

Tenrikyo

newsletter



2024 Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba!

This year, the America-Canada and Hawaii general groups were combined, consisting of 29 BGA members and 44 staff. Eighteen members, along with five counselors, participated in the International Boys & Girls Hinokishin Corp.

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

August 2024

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

Reading the “Anecdotes of Oyasama”

This month, the Boys and Girls Association of America is holding their annual Service Convention. I would be delighted if as many members as possible would participate.

Next month (September) has been designated as the “Missionary Work Month for All Churches.” I hope that many people around the world who are unfamiliar with the teachings of Tenrikyo will be introduced to them. Please be conscious of and focus on spreading the fragrance of the teachings throughout next month. I thank you in advance.

Here at Mission Headquarters, unless there is a specific event, we hold our morning assemblies at 8:45 AM. We begin by reading various “texts,” which we read throughout the week, from Monday to Sunday, before switching to a different text on the following week. These texts include the Japanese and English versions of the

“Okakisage,” “Truth of Origin” (in Chapter 3 of The Doctrine of Tenrikyo), “Ten Divine Providences,” and “Eight Dusts of the Mind” (published by Doyusha).

After that, the secretary announces the day’s schedule, followed by a one-minute speech from a staff member. These speeches, which sometimes extend to three or even five minutes, can cover anything the speaker is thinking about, feeling, or aiming for. However, it is an unspoken rule not to complain or speak about negative things. The person who gives the speech selects the next speaker. Al-

(continued on page 18)

Coming Up

- * **September Monthly Service Sermon (9/15)**
- Mr. Kazuyuki Kawata (J)
- * **Autumn Memorial Service (9/14)**
- Mission HQ @ 7PM

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June Monthly Service Prayer

June 16, 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, looking forward to sharing in our Joyous Life, You created this world and human beings, where there was no form. At the arrival of the promised time, You revealed Yourself through Oyasama as Your Shrine and taught us the Service to save all humankind. Through the scriptures you taught us:

“What do you think this Service is about? It is solely to bring peace to the world and salvation to all.” (Ofudesaki IV:93)

Receiving the truth of the Kagura Service, we perform the service, and are spiritedly working towards world salvation each day. As this fine day is our June monthly service, from now, receiving the truth of Jiba, we service performers will unite our minds and spiritedly perform the seated service and Teodori service dance.

Many Yoboku and followers have gathered here in anticipation of this day to express their gratitude for Your daily blessings. In witnessing our spirited singing, we ask that You, God the Parent, become spirited as well.

On the 30th of this month, we will celebrate our 90th Anniversary with the honorable attendance of the Shinbashira's official representative, Rev. Daisuke Nakayama, and the Shinbashira's wife, Mrs. Harue Nakayama. We pledge to unite the minds of all in our diocese, and to continue our journey towards spiritual growth in our season of joy. We ask that our anniversary be concluded safely and smoothly.

Further, on the 29th, we will hold a joint convention for the 70th anniversaries of both the Women's Association and the Young Men's Association of America. This will be held with the attendance of the Chairwoman and Chairman of both respective associations. Please guide us so that this event will be held smoothly and that it will become a spark that ignites the growth of our path in America and Canada.

In the second year of our pre-anniversary activities towards Oyasama's 140th Anniversary, we will take to heart the Shinbashira's intention as expressed in Instruction Four. We will also strive to lead a Joyous Life by engaging in missionary and salvation work as we advance our spiritual growth to bring joy to the parent. Further, with spirited minds, we will welcome in our 90th anniversary, which will occur in two weeks.

We humbly ask You, God the Parent, to accept our minds of sincerity, and grant us Your free and unlimited blessings to help us transform this world, even one day sooner, into a place where all people of the world, hand in hand, mutually help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray, that You bless us so.

June Monthly Service Sermon by Rev. Kuniaki Hasegawa

~From Knots, Buds Will Sprout~

I am 81 years old. There is much that I have learned in my life – most of it in the last 55 years since I dedicated to change my life towards God and Oyasama’s Divine Model. It’s important for the younger generation to learn of the successes, failures, and history from those who preceded them. I’ll discuss a few of the more important lessons I’ve learned that have enabled me to enjoy a peaceful and prosperous life.

Probably one of the most important lessons is the realization that life is not fair, life is hard and, it will never be easy. In Tenrikyo we have a saying, “from knots, buds will sprout.” You have to accept this and not blame your circumstances on others.

Set goals for yourself (kokoro-sadame) and never give up trying to achieve them. I inherited a life which felt like everything was going against me. In 1940, war broke out between the US and Japan. Consequently, every Japanese family was forced to go to an internment camp, and I was born at one of these camps.

After the end of War World 2, my father decided to go back to Hiroshima, Japan. My father did not know about the atomic bomb that had destroyed Hiroshima, and his family had no place to go except the streets.



Rev. Hasegawa is currently a Board of Director for the Mission HQ.

My father had to ask his friends for a place to stay while he struggled to make a living. One of my father’s friends offered their cow shed, so we lived there for a while.

I was 12 years old when my father made the decision to return to America, because living didn’t get any better.

We returned to California with help from my uncle. I started to attend elementary school, and most of the students were very nice to me, but I was bullied by two or three students there because I didn’t speak English. I wasn’t very smart and everyday going to school was no fun.

After I finished high school, I decided to join the US Air Force. My drill instructors reinforced what I learned in my early teen

years: All things my father taught me when I was younger.

Challenge all your hardships, respect your elders, clean up after yourself, make your bed each day, and take pride in yourself. I learned skills that I never knew I had. I learned how to get along with others no matter their race or religion.

One of the more important lessons I learned in boot camp – that I still adhere to today – occurred on the obstacle course on a hot day. All of the strenuous running while figuring out the obstacles was physically and mentally draining. But by training the mind and body, we were able to accomplish and finish the course. It's just a matter of figuring out how to do it. Don't ever underestimate what you can accomplish and never give up. After I completed my military duty, all of these lessons instilled a degree of confidence in me that I had never felt before.

My second life lesson, I learned after I was out from the service and pursuing a job in engineering. During [engineering] school, I almost died by losing two-thirds of my blood and at that time, a Tenrikyo minister came to pray (Osazuke) for me, and he counseled me that I should dedicate myself to saving others in order for me to be saved.

I thought to myself, even though I had faith in Tenrikyo, I didn't have the confidence to become a missionary and spread the teachings. However, my wife said, "As long as my husband can be saved, we promise to

withstand any hardship and go through even fire, flood or famine." I was having trouble breathing and half-conscious, but when I heard what she just said, I said to my wife, "Are you serious?! The path of a missionary is not something to do on a whim."

I was then taken to the hospital by ambulance. At that time, the doctor said, "You've lost two-thirds of your blood. Normally, you should be dead by now. It's a miracle. I didn't save you. God in heaven saved you!" As I was told by this American doctor that it was God, in fact, that had saved me, I resolved to dedicate my life to this path.

So, I sacrificed my engineering degree to become a Tenrikyo missionary. It gave me emotional and mental strength. I learned to have no space for bearing grudges and to reserve my anger, even though it took a while.

When we first moved into NC church, we didn't know anything about anything, and the followers were very strict on us and they would always complain about what we did, and said things like, "You shouldn't talk to us about making more donations." Or, "You shouldn't let this or that person come to the church." They would tell us to do this or that, and they even yelled at us at times. Doubts crept up on me as to whether God really existed or not, and my faith began to fade. More and more, I avoided coming into contact with people, and I starting to get afraid of people in general.

But even then, I had someone that saved

me. That was my wife. She went back to her parents' home in Iwate Prefecture in northern Japan, and when she told her mother that we are going to become Tenrikyo missionaries, her mother did not object, but only asked, "Will you have a house? Will you have enough food to eat?" When my wife replied, "I won't have such things because we are going to be doing missionary work," her mother started to cry.

My wife came from a very wealthy family that was in charge of a large Buddhist Tendai Sect temple. It must have been heartbreaking for her mother to allow her daughter to go to the distant and foreign land of America. I think it must have been unbearable for her mother to allow us to become Tenrikyo missionaries.

I was 29 and my wife was 26 when we entered the church together as a couple committed to a life of helping others to be saved. I was worried at night, I couldn't sleep, and my heart was always racing and I couldn't do anything. Even though my wife did not understand anything about American culture or English, or living in a church in America, she always had a smile on her face. Her smile was my salvation. I am so grateful to my wife for never even once mentioning divorce to me, and for standing by my side for all these years.

By pursuing the Tenrikyo faith, I encountered many knots every Oyasama's Anniversary. First, I received an unexpected knot in life during the 100th Anniversary of Oyasama; my brother-in-

law committed suicide after going bankrupt running a Japanese restaurant. Since I was the guarantor, I suddenly had a huge debt of \$60,000.

During the 110th Anniversary we were taking care of a young man, who was a drug addict and had just been released from prison. One day, in a drug-infused frenzy, he took a bat to my head and broke both of my arms. My wife and son immediately called an ambulance and I was taken to the hospital. When the doctor saw my condition, he said, "You're lucky to be alive and I'll do what I can, but I can't guarantee anything." I had no medical insurance and this added \$50,000 in medical bills on top of my already huge debt from my brother-in-law's restaurant.

Luckily, I only needed ten stitches on my head and I had dizziness and headaches for about half a year, but since both of my arms were broken and in casts, my wife had to not only feed me the whole time, but she even had to help me every time I went to the bathroom, etc. She never once complained, and cared for me the whole time. Because of my condition, I was unable to perform my church service duties, neither could I even administer the Sazuke prayer, and I gradually lost all my motivation. I was in my worst condition, both mentally and physically, beset by daily worries.

The more I was shown knots in life, one after another. My debts piled up more and more, I had no prospects to pay them back, I felt lonely, I felt sad. It felt like I was going

through an endless dark tunnel and I could just not see even a sliver of light. I thought about resigning as head minister because I couldn't fulfill my duties.

When I was in this state of suffering, I happened to see the former Shinbashira in his service robe coming down in the corridor of Oyasama's Hall and he shook my hand saying, "Mr. Hasegawa, I understand everything that you are going through." He saw through the desperate state of my mind, and I hugged the former Shinbashira and then I cried. Before I knew it, I woke up and realized that it was all a dream.

Then, a strange thing happened that seemed to change everything completely. A year later, the former Shinbashira visited the Mission Headquarters in America and I unexpectedly got to meet him and explained to him my circumstances until that point. He then took hold of my hand and then said to me, "Oyasama once told us that after 20 or 30 years has passed, a day will come when we will come to be able to understand. Do your best until then." I was in tears of joy. When I raised my head, I could see something sparkle in the former Shinbashira's eyes.

Further, the former Shinbashira announced that the 110th anniversary of Oyasama would be celebrated throughout the year. I thus made a big spiritual resolution (kokoro sadame) to return to Jiba each month of that year. I was still in a huge amount of debt, so it was a difficult decision, but I managed to keep my spiritual resolution for a year until December of that

year.

I was filled with gratitude for being guided by Oyasama, and I kneeled down in front of Oyasama and expressed my gratitude, saying to Oyasama, "What should I do going forward? Returning to Jiba this time has been a great sacrifice for my family. I think it's impossible for me to continue this, because the travel expenses alone are adding to our debt and the debt keeps piling up." At that moment, someone tapped me on the shoulder and when I turned around, it was the former Shinbashira's wife, Masa Okusama. With a smile on her face, she softly said to me, "Gokuro-sama, I saw your effort of returning to Jiba every month. It must be so difficult for you to return to Jiba every month. Thank you for your efforts." It seemed to me that Oyasama was now kindly speaking to me through her, and I was so happy that my mind turned blank. In front of Oyasama and the Shinbashira's wife, I was so moved that, without thinking I proclaimed, "I will continue my monthly pilgrimages to Jiba." Afterwards, I was so surprised that I even said those words.

But when I got back to my church, reality sunk in. We were already tapped out. I was discussing with my wife how to cover the next month's airfare with such a huge amount of debt. After listening to our conversation, my daughter said, "Don't worry dad, I'll help with your airfare." My daughter was hired as a United Airlines flight attendant. I was so happy that I jumped for joy at Oyasama's

advance blessings.

Thanks to Mrs. Masa Nakayama's kind words to me on that day, I was allowed to return to Jiba, Tenri every month for twelve years, which is one hundred and forty-four consecutive months. It is also thanks to the guidance of God the Parent and Oyasama, as well as the guidance of the former Shinbashira and his wife, that I am here today. This month on the 24th, will be the third Shinbashira, Zenye Nakayama's 10th year memorial service which will be held at Church Headquarters. Now when I return to Jiba, I am filled with nostalgia and loneliness, as they have both since passed away for rebirth.

Prior to the 120th Anniversary of Oyasama, when the former head minister of my Directly Supervised Church, Portland Church, passed away for rebirth in 2002, my wife was appointed as the N.C. Church head minister, and at the same time, I was appointed as head minister of Portland Church, which was almost 600 miles away. After I served as head minister of Portland Church for 12 years, in 2014, as you all know, our Honjima Grand Church head minister's younger brother, Rev. Kazunobu Katayama, was appointed to care for the Portland Church.

After the Spring Grand Service in Jiba, the year before Oyasama's 130th Anniversary, I returned to N.C. Church. On the morning of the very next day, a fire broke out of the church boiler and the roof and the sanctuary became engulfed in flames. My only thought

was that I had to save the shrines of God the Parent and Oyasama, and in the moment and in a frenzy, I ignored the instructions of the firefighters and retrieved the shrines and placed them in our mobile home. It took about an hour and a half to extinguish the fire, and it was completely burned. After that, I could not sleep at night for several days. As the days passed, I regained my composure, and as a result, I gradually came to realize that the fire in the church was a mysterious blessing from God the Parent.

Also, if the fire had happened in the middle of the night, my wife and I would have probably perished. The church was newly reconstructed, and the sanctuary altar is now made of fine Cypress wood. This happened just about when I had stepped down as the Portland head minister and I was in retirement mode.

Hardships in our lives are never for the purpose of us to suffer, but they are the seeds that made me spiritually strong, and gave me the reward of a brand new church before the anniversary of Oyasama, and were the seeds for good things in the future.

Lastly, as you may know, during this period leading up to Oyasama's 140th anniversary and the announcement of Instruction Four, I received an illness from God the Parent two years ago. During my routine colonoscopy checkup, they found twelve stage-3 cancerous tumors. Since then, I had surgery, chemo-therapy treatments, CT scan, etc.

Up until now, I have been suffering

from “distrust of the path, worries, depression, anger, anxiety, complaints, and irritability, etc.” For the past 50 years, I have accumulated a lot of dusts of the mind. Therefore, going forward, I will lean on God the Parent, joyously engage in Hinokishin each and every day, and do God’s work at our church. Thankfully, I have no pain, no tiredness, and I can eat delicious food every day.

There is nothing at all which should be called illness. It is only because there are paths of the mistaken mind.

Ofudesaki III:95

Therefore, my illness come from the mind that I used in the past, so that I always try to say, “I’m grateful, I’m fine,” no matter what happens. I was not surprised to learn that when I had my second colonoscopy test in last year, the doctor said to me that surprisingly I am cancer free.

Knots in life are great opportunities for great buds to sprout in our lives. I pray that all of us will not give up, that we will not be swayed by the trends of society or common wisdom of the world. Let us believe in this path, strive and do whatever needed to get closer to Oyasama’s mind, clear our minds, and become of a generous mind that helps others be saved and follows the Divine Model. I believe that the true joy of our faith can be gained when we face each knot in life head-on and depends on our own efforts and convictions.

In summary, life is not fair – it’s hard. Accept that and don’t be envious of what others have. The Teaching focuses on values like kindness, humility, honesty, integrity and resilience – the values that makes this planet a wonderful place to live.

These are but a few of the lessons that have served me well over the 81 years, as I rose from poverty to rich life by overcoming a difficult childhood to challenge the hardship of following Oyasama’s Divine Model, which ultimately [allowed me to] achieve my dream here in America as minister of a Tenrikyo Church. If you do this, you can also succeed and find a level of peace and prosperity in your life few people will ever realize.

Aligning our values with the Tenrikyo teachings and building on the past, we can work together to build a better future together for the upcoming 90th anniversary of the Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in two weeks, by receiving the Honorable Shinbashira’s wife, Harue Okusama, and the Successor of the Shinbashira, Daisuke-sama.

Thank you.

July Monthly Service Prayer

July 21, 2024

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 created this human world, where there was no form. Upon the arrival of the promised time, You revealed Yourself through Oyasama as Your Shrine and directly taught us the ultimate Teaching. Since then, this path has spread to the world, and here in America and Canada we are blessed with followers who devote themselves to salvation work while relying on the Divine Model of Oyasama. We strive daily in high spirits to respond to Your intention.

On this fine day of our July monthly service, receiving the Truth of Jiba, we service performers will now unite our minds and spiritedly perform the seated service and Teodori service dance.

In Your presence, we Yoboku and followers have gathered here today to give thanks for Your daily blessings and to ask for Your unchanging grace. In witnessing our spirited singing, we ask that You, God the Parent, become spirited as well.

Last month, on June 30th, we successfully held our 90th Anniversary with the honored presence of Rev. Daisuke Nakayama, the official representative of the Shinbashira; and Mrs. Harue Nakayama, wife of the Shinbashira. I am so grateful. Let us firmly keep in mind the Shinbashira's message as we move forward on this path.

I am also grateful to the presidents of the Women's Association and Young Men's Association for their attendance on the day before, June 29th, allowing us to successfully hold the joint convention commemorating the 70th anniversary of our Women's and Young Men's Associations of America. Bearing in mind the messages conveyed by their respective association presidents, we hope that we will be able to promote the activities of each of these associations.

This month, many people from our diocese have already returned to Jiba or are about to do so. Please guide them so that each of them can receive the Truth of Jiba and return safely and spiritedly to their homes.

Also, next month, we will be holding our Boys and Girls Association Service Convention. We would appreciate Your guidance so that as many members as possible will be able to attend and that this event will be a success.

We pledge to always seek the intention of God the Parent, practice the teachings, and strive to realize the Joyous Life world. Furthermore, we would like to strive toward spiritual growth as we approach the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama.

Dear God the Parent, we humbly ask for You to accept our minds of sincerity so that, even one day sooner, this world will be transformed into one full of joyousness, in which all people of the world mutually help one another in harmony. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

July Monthly Service Sermon

by Rev. Shino Hirai

~A Thought on How to Convey Tenrikyo Teachings~

We just now completed the July monthly service with everyone present. Also, fresh from the 90th Anniversary Service of the Mission Headquarters in America and the 70th Anniversary Joint Convention, I feel I was given this opportunity of giving the sermon this month through parental guidance and I ask for your kind attention for a little while.

It's been 24 years since I became head minister of my church and this is my third or fourth time giving the monthly service sermon here. There were many times when I had a lot on my mind and was unable to be spirited. I feel like whenever I have a lot of concerns in my life, I am asked to provide a sermon.

The biggest concern on my mind at the moment is finding a successor for my church. I was blessed with five children. They all completed Oyasato Seminar and became Yoboku. At the same time, there is no designated successor for my church. This weighs heavily on my mind every day.

Services were very lively during the time of my senior reverend. But as many church followers passed away for rebirth, there were fewer people who came to church. But even during these difficult times, I have always made sure to ask God for help every day. For example,



Rev. Hirai is the head minister of the High Seattle Church.

I would ask God for help if I lost my cell phone, glasses, and at times even my bag. If I can't find something for a few hours, I will ask God for help.

After I ask God for help, whatever I am looking for appears every time. And usually, I would find it at a place I already searched. Afterwards I always put my hands together in appreciation. Sometimes I will voice my plea or appreciation. Whether it is something minor or major, I will always consult with God. Through this process I realized that I am receiving God's blessings. I feel God is close to me during these situations.

Also, we must "entreat God when we are in trouble." There may be some people who feel

guilty that they only ask for help during times of need. There is nothing wrong in doing so. We should be asking God for help precisely during the most difficult times.

If you feel sorry asking for help only when you are in trouble, then you should show your appreciation right away. One way of showing one's appreciation is sharing your experience on how you were saved with others. Perhaps your story will provide inspiration for someone else.

Mr. Daisuke Nakayama, who attended our 90th Anniversary in place of the Shinbashira, provided the following quote in his congratulatory message at the Commemorative Service: "Purchase My sincerity with your own sincerity." This means the amount of sincerity you receive is determined by the amount of work you put into it.

I feel like I am lacking effort. But where I lack effort, I had an idea that partially compensates where I am lacking. If the parent's voice does not reach my children, then I can at least try to reach the hearts of children close in age to my own. There are some young people who sometimes come and visit the church.

Last year, one of those young people would often come to the church and we started to talk about our families during meals. I told this person that they needed to learn from their experiences, and to know it is because of their parents' and God's blessings, they are where they are. After our talk, this young man, who usually does not speak with his father, started to convey more appreciation towards him.

Upon graduating from school last year and returning to his hometown, he wrote a very nice message to me as his "Seattle Mom." I remember years ago when my daughter and I felt very nervous when she started to attend school in New York. I am grateful to everyone at the New York Center for her graduating from school. I still feel appreciation till this day. My kids are being helped by someone somewhere. When I think of that, I feel that it is obvious to repay that debt of gratitude by taking care of someone else's children.

Also, last month throughout the Commemorative festivities, the room I stayed in had a lot of young children. A small child would wake up early in the morning and cry while looking for their mother. Soon afterwards, a five or six-year-old child sleeping nearby would wake up and carry the smaller child to their mother who was doing Hinokishin in the kitchen.

I felt the greatness of the children of our Path in that scene. These young children are going through the same path as their parents, growing up as they are being taught about God's Teachings. Although they may not be fully aware of it, they have inherited the mentality of the Path of our Faith.

I have a request for all of you who grew up this way. All of you young people are focused on a dream for the future. Every once a while, I want you to turn around and be aware of your parents who have supported you while you are focusing on fulfilling your dream. I am sure you

will feel gratitude for them, especially during difficult times or when you are feeling lost.

We just completed the 90th Anniversary of the Mission Headquarters in America, but the passing down of our faith of this Path is much longer. When I was younger, I remembered I used to say something like “I will listen to someone if I understand why.” This kind of reasoning in terms of our Faith will not be fulfilled. That is because there are many things we do not understand until they occur. But if we continue to believe in our Parent, there will come a day when it all makes sense. God taught us “*Just a word, listen what God says.*” If you start listening to God, then there will come a day when it will all make sense.

Things that I felt growing up in a church:
-When there was something good on TV, it was always during evening service.

-Whenever playing started to become really fun, it was time for evening service.

-In the morning, I was still sleepy, but we had morning service.

Even if I felt this way when I young, I started to come to terms with these feelings, the more I learned about the importance of the Service. (In principle, at least...)

You will need patience and perseverance. There is no need for reservation between parent and child. They will stop doing something if they don't want to and they will suddenly enter a rebellious stage in their life. You can perhaps hold back if it was a church follower, but it just makes you angrier with your own child. This

is the beginning of the war of words between parent and children at the High Seattle Church. My children are all over thirty years old now and only come home whenever they please. Whenever I hear of successors taking over their churches, I become envious and give out a sigh. I try different ways to connect with them, but small glimpses of hope are turning into utter hopelessness.

With that being said, I was able to return to Jiba last October and listen to the Shinbashira's sermon. He mentioned that everyone has their own role and obligations, and to not give up and try your best until the end. I have since treasured those words and brought them back home with me. I was very happy. I felt like his words encouraged me through this big worry on my mind. I was able reflect and remind myself that my role is to convey the Teachings to the children of my church followers, as well as to my own children. The only thing I can do is to continue to convey the Teachings without giving up. I thank you for listening to my sermon that had my personal complaints mixed in with it, and I would appreciate any kind of advice at this time.

Lastly, I want to reconfirm within myself the Service that Oyasama taught us through Her 50-year Divine Model. The truth of the church and its' purpose is being a place for salvation work and for performing the service. Let us bring joy to Oyasama as we approach Her 140th Anniversary.

Thank you for your attention today.

News and Announcements

1) AUGUST MONTHLY SERVICE (8/18)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Junjiro Nakatomi, Zen Yukimoto Attendants: Mitsuharu Ito, Jonathan Nomachi

Director: Tomoyoshi Tanaka Offerings Officiant: Paul Tomizawa Sermon: Ray Tadkoro (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

Orange Church: Head Minister Appointment, Request for Special Service

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

3) LAY MINISTER PREPARATORY COUSE / HEAD MINISTER QUALIFICATION COURSE

Since there were less than five applicants for the Lay Minister Preparatory Course English class, scheduled to be held from the end of August, it has been canceled. If someone desires to attend the course using simultaneous interpretation, please contact the Mission HQ by August 15. If someone would like to attend the Head Minister Qualification Course, held from the end of September (9/27~10/17), please contact the Mission Headquarters by September 15.

4) TENRIKYO LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (TLI) & ICHIRETSUKAI SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

TLI applications for the Japanese Language Department (the 2025-2026 academic year) are now available, as well as Ichiretsukai Scholarship applications for Japanese Language Department applicants, during the period specified below. For those who wish to apply, please notify the Mission Headquarters by the end of August. From this year, please download the applications from the TLI homepage (<https://kaigai.tenrikyo.or.jp/tli/top/>). You can also find additional information on the homepage, so please visit the website if you are interested in enrolling.

Form	Application Period	Fee
TLI Japanese Lang. Dept.	August 15~September 20, 2024	None
Ichiretsukai Scholarship	August 15~September 20, 2024	None (for TLI applicants)

5) AUTUMN MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Mission Headquarters will hold its Autumn memorial service on September 14 (Sat), from 7PM.

6) SERVICE ROSTER

We request service performers to communicate their plans to attend the monthly service, including any changes, to the Mission Headquarters by the end of the month prior to their attendance. For example, please communicate your final availability for the September monthly service by the end of this month (August 31, 2024).

7) MISSION HQ PERSONNEL CHANGES

Ms. Sawa Hayashi (Kagawa GC, Odomi BC), who served as joshiseinen at the Mission Headquarters since August 19, 2022, will finish her term and return to Japan on August 21.

COMMITTEE & ASSOCIATION REPORTS

Construction Committee

- * We are gathering estimates to repair the ceiling and exterior wall in the MP Hall second floor bathroom.
- * We are making plans to repair a Tenri Kaikan drain line along Saratoga Street.
- * We are considering looking for a new gardener.

Nurturing & Educational Committee

- * This year’s Oyasato Seminar was held in Jiba, from July 16~22. 10 students from the America-Canada diocese attended the Seminar, and they were granted the truth of the Sazuke on July 20. Also, a pre-seminar was held with Rev. Hiroko Okazaki, OS counselors, and students who wished to participate, from July 9~16.
- * The TSA will be holding a bake sale after the monthly service. There will be snow-cones and snacks available. All funds raised will be put towards future TSA activities.

Public Relations Committee

- * We have incorporated an ongoing section in the Ichiretsu/Newsletter to highlight everyone’s efforts and activities leading up to the 140th anniversary of Oyasama 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).
- * The 90th Anniversary photo exhibit, entitled, “‘A Ninety-Year Path’ Photo Exhibit,” will be available for viewing until the November monthly service.
- * 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.
 - The password for the “Members” tab is “joyouslife.”

Future Path

- * We are currently discussing the necessity of holding an event in June of 2025. Following the SoulFire held in 2022/2023, and the Mission HQ 90th Anniversary Celebration in 2024, the purpose for this event would be to serve as a bridge towards the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama in 2026. This event would be centered around studying “The Doctrine of Tenrikyo,” which was being planned prior to the novel coronavirus pandemic. Once a proposal has been finalized, we will request the feedback of the bishop and the Board of Directors.

Women’s Association

- * District Conventions:

San Francisco	9/28 (Sat)	10:30AM	@ San Mateo Church
Los Angeles	9/29 (Sun)	10AM	@ Mission HQ
Chicago	9/29 (Sun)	10:30AM	@ Midwest Church

- * The book titled “Oshie wo Moto ni” has been published in English, titled “How to Lead a Faith-Based Life.” Those interested may receive the book for \$1 per copy. Please reach out to your District

16 News and Announcements (cont'd.)

Representative or to a Publications officer.

Boys & Girls Association

* Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba: this year's general group, held jointly with the returnees from Hawaii, consisted of: 29 BGA members, 44 staff, 18 International Boys & Girls Hinokishin Corp attendees, and five counselors.

* Currently Recruiting Fife & Drum Corps 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 [moto1884@icloud.com] for more details

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

NY Center

* 8/24~25: BGA Sleepover, Service Convention

* 9/1: Nioigake Day NY District

* 9/12: New semester begins for children's Japanese classes at TCI

Mission HQ Sermons



TLI Application



90th Anniversary Doyusha Video!



90th Anniversary YouTube Link!



*Thanks for
coming to the
90th!
Check out this
short video
here!*

2024 Children's Pilgrimage to Jiba!!



though everyone usually gets a turn, occasionally someone may be chosen twice in a week if the previous speaker didn't realize they were recently chosen, or they may not be chosen for a while. After the speech, I offer a brief talk.

As a result, I have to think of something to say every day when I am at Mission Headquarters, which can be quite challenging. Sometimes I know what I will say the day before or even a few days in advance, but often, I find myself searching for topics after breakfast each morning. This routine has been ongoing for over 14 years, and I often find myself saying, "it can't be helped."

Because of this, I began reading the *Anecdotes of Oyasama* (hereafter *Anecdotes*) in January this year (2024). By early June, I had finished reading all of *Anecdotes*.

I first encountered *Anecdotes* when I came to America during high school. The *Anecdotes* was published on January 26, 1976, during the 90th Anniversary of Oyasama, which was the year before I came back to the United States.

During high school, I stayed at and was taken care of by the Central Fresno Church. The head minister, Rev. Masutsugu Yukimoto, would read the *Anecdotes* after every evening service.

The *Anecdotes* contains 200 stories, and I recall that even after we finished reading all of them, he would restart from the beginning and read it all over again, repeatedly.

So, although I didn't remember the details, I had a general recollection of their contents. For example, I learned that Oyasama enjoyed "kaki-no-ha sushi" (persimmon leaf sushi) and engaged in strength contests with early followers.

Starting in January this year, I began reading a few anecdotes at a time and realized that I had some mistaken memories, which I was able to correct, for which I am very grateful.

I also noticed that it was difficult to read Oyasama's words in Japanese. Oyasama spoke in a dialect known as "Yamato-kotoba," and I found it challenging to accurately follow and read aloud the characters written in the *Anecdotes*. There were many phrases and expressions where I thought, "Is this really how Oyasama said it?"

The wording was often different from how I usually speak. I grew up in Tenri City, attending kindergarten, elementary, and junior high school there, so I believe I have some understanding of "Yamato-kotoba," and I think I actually used it, but there were still expressions that made me go, "Huh?" Therefore, when reading Oyasama's

words, I focused on accurately following each Hiragana character and reading them aloud.

This time, by re-reading the *Anecdotes*, I realized that there were some parts where my vague understanding of the contents differed slightly. I also found myself often puzzled by Oyasama's phrases and wording, leading me to feel the need to read the *Anecdotes*, particularly Oyasama's words, more carefully. By doing so, I believe I might gain a new and more accurate understanding of Oyasama's words, which could lead to deeper insights.

I believe Oyasama's words are rich with meaning. In other words, they are deeply layered. While one could superficially grasp Her words, it seems that Oyasama's words have multiple layers, and as one gains more experience—spiritually deepening one's faith—new insights emerge.

We sometimes explain the teachings to others, but I wonder if, somewhere along the way, we might start to think we “know” the teachings. When we carefully re-examine the teachings, we might find that they differ from what we had previously understood.

That's why studying the teachings is essential. It is also necessary to constantly check whether our understanding and interpretation of the teachings are correct. By doing so, we may

achieve a more solid understanding of the teachings, and we might also come to understand aspects of Oyasama's parental love that we hadn't noticed before.

In other words, by re-reading the *Anecdotes* this time, I felt that studying the teachings repeatedly as we accumulate various spiritual experiences might lead to a deeper understanding of Oyasama's parental love.

If you haven't read the *Anecdotes* for a while, I recommend you re-read them. We also plan to start reading the *Anecdotes* again at Mission Headquarters.

Furthermore, for the past several years, a retranslation of the English version of the *Anecdotes* has been worked on. Last year, that work was completed, and the revised *Anecdotes* will be published. I believe that it will ultimately reach your hands, and when it does, I hope you will pick up the newly translated *Anecdotes* and read it, which I believe will further deepen your understanding of Oyasama's parental love.

(translation by S. So)

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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.