

Tenrikyo

newsletter



Yoboku Gathering 2023!

Last month, we held our Yoboku Gathering at the Mission HQ. Participants watched the sermon given in August by Rev. Kazumoto Kubo, head minister of Kojimachi Grand Church, which was followed by group discussions.

Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters in America

www.tenrikyo.com

December 2023

“A Work in Progress” by Bishop Fukaya

— *Sunlight* —

It's already December. On the 31st of this month, we will conclude the first year leading up to Oyasama's 140th Anniversary. Furthermore, the new year will begin the second year.

I want to give my sincere thanks for all the support we received this year.

Once we welcome in the New Year, we will only have 6 months until our 90th Anniversary, which will be on June 30th. Leading up to our anniversary, I hope that we, in this diocese, will mutually heighten each other's spirits and work hand in hand so we can have a successful and smooth anniversary.

For the upcoming year, I hope that you will continue to support our Mission Headquarters just as you did this year, or better yet, even more than this year.

Switching topics, at the Mission Headquarters, we clean the sanctuary from 5:30 am every day. The earliest the sun rises here is around 5:45 am, so the sanctuary cleaning always starts before the sun rises. This means that the cleaning starts while it is still

dark, so of course we turn on the sanctuary lights. However, the lights in the sanctuary are not bright LED bulbs and there are not that many, so it is still relatively dark in the sanctuary even with the lights on.

When we do the morning cleanup, we use cleaning cloths and mops. Occasionally, the lint from the cloths and mops fall on the upper dais or the stage area. The mop head is yellow, so of course the lint is also yellow. However, this color matches that of the upper dais flooring and stage, which makes it difficult to notice any lint. The lint is extremely small, which also makes it even harder to see. Sometimes dust balls are hard to notice as well. It would be fine

(continued on page 18)

Coming Up

- * **Spring Grand Service Sermon (1/21)**
 - Bishop Fukaya (E)
- * **TSA Winter Conference**
 - Dec. 26~29 @ Mission HQ
- * **Rice-Pounding (*Mochitsuki*)**
 - Dec. 28 @ Mission HQ
- * **New Years Service**
 - January 1, from 7AM @ Mission HQ

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

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

COVER DESIGN: Jun Nakagawa

VOLUME L (50)

December, 2023

published by: TENRIKYO MISSION HEADQUARTERS IN AMERICA
2727 EAST FIRST STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90033

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

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

November Monthly Service Prayer

November 19, 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 created this world and human beings where there was no form, in order to see us lead the Joyous Life, and to thus share in that joy. At the arrival of the promised time, You revealed Yourself through Oyasama as Your living Shrine, and enlightened us to this ultimate Teaching, which has spread to the world.

Here in America and Canada, we are blessed with those who rely on the Divine Model of Oyasama and strive for world salvation. This is all due to the blessings of God the Parent and the Parental love of Oyasama, and each day we walk on the path of single-heartedly helping others be saved.

As this fine day is our November Monthly Service, from now, receiving the Truth of Jiba, we service performers will unite our minds and joyously perform the seated service and Teodori service dance.

In Your presence, Yoboku and followers have gathered here, looking forward to this day. We give thanks for Your daily grace and ask for Your continued blessings. Please witness our spirited singing and become spirited as well.

Yesterday, we were able to successfully hold our annual Yoboku Gathering in a hybrid format. For this, we are truly grateful. This was an opportunity for the followers of our Tenrikyo community to connect with each other. We ask for Your guidance so that this path expands as we reaffirm our mission as Yoboku and continue to encourage one another.

In light of the unstable situation in the world today, we are keenly aware of the importance of pressing forward without slowing our efforts toward realizing God's intention of the Joyous Life world.

Also, with only about seven months remaining until our 90th anniversary, we pray that the minds of all followers in our diocese will be united as one, and that we can make this anniversary an important milestone for our future.

God the Parent, please guide us where we are lacking, so that we can settle into our hearts that everyone in the world are equally brothers and sisters so that, even one day sooner, this world will be transformed into one in which all people help one another. In unison with the whole congregation, I humbly pray that You bless us so.

November Monthly Service Sermon by Rev. Kunihito Fumioka

~*Otasuke (Salvation Work)—Let Us
Begin from Offering Prayers*~

We have just completed the Mission Headquarters' November monthly service, led by the Bishop and Mrs. Fukaya, and together with the entire congregation. I am very thankful for this. I have been appointed to deliver today's sermon, and thus, may I ask for your kind attention?

Presently, we strive to make progress daily in the "three years, one thousand days" activity period leading up towards Oyasama's 140th Anniversary. In Instruction Four, which was announced by the Shinbashira one year ago, it says, "The period of 'three years, one thousand days' that leads up to an anniversary of Oyasama is a time for us to actively move forward on the path of single-hearted salvation with our sights set on the Divine Model." The term "single-hearted salvation," in my opinion, is to always think of doing the salvation work and to always seek opportunities to engage in salvation work.

However, I think there are many



Rev. Fumioka is the head minister of the Tenrikyo Midwest Church, located near Chicago, Illinois.

who feel that the bar is being raised when we hear the term, "salvation work." This can be so because we get trapped with a notion that "salvation work" is "to administer the Sazuke" and "receive miraculous blessings;" thus, "saving people's lives," which can make people become hesitant.

But when we substitute the term, "salvation work," with its original Japanese, "*OTASUKE*," it may help to lower the bar. I would like to proceed with today's sermon by using the term "*Otasuke*." "O" is honorific and "tasuke" means to "help others be saved."

During the special lecture in the “Visit by a Church Headquarters Official,” back in February this year, Rev. Masaharu Matsuda, Honbu-in, said he learned that there are more than 30 kanji characters that can be read as “*tasuke* (help others be saved).” Later, I actually checked the online dictionary. There were a few duplicates from the nouns and verbs but there were indeed more than 20 kanji characters that can be read as “*tasuke*,” and the meaning of each character ranged from to save, to help, to help others be saved, to support, aid, contribute, guide, serve, etc. There are various meanings of “*tasuke*” and Rev. Matsuda also said that since there are many meanings of “*tasuke*,” there has to be something we all can do.

When I was looking up these kanji characters, I noticed something very interesting. As there were more than 20 kanji characters, there were some that I had never seen before, and among them, a few drew my special attention.

For example, let’s see this kanji. “佑” This kanji reads as “*tasuke*.” Kanji derives from pictograms. The left side of the kanji is “亻,” which means a “person.” The right side of

the character is “right,” in terms of left-right. So I can interpret this as “*tasuke*” is to “be on the right side of someone.” Further, there is another kanji, “佐.” Apparently, according to the online Japanese dictionary, this also reads as “*tasuke*.” The left side is “亻,” which means a “person.” The right side of the character is “left,” in terms of left-right. So I can interpret this as “*tasuke*” is to “be on the left side of someone.”

To be on the side of someone who is suffering from illnesses or other problems is indeed “*tasuke* (to help someone be saved).” In Instruction Four, it says “let us reach out to them with love and care.” The original Japanese used in Instruction Four is “*yorisou*.” The literal translation of the word “*yorisou*” is to be on the side of someone caringly, just as these kanji pictograms indicate.

There was another shocking discovery while I was researching. There is another kanji that can be read as “*tasuke*,” which is “侑.” The left side is a “person” and the character on the right side is “existence.” So I can interpret this kanji as the “existence of someone.” Even if you cannot be physically on the side of someone,

to “be there for someone” is also “*Tasuke*.”

So what does that mean? To elaborate on this, there are many ways to connect with someone such as a phone call, an email, a text message, etc. The video chat that I thought was only in Sci-Fi movies when I was little is now a reality. We can do this with your smartphone right at your hand. That is to say, even if you are distance away from someone, you can utilize your smartphone to connect with that person. Even if you are not good at using a smartphone, there is a landline phone. You can also write a letter or send a card. There are many ways to connect with someone. Reach out to someone. After the pandemic, why not get in touch with someone whom you haven’t talked to for a while? That is, in my opinion, the first step of *Otasuke*, salvation work.

We can start from a casual talk, and if you encounter someone who needs our *Otasuke*, let us perform the service and pray for that person. In the Instruction Four, it says, “If we find people who are suffering from illnesses or other problems, let us reach out to them with love and care and pray for a solution through performing

the service.” During the morning and evening services or during the service at your church, let us pray for that person. Praying can be done by anyone, anywhere, anytime. There is nothing difficult about this. At home and/or at your church, let us perform the service. I am very certain that your church will also conduct a prayer service. If you are far away from your church, contact your reverend. He or she will surely perform the service at the church. Let’s put it into action.

With regard to praying for someone, please allow to me share some of my experiences.

This was before the pandemic. A female colleague of mine, let me call her Emma, using her first initial, came to the office with a pink baseball cap one day. I really didn’t pay much attention, but I realized that even after a few days, a week, she comes to the office with that pink baseball cap. Feeling uneasy, I sent her an email, saying, “I apologize if I am wrong, but are you sick or something? I don’t know if you know but, outside of the office, I am a minister of a church called Tenrikyo, and my job is to pray for someone. If you are ill, can I pray for you?”

Then she replied,” Thank you so much. It means a lot. I was diagnosed with breast cancer. By all means, please pray for me.”

Then the pandemic hit and I was forced to work from home for 17 months, and I lost opportunities to talk to her. But I kept her in my prayers during that time. I prayed for her during the morning and evening service every day.

After coming back to the office, I began to see Emma in the office again. So I sent her an email to see how she was doing. She replied and told me that her chemotherapy ended a few months ago, her hair came back, and she is doing well. It was wonderful news.

That was almost two years ago. Also earlier this year, sometime in January or February, I was having a small conversation with another female colleague of mine, let me call her Ella, using her first initial, who also works closely with Emma. She says, “Kuni, are you still doing that minister thing?” I told Ella, “Yes, I am. If you need a prayer, let me know. I’ll pray for you.” I assume Emma told her team member that “Kuni is a minister and he is (was?) praying for me,” or

something like that.

Feeling the urge to pray for Emma, I took action, which has led to help her be saved. Not only that, it may have led to spreading the word. This has opened a door for me to pray for people in the office.

Please allow me to share with you one more experience. At my church in Chicago, there is a Judo club in the basement of the worship hall. In the Judo club, there is a fellow instructor, who has been suffering from a series of injuries. The executive instructor of the club introduces me to new members as I am an instructor of the club and also the head minister of the church above the Judo club. Because of that, everyone, including the students’ parents, know that I am the minister of the church.

This was before my friend became an instructor. The first injury he suffered was a rotator cuff tear. At that time, I told him, “You know I am the minister of the church upstairs, and my job is to pray for someone. So may I pray for you for a fast and sound recovery from the injury?” He, then, replied, “thank you so much. Please pray for me.” So, I kept him in my prayers during the daily service.

His injury eventually healed and he started to join the practice again. Then a year or two later, he suffered from another injury. He broke his ribs during the practice. So I told him that I would put him back in our prayer list and I prayed for him during the daily service.

Then, one day during this summer, he texted me all of a sudden and told me that his stepmother was hospitalized and was in the ICU, suffering from kidney and heart failure. He asked me if I could pray for her. Immediately, I went to the worship hall and prayed for her well being. I also added her in our prayer list and prayed for her during the daily service.

A few days later, when I was wondering how she was doing, my friend texted me and told me that although she is not out of the woods yet, she regained consciousness and the doctor took her off of the ventilator. He also said that “Your prayers are working. Thank you very much.” Then about a week later, he showed up to a practice. As soon as he saw me, he came up and told me that his stepmother is “out of the woods and doing well.” It was such nice news to hear.

I think this was a fruit of not missing opportunities and immediately getting into action, which had resulted in my friend to seek help from Tenrikyo. Both Emma and my friend said, “Your prayers worked,” or “Your prayers helped.”

Further, Emma also told her colleague that, “Kuni is praying for me.” I did not even have to say anything. She spread the word. I don’t think the word “Tenrikyo” is known in the office nor in the Judo club, but at least, “I offer prayers” is spreading little by little.

The pre-anniversary activity period for Oyasama’s anniversary is a time for us to exert more effort than usual to grow more spiritually. Let us make extra effort and reach out to those who need help. I am pretty sure there are many who need someone to talk to. In many cases, just letting out is enough for that person. Let us listen to the person caringly and pray for a solution for that person. Even if you still cannot offer a prayer to that person, you can still pray for that person at home or at the church. Let’s take action.

Moreover, at the Visit by the Church Headquarters Official I attended 10 years ago for Oyasama’s 130th

Anniversary, the lecturer said, “if that person says, ‘Thank you for your help.’ Then that is *Otasuke*, helping someone be saved. Helping someone is *Otasuke*.” Even a small act of kindness can be *Otasuke* for many people. Let us do something. Call someone. Send a text message or an email. Let’s just do it. God the Parent and Oyasama are watching and they will provide us with opportunities for *Otasuke* that only YOU can do, and they will be happy to see you taking action.

We will never know what happens, but that is something we don’t have to worry about. That is God’s realm. As long as we put our hearts into performing the service and pray for that person, “God the Parent will accept our sincerity and provide free and unlimited workings accordingly,” as indicated in the Instruction Four. If we pray for that person sincerely, God will work for us. God the Parent and Oyasama are waiting for us to take action. Let’s start by reaching out to someone and caring for them.

Today, we often find out about a friend being sick or suffering from an accident or injury through social media. That can be a starting point. Let’s start by praying for that person

to be saved.

In the Instruction Four, it says, “each and every Yoboku raising his or her awareness of being Oyasama’s instrument.” With respect to “being Oyasama’s instruments,” the Shinbashira explained in detail as following in his sermon at Autumn Grand Service at Church Headquarters in 2012: “God truly wants us to replace our self-centered minds with a mind of saving others.” Further, he continued: “More than anything else, maintaining the mind of saving others and implementing salvation work will accord with God the Parent’s intention and lead to one’s true salvation as well. Rather than merely praying for one’s own salvation or one’s family’s salvation, it is important to make a point of trying to help others be saved,” and that is “the act that brings the greatest joy to God the Parent.”

Also re-visiting the past Instructions, in Instruction Two, it says, “Making sincere efforts for the salvation of people suffering from illness or other troubles is indeed the supreme mission of Yoboku. Even in our local communities, there are many who need our help. Let us, at all times, be sensitive to people’s needs so that we

can take every opportunity to engage in salvation work with loving care.”

Further, in Instruction Three, it says, “Salvation work begins with paying attention to those around us. If we find people who are suffering from illnesses or other problems, let us first pray for a solution, speak proactively to them, and reach out to them.”

Let us put out our antennas, pay attention to those around us, take every opportunity to reach out, and extend our helping hands. Let us be there for that person with love and care, perform the service and pray for a solution for that person. That is “the act that brings the greatest joy to God the Parent.” In this seasonable time toward the anniversary of Oyasama, let us do something. Let us put out antennas and seek opportunities for *Otasuke*. Such effort will lead us to growing more spiritually without us even realizing it. Let’s advance together so that we may be able to “bring joy and peace of mind to Oyasama.”

Toward the 90th Anniversary of the Mission Headquarters that will be observed next year and toward the 140th Anniversary of Oyasama, which will be observed roughly in two years, let us take the first step forward and

make efforts to bring joy to God the Parent and Oyasama.

Before I conclude today’s talk, please allow me to go over the main point of today’s talk. There are many meanings of “*Tasuke*.” There must be something we can do. *Otasuke* begins from praying. Let us pay attention to those around us and seek every opportunity to pray for a solution. Praying for someone can be done anytime, anywhere, and by anyone. Even I started from here. If you have not been able to take the first step forward, let us start from praying for someone.

Thank you so much for your kind attention.



**You can now view Rev. Fumioka's sermon
video here!**

News and Announcements

1) DECEMBER MONTHLY SERVICE (12/17)

Officiant: Bishop Assistants: Tomoyoshi Tanaka, Takahiko Hayashi
 Attendants: Motohiro Iwahashi, Gary Yashiki Director: Kuniaki Hasegawa
 Offerings Officiant: Robert Shimizu Sermon: Marlon Okazaki (E)

2) CHURCH AFFAIRS

Contact number change: The contact number for Columbia Church has changed.

3) OYASATO SEMINAR PRELIMINARY SESSION

This year's Oyasato Seminar preliminary session will be held in-person at the Mission Headquarters from December 28 (Thu) ~ 30 (Sat).

4) TSA WINTER CONFERENCE

This year's winter conference will be held at the Mission Headquarters, from December 26 (Tue) ~ 29 (Fri). Registration has ended, but we will continue to accept applicants until a few days before the event. However, there will be an additional fee of \$20 (total \$70). The limit of participants is 35 persons, and spaces will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

Eligibility has been opened up to allow all students of high school age, including freshmen (14 years and older), to attend.

5) END-OF-YEAR / NEW YEAR ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

* The Mission Headquarters will be holding our annual end-of-year cleanup from 12:30 PM following the December 26th Day Service (Tue). We will also be holding our annual Rice Cake Pounding (Mochitsuki), planned for December 28 (Thu), and we ask for hinokishin from those that live near the Mission Headquarters.

* Our New Year's Day Service will be held on January 1 (Mon) from 7 AM (we will open the portals and prepare the offerings from 6:40). If you are a service performer local to the Mission Headquarters and are assigned to perform the New Year's Day Service, please do not be late.

6) 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. Applicants without Japanese citizenship must apply for a visa, which can take several months, so please let the Mission Headquarters office know as soon as possible if you are planning to attend. Also, please be aware that there may be circumstances where the English Class may be canceled, or the visa cannot be obtained.

7) TENRIKYO HINOKISHIN DAY

We request each district to begin preparations for next year's Tenrikyo Hinokishin Day. We will distribute the Hinokishin Day Plan Report documents to all district representatives, and we ask you to submit them to the Mission Headquarters by December 26.

8) ALL YOBOKU ACTIVITY DAY

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

9) 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.

10) THREE DAY COURSE

Next year's Three Day Course will be held at the Mission Headquarters from February 23 ~ 25. Applications will be distributed this month, and the submission deadline is 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.

11) APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL ICHIRETSUKAI SCHOLARSHIP

The application for the 2024 Special Ichiretsukai Scholarship is now available for students who will attend college or university next fall. The application deadline is December 31, 2023.

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 next 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 next year's spring grand service by the end of this month (December 31, 2023).

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 will now be viewable in both English and Japanese, beginning with the August 2023 monthly service sermon video.
- The (currently five) videos titled "Stories Inspired by Oyasama" can now be viewed on the Mission Headquarters homepage. We plan to add more content once they are completed and ready for publication.
- Video records of the SoulFire are now available for viewing.

Women's Association

- * 106th Tenrikyo Women's Association Convention April 19, 2024 (Fri), from 9:30 AM at the Church HQ Inner Courtyard
- * Meetings with Committee Heads by the Chairwoman are currently being held.
- * TWA America 70th Anniversary Commemorative photo album, joint-convention, and offerings are under consideration.
- * Gathering for District Leaders January 20, 2024 (Sat), from 2PM via Zoom

Boys & Girls Association

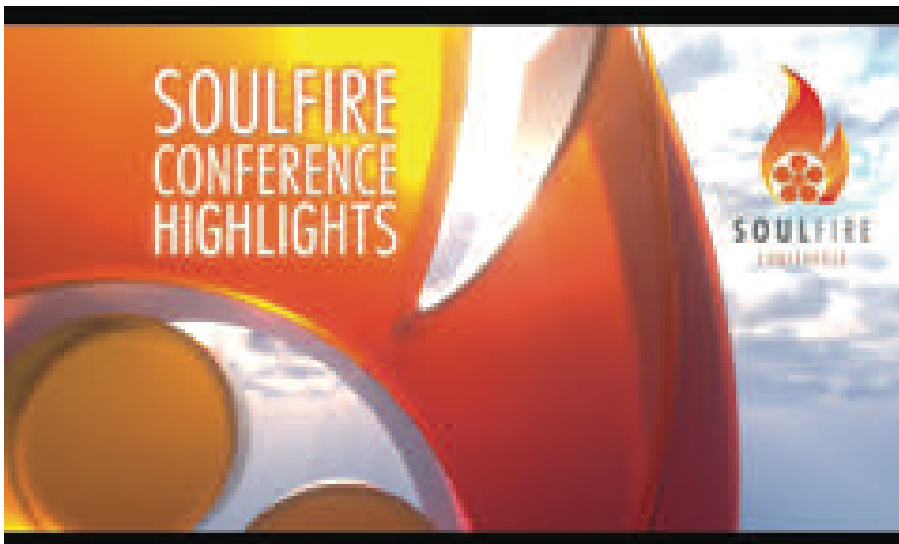
- * We are recruiting new koteki members! Would you like to join your Tenrikyo friends to do koteki (fife & drum corps) activities in a unity of mind? We are conducting activities that teach mutual help and the joy of exerting one's sincerity for the salvation of others. Please contact a BGA committee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

- * We are planning to hold an end-of-year gathering at the East Hall this month on the Saturday evening before the Mission HQ monthly service.
- * We will be cleaning the East Hall towards the new year.

NY Center

- * December 17: Holiday Bazaar
- * December 30: Rice Cake Pounding (mochitsuki)
- * January 12: New Year's gathering at the Tenri Cultural Institute



SoulFire Videos Here!

Church History

Kotoku Truth Church

The fourth head minister of America West Church, Reverend Yoshikazu Takahashi, fell ill in the year before Oyasama's 110th Anniversary. Just when there were signs of jaundice becoming apparent and his life in danger, the third head minister of Kotoku Branch Church came over from Japan and gave us a talk. "We would like to establish a branch church for which the fourth head minister becomes the parent. Currently there is a fellowship that is run by you, but please make a resolve to make it a church." From my grandmother's generation, I am a third-generation follower, and further, Kotoku Branch Church and America West Church were where I grew up, so I knew where that intention and desire was coming from. However, I was worried how my husband would understand the situation as he was still not familiar with the Tenrikyo teachings. The 3rd head minister of Kotoku Branch Church spent four hours talking to my husband and I (of which it was later translated by 5th head minister of America West

Church Takahiko Hayashi). We were told we can make our "Yes" or "No" decision on this matter the next day, which was also the monthly service for America West Church. I wanted to respond to our head minister's desires, so together with my mother, who also came from Japan, asked for my husband's cooperation, and got my husband's "Yes" answer. This became the origin of Kotoku Truth Church. We inherited the church name of Higashi Kotoku Branch Church, which was the church branch that was established under Kotoku Branch Church back on November 27, 1954 in Kyoto. In addition to the church affiliation change of America West Church, on August 26, 1996, I was appointed as the third head minister, and further granted for the church to be moved and renamed.

Years later, the fourth head minister of America West Church recovered from his illness upon receiving God the Parent's blessings, and continues to always support Kotoku Truth Church. We also received marvelous blessings. When my husband and I attended a seminar together for the first time in Jiba, there were nine individuals who came from overseas. They came from Hawaii and Brazil and understood Japanese, but only my husband did not comprehend Japanese. But we were thankful that

we had a member from the Overseas Department translate for him during that time. My husband also studied at the Spiritual Development Course at America Mission Headquarters during Bishop Tsuji's tenure. Our three children also attended Oyasato Seminar from 16 years of age and loved their times at Jiba through their experience at Seminar. Our parent church's head minister created happi coats with the name of Kotoku Truth Church in Japanese, and my parents supported us as they reached out to many people in Japan. As a result, within Japan we were blessed with about 20 yoboku, three spiritual development course graduates, and people attending their first besseki lectures. My parents was also granted by the head minister of Kotoku Branch Church the gathering place name of "Kosei." The name includes the Japanese symbol "truth" and used that meaning to name our Kotoku Truth Church. We are thankful for this path and to our head minister of Kotoku Branch Church for allowing us to see this forward vision.

In January 2011, my father entered the hospital due to an illness. My third son, Ryo, who adored my father very much, would go visit him during his days off from school. During that same time when I returned to Jiba, Ryo went through a major event.

Through this event, our head minister advised "since it was a great time to overcome such an event at Jiba, please make a resolve to attend the English Spiritual Development course that starts in April." Upon returning to the U.S., we filed paperwork for an extended school leave and mapped out our next steps. 2011 was also the year when the tsunami happened, so we were worried about going back to Japan during the mid-March timeframe. However, because Ryo was saved from such big trouble, and as promised in our resolution, we returned to Jiba. Although 2011 was an unforgettable year as my father passed away at the age of 90 on April 12th, it was also a year for which we were blessed with a wonderful encounter. Ryo's eventual marriage partner, Hiroko, graduated from college in March that year, and attended the Japanese Spiritual Development course that started in April. The two first met each other at a Boys and Girls Association nurturing class. I am thankful for the two to meet each other.

I myself at 20 years old, was nurtured by Reverend Jutarō Hayashi, the 1st head minister of America West Church, and after four years of studying and living at Kotoku Branch Church devoting my time as a formal Tenrikyo missionary, I was able to go

to the U.S. at the age of 24. However, as instructed by my head minister, the four years of my church service at that time, was nurturing members of the Students Association, Boys & Girls Association, and the Fife & Drum Corps. I was able to learn a lot from these services, and as I reflect back, I am grateful that I was able to go through such a big experience. The place that Ryo and Hiroko met was also through a class to study the nurturing of the Boys & Girls

association members, so I am grateful for God the Parent, Oyasama, and our ancestors to oversee and guide us.

As long as I continue to be alive, be well, and until my mind becomes blurry, I would like to continue my path to repay my blessings and offer my gratitude to my spiritual parents who have nurtured me through this day.

Share Our Joy of Faith! My 90th Anniversary
Share Our Joy of Faith with Our Family, Friends, and Communities!



We had other events planned in the Seattle area, so instead of waiting until October, we decided to carry out the All Yoboku Activity Day ahead of time. There were 7 participants, who had gathered for the first time in a long time, and we watched videos of Jiba, and read the Instruction Four together. When we were studying instruments, we had a hard time getting a good tone at first, but after repeating it over and over again, we were able to play with a good tone and rhythm. Overall, we were able

to study very comfortably.

The potluck lunch was lively and delicious. We'd like to do our best to encourage more people next time so that we can increase the number of people.

Share Our Joy of Faith! My 90th Anniversary
Share Our Joy of Faith with Our Family, Friends, and Communities!



Brian, Susan and Robert Yamasaki (when he was back home from school in New York) have been dedicating their Saturdays to cutting back the bougainvillea that has become overgrown on the east side of Hollywood church.

~~~

On Sunday, September 24th, we participated in a volunteer event hosted by The San Diego River Park Foundation, as a Nioigake activity of the San Diego district. We removed invasive weeds to protect the native plant species that live in the San Diego River estuary. There were 13 participants.



if we could notice these while we are cleaning, but oftentimes we do not.

Once the cleaning is done, I sit at center stage below the upper dais and do a closing prayer with everyone who participated. During this time, I sometimes notice lint on the floor, so I go pick it up after the closing prayer is finished. When I am sitting down, my eye level is closer to the floor, so it's easier to see the lint. However, once I get up and walk to the area where the lint was, I sometimes have a hard time finding it. It is indeed hard to see the lint unless your line of sight is slightly above the floor or at a good angle.

Once the closing prayer is finished, I survey the stage from edge to edge to see if there is any lint that was missed. Even though I may not see any at this time, I sometimes notice lint just prior to starting the morning service.

Our Mission Headquarters sanctuary faces towards Jiba, which is toward west-northwest. Therefore, when the sun rises during the summer, the sun's rays shine through the glass windows on the north side. The sun rises before morning service so during morning service, the sanctuary is bright with sunlight. If we open the windows on the north side, the sunlight will directly hit the upper dais floor, so we do not open these windows. However, the sunlight passes through the frosted glass windows and the upper dais and stage gets lit up. Sometimes the sun's rays are so strong that the light reflects off the floor and shines onto

the shrines.

At this time, when the sunlight shines on the upper dais and stage, I am able to see all the lint and dust balls on the floor, which were not noticeable during morning clean up. I believe this is due to the angle of the sun, meaning it isn't shining straight down, but from a more horizontal angle. Sometimes I can clearly see small dust particles on the upper dais that we just had mopped and cleaned thoroughly. However, this could also be because some time had passed since we finished the morning cleanup.

When I see this spectacle of dust, it reminds me of the magnificence of sunlight.

I am sure you all have experienced this, but when the sunlight passes through a gap in the curtains and creates a beam of light that shines into the room, you are able to see the dust particles floating inside the room. Usually we cannot see this, but due to this beam of light, we are able to see the drifting dust particles. During such times, I think to myself, "Is it really okay to be in this dusty room and breathe in all this dust?"

When we switch out the metaphor of "sunlight" with the workings of God the Parent or the teachings, we are able to better comprehend a lot of things.

Oyasama taught us the teaching of the "Eight Dusts of the Mind," and because of this, we are able to be cautious on how we use our minds daily. In other words, we can say we have the "sunlight" to perceive things, or we can use this "sunlight" to il-

illuminate areas of darkness. If we were not taught the teaching of the “Eight Dusts of the Mind,” we would pay less attention to our mindset. I feel we would accumulate dusts of the mind unknowingly and this would eventually lead to our suffering because we would not know that this dust is the very cause of our various illnesses and troubles.

On top of that, we would not be able to understand the concept of “negative causality,” and we would not know the thought process of how to cut off “negative causality.” Once “sunlight” shines upon us, or to put it another way, once God the Parent’s workings or teachings shines upon our minds, we are able to notice our “dusts.”

Similarly, even with the same light from the sun, depending on its angle, there are things we can see and things we might not be able to see.

I believe that the lint and dust balls on the sanctuary’s upper dais and stage are easier to see in the morning light because the light comes from the sun at its lowest position just above the horizon. This is similar to when the light from a sunset hits a person and their shadow is projected larger than the actual person. So I believe the morning sunlight hits the lint and dust balls and it projects a larger shadow, which makes it easier to notice. If the sun is shining down from a higher angle, I think it would be harder to notice the lint and dust balls.

Another example is when the light shines like a beam allowing one to see the dust

particles floating in a room. In this case, if the light was not in a beam form, we would not be able to see the floating dust.

When I think about such situations, I believe the way a person reflects on their illnesses or difficult situations changes depending on the angle of the “sunlight,” God the Parent’s workings or teachings. It also changes depending on the “type” of “sunlight,” in other words, which teachings are shining upon you.

Furthermore, how we accept the “sunlight” will alter how we understand God the Parent’s message. I feel even if we hear the same teaching or receive the same blessings, depending on our mental state, we would comprehend them in different ways.

There is no difference in the sunlight, no matter where you are in the world. Wherever you may be, the sun shines upon all of us equally.

In the same way, the “sunlight,” which is God’s workings and teachings, shines throughout the world without discrimination. However, as I mentioned previously, our mental state alters how we perceive the “sunlight” shown to us. Also, due to the various “sunlight” from God the Parent, we are able to distinctly and clearly perceive situations that were once not visible or hard for us to see. Therefore, if we hold on dearly to the teachings of God the Parent, we will be able to comprehend the true nature of our various illnesses and difficult situations in life.

What do you all think?



# 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](http://tenrikyo.com)  
Tenrikyo Mission Headquarters • 2727 East 1st St • Los Angeles, CA • 90033



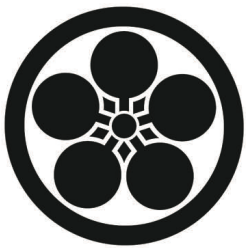
TENRIKYO MISSION HEADQUARTERS IN AMERICA  
2727 EAST FIRST STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90033

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
PERMIT NO.30002

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## 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.**