbashira directly instructed me and the Fourth Head Minister of Sumoto Grand Church on the essential aspects of faith that a head minister should follow for 30 minutes at Church Headquarters. The establishment of the new church took place ten years after coming to

America, and every day was filled with gratitude and amazement for the blessings we received. Without ever forgetting the words spoken by the Third Shinbashira, we sincerely express our deep gratitude for the guidance we have continued to receive until today.

The sanctuary area was constructed in 1992 before the establishment of the church. It was completed as a small-boxed shrine where God the Parent, Oyasama, and the Memorial were enshrined. Thanks to the continued blessings of opportunities for salvation work, we began the second construction of the sanctuary in 2003, which included an upper dais larger than the previous one.

In June 2004, after the completion





of the sanctuary, we were honored to welcome the presence of the Shinbashira and his wife at our church. Accompanying them were former Bishops of Mission Headquarters, Rev. Itakura and Rev. Matsuda, as well as the then-Bishop, Rev. Tsuji. We remember with joy the stay they had at San Mateo Church while enjoying a relaxing dinner that lasted five hours and were truly delighted by their looks of satisfaction.

As the Head Minister, starting from January of the following year, I made a resolution to return to the Jiba every month. Thankfully, in receiving the warm parental love and blessings of good health from Oyasama, I have now entered the 17th year of my resolution as of 2020.

In December 2016, amidst God the Parent and Oyasama's miraculous

blessings, we were able to purchase the land at our current location, which is eight times larger than the previous site. In March 2017, under the supervision of the Sumoto Grand Church Head Minister, we temporarily enshrined God the Parent, Oyasama, and the Memorial in the room of the existing building of the new location. In May 2018, we obtained the city's approval to begin the construction of the sanctuary, which progressed smoothly. In March 2019, the Head Minister of Sumoto Grand Church himself officiated and enshrined God the Parent, Oyasama, and the Memorial in the newly completed sanctuary. Within feelings of gratitude and continued joy, we are currently moving forward in our daily salvation work activities.

(translated by P. Yagi)

of Mission Headquarters. If the traffic lights are not working, we know that the power outage is widespread, but if the traffic lights are working as usual, we know that the power is out only in our facility.

The power outages had various causes, but once it was due to an old electric wire nearby that sparked and severed, and it took several hours to be repaired. Since the outage occurred just before the evening service, we used our smartphones as flashlights to illuminate the upper dais (level) of the sanctuary during the evening service, and the outage continued for several hours afterward.

Once, it was one of those hot summer days where you don't feel like doing anything unless you turn on the air conditioner. It was when many people were using air conditioners due to the media urging people to turn them on, and suddenly, the power went out in the afternoon. As usual, we went out to First Street in front of Mission Headquarters to check the traffic lights, and they were not working.

However, when I looked at the intersection of Soto Street, about three blocks west, the traffic lights there were working, so it appeared that the power was only out within a few blocks of our facility. There was no power outage at a church in the same area only about a three-minute drive away. I imagine that it was probably caused by the supermarket across the street that used a lot of power at once. It was very hot, so many people went to the supermarket to cool off, so I imagined that this might have been the

cause. Supermarkets are supposed to have their own power generation facilities for sudden power outages, but the electricity inside the supermarket was also out.

The power was restored before evening service, but the next day, the power went out again during the day. The power was restored in about 3 hours, but the supermarket across the street that day seemed to be using their own generator to continue to operate. I imagine that the reason why the power was restored so quickly that day was because the supermarket used its own generator.

The problem with a power outage is that the refrigerator will not be able to keep food cool. There will be a possibility that the food inside will thaw or spoil. So, if a power outage occurs, we try not to open the refrigerator to keep the inside cool, but fortunately, food has not gone bad so far, which is a big help.

In addition, showers are electric, as the water is heated and stored in a tank, and is kept at a certain temperature automatically. So when the power goes out, the water gets cold. Therefore, when the power goes out in the evening, you must take a shower as soon as possible after the power goes out. Also, since hair dryers cannot be used, you will not be able to dry your hair, and if you are not careful, you may catch a cold.

If the power goes out for a few hours during the day, the only major problem is that we cannot connect to the internet, so if we do other errands, it would not be too big of an inconvenience. However, if it lasts longer, it does become troublesome.

Power outages are a real problem after it is dark outside. You can use candles, but there are some safety risks. You can use your smartphone or other devices as lighting indoors, but once your smartphone runs out of battery, there is nothing more you can do. There is nothing romantic about spending time by the moonlight in such situations.

When I think about power outages, I feel thankful for electricity. In today's society, we use electricity so much that it is difficult to do anything without it.

Electricity is produced by power plants, which require the blessings of fire, water, and wind. Electricity may be said to be the combination of God the Parent's greatest blessings.

But what I am trying to say here is that I am not only grateful for electricity. I am talking about the blessing of the rising sun.

In the past, people spent every night in total darkness. I believe that they anxiously waited for the sun to rise. They must have waited impatiently for the sun to rise to a degree that we cannot imagine today. Also, when electricity was not yet widespread, people spent their nights using lamps and candles, and I imagine that the moonlight was something people used and appreciated greatly.

We are taught that God the Parent's blessings are the "moon" and the "sun," and that we are taught to be grateful for their existence, but it occurred to me that we today do not feel the same gratitude for the "moon" and the "sun" that our predecessors felt. I wonder how much we really understand the

feeling of spending night after night in total darkness, at times more than 12 hours in the dark.

Of course, an explorer may live without electricity for days at a time. That is an exception, but the average person only experiences a few days of darkness when they go camping, and I imagine that experiencing life without electricity for a whole year would change the way someone feels about their gratitude for the rising of the sun.

There is a story of Oyasama spinning thread under the moonlight when She was in the depths of poverty, but I think that we today do not feel the same gratitude for "moonlight" as much as Oyasama, Shuji, and Kokan felt at that time.

In this regard, I feel there are things in Oyasama's Divine Model that we people today cannot feel or find difficult to feel. I imagine that the "gratitude felt by our predecessors when the sun rises and the morning comes" during their lifetime must have been quite different from what we feel today.

When I think about this, although it may be difficult to do so nowadays, I sometimes think that it is necessary to try to understand the times in which Oyasama was physically present, the times and environments in which our predecessors lived, when we read the Ofudesaki or sing the Mikagura-uta while performing the Otefuri service dance. If we can do this, we will have a deeper understanding of the teachings, and the true intention of God will truly settle in our minds.

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TOWARD THE JOYOUS LIFE

TENRIKYO came into existence on October 26, 1838, when God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, became revealed through Oyasama, Miki Nakayama, to save all humankind. God the Parent is God of Origin and God of Truth who created this world and has nurtured and protected us ever since.



God the Parent created human beings so that by seeing us lead the Joyous Life, God could share in our joy. Leading the Joyous Life is, therefore, the purpose of our existence. Since God is our Parent, we are all God's children; thus, we should realize that we are all brothers and sisters.

“With human beings : the body is a thing lent by God, a thing borrowed. The mind alone is yours.”
Osashizu : June 1, 1889

We are taught that we borrow our bodies from God the Parent and only our minds truly belong to us; further, through the proper use of our minds, we will be able to lead the Joyous Life.