

October 2, 2022

To Members All Around the World

From

Yoichi Okada, Kyoshu

Masaaki Okada, Successor of Kyoshu

### **Regarding Observance of Holy Days in Our Church**

With a resounding statement declaring that he wished to save all of humanity and lead it in the right direction by working in concert with Christians using all his heart and soul, Meishu-sama founded World Church of Messiah on February 4, 1950. A little over a month after that, in an interview for the Church publication *Messiah*, he was asked, “Is it possible to realize world peace with the power of religion?” He responded:

I believe that it is absolutely possible. As I said before, in the West, there is Christ. In the East, there is Messiah. If these two major forces work in concert with each other—one in the East, the other in the West—and if all members of the two powers diligently fight for peace, eternal peace will surely be brought about.

*Messiah*, No. 53, published March 11, 1950

Thus, he expressed that if Christianity and World Church of Messiah do not work in concert with each other and if all the members of Christianity and World Church of Messiah, the two powers, do not fight for peace together, eternal peace cannot be established.

When we think about how Meishu-sama stuck to the name World Church of Messiah without changing it all the way until his ascension, we could gather just how strong Meishu-sama’s wish was, his wish to go forward together with Christians and accomplish world peace and the salvation of humanity, together. At the same time, we couldn’t help but doubt whether our many years as believers were something that actually corresponded to this

Meishu-sama's will.

However, your unyielding faith and passion with which you single-mindedly seek Meishu-sama and your sincere feelings toward the holy seat of Kyoshu left by Meishu-sama were brought together, and the sacred name "World Church of Messiah" that was concealed after Meishu-sama's ascension was resurrected on February 4, 2020. How happy Meishu-sama must have been!

Furthermore, all of you are going forward with the salvation of humanity by working in concert with Christianity, and following Meishu-sama's example, you are recognizing that Christians, too, are the same followers of Meishu-sama and our brothers and sisters. You are making those efforts to realize Meishu-sama's long-neglected will and wish with your own hands. For this, we are deeply grateful to you.

When we think about this remarkable advancement of Meishu-sama's divine work, we want to further respond to his will—his wish to work in concert with Christianity, his wish to walk together with Christians. Accordingly, we have determined, from today, to officially observe the three major holy days of Christianity as holy days of our Church, the same way we observe Meishu-sama's Birthday and other important days: **Easter**—the day of Jesus Christ's resurrection; **Pentecost**—the 50th day after the resurrection when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles; and **Christmas**—the day commemorating Jesus's birth.

As all of you know, Christmas is celebrated every year on the same date, December 25. Easter and Pentecost are movable holy days and change every year based on the vernal equinox as well as the occurrence of the full moon. For example, next year, 2023, Easter occurs on April 9 and Pentecost on May 28. In 2024, Easter occurs on March 31 and Pentecost on May 19. Although the date for Easter differs depending on whether it is Western Christianity, which includes Catholicism, or Eastern Christianity, we will be basing our schedule on Western Christianity's.

In 1954, regarding the purification of the cerebral hemorrhage he received, Meishu-sama said, "This time, the happiness I feel is beyond words. This purification is related to Christianity in particular."

That year in 1954, Easter was on April 18—only a one-day difference from April 19 when Meishu-sama received the cerebral hemorrhage purification.

About 50 days after April 19, that is, June 5, Meishu-sama announced the Sacred Word on the birth of the Messiah to the leading ministers of the Church. That year, Pentecost was on June 6—only a one-day difference here too.

And needless to say, with only a two-day difference between Meishu-sama's birthday on December 23 and Jesus's birthday on December 25, for Christianity's three major holy days, Easter, Pentecost and Christmas, to be this closely related to Meishu-sama is nothing short of astonishing and is impossible to smooth out as just "coincidence."

Meishu-sama said in his own words, regarding Jesus Christ and himself, "We cannot deny that there is some sort of spiritual connection through these 2,000 years." And he said that in the connection between Jesus and Meishu-sama lies "the hidden will of God."

Meishu-sama's birthday. The day that Meishu-sama received the brain hemorrhage. The day that he announced the Sacred Word on the birth of the Messiah. We cannot help but think that God predetermined all of these dates to make us realize this "hidden will of God."

In Christian countries, including the United States and those in Europe, the custom of celebrating Christmas or Easter is already well-rooted of course. But even in Japan, a non-Christian country, these customs are taking root. Even if there might be underlying commercial reasons, it is quite remarkable for a country like Japan with hardly any Christians.

This fact is a sign, to put it briefly, that for all humanity, the existence of Jesus Christ is an existence that cannot be ignored.

Until now, while we watched or even participated in the excitement of Christmas or Easter, didn't we distance ourselves from it in some way?

But beginning this year, let us take in the holiday cheer of the streets of Christmas, Easter and other holy days as something prepared literally for us too. Let us enjoy the Christmas season and other holy times thereafter to the fullest.

And let us not simply celebrate these days. Let us take one step further and bring our thoughts to the very mystery within a mystery, "the hidden will of God" embedded in the birth of Jesus and the birth of Meishu-sama. And together with the members of World Church of Messiah and Christianity all over the world, let us celebrate these three Christian holy days.

This year marks the 140th anniversary of Meishu-sama's birth.

At the end of the year, Meishu-sama's Birthday Service will take place all over the world. On the day of the service, let us not only celebrate Meishu-sama's birth, let us also celebrate the new holy day for our Church, Christmas, the day of Jesus's birth. For the sake of the salvation of all humanity and the realization of eternal peace, that is, for the fulfillment of Meishu-sama's will, from here on too, with members all around the world uniting as one, let us resolutely go forward still further on the path of salvation of working in concert with Christians.