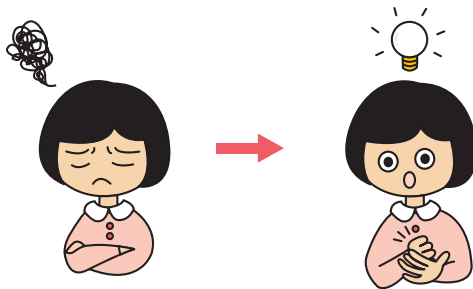


## The Four Noble Truths

~ The Teaching for Ending Life's Suffering ~



This month, we are going to learn about the teaching of The Four Noble Truths which comprise a kind of problem-solving equation that can lead us to perfect liberation. This doctrine's fundamental process for solving our problems is divided into the four stages: the Truth of Suffering, the Truth of Cause, the Truth of the Path and the Truth of Extinction.

The word "truth" in the term "Four Noble Truths" is translated from a Chinese ideograph meaning "to make clear" or "to discern clearly." The Truth of Suffering means to clearly look at the actual situation when one is suffering, in order to have a grasp and recognition of it. The Truth of Cause means to search for a cause of one's suffering, and to clearly realize what it is. The Truth of the Path tells us what practice we should use to dispel suffering, in other words, this means to do good deeds continuously. And the Truth of Extinction refers to a state of true happiness without any suffering.

Have you ever had the experience of being forced to spend time with someone you did not get along with? That person may have been your sibling, school friend or colleague . . .

*12 Essentials for Good Living*

Let's apply the Four Noble Truths to the case above. We'll take an office colleague as an example.

First of all, it is important to look squarely and honestly at your suffering without turning your face away. Instead, you must honestly try to see your own suffering and its real cause. You may find that you are not capable of accepting the other person, and are causing yourself to suffer by thinking, "Why is she like that? She should behave more properly!" This is the Truth of Suffering. Please consider the reason why you can't get along well with this person; is it because someone is causing her trouble? It may be that you are the person making her unhappy! "Yes, that's it" you may realize. "I've been looking only at her shortcomings." This is the Truth of Cause. Then, you might think, "Maybe I should try to find her strong points instead. I'll have a talk with her." When you look at her from a different angle in this way, you will find that a compassionate consideration for her arises in your mind. There are many things you can do for her: speaking to her in gentle words, meeting her with a smiling face, and so on. This is the Truth of the Path.

Gradually, her mind will open, and she will gain a new perspective. When that happens, you will truly feel delighted at how well this teaching works. This is the Truth of Extinction.

If you can change the suffering that you face in your life into hope and courage, you will take a positive attitude toward all things that may happen around you, and feel truly alive each day as well.

## Rissho Kosei-kai International of South Asia Center Completed

## Special Topics



On January 30th of 2010, the ceremony celebrating the completion of the Center of Rissho Kosei-kai International of South Asia in Bangkok was held, with President Niwano in attendance. About 400 participants gathered for the ceremony, including members from South Asian countries, officers from the Rissho Kosei-kai headquarters in Tokyo, people involved with the Center's construction, and distinguished guests. President Niwano named the Center's lecture hall "Zen-yu Hall (Good Friends Hall)" in the hopes that people in South Asia can be good friends with one other. The board chairs and ministers from the South Asia district met there next day. The Youth Leader Seminar 2010 was also held there for 3 days from the following day. Thirty-six youth members took part in the lectures and workshops to study the teachings of the Lotus Sutra.

# The Practice of Being Satisfied with Little

President of Rissho Kosei-kai **Nichiko Niwano**

## Desire as Morally Neutral

These days, things are so overly abundant that we seem to be part of a consumer culture that puts anything we want into our hands, whether we really need it or not.

Family finances are tight for many of us because of the present economic downturn, but we still cannot easily change our habit of satisfying ourselves by obtaining the things we want. Our minds thus never have a moment's rest, and we fret about the things that we do not have. Unable to have certain things even though they are right before our very eyes leaves us feeling dissatisfied.

In Buddhism, greed is one of the three poisons (the other two are anger and ignorance) that produce human suffering. And yet, desires are intrinsic to human nature. Because we have desires, knowledge comes into play, and that has led to the development of varied cultures and civilizations. Therefore, we cannot categorically declare that all desire is not good. Rather we should think of it as morally neutral, neither right nor wrong.

In fact, Shakyamuni's enlightenment directly tells us so. Shakyamuni, who undertook austere religious practices, realized that extreme physical anguish and the total denial of intrinsic desires were both impossible and futile, and achieved enlightenment through quiet meditation. In other words, rather than trying to eliminate desire, we should put it to work, since all of us as human beings are blessed with the capacity to do so.

There is an old saying that people with the capability for great evil are also capable of great good. Even desire-plagued burglars who target empty houses can decide to reform themselves and use their experience to help prevent such crimes in the



future. They can turn their past wrongdoing to good as home security experts.

By controlling desire and putting it to work, we can demonstrate our rich diversity as human beings.

## The Merit of Knowing Satisfaction

The teaching of learning to be satisfied with little has existed since long ago. Basically, it means having few desires and still being satisfied. Being good at controlling our desires leads to spiritual richness, because it makes us more aware of what



we have already received and the blessings we continue to receive.

When we take for granted a lifestyle that can give us everything we want, we yield to the illusion that we are living by our own power alone. But when we experience life that is short of material things, we can awaken to the law of dependent origination, in other words, that we are caused to live thanks to countless other people and things.

For instance, when we face reduced work schedules and our pay decreases, for the first time we sharply feel how our own lives are connected to changes in the world economic situation. At the same time, a lower income will make us get by with less, and through an awareness of this, we can once again resolve to face the reality of life and regain our sense of gratitude for being caused to live.

In this way, the realization of being able to be satisfied with what is close at hand and sharing those things with others can be training for us to control our ego. By reining in our desires and sometimes yearning for more, we can nurture a consideration for the poverty and hardships that others may face. From this, some people go on to learn endurance, and some of them even to perceive the truth.

In other words, we could say that when we realize the value of being satisfied with little, we grow rich spiritually, much more so than when we

suffer no deprivations of any kind.

When the phrase “being satisfied with little” is written in Japanese, the kanji character for “foot” is used in conveying the sense of satisfaction, which I find most intriguing.

With the widespread development of modern public transportation systems together with an increasing dependence on private automobiles, most people no longer do much walking. Actually, it is both more economical and much better for one’s health to walk more instead of using other means of transportation. The physical activity of walking can help to increase our appreciation for being caused to live.

Although we are living in somewhat difficult economic times, if we open our wisdom-eye and change our values from material wealth to spiritual riches, we will know that there are many sources of happiness all around us. The spiritual richness behind being able to say, “even if everybody’s pay goes down, at least we can all learn to lead lives of sharing”—being satisfied with little is a practical teaching that brings true happiness and is the wisdom needed for our times.



# *In the Footsteps of the Founder*

KAISO-SAMA NI NARAITE

President-designate of Rissho Kosei-kai **Kosho Niwano**

The following begins a new series of English translations from the Japanese-language book *Kaiso-sama ni Naraite* (In the Footsteps of the Founder) by Rev. Kosho Niwano, president-designate of Rissho Kosei-kai.

## All Can Attain Buddhahood: the One Buddha-Vehicle

**“The One Buddha-vehicle means that all the teachings are given to lead all sentient beings to buddhahood.”**

**(Shinshaku Hokke Sambu-kyo**

**[New Commentary on the Threefold Lotus Sutra], vol. 2, p. 276)**

Founder Nikkyo Niwano said, “True faith will not arise unless you wonder why you have been given life.” So, why have we been given life?

We have been given life in order to attain buddhahood.

People experience not only happiness in life—we invariably experience trouble, sorrow, and bitterness as well. However, such experiences are not necessarily “bad.” Everything we experience is what we need to experience in order to attain buddhahood. There is no doubt that we all will attain buddhahood; every person is on the path to buddhahood.

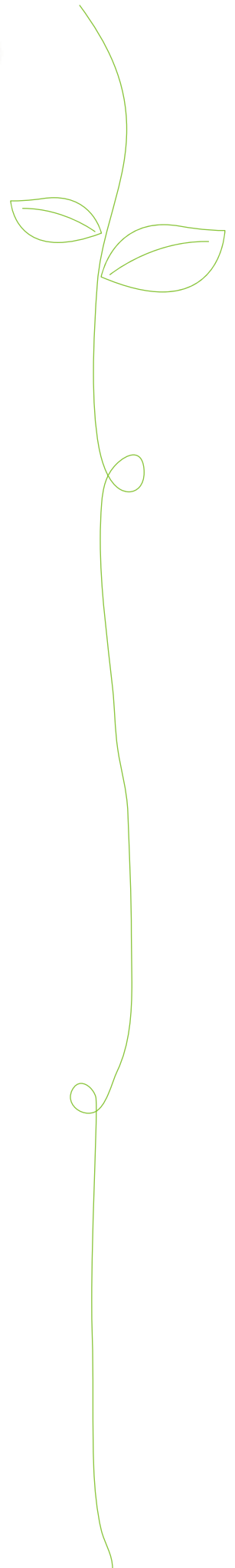
One and the same event can be seen either as a plus or as a minus, and the differences in the way we see and think about something are revealed in our personalities and lives.

The founder said, “When you have faith in the gods and the buddhas and feel ‘The buddhas are always beside me, and the gods are always protecting me,’ then you can be consistently sincere, calm, and composed. This is the most important quality of faith.”

We tend to seek the common-sense forms of happiness and become wrapped up in securing them, suffering pain and confusion in our efforts to solve our problems. But, within such suffering can we discover joy and gratitude in our hearts? This marks an important crossroads on the path to happiness.

To develop the ability to discover the virtue and blessings in any sort of situation, and thus to cultivate the Buddha’s wisdom, is the greatest reason why we are being given life, and religious training constitutes the practice of focusing one’s attention on this truth. All change starts when you can achieve such a change of heart and align your spirit in this direction. The result is the ability to live peacefully even through a lifetime filled with great sorrow and suffering.

There are no such situations as “This person can attain buddhahood, but that person cannot,” or “You can never be saved through this or that religious practice.” If, by realizing this, you can obtain the eyes to see, you will see that every person is



on the way to buddhahood, and that every person is a would-be buddha. This is the meaning of the phrase “Not one fails to become a buddha” in chapter 2 of the Lotus Sutra, “Skillful Means.”

**“Those who have faith in the Eternal Original Buddha and try to put Buddhist teaching into practice can discern the form of the Eternal Original Buddha and hear the sound of his preaching in everything they see, hear, and experience.”**

*(Honzonkan no Kakuritsu no Tameni  
[For Confirming Our View of the Focus of Devotion] p. 68)*

One day, at the start of a leadership meeting of Dharma Center ministers, one of the ministers immediately raised his hand high and asked the founder’s opinion about his problem with a lack of members volunteering for night duty. The founder gave him a warm smile and answered as follows:

“You have a lot of courage to be the first to ask a question in front of everyone about a problem most centers would not like to admit they have. With so much enthusiasm, you will no doubt work things out. I am sure you will receive the Buddha’s blessing.”

The minister was asking the founder what he should do to encourage more people to sign up for night duty.

However, the founder answered not by giving direct advice, but by praising his enthusiastic spirit, telling him things would work out all right. Hearing this, the minister realized that although he had been speaking to others that “all can attain buddhahood,” his own spirit had not yet settled into alignment with that thought.

**“Shravakas [disciples who hear and follow the Buddha’s teaching] and pratyekabuddhas [who engage in religious training without a teacher] can become bodhisattvas the moment they aspire resolutely to practice the bodhisattva way of saving sentient beings. Fundamentally, they have the same human nature as bodhisattvas.”**

*(Shinshaku Hokke Sambu-kyo  
[New Commentary on the Threefold Lotus Sutra], vol. 2, p. 276)*

Rather than look at the true aspect of reality, we tend to make instant judgments, thinking “This is, or is not, how things should be.” We do this when we view daily events as negative phenomena. If, as the founder always did, we learn to discern the greatest possible joy in each present moment, it is possible that we can transform the everyday world into the world of the Buddha just by a single word. It is our own way of looking at things that unnecessarily makes the change difficult to happen.

When problems do occur to us, it is in a sense wasteful to solve them right away. The Buddha’s purpose with respect to problem-solving does not concern whether we can solve our problems or not, but involves how we approach those problems and how our spirits rise to the occasion.

## President-designate Kosho Niwano

President Nichiko Niwano's oldest daughter, Rev. Kosho Niwano was born in Tokyo. After graduating with a degree in Law from Gakushuin University, she studied at Gakurin Seminary, the training institution for Rissho Kosei-kai leaders. Presently, as she studies the Lotus Sutra, she continues to act as President-designate, making speeches for participants in the main ceremonies of Rissho Kosei-kai, and handling activities for interfaith cooperation at home and abroad. Married to Rev. Munehiro Niwano. Mother of one son and three daughters.



**“Animals, plants, mountains, rivers, and all things existing in nature share equally in the great life of the universe and are manifestations of the Eternal Original Buddha; we arise also from the same life root. This is the essence of the lessons of the Lotus Sutra.”**

*(Niwano Nikkyo Howa Senshu*  
**[Selected Sermons of Nikkyo Niwano], special volume, p. 64)**



# Emphasizing Mutual Understanding

by Yuki Wada Chair of the Board, Manager of Public Relations  
Hawaii Dharma Center



In my current position as manager of public relations at the Hawaii Dharma Center, I often have the opportunity to interact with people of various faiths, including Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, especially established Buddhist sects from Japan.

During such meetings, I make it a rule to always listen with interest when the other person's religion is discussed. If, while we are talking, I discover something their religion and Rissho Kosei-kai have in common, I will often say, "We also share the teaching you have just mentioned."

Before we share the teachings of Rissho Kosei-kai, we should first understand what the other person believes. That is exactly what the Founder taught us to do, and what I do now.

My wife became a member about seventeen years ago; we had the Gohonzon (Rissho Kosei-kai's focus of devotion) enshrined at our home about nine years ago. On behalf of my wife, I attended the invocation ceremony held at the Great Sacred Hall in Tokyo, because she had to work on the day of the event.

Until that time, I had no desire to practice the teachings for myself, although I did not have any objection to my wife's faith.

But my former frame of my mind was changed in a moment at the ceremony. I climbed up the hall's sacred stage to receive the Gohonzon, and then went down to the female members who were responsible for wrapping it in cloth. They greeted me with a big smile, as well as kind words of congratulation. I wasn't the only person to receive such warm greetings; all of the other recipients were treated in the same way. I was greatly touched by this attitude.

Such people feel others' joy as their own, even in such a society as ours, where people always compare themselves to others and are so competitive.

I wished my wife had been able to share my experience, and I thought to myself, "I want to be a person who can delight in others' happiness," and "I want to know what kind of things Rissho Kosei-kai teaches its members."

I was born in Japan as a third generation of Japanese-American, and crossed the ocean to Hawaii when I was seventeen years old. Since then, I have lived in Hawaii for forty-eight years. Since I have been speaking English longer than Japanese, I attend the seminar in English on the Threefold Lotus Sutra that was held twice in a month at the Dharma Center, and the All US Lotus Sutra Seminar as well.

People of other religions are often amazed when I tell them that I chant the sutra in English and join English seminars simply as a matter of course. I confidently explain to them, "We can recite the sutra in English, Korean or even Portuguese. So the teaching is spreading all over the world."

I will willingly continue to do my best from now on to be service to the Dharma Center, so that in the future every single person in Hawaii answers "Of course, I know!" when he or she is asked if they know the name of Rissho Kosei-kai.

From "Yakushin" September 2009  
"Kaigai Fukyo Dayori - News of overseas dissemination"

## Three Social Phrases

At a university graduation ceremony, one of the teachers gave three phrases to some young people who were taking the first step into the world. He said, "I'll teach all of you what is the most important when you begin to work for a company; doing this will clear a path to success. My advice is this: That is that you become the kind of people who can say "Good morning," "Thank you," and "I'm sorry" with an open-minded and straightforward attitude.

These phrases, which are frequently used in daily life, are basic expressions for maintaining good interpersonal relationships. However, many young people today seem to be unable to use these phrases. The teacher lamented the fact that he had to give such advice at a university

## The Teaching of Founder Nikkyo Niwano

graduation ceremony.

Even university graduates can never do any truly useful work for society if they only have minds crammed with facts and figures, and a diploma, which is, after all, just a piece of paper. Since human beings are the elements of society, good individual manners and proper conduct are essential for smooth relationships within it.. Knowledge becomes useful only when people make them a part of themselves.

We should acquaint people with such important phrases in childhood, so that they can use them easily and naturally. The lack of manners results in unhappiness for individuals and Japanese society as well.

From "Kaisozuikan 4" (Kosei Publishing Co.) P. 50-51 Translated by Rishso Kosei-kai International

### \*\*\* Column \*\*\*

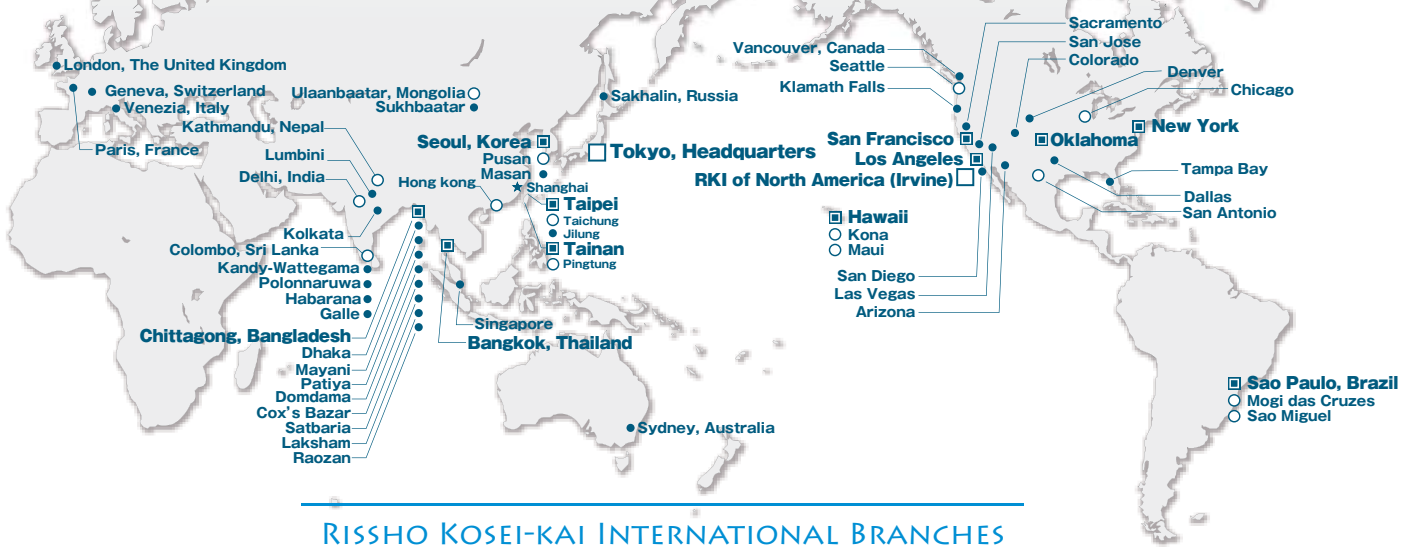
This is the year of tiger according to the Oriental zodiac. Rishso Kosei-kai was born in the year of tiger seventy-two year ago. As a proverb says, "A tiger travels a thousand miles and goes back over the same distance," our organization made a strong initial start this year. Strangely enough, an event symbolizing the year of tiger took place in Bangkok on January 30. A dedication ceremony was held there to celebrate the completion of Rishso Kosei-kai International of South Asia Center with President Niwano and his wife in attendance. On that day, the board chairs, branch leaders, and many youth

from Dharma centers and branches in South Asia gathered together there. This center was built to foster the development of leaders in South Asia but it is also available for youth members and the members in general around the world. In his speech at the ceremony, President Niwano named the center's lecture hall Zenyu Hall (Good Friends Hall). At the conclusion of his speech, he expressed a hope that people make good friends and join lectures and seminars at the Zenyu Hall. Let's guide as many as your friends to the faith with vigorous courage like a tiger's so that we ourselves can become good friends for others.

(Kotaro Suzuki)

## Rishso Kosei-kai

Rishso Kosei-kai is a lay Buddhist organization whose holy scripture is the Threefold Lotus Sutra. It was established by Founder Nikkyo Niwano and Co-founder Myoko Naganuma in 1938. This organization is composed of ordinary men and women who have faith in the Buddha and strive to enrich their spirituality by applying his teachings to their daily lives. At both the local community and international levels, we, under the guidance of the President Nichiko Niwano are very active in promoting peace and well-being through altruistic activities and cooperation with other organizations.



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85/A Chanmari Road, Lalkhan Bazar, Chittagong, Bangladesh  
*Tel/Fax:* 880-31-2850238

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Dhaka**

House No.465, Road No-8, D.O.H.S Baridhera,  
Dhaka Cant.-1206, Bangladesh  
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**Rissho Kosei-kai of Mayani**

Mayani Barua Paya, Mirsarai, Chittagong,  
Bangladesh

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Patiya**

Patiya, Post office road, Patiya, Chittagong, Bangladesh

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Domdama**

Domdama, Mirsarai, Chittagong, Bangladesh

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Cox's Bazar**

Phertali Barua Para, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Satbaria**

Satbaria, Hajirpara, Chandanish, Chittagong, Bangladesh

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Laksham**

Dupchar (West Para), Bhora Jatgat pur, Laksham, Comilla,  
Bangladesh

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Raozan**

West Raozan, Ramjan Ali Hat, Raozan, Chittagong, Bangladesh

**Branches under the South Asia Division**

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Colombo**

No. 18 Anura Mawatha, Off Anderson Road, Kalubovila, Dehiwala,  
Sri Lanka  
*Tel:* 94-11-2763035 *Fax:* 94-11-4205632  
*e-mail:* rkksrilanka@visualnet.lk

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Polonnaruwa**

No. 29 Menik Place, Kaduruwela, Polonnaruwa,  
Sri Lanka

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Habarana**

151, Damulla Road, Habarana, Sri Lanka

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Galle**

“Suwisal” Bataganwila, Imaduwa, Sri Lanka

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Kandy-wattegama**

12 Station Road, Kapugastota, Sri Lanka

**Delhi Dharma Center**

B-117 (Basement Floors), Kalkaji,  
New Delhi-110019, India  
*Tel:* 91-11-2623-5060 *Fax:* 91-11-2685-5713  
*e-mail:* sakusena@hotmail.com

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Kolkata**

E-243 B. P. Township, P. O. Panchasayar,  
KOLKATA 700094, India

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Kathmandu**

Ward No. 3, Jhamsilhel, Sancepa-1, Lalitpur,  
Kathmandu, Nepal  
*Tel:* 977-1-552-9464 *Fax:* 977-1-553-9832  
*e-mail:* nrkk@wlink.com.np

**Rissho Kosei-kai of Lumbini**

Shantiban, Lumbini, Nepal

*Live Broadcasting on Web*

# *Ceremony for the 72nd Anniversary of Foundation of Rissho Kosei-kai*

March 5th is the day of Ceremony for Anniversary of Foundation of Rissho Kosei-kai. We will broadcast the ceremony at the Great Sacred Hall both in English and Japanese to the overseas branches on live by Internet. Everyone can participate in it from your location. Please join the ceremony through Internet!!!

Date and Time: Friday, 5th March

9:00 a.m. ~ (Japan Time)

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Ms. Saito, Rissho Kosei-kai International.

E-mail address; [kaoru.saito@kosei-kai.or.jp](mailto:kaoru.saito@kosei-kai.or.jp)

インターネット配信のお知らせ

## 創立72周年記念式典

3月5日は創立記念の日です。大聖堂で行われる式典の様を、インターネットを通じて日本語と英語の二ヶ国語で、海外の各拠点に配信いたします。どなたでも、どこからでもご覧になることができます。

全世界からのご参加を心よりお待ちしております。

配信日時: 3月5日(金)

午前 9 : 00 ~ (日本時間)

ご不明な点は、国際伝道本部齋藤までお問い合わせ下さい。

メールアドレス; [kaoru.saito@kosei-kai.or.jp](mailto:kaoru.saito@kosei-kai.or.jp)



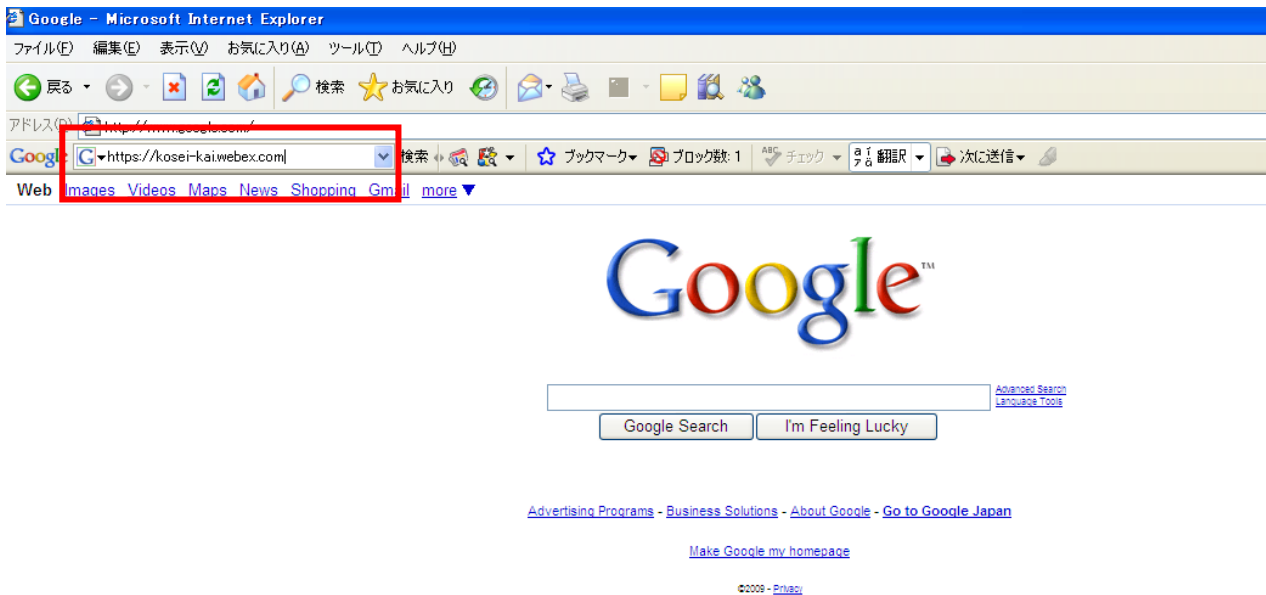
# Instruction to participate in Ceremony for the 72nd Anniversary of Foundation of Risso Kosei-kai

Dear All,

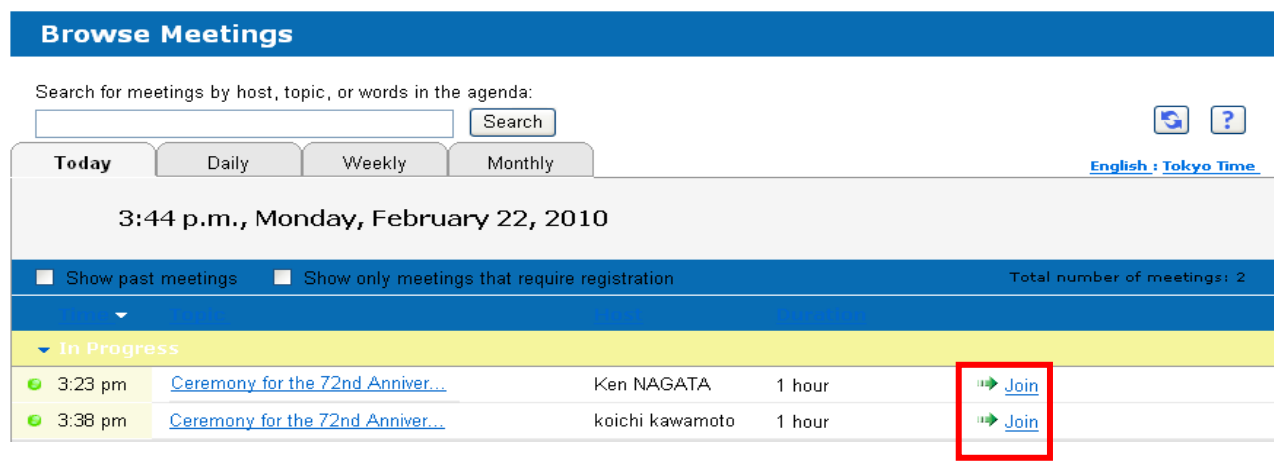
Ceremony for Anniversary of Foundation of Risso Kosei-kai will be held on March 5, 2010. Using WebEx; meeting system on the web, overseas branches can participate in the ceremony at each place.

Please find the following instruction.

1. Activating web browsing application and connecting to <https://kosei-kai.webex.com>.  
The site named "Rissho Kosei-Kai WebEx Enterprise Site" shall be opened.



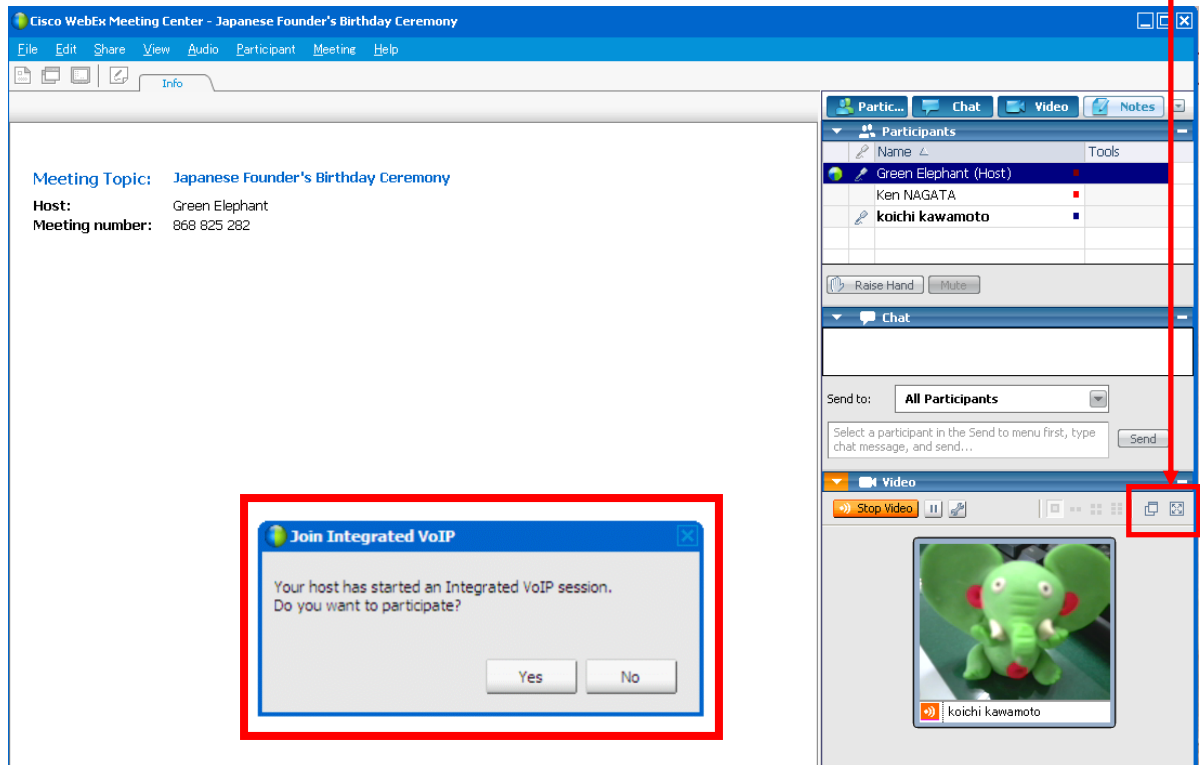
2. You can find two topics of meeting in the "Browse Meetings" in this site.  
We prepare two meetings for Japanese and English.  
Choose whichever you want to join and click "Join."



- Please provide your information; 1. Your name, 2. Email address, 3. Meeting password.  
The meeting password is “foundation”  
And then, click “Join Now.” And click “Yes” if the security warning dialog box appears.



- When the meeting starts, the dialog box of “Join Integrated VoIP” appears.  
Please click “Yes”. You can hear the sound and voice.
- You can find a video in the window, and there are two buttons under the video.  
Left button is for “Undock the video panel,” and right one is for “View in full screen mode.”  
If you want to watch the video in large size, please click these buttons.



6. Right side of the window of this meeting, you can find the panel of “Chat.”  
If you have any troubles or questions in the meeting, please let us know through the chat.  
We will reply soon through chat.

