

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Happy New Year!

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

January 2024

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya



— Advertisements —

Happy new year!

Thank you very much for your hard work during the past year in serving the path and the Mission Headquarters. We look forward to your continuous support and cooperation.

This year, on June 30, we will celebrate the 90th anniversary of the founding of our Mission Headquarters with the honorable presence of Ms. Harue Nakayama and Mr. Daisuke Nakayama. On the day before, we will also hold a joint general convention to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the founding of both the Women’s Association and the Young Men’s Association of Amer-

ica. We hope that as many participants as possible will attend.

Well, this past September, the Rugby World Cup 2023 was held in France. Unfortunately, the national teams from both the U.S. and Canada did not qualify. However, the Japanese team did and won their first match against the Chilean team, who had defeated the U.S. and Canadian national teams in the qualifying matches.

At this kind of sports event, admission fees are used to defray some of the operational costs, but I believe that a majority of the event’s costs are covered by the many companies that have sponsorship contracts and the sponsorship fees. The sponsoring company then becomes an “official spon-

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Coming Up

- * **February Monthly Service Sermon (2/18)**
- Rev. Toshihiko Okui (J)
- * **Salvation Work Promotion Meeting for Head Ministers and their Spouses**
- Feb. 17 from 2 PM @ Mission HQ
- * **Three Day Course (2/23~25)**
- Application deadline: Feb. 18

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December Monthly Service Prayer

December 21, 2023

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

Dear God the Parent, You have guided us safely with Your unchanging blessings again this year, and today, we will now hold the final service of this year. Looking back, we have seen great knots through the continuing wars, conflicts and disasters occurring in various places around the world.

In this first year of our activities leading up to Oyasama's 140th Anniversary, Church Headquarters Missionary Visits were held, and the "Action Day for All Yoboku" was held throughout the Tenrikyo community.

Within our diocese, we have focused on human resource development. In June, we held the SoulFire Faith Conference. In July, we participated in the Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba that was held for the first time in 4 years, and in August, we held our vertical mission seminar.

Toward the 2nd year of the "three years, one thousand days" activity period leading up to the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, we always connect our hearts to Jiba, make efforts to repay our debt of gratitude to God, aim for the Joyous Life, and engage in daily salvation work.

On this wonderful day, we shall perform our December Monthly Service. From now, receiving the truth of Jiba, we service performers will unite our minds to joyously perform the seated service and Teodori service dance.

Looking forward to this day, Yoboku and followers have gathered here to give thanks for Your daily blessings and safe guidance throughout the year, and we pray for Your unchanging parental love. In witnessing this, we ask that You become spirited as well.

The Students Association's Winter Conference will be held here from the 26th of this month till the 29th, and the Oyasato Seminar Preliminary Session will be from the 28th to the 30th. We ask for Your unchanging parental love in nurturing our next generation of youth, and we pray that their activities be completed smoothly and safely.

As we conduct the last Monthly Service of this year, we will advance to the second year of our "three years, one thousand days" anniversary activities toward Oyasama's 140th Anniversary. Further, we, the followers of this diocese, will take steps toward spiritual growth in a unity of mind, so that our 90th Anniversary Service on June 30th of next year can be held smoothly and safely.

Dear God the Parent, please accept our mind of sincerity and guide us so that in the coming New Year, the people of the world will realize that we are all equally brothers and sisters, so that we can transform this world into a place where we all join hands together to help one another. Further, please guide us so all that the followers in this diocese can make progress in their spiritual growth. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

New Year Service Prayer

January 1, 2024

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

Dear God the Parent, together with the church head ministers, Yoboku and followers gathered here today, I would like to extend our New Year's greetings for the 187th year of Tenrikyo. This is all due to Your constant blessings.

Looking back on last year in our diocese, we started the first year of our activities towards the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama; we had official missionary visits from Church Headquarters; and we held our "Action Day for All Yoboku."

Further, we successfully held the Tenrikyo Faith Conference : SoulFire in June; we returned for the Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba at the end of July for the first time in four years; and in August, we also devoted ourselves to nurture our human resources through our Vertical Mission Training Seminar.

As this New Year's Day service marks the 187th year of Tenrikyo, from now, we service performers, with our hearts united, will perform the seated service and service dance joyously. We give our gratitude for Your countless blessings and warm parental love throughout this past year and humbly pray for Your continued blessings.

For our first service of the year, we Yoboku and followers have gathered here before you to give thanks for Your blessings of last year and to pray for Your continued blessings in the new year. As we express our joy through our spirited singing with bright hearts, we ask that You, God the Parent, become spirited as well.

Through our service performance today, we are determined to expand this Path to realize the Joyous Life world, and, in June of this year, we will celebrate our 90th anniversary.

As such, we will express our gratitude towards our predecessors, connect the path to our next generation, and continue to spread the teachings to those in our diocese as well as to people across the globe in our work to single-heartedly help others be saved. Further, we pledge to focus on the second year of our activities toward Oyasama's 140th Anniversary.

God the Parent, please accept our sincerity, continue to bless us with unchanging parental love, and guide and nurture us throughout this new year. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

December Monthly Service Sermon by Rev. Marlon Okazaki

~The Otefuri Service Dance and the English SDM (Singable-Danceable Mikagura-uta) : The Keys to Opening Our Path in America and Canada~

Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Morning; Buenos dias, Damas y Caballeros; Yorobun Anyun Haseyo. Mina-sama, Ohayo Gozaimasu. In our monthly service today, we have just offered our prayers for World Peace, World Salvation, and the Joyous Life for all our dear brothers and sisters in the world. Thank you.

I want to thank our interpreters Ms. Ah Lim Kim, and Rev. Hiroko Okazaki in advance for their hard work in interpreting for me. I know it is not easy. Thank you.

Today, I will be talking about the key to opening our path in America and Canada, which I believe to be the Service, the *Otefuri*. FYI. I will use the words "*Otefuri*" and "*Teodori*" interchangeably. They both basically mean the same thing: the service dance, with hand movements.

I am truly privileged to give today's sermon, and I thank the bishop for



Rev. Okazaki is the head minister of the Tenrikyo Southern Pacific Church, in Los Angeles, CA.

appointing me, and I thank you all in advance for your kind attention.

Before I begin my main talk, has anyone noticed anything different about me since last month? Yes, my old man beard is all gone now. I'm back! What do you think?

I'm sure you're all wondering, "Well, why did you shave your beard?" My answer is, "The wife always wins!" In fact, my wife recently told me, I have to shave. "Or else!" And... I didn't want to find out what "or else" meant.

Well, enough about me, let's talk about something more important. The Otefuri Service Dance, I believe, is the

key to opening our path in America and Canada! Let me explain.

First of all, in Tenrikyo, the two main pillars of salvation are the Service and the Sazuke. I believe that the Sazuke prayer receives its effectiveness :

- (1) through our performance of the Service, which purifies our minds, and, of course,
- (2) our sincerity in administering the Sazuke.

In essence, I believe that the Service and Sazuke are one in truth and are inextricably tied to the Kagura Service, as well as to the daily and monthly services and the Otefuri, that we do here in America and Canada, and elsewhere in the world.

But “how is this Otefuri Service Dance going to help truly open up our path in America and Canada?” We have been doing the Service here for the past 90 years plus, so why is our path here not already flourishing? There are probably many reasons. But to try to answer this question, let’s look back to when Tenrikyo was growing at an unbelievable pace.

Did you know that in the ten years from 1887, when Oyasama withdrew

from physical life till a decade later, in 1897, it is estimated that Tenrikyo grew from a small group of maybe a few thousand followers to about 7 or 8 million? How was that even possible? That was almost 10% of the whole Japanese population at that time. Well, I am thinking that this must have been mainly due to the performance of the Service and the special prayer services—because relatively few followers had been granted the sazuke by that time.

Now, let’s see what the Mikagura-uta says about the Service. Song 6, Verses 4 & 5 :

Fourth, I am pleased that you have followed to join the Service. This Service is the fundamental way for salvation.

Fifth, Always performing the Kagura and Teodori, in the future I will work remarkable salvation.

So here, it is very clear. God is pleased when we do the Service, and that this Service is the basis for our salvation. Further, when we perform the Kagura (In our case, the seated service) and the Teodori, God will work remarkable salvation. Next, in the Ofudesaki it says:

If you wish that the crops grow spiritedly, do the Kagura Service and the Teodori.

At this time, begin the Teodori quickly. That will be the sign for miraculous things to come.

Ofudesaki I:14, 15

Here, the crops can be a metaphor for all things that sustain our lives, such as food, and other blessings. So if we want abundant blessings, God asks us to do the Teodori Service quickly, as this will lead to miracles.

Further, in the Ofudesaki, as the Bishop mentioned in his October sermon, we are taught that this Service achieves at least the five following things:

*What do you think this Service is?
It is none other than the means to universal salvation.*

Ofudesaki II:9

What do you think this Service is about? It is solely to bring peace to the world and salvation to all.

Ofudesaki IV:93

By this Service which teaches the path quickly, all minds in the world will be purified.

Ofudesaki VII:99

Day by day, hasten to begin the Service. You will escape any danger whatever.

Ofudesaki X:19

However serious your illness may be, you will all be saved by the Service done single-heartedly.

Ofudesaki X:20

The purpose of the Service is therefore, to save all people, to settle the world in peace, to teach the path quickly, to purify our minds, to escape any danger, and to be saved from any illness. This is how powerful the Service is! In addition, the Shinbashira in Instruction Four, specifically asks us to “pray for a solution through performing the service.”

For all these reasons, now more than ever, we need to pray for others, by performing the service more and more. When I say perform the service, in addition to our daily and monthly services, I mean doing special prayer services, the Onegai Zutome.

Before my services, I try always to tell my church members that the Tenrikyo service is, in its essence, a gratitude service, then secondly a prayer service to ask for others to be saved, then lastly, it can also be a prayer to ask for God’s

help for oneself.

When my kids used to ask me, “Oh Daddy, why do we have to do the service everyday?!” I would tell them, “Well kids, God gives us blessings every day, so it’s our way of saying thank you to God.”

But one time, my third son Riki, who is very smart, told me, “Daddy, no. You are wrong! When I want to say thank you to God, I say, ‘Thank you God!’” I think he was about 6 or 7 at that time. I could not argue against that kind of logic. But I think he understands now. Is that right, Riki?

For people who are close by, we can always do the sazuake prayer whenever someone is ill, physically, mentally, or emotionally.

However, including people who are far away, we can pray for them through the performance of the Seated Service and/or Teodori. Back in the day, that is how our predecessors prayed and received clear and remarkable blessings. They would do Special Prayer Services, called *Onegai-Zutome*.

Let me cite from the Anecdotes to give you an idea of what their Special Prayer Services were, and what blessings they provided. In Anecdote #199, titled “Just One,” a woman named Sei Honda, at

the age of 49, developed a near death abdominal condition and was given up by doctors, to which Oyasama said:

She will not die. Go back quickly and perform the service with sincerity....

... The followers then “... performed a special prayer service for her recovery for three days and three nights, six times a day. However, when the third day came, there were no signs of her condition improving. So another special prayer service was performed in the same manner for three days and three nights.”

For your information, this Special Prayer Service consisted of the seated service and the Teodori Service Dance, performed 3 times during the day and 3 times at night. If you do the math, that comes out to a whole monthly service of Otefuri every 4 hours! Kids are you listening?

Sei Honda miraculously recovered, and later went on to live for 30 more years to the ripe age of 79.

In Anecdote # 108, titled “The Roads to the Summit are Many,” a man named Seijiro Imagawa had been suffering for many years, also from a stomach ailment. :

Upon receiving three-days and three-nights of prayers, he was blessed with a complete recovery from the stomach ailment that had troubled him for 30 years.

And these are just two examples. I believe our pioneers just naturally did this, and it was par for the course. Here, we can see the lengths to which our early pioneers did the Otefuri as a way to receive wondrous and miraculous blessings. However, what do we do today?

As for myself, I used to hate and could not do the Otefuri, not even Yorozuyo, because I did not understand Japanese or the hand movements. It still amazes me to this day, how someone who hated the Otefuri, me, got chosen to make this Red book, the Otefuri Guide. God does, indeed, work in wondrous ways.

What amazes me more, however, is how many times while I danced the Otefuri, the words of the Mikagura-uta moved me to tears and gave me messages from God, when I needed them the most. But again, the Mikagura-uta and Otefuri affected me in this way, only because I had studied Japanese for 5 years in college and had lived in Japan

for a decade.

I would now like to give a more personal example of the power of prayer in Tenrikyo. My mother, Kazuko Okazaki, has been doing Special Prayer Services, Onegai-Zutome, for our followers, every day, for many years. Sometimes I would join in, at other times I would not. However, when some of our followers who lived far away developed grave illnesses, I, too, began dancing the Teodori with my mom, and now it has become a part of my daily devotion.

One of the people that we now pray for, had been diagnosed with a late-stage illness, and at one point, things looked very bad. The doctors had given up hope. But by some miracle, due to Oyasama's blessings, this person's symptoms and test results have greatly improved and they are now living a near normal life.

This person is very dear to me, and gratitude fills my heart, because Oyasama has allowed me, to pray through the Otefuri, which allows me to directly connect with the cosmos, and to engage with the entire Universe, which is the body of God.

Now, I'd like to lighten things up a bit. I have a quiz for everyone here, and

this includes you Bishop and Okusan. I would like to ask everyone to please stand up. Just for a minute. Everybody. I am now going to ask you a few questions and you all must be honest, or this exercise won't work. (You will respond by staying standing or sitting down.)

Who here can do the whole Seated Service all by yourself without the help of anyone or any aid whatsoever? (if not, please sit down) Who can do Yorozuyo all by yourself? (if not, please sit down). Now who can do the 1st half, Songs 1-6, without any help (no printed words, no one by your side, no Shinbashira CD, etc. if not, please sit down). And finally, who can do all the 12 songs, the whole enchilada. (if not, please sit down). Everyone left standing can do the whole Teodori Service all by themselves with the aid of no one or no thing! They are super human! Let's give them all a big hand. And please remain standing.

Now, my next question is, to everyone who is still standing, "Who understands Japanese?" (if you do, now I want you to please sit down. All Japanese speakers please sit down).

Now who do we have left? Rev. Kay Morishita. You are truly a superwoman! Awesome. We need more people like

you. However, the fact that we have so few of you, indicates to me, that, we have a problem. This is our problem in America and Canada—, we don't have enough Rev. Kay Morishitas .

Our problem is that to know how to dance the whole Otefuri independently, understanding Japanese is almost a requirement. The only people I know, in mainland America and Canada, who can do all the Otefuri without understanding Japanese, are Rev. George Blesch, Mrs. Louise Sasaki and Rev. Kay Morishita. And if I am wrong, and I hope I'm wrong, I would be very pleased.

Now given how important this Service is, we MUST find better ways to effectively teach English-speakers the Otefuri Service Dance. If after 90 years plus we can only get a handful of non-Japanese speakers to learn our all important Otefuri, then that tells me that we need to be doing something different now. Steve Jobs of Apple once said, "Think Different!"

Also, Einstein once said, "Insanity: is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." So let us not be crazy. Let's stop doing the same thing, so we can get different and better results for Oyasama.

Now how can we strike a chord with

people in America and Canada who don't understand Japanese and do not understand our service?

We must promote inclusion, diversity, and equity, to have an equal playing field in learning Oyasama's Otefuri. In our public schools today, if a child has a special need, such as ADHD, dyslexia, or autism, they get special instruction that fits their need, so that they can succeed.

In the same way that we help kids with learning disabilities, we need to change something, to better help our English-speakers learn the Otefuri, so that they can also succeed and maybe become the future Tenrikyo Supermen and Superwomen in spreading Oyasama's teachings here in America and Canada, like Rev. Kay!

And let me be clear, "not being able to understand Japanese" is essentially a learning "dis-ability" in understanding, learning, and remembering the Otefuri service dance.

I believe that one of the major reasons for the success of Tenrikyo in Korea is that they can perform the service and sazuke in their own native language of Korean. And our lovely Korean interpreter, Ms. Ah Lim Kim, is a shining example. She first learned the

Mikagura-uta and Otefuri in Korean, but she can now dance it just as well in Japanese. In fact, she told me, the other day, that she loves the Japanese and Korean Mikagura-uta equally. Ah Lim-san, Gamsam Hamnida!

I believe the English SDM (Singable-Danceable Mikagura-uta) can help us open new gateways to capture the hearts and minds of our brothers and sisters in America and Canada. So let us proactively use the SDM as a tool to help encourage more and more people to actually do the Service as a prayer for others, which is one of our 90th Anniversary goals:

Let's "Pray to God the Parent for those in our communities through the service."

Further, In the Anecdotes, #18, titled "The Songs of Truth," in reference to the Mikagura-uta and Otefuri, Oyasama said:

*These are the songs for the Service...
These are the songs of Truth. So you
must dance to the Truth.*

The English SDM is a near direct translation of the Mikagura-uta that

matches the lyrics with the hand movements and matches syllable per syllable, the tune and melody as taught by Oyasama.

Other than where the THROW hand movements occur, the “finalized” SDM Seated Service and Yorozyo match the “truth of the song” with the “truth of the dance” 100%. In other words, the “*Riburi*,” the truth of the words, matches the “*Teburi*,” the truth of the hands!

The SDM is merely a tool, but an important tool, which can be the key to allow English-speakers to someday be able to sing and dance the Mikagura-uta and Otefuri exactly as taught to us by Oyasama herself—just like Ms. Ah Lim Kim has.

Every child of God the Parent needs to be able to crawl before they can learn to walk, run or someday dance. This SDM can help English speakers get on their feet, to truly feel in their body, brain and breath, the beauty of Oyasama’s precious Otefuri and Mikagura-uta.

And in case you are wondering, please know that the SDM will never be forced upon you. But, there are many people who may need it—so that they, may someday, feel what Japanese-speakers can feel, when they dance to Oyasama’s wonderful teachings.

Actions speak louder than words, so please allow me to now demonstrate our finalized SDM Seated Service and Yorozyo, as was introduced this summer at the SoulFire Conference.

Demo SDM.

Well, what do you think? This SDM project began in 1994, almost 30 years ago, and many people have contributed to its content and I am so grateful that we have been able to come this far. To everyone who has been involved in this project, I thank you.

It is my belief that if we better help our American and Canadian brothers and sisters, especially our youth, to understand and embrace the Otefuri service dance and to practice all its wonders and blessings, this will become one of the catalysts that propels our path forward here. And I believe that this will enable the local American and Canadian path to enjoy all blessings of the Service, as promised to us by God in our Scriptures.

(To our wonderful interpreters Ms. Ah Lim Kim, and the love of my life, Rev. Hiroko let’s thank them for their wonderful service. Thank you.)

I thank you for your kind attention.

News and Announcements

1) SPRING GRAND SERVICE (1/21)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Kazumi Kawakami, Zen Yukimoto Attendants: Brian Kojima, Ray Tadokoro Director: Shigemi Torizawa Offerings Officiant: Junjiro Nakatomi Sermon: Bishop (E)

2) PASSING AWAY FOR REBIRTH

Mr. Sadao Uehara, head of the NY-Jersey Fellowship (officially registered as “Kasaoka America Fellowship Fellowship”), passed away for rebirth on January 10 at 10:03 AM, at the age of 88. The soul transfer ceremony was held on January 12, and the funeral service was held on January 13. We would like to acknowledge and appreciate his many years of service and dedication.

3) OYASATO SEMINAR PRELIMINARY SESSION

This year’s Oyasato Seminar preliminary session was held at the Mission Headquarters from December 28 (Thu) ~ 30 (Sat). Eight students successfully completed the session.

4) TSA WINTER CONFERENCE

This year’s winter conference was held at the Mission Headquarters, from December 26 (Tue) ~ 29 (Fri). 19 students participated in the program (a total of 24 students and chaperones attended the ski trip).

5) SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE IN JIBA

Shuyoka (three-month Spiritual Development Course in Jiba) English Class will be held from the end of March next year. Non-Japanese applicants must apply for a visa, which can take several months. If you are thinking of attending, please let the Mission Headquarters office know as soon as possible. Also, please be aware that there may be circumstances where the English Class may be canceled, or the prospective students may not be able to obtain a visa.

6) TENRIKYO HINOKISHIN DAY

We request each district to begin preparations for next year’s Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day. We have distributed the Hinokishin Day Plan Report documents to all district representatives, so if you have not yet submitted them to the Mission Headquarters (c/o Secretary Masuno), please do so as soon as possible.

7) 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.

8) 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. We have sent an announcement letter to all those eligible to attend, so please check accordingly.

9) 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. The English course will be held if there are at least 4 applicants, and the Spanish course will require at least 2 applicants.

10) 85TH AMERICA SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE (SHUYOKAI)

The 85th Spiritual Development Course at the MissionHQ 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).

11) 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.

12) 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 February monthly service by the end of this month (January 31, 2024).

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS**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
- * Gathering for District Leaders January 20, 2024 (Sat), from 2PM via Zoom
- * 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

- * 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 (moto1884@gmail.com).
- * 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

You can view Rev. Okazaki's sermon video here! → → →



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

Share Our Joy of Faith! My 90th Anniversary And on Towards Oyasama's 140th Anniversary

Bring them to our places of worship to share our true joy

At the end of December, the Mission Headquarters and the New York Center held a rice-pounding event (mochitsuki) in high spirits, to prepare mochi offerings for the New Year Service. For the New York Center, this was their first time in four years to hold their mochitsuki, and with the help of about 80 staff members, they were able to welcome over 200 people! This was a concerted effort that brought followers, friends and family, TCI students and their loved ones together for a fun day of rice pounding!

New York Center



Mission Headquarters



sor” and can advertise and promote itself at the tournament venues, etc., and this is expected to have the effect of increasing sales of its products. This is how major sporting events are operated nowadays.

France, the host country of last year's (2023) Rugby World Cup tournament, has a “regulation” regarding advertising in stadiums used during such events. The regulation, known as the “Evan Law” enacted in 1991, prohibits alcohol and tobacco advertising in public facilities. By not allowing such advertisements, it discourages underage drinking of alcohol and smoking of cigarettes, which is to protect the health of minors. In turn, this will lead to lower treatment and other costs by helping people maintain good health, and the idea that it would also protect the welfare of the public seems to underlie the enactment of this regulation. Therefore, this has become a “hurdle” for beer and tobacco companies to sign sponsorship contracts for events in public facilities in France.

However, Asahi Beer Company of Japan became the “Worldwide Partner” and Asahi Super Dry was the “Official Beer” of this event in France. Before Asahi Breweries became the official sponsor, Heineken had been the official sponsor of the 2019 Games in Japan, but due to this regulatory law, Heineken got cold feet in signing a sponsorship contract with France.

Even though Asahi Breweries could not advertise at the stadium, they could serve beer and other alcoholic beverages at “rug-

by villages” in cities in France, so there were many advantages for being a “worldwide partner” sponsor.

However, it seems that the sponsorship agreement was not signed solely for the enjoyment of those benefits. Asahi Breweries took a slightly more subtle tactic. They placed an advertisement on the electronic billboards in the stadium that could be easily mistaken for “Asahi Super Dry.”

Their advertisement said, “Aaah! 0.0% SUPER TRY,” but what they wanted be to heard was, “Asahi 0.0% SUPER DRY.”

This string of text itself is not the least bit interesting, but a quick glance at the actual ad makes it difficult to notice the difference between “Aaah!” and “SUPER TRY,” and “Asahi” and “SUPER DRY.” The ad used the same font and design as the “Asahi Super Dry” beer label, so the “a” looked like an “s” and reminded the viewer of “Asahi Super Dry.”

But that was not the end of the story.

With today's technology, the display of advertisements on electronic billboards can be easily changed using technology, so they digitally changed the text on the billboards to read “SUPER DRY” in the videos shown after the game.

Advertisements are originally created to motivate consumers to purchase products. Therefore, advertisements have an impact on product sales, and sales can be greatly influenced by the actors used in such advertisements.

If we attempt to make a doctrinal inter-

pretation of this, we may say that advertisements “induce” people to incur the mind of “covetousness.”

In the book “The Eight Dusts” published by Doyusha, it is written, “We must be mindful not to let people accumulate ‘dust.’” On the other hand, however, although it seems strange to say it this way, we could think of advertisements as trying to encourage people to accumulate “dust.” In other words, advertisements may be tempting people to accumulate the “dust” of “covetousness,” wanting what you don’t have.

So if you think of it in that way, advertising may seem like something “evil,” but it is not always so. Advertising may be necessary to keep the world’s economy moving, and I believe it can be used in a “more positive way” as well.

For example, although it is not exactly an “advertisement,” many Tenrikyo churches in Japan display banners that read “Gratitude, Moderation, Mutual Help.” By seeing this, some people may rediscover the meaning of each of these words and may even correct their minds.

I once read an article in which a writer, when passing through Tenri City by car, saw the banner and said something like, “We may have the spirit of gratitude and mutual help, but perhaps we lack the spirit of moderation in our modern world.”

In the Tenrikyo Boys’ and Girls’ Association, one of the “Three Promises” is “Take good care of things!” This could be considered as a kind of “advertisement.” I think

this would be a type of “advertisement” that encourages us to cultivate a mind of being conscious to not be wasteful.

In Japan, commercials for the “Children’s Pilgrimage to Jiba” are aired on TV every summer, and I think the idea is to invite children to the “Children’s Pilgrimage” so that they can get to know the path a little better and become a “Yoboku” in the future, and work together with us to realize the Joyous Life world.

When thought of in this way, I think that “advertising” is something that we should be using.

It is natural for companies to advertise so that their products will sell, but as Tenrikyo followers, our “product” (for lack of a better word) is our teachings. So how do we make it more “sellable?” On this basis, since many people may know that “Tenrikyo equals Hinokishin,” the word “Hinokishin” could be considered a kind of “advertisement.”

I think it is acceptable to utilize “advertisements” as a way to make the teachings known to the people of the world. So how can we create “advertisements” for our Tenrikyo “product,” and how can we leverage them?

My subject for this article may sound a bit mundane and unspiritual. But I am asking how can we better spread Tenrikyo and its teachings? One way to do this is to create various “advertisements” to help spread them. I think this could be a good option.

What do you all think?

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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.