

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day!

On April 29 (Mon), the Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day was conducted. The Mission Headquarters, as well as in other districts, set a day to conduct their activities, and many people were able to participate. Clockwise from top left: Orange District, New York District, Gardena District, & Boyle Heights District (Mission HQ).

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

May 2024

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

— *The Choice of Our Words* —

Last month, on April 18, Oyasama’s Birth Celebration Service was held at Church Headquarters. The service was completed in a lively atmosphere with many attendees, including those from our diocese. I believe that many of you celebrated Oyasama’s birthday at your respective locals.

Until our 90th Anniversary, which is coming up next month on the 30th, let us proceed on the path of spiritual growth together, and make it a wonderful anniversary. I would like to ask for everyone’s cooperation.

On the day before the anniversary, a joint general convention will be held to commemorate the 70th anniversary of both the Women’s Association of America and Young Men’s Association of America, so let’s encourage all the members of these associations to attend.

On March 11, 2011, a tremendous earthquake occurred off the coast of Fukushima Prefecture. The Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant was in operation, but soon after the earthquake, the reactor was shut down for safety by the automatic shutdown system. The earthquake caused a loss of external power, but the emergency underground diesel gen-

erator started up, so the reactor cooling system was not affected at that time. However, the tsunami caused by the earthquake then hit the power plant, flooding it with seawater and causing the underground generators to fail, and damaging or flushing away numerous equipment pieces, resulting in a “total catastrophic loss of power,” which led to the failure of injecting cooling water into the reactor and spent nuclear fuel pools.

Thus, the nuclear fuel could no longer be cooled. Since nuclear fuel emits enormous amounts of heat even after a shutdown, it is necessary to cool the reactor by injecting water, but since this was no longer possible, it was like “heating an empty kettle” and the nuclear fuel started to melt the reactor itself due to its own generated heat. Then, a core

(continued on page 10)

Coming Up

- * **June Monthly Service Sermon (6/16)**
- Rev. Kuniaki Hasegawa (E)
- * **TSA Spring Conference (5/25~27)**
- Application deadline: May 5
- * **TYMANA/TWA Joint Convention (6/29)**
- * **Mission HQ 90th Anniversary (6/30)**

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April Monthly Service Prayer

April 21, 2024

Before You, God the Parent, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, Who is enshrined in this altar, I, Board Member, Marlon Okazaki, on behalf of the Bishop of Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America, invoke with reverence.

Dear God the Parent, out of Your deep desire to save all Your children in the world, at the arrival of the promised time, You revealed Yourself through Oyasama as Your shrine, and laid the path of universal salvation.

Since then, we have put the teachings into practice and have spiritedly walked on the path toward the Joyous Life, with Oyasama's 50-year Divine Model as our guide, and for this, we are truly grateful.

This is the joyous month in which Oyasama was born. Today, receiving the truth of Jiba, we service performers will now conduct our April monthly service, spiritedly performing the seated service and Teodori service dance, with joy in our hearts. At the same time, we will also celebrate, our Beloved Mother, Oyasama's 226th birthday.

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

This month, many from our diocese returned to Jiba for Oyasama's Birth Celebration. After they receive the truth of Jiba and have returned to their respective locals, please guide them, so that they may spiritedly engage in salvation work.

From now until next month, we will be holding our annual hinokishin day activities in various regions in our diocese. May this also serve in helping to spread the fragrance of the teachings.

In this second year of our pre-anniversary activities, leading up to the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, let us reflect upon the wars, conflicts, and natural disasters around the world and remind ourselves, once again, of God the Parent's hastening for the realization of the Joyous Life world. Also, relying upon the Divine Model of Oyasama, let us strive on the path of single-heartedly helping others be saved.

Further, let us unite the minds of all in this diocese and further our spiritual growth towards our 90th Anniversary, which will take place on June 30th of this year.

Dear God the Parent, please accept our mind of sincerity and bless us so that, even one day sooner, the minds of all people will become purified and that this world becomes one in which we all mutually help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray, that You bless us so.

April Monthly Service Sermon by Rev. Brian Kojima

~Following the Path~

Hi everyone, it makes me so happy to see everyone's wonderful smiles on this day at the Mission Headquarters in America where we have gathered for the April monthly service. Having just completed the music and dance of the Songs for the Service as taught to us by God the Parent through Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyo, it is now my time to deliver this month's sermon. For some reason it doesn't feel like this is my third time delivering the sermon for the Mission HQ's monthly service, but it is. I think its because the last time I spoke was for the December 2020 service which, of course, was virtual because of the Covid 19 pandemic. I have to be honest, but I had a difficult time gathering ideas of what I wanted to say this time. I apologize in advance for my shortcomings as a speaker and hope you can get something out of my talk today. I would like to ask for your kind attention.

To start off, I would like to read two verses from the Ofudesaki, Part I, verse 45 and 46:

*Looking all over the world and through
all ages,
I see various paths of life.*

*Hereafter, I shall speak in the metaphor of
a path,
not indicating any place in particular.*

I have a memory from my childhood that



Rev. Kojima is the head minister of the Sacramento Church.

makes me reflect deeply on my life today. When I was 5 years old, we lived nearby the Sacramento Church. My grandfather was the head minister at the time. We lived about 5 minutes by car, maybe 15 to 20 minutes walking. On this day, I remember walking to the church with my sister Sharon and my mother carrying my sister Laurie, who was about 8 months old. I'm not too sure if I knew why we were in such a rush to get to the church, but I remember was watching the paramedics as they pushed my grandfather who was on a gurney into the ambulance and then to the local hospital.

At the hospital, I vaguely remember that Sharon and I were waiting and sitting on the bench to see our grandfather. As we were finally able to see him, I went to his bedside and he said something to me. To this day, I can't really remember exactly what he said but I do

remember the feeling that he cared for me and my sisters very much. That was the last time that I saw him alive. Even though I don't remember too many details about my grandfather, the thoughts of him have given me motivation throughout my life.

Growing up, my father asked me to participate in the Tenrikyo programs that we have, like the Boys and Girls Association conventions and summer camps that we used to have at the beach. Also, when I was a teen, I regularly participated in the Tenrikyo Student Association's spring and winter conferences. I also remember going to Jiba often. I participated in the summer Children's Pilgrimage a few times. Then as a high school student I remember going to gakkusei seito shuyoka, which was the regular thing that we participated with before Oyasato Seminar was created in 1984. Then in 1984 and 85 I spent two entire summers of Oyasato Seminar. At that time the Oyasato Seminar was 50 days long. I'm sure my parents encouraged me to participate in all of these programs so that I could learn more about the teachings. I guess it worked because ultimately, I decided to become a minister and take over the duties at Sacramento Church.

In the Ofudesaki, Part 3, verses 5 and 6, it states:

*Until now, you have understood nothing,
but from now on you will see wondrous
signs.*

*I do not force you to come along if you do
not wish to,
but if you should, you should be
blessed forever.*

I am so thankful for many things that are an

important part of my life, especially my family. I have been married to my wife, Yumiko, for 24 years and have 4 children. I don't think of them as children anymore, actually young adults; 3 young adult boys, ages 23, 20 and 18; and one girl, she's 14 years old. As of this year, I have been the head minister of the Sacramento Church for 20 years and feel blessed to have church members who are so supportive. Also, I feel fortunate to have worked for the California State University, Sacramento as a custodian for almost 10 years, but it is a lot of physical work.

Last July, I was assigned to clean the first floor of the university Library. Part of my duties is to collect bags from the 3 compartment bins that contain recyclables, trash and compost in the breezeway. Unfortunately, I end up putting all of the bags together as trash because most of our students aren't paying attention to the directions on the bins. I really wish they would be more considerate. Later in my shift if I have time, I wipe down the tables and benches, or use the leaf blower to blow the leaves and loose trash around the area. Sometimes I get a break from standing and use a riding machine to clean the pavement in the breezeway. There are more buildings that I'm also responsible for but I won't go into more detail. However, from December of last year, the university dean, who is the person in charge of the library mentioned that the main and the other stairways are not as clean as they should be.

I try my best not to take this personally, because in our department, we are short-handed in our area due to many of the employees either, recently retired, left for other well-paying jobs, or can't handle the hard physical work. I just do my best to clean where the area needs to be cleaned the most first and then I get to other areas if I have time.

Occasionally, when I'm collecting the trash or wiping the tables in the breezeway, I have students thanking me for the work that I'm doing. Often, these comments come at a perfect time when I'm not having a great day and it really helps me get through my shift. These are the times that I know that God the Parent and Oyasama are watching over me to make my day go smoothly.

In the Ofudesaki, Part 3, verses 36 and 37, it states:

Do not complain about your present situation.

A broad path will appear ahead of you.

Do not grieve over whatever path you are now on.

Take delight in the main path that lies ahead.

When I started working for Sacramento State my hours were from 4 pm to 12:30 am, Monday to Friday. This meant that I was barely able to see my kids when they were going to school. Coming home exhausted, my generous wife would let me sleep in as she performed the morning service and take the kids to school. The only time I really saw my kids were on the weekends. Now that our children have grown, she started working regularly, Monday to Friday. From Wednesday to Friday, she goes to work early so now, I regularly wake up to perform the morning service and make sure that my daughter, Briana is ready for school. I also make sure that my third son Brady is prepared for his work.

In the Kakisage, in the last paragraph, it is written:

One thing more, I shall teach you the first truth. First, I desire exemplary models in every community. The basis of teaching others is how you carry on each day. Carry on in your occupation each day. This is important.

I am especially thankful for this teaching because it helps me to keep my mind on the right track. In my mind, it is due to our faith in God the Parent and Oyasama that things have continued to go well with our family.

Last year, my second son, Brett, graduated from the Tenrikyo Language Institute in Tenri. He was there to learn Japanese for one year and came back in March. I am grateful for the teachers and his classmates for helping him keep focused enough for him to complete the course. I am also thankful for the many people from the Meikyo tsumesho for looking after him. Also, my eldest son, Bryce, was in Japan at the same time as he did hinokishin at the Meikyo Grand Church in Nagoya for one year and a half helping to prepare for Meikyo's 100th anniversary which was celebrated last October. Both of them are now at home helping us around the church and performing in our monthly services.

I am also grateful for the support and participation of the members of our Sacramento Church. Last year, thanks to the end of the coronavirus restrictions, many followers from our church were able to return to Jiba. In the summer, five of our members listened to the Besseki lectures and 3 attended the Oyasato Seminar. Out of this group, five were blessed to receive the Truth of the Sazuke. Also, one church member participated in the summer Children's Pilgrimage with the America group. Also, last October, 14 of our church members

attended the Meikyo Grand Church 100th anniversary in Nagoya and the Autumn Grand Service in Jiba. At this time, one of my church members received the osazuke on the 25th.

Then at the end of November, a different group of my cousin's family, 11 members in total, stayed at the Meikyo Grand Church for a few days and later returned to Jiba with two of them attending the Besseki lectures. I'm so grateful that many members returned to Jiba last year and 7 of them received the Truth of the Sazuke.

In three months, the Shinbashira's wife and Daisuke-sama are attending the Women's

and the Young Men's Association Convention on Saturday and the Mission HQ's 90th Anniversary on Sunday. I know many of my church members will be attending this special occasion and I hope you will be there too. Please make the time to attend the celebration. Thank you for your kind attention.



*You can view
all the past
sermons
here!*

News and Announcements

1) MAY MONTHLY SERVICE (5/19)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Tomoyoshi Tanaka, Yoichi Fukui Attendants: Ichiro Ito, Koji Uesugi
Director: Kuniaki Hasegawa Offerings Officiant: Eddie Takemoto Sermon: Robert Yuge (E)

2) CHURCH AFFAIRS

* Divine Sanctions:

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

Orange Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

Divine Sanction: July 26, 2024 Head Minister: Kinpei Ito Enshrinement Service: September 21, 2024

3) THIRD SHINBASHIRA TENTH MEMORIAL SERVICE

The tenth memorial service for the third Shinbashira, Zenye Nakayama, will be held at Church Headquarters on June 24, 2024.

4) TENRIKYO HINOKISHIN DAY

For those districts that have conducted their Hinokishin Day activities, please submit your Activity Report to the Mission Headquarters Secretaries (c/o Masuno).

5) 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

News and Announcements (cont'd.)

applicants for the Spanish course, as of one month prior (June 16).

6) TSA SPRING CONFERENCE

The TSA Spring Conference will be held at the Mission Headquarters from May 25~27. The theme for this year's conference is "The Joy of Faith."

Application forms have been distributed to each church, fellowship, and mission center, and can also be found on the Mission Headquarters homepage. Deadline: May 19 *Although the initial deadline has already passed, we decided to extend it.*

7) MEMORIAL DAY CEMETERY VISIT

On May 27 (Mon) at 10 AM, the Mission Headquarters will offer their prayers at the Memorial Shrine in the sanctuary, then proceed to Evergreen Cemetery to pay their respects.

8) AMERICA ICHIRETSUKAI SCHOLARSHIP

We are now accepting applications for the 2024 America Ichiretsukai Scholarship. Children of church, fellowship, and mission center heads who have been accepted to attend college are eligible. Application forms are available at the Mission Headquarters. The application deadline is June 30 (Sun). New recipients will be announced on the August monthly service day. Those wishing to continue to receive scholarship in the second, third, or fourth year will not have to resubmit applications; however, if students plan to take time off from school or transfer to another school, they must report it to the Mission Headquarters by August 31.

9) MAJOR CLEANING TOWARDS ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

This year on May 26 (Sun), following the performance of the May 26th Day service, we will hold a major cleaning in the afternoon, from 12:30PM. It will be conducted the same as our year-end cleaning, as we clean the sanctuary and the other buildings. We ask the heads of churches, fellowships, and mission centers near the Mission Headquarters to reach out to you followers and join us in our major cleaning. In order to prepare meals for that day, if you would like to eat lunch, please contact the Mission Headquarters secretaries by the May monthly service date (5/19).

10) 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 June monthly service by the end of this month (May 31, 2024).

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Construction Committee

- * The door has been installed in the Tenri Kaikan second floor guest room. We are now repainting the room.
- * We are working on weeding around the Mission Headquarters premises.
- * Installing new electrical hardware for new washers and dryers.
- * Asphalt around the office will be replaced with concrete.

Nurturing & Educational Committee

- * We are planning an online meeting for those students who will be attending this year's Oyasato Seminar, and their

parents/guardians, on May 19 (Sun), from 4 PM PT. This will also include the students and parents from Hawaii. There is also some time for Q&A, as well as activities, just for students, to connect and get to know one another.

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 "Stories Inspired by Oyasama," SoulFire, monthly service sermons, & podcast videos are now viewable on the Mission Headquarters homepage. Please visit our homepage to view these videos, and let those around you know as well.
- New information regarding the 90th anniversary of the Mission Headquarters has also been updated.

Women's Association

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

* District Conventions:

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|---------------------|
| - San Francisco | 9/28 (Sat) | @ San Mateo Church |
| - Los Angeles | 9/29 (Sun) | @ Mission HQ |
| - Chicago | 9/29 (Sun) | @ Midwest Church |
| - New York | 10/5 (Sat) | @ New York Center |
| - West Canada | 11/3 (Sun) | @ Joyous Fellowship |

Boys & Girls Association

* We ask for your help in fundraising! We will be selling popcorn online for fundraising. On May 17, we will send you a link where you can purchase the popcorn. Your cooperation would be appreciated.

* KIDS FUNFEST: On the weekend of the 90th anniversary celebration, we will be holding activities to learn and have fun, so please register your child using this form: <https://forms.gle/vyYD882Rcq71M1ud9>

* The BGA America Service Convention will be held at the Mission Headquarters on August 17 (Sat). The service roster was distributed last month. Please start practicing your service roles at your home or at your church.

* Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba General Group: July 24~30. From this year, the America-Canada and Hawaii groups will be combined and participate together. Registration deadline: May 31.

* The International Boys & Girls Hinokishin Corps will be held from July 25~30. Registration deadline: May 31.

TYMANA

* 5/19: Mission HQ retaining wall painting

* 6/16: Pressure-wash building walls & exterior windows, weeding of parking lot.

* 6/29 @ 2PM: TWA/TYMANA 70th Anniversary Joint Convention.

* 7/18~24: International Hinokishin Corps. Applications have been distributed to TYMANA members. Please submit all applications and questions to kkryono@gmail.com.

NY Center

* 5/19: Yard Sale

* 5/26 Family BBQ (Sponsored by TYMA)

meltdown occurred, and as a result, a large amount of hydrogen generated by the meltdown filled the building and caused multiple hydrogen explosions. I am sure many of you have seen this video capture, as it was shown on the news many times.

Water was then injected and discharged to cool the reactors and spent fuel pools, and such water containing radioactive materials was stored in tanks, which gradually increased in number. From the beginning, it was planned to eventually release the water in the tanks into the ocean. Of course, the plan was to use the Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) to remove various radioactive materials before releasing them into the ocean as “treated water.”

In fact, the water started to be discharged into the ocean after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) determined that the levels of radioactive materials contained in this “treated water” did not exceed the prescribed limits. However, one of the neighboring countries complained that radioactive material called tritium had not been removed from the “treated water” released from the tanks.

Tritium is “Tritiated Hydrogen” and is a member of the hydrogen family. Therefore, it is generated naturally every day and is present in tap water, rainwater, and our bodies. Thus, it is a radioactive material that “cannot be removed” from the water.

As I aforementioned, this “treated water” has already been verified by the IAEA that it is within safe levels. Rather, the value levels of “tritium” discharged by the nuclear power plants of the country making the complaint is

much higher.

Well, my preface explanations have gone on too long.

I mentioned earlier that Tritium “cannot be removed,” but this expression is problematic. Tritium is a naturally occurring isotope, so inherently, it “cannot be removed,” as a matter of course.

Someone has said, “You should say, ‘There is no need to remove it,’ instead of saying, ‘It cannot be removed.’” This convinced me, “Oh, that is right!”

If you say, “It cannot be removed,” it may be understood that “it cannot be removed” due to some technical issues or something, and people might expect that “it could be removed” by some other method. Then, the discussion could further develop into the argument that not enough was put into finding that other method.

However, as I mentioned earlier, it is not possible to “remove” 100% of “tritium” from “treated water” because it is a naturally generated radioactive material in nature that simply “cannot be removed.”

Also, I described “treated water” earlier, but the complaining country seems to describe it as “contaminated water. “It is the same “water,” but “contaminated water” and “treated water” give us completely different impressions of the “water.” The term “contaminated water” implies that the water is dangerous and has contaminants, while “treated water” implies that the water has been “treated and purified” in some way.

Next, let me talk about Singapore, where I used to live.

Singapore is a small island nation with a

land area about the size of the Tokyo's metropolitan area with 23 Wards. Its mountains are hilly with an elevation of about 530 feet (163 meters) above sea level. Since it is a tropical country, there is no snowfall. Fortunately, there are daily squalls, so precipitation is plentiful. Unfortunately, its reservoirs have limited storage capacity.

Also, the population was said to be about 4 million when I lived there, in 2023 it increased to be about 5.92 million, and an increased water supply for drinking and daily use is needed accordingly.

Singapore signed a 99-year "water agreement" with neighboring Malaysia in 1962, prior to its independence in 1965. The agreement gave Singapore the right to draw 250 million gallons of water per day from Malaysia, and 5 million gallons of treated water is supplied back to Malaysia from Singapore, with Singapore purchasing 1,000 gallons (3,785.41 liters) of water for less than \$1.00.

The Straits of Johor between Singapore and Malaysia are not connected by land, but the straits are narrow, and the two countries are connected by two locations, the "Causeway," a road built on a reclaimed land, and the "Second Link," a bridge completed in 1998. Both locations allow for automobile traffic between the two countries. Large water pipelines run along the "Causeway" and water is "imported" from Malaysia through these pipes.

However, in consideration of the "water agreement" expiration in 2061, at which time the price may be raised or, worse, the contract may be rejected, a water reclamation plant is being built in Singapore to convert seawater into fresh water. In addition, they also puri-

fy sewage water and then apply more advanced treatment to produce drinking water called "NEWater." I once saw a news report of government officials drinking the freshly produced "NEWater," and now five plants are capable of meeting 40% of Singapore's water needs.

I think the "trick" is the naming of this "NEWater." No one would want to drink it if it were labeled "treated sewage water."

In the case of spreading our faith, the fundamental teachings of the path remain the same, but there are many different ways to convey them. At the time you communicate the teachings, if you do it in a way that is wrong or misleading, you may cause the teachings to be distorted. Also, even if you are saying the right thing based on the teachings, if it ends up hurting the others, you will ruin everything.

Therefore, I think it is important to convey the teachings by carefully considering the words you use and the state of mind and situation of the other person at that moment. It is important to choose words that suit the situation and the other person's state of mind, and to convey the teachings in a way that will convince the other person in a positive way, without changing the fundamentals of the teachings.

For us, conveying and spreading the teachings correctly is our missionary duty, but there are many different ways to convey our teachings. From that perspective, I think it would be wise for us to exercise some ingenuity in the "Choice of Our Words."

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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.