



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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May 2022

### BISHOP'S CORNER

#### "Congratulations, Graduates!"

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



The greeting "Glad to see you!" held more meaning than ever this year as Pacific Buddhist Academy's Commencement Exercise was, once again after 2 years, held in person. As is the tradition, on the Thursday evening before Commencement, a special Baccalaureate Service sponsored by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii officiated by Bishop Eric Matsumoto, planned by Executive Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Daido Baba and Ms. Liane Vilorio of PBA was held at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin with Temple's Ministers and Family & Friends of the Graduates present. At the Service, each Graduate was presented with a special PBA montoshikisho in "recognition of their engagement with the Dharma, or Buddhist Teachings, during their studies at

PBA." Also, participating was Mr. Josh Morse, PBA's Head of Schools, and Ms. Teddi Yagi, Vice Principal of Hongwanji Mission School who presented an award. Dr. Warren Tamamoto, State President of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii shared a congratulatory message on behalf of Hawaii Kyodan. A Congratulatory Message from the Administrative Head of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji World-wide Denomination Governor General Chiko Iwagami was read by Executive Assistant to the Bishop and PBA Chaplain Rev. Daido Baba.

Then, on Friday, May 6, 2022, the Commencement Exercise honoring the 26 Graduates of PBA's Class of 2022 was held at the famous Waikiki Shell. The sharing of an individualized personal message crafted by the Head of Schools to each Graduate and the Graduates presenting kukui nut lei to their family members before the crowd of well-wishers as an expression of their gratitude for the love and support they received are two of the unique highlights of PBA's Graduation every year.

The following Aspiration was given by Bishop Eric Matsumoto at Commencement.

Today, under a Hawaiian sky, as we gather for this Commencement Exercise for Pacific Buddhist Academy's Class of 2022 at the Waikiki Shell, in the presence of All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion, Amida Buddha, let us reflect and aspire.

The Buddha's compassion is often likened to the sun or rain. Just as life sustaining rain without prejudice falls equally upon on all and the sun casts its light on all without discrimination, so does Buddha's wisdom and compassion shine upon all. It guides and nurtures us to truly understand Universal Reality and encourages us to do what is right and proper or "pono" as we

would say in Hawaii. Also, I share with you the Historic Buddha's exhortation to the monks and nuns of his time. The Buddha said *"Go forth for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the good and the happiness of gods and people."*

At Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and PBA, we hope that our Graduates have learned not only the academic knowledge and skills necessary to pursue their dreams and careers, but that they have also gained some insight and perspectives into truths like interdependence which gives rise to virtues like mutual respect and appreciation, and fosters being a caring presence with courage, humility, equanimity and equality, non-discrimination and non-judgement aspiring for peace and harmony throughout the world. May All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion continually guide them throughout their life so they may exemplify the ideal way of living which is *"Simultaneously benefiting both self and others."*

Today, as we extend our congratulations to our Graduates and their Families, let us express our acknowledgment and gratitude to all others, not limited to our human relations, for the part they played in our lives and embrace the aspiration for the happiness and well-being of one and all.

To conclude this Aspiration, please join me in gassho/anjali, a gesture of reverence and respect in Buddhism, to recite Amida Buddha's Honored Name in awareness, joy and gratitude of Great Wisdom and Compassion.

Namo Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu. Namu Amida Butsu/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF JODO SHINSHU HONGWANJI-HA BISHOP CHIKO IWAGAMI FOR 2022 PBA BACCALAUREATE**

First, congratulations to this year's graduates!

As we share this moment, you may be looking back on the many memories of your time spent here at PBA.

Graduation marks the end of one of many chapters in one's lifetime, and at the same time, it is also the starting point as you embark on a new goal. As you set off from Pacific Buddhist Academy, you will carry the memories of your days here at PBA together with your hopes and dreams in the next phase of your life.

In response to the Novel Coronavirus pandemic these past two years, in-person learning, as well as extracurricular activities and events have been limited. As a result, your senior year of high school may not have gone as you had hoped, and many may have found this very disappointing. But perhaps, these unprecedented circumstances gave us an opportunity to stop and carefully think about our lifestyle and future that we had been taking for granted.

Bulletin boards at schools are often used for making announcements and sometimes displays a motto or slogan. Buddhist temples also have this kind of bulletin board on which inspirational words or a short phrase filled with Buddhist wisdom are shared. Maybe you have seen one of these. A few years ago, a Japan-based Buddhist organization called Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai held a contest of inspirational phrases shared by Buddhist temples through their bulletin boards. This contest, which is called "Let it Shine! Temple Bulletin Board Project" has been gaining attention in Japan. The Grand Prize winner for 2020, which was selected from a total of 1,677 entries, was a remark made by a salesperson of a drugstore in

Kanagawa prefecture, which was displayed at a temple in Kumamoto prefecture. It read, "The thing that scared me the most was not COVID, but humans."

We were faced with many challenges when the first state of emergency was declared in Japan in April 2020. The media reported that a healthy person with no underlying health conditions had died of COVID-19 within a couple of days. People were panic buying face masks and hand sanitizers. Customers were lashing out at store employees because of the empty shelves. Some were even engaging in the reselling of medical masks and price gouging. In learning that we become infected through contact with others, we have become suspicious of people around us. Sadly, this has led to stigma and discrimination against frontline medical workers and COVID-19 patients. Everyone is scared in the same way, but the feeling of fear has driven us into an egocentric shell. The phrase, "the most terrifying are humans," is a description of the reality of us humans, which was revealed in the circumstance of the pandemic.

The phrase that took second place in the contest that year was one that was displayed on the bulletin board of Tsukiji Hongwanji in Tokyo, a Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha branch temple. The phrase is, "Even if you hurt me, I would not hurt you back. This is Buddhism."

In fact, Sakyamuni Buddha taught us that if you take revenge on someone, in turn, that person will take revenge on you, and so in this way, the hatred would never end. You may feel you have the upper hand when you take revenge on someone whom you hate, but it only puts that person in the same position as you were in and that individual would plot vengeance against you. Thus, hatred between the two of you would never diminish.

The only way out of this sad circle of hate is through sharing feelings with each other. Let us try to rid ourselves of our own egoistic mind and feel the joy and sorrow of others.

Just as no one could have ever predicted this pandemic, what awaits us in the future is also unknown. There may be happy occasions, as well as some sad ones too. Please continue learning more about Buddhism, which is the spiritual legacy of this school's foundation, and Buddhism will surely provide you with the guidance you need whenever you are feeling lost in your own fear or hatred.

Our lives are all interrelated and interconnected. It is important that we keep in mind this feeling of gratitude for one another, as we continue to practice the spirit of placing our hands in gassho, and make every effort to respect and uphold the dignity of all life. In today's world, we are too often only concerned with the results. Although you may endeavor, it may not always pay off. However, try to not feel distressed in such situations, and try not to boast when your efforts are rewarded. All you need to do is just continue in your efforts. When this naturally comes to you, you are then a truly respectful and beautiful human.

It is my hope that you will face things you encounter with a feeling of gratitude that "thanks to you, I am enabled to dedicate myself to this." Then, I am confident that a bright future will await you.

In closing, I would like to extend my congratulations once again. Thank you.

May 5, 2022

Governor General IWAGAMI, Chiko

Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR 2022 PBA BACCALAUREATE



Congratulatory message to the Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2022 on behalf of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Bishop Matsumoto, Head of School Josh Morse, Former Head of School Pieper Toyama, ministers, teachers, parents and most importantly, the Pacific Buddhist Academy graduating class of 2022, good evening. It is my privilege to offer congratulations on behalf of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to you, the Pacific Buddhist Academy class of 2022.

I would like to share with you one of my favorite stories. You may know it. I have enjoyed reading this story again and again to my children and grandchildren. It is *Momotaro*, the Peach Boy-one of the best loved folk stories of Japan. It is the story of an older couple who dream of having a child of their own. Their dream comes true in the form of a giant golden peach floating down the river into the arms of Obaa-san. Planning to feast on the peach, they are surprised when the enormous peach bursts open and inside the peach is a tiny baby boy. Their dreams of having a child are fulfilled and they named him MOMOTARO, the Peach Boy. Momotaro grows up to be smart, strong and brave. He helps with the work of the village and he learns the skills of a samurai.

As he grows into a young man, Momotaro learns that for many years, evil ogres (oni) would arrive at the village to rob, kill and plunder. Momotaro announces that he will go to the Inland Sea and defeat the ogres so that they would never return to the village. His parents prepare him, as best they can, for his journey. They prepare kibi-dango, a special Warrior's food. Ojii-san laid out Momotaro's knife, sword, sash and tessen-iron fan, the garb of a samurai. ***Then, armed with all that he knew and all that he was, Momotaro set out.*** This line from the story has always been particularly meaningful to me, and I think for your parents as we see you attain this milestone in life and move forward to a future that is still unwritten. Notice the careful choice of words. ***"Then, armed with all that he knew and all that he was, Momotaro set out."***

On his journey, Momotaro encounters a giant dog, a monkey and a pheasant. These animals become his friends and allies in the battle against the evil oni. Momotaro crosses the Inland Sea to arrive at the home of the evil oni. With the help of his brave companions, Momotaro defeats the ogres. He recovers stolen treasure and returns home. Along the way, Momotaro returns stolen treasure to all of the villages. He finally arrives at his home village with the unclaimed treasure and he is able to care for his parents for the rest of their lives.

This story is much more exciting than the abbreviated summary that I've shared with you today. It is a good metaphor for this occasion. Momotaro had parents who cared for him and loved him. They were concerned for his future, but they prepared him the best way that they knew. Your parents are always thinking about you.

Hopefully none of you will be headed for real battle, but we know that this journey of life doesn't always go exactly the way that we think it will. You will have your own battles. Your "weapons" and your armor are the skills, knowledge and values that you have gained through your hard work, nurtured by your

parents and your school community. You will meet new people along the way. Like Momotaro did, choose your close friends wisely. You will face difficult choices in your life. I suggest that you ask yourself a few questions. Did I do my best? Did I do what is right? Did I care for and help others?

Finally, Momotaro returns to his home village. Returning home in this context means maintaining connections-with your friends, family and school community. Remember the Buddhist teaching of interdependence. We are interconnected and interdependent with everyone and everything around us.

In closing, I'd like share that special line from the story of Momotaro with minor changes: ***Then, armed with all that they knew and all that they were, the Class of 2022 set out.***

Aloha and Best Wishes,  
Namo Amida Butsu.

May 5, 2022  
Dr. Warren Tamamoto  
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

***PBA's Baccalaureate Service was held on Thursday, May 5 at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, and the Commencement Ceremony was held on Friday, May 6 at Waikiki Shell. 26 students graduated. Please visit PBA's Website and social media for further information.***

- Website: <https://www.pacificbuddhistacademy.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PacificBuddhistAcademy>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/pacificbuddhistacademy/>



***Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2022***



## CONDOLENCES

**Reverend Sandra Sanae Hiramatsu**, a former Kaikyoshi minister of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Rev. Hiramatsu passed away on Friday, February 18, 2022, at Pali Momi Hospital in Aiea, HI, at the age of 71. Her memorial service was held as a private service by her family.

Rev. Hiramatsu became a Kaikyoshi minister in March, 1982 and served at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, Headquarters (as Youth Activities Specialist) and Kailua Hongwanji Mission before resigning in 1995.

## 63<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL HONPA HONGWANJI STATE MINISTERS' ASSOCIATION SEMINAR

The 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Honpa Hongwanji State Ministers' Association Seminar will be held on June 7-9, 2022 via Zoom hosted by Hawaii District Ministers' Association. The theme of the seminar is "Immeasurable Life" and the lecture title is "Shinran's wisdom for a broken world." The keynote speaker will be Rev. John Paraskevopoulos, member of the Hongwanji Buddhist Mission of Australia. He has actively sought to spread the teachings to Western audiences through his books, articles and lectures. He is the editor of Muryōko, an online journal of Shin Buddhism, and is active in the academic arena as well as in giving pastoral support to people as a minister.

## 65<sup>th</sup> JR. YBA STATE CONVENTION

The Hawaii Federation of Junior Young Buddhist Associations will be holding its 65<sup>th</sup> Jr. YBA State Convention on June 17-19, 2022 at the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin and Hilo Hawaiian Hotel hosted by the United Jr. YBA of Hawaii. The theme of this year's convention is "AMIDA, I choose you!"

## BSC SUMMER SESSION

### **"Jōdo Shinshū and the Making of American Buddhism:**

*Is Shin Buddhism the foundation of American Buddhism?"*



The Buddhist Study Center will offer its 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Study Session as a free in-person and online class series on June 20-24, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (HST) featuring the noted scholar, **Dr. Scott Mitchell**, author of *Mid-Century Modern Buddhism*, examines Buddhism in the United States before, during, and after World War II, when Nisei Jodo Shinshu Buddhists reacted to the trauma of racial and religious discrimination by laying claim to an American identity inclusive of their religious identity. In the pages of temple-supported magazines, such as the *Berkeley Bussei*, Nisei argued that Buddhism was both what made them good Americans but also what they had to contribute to America, a rational and scientific religion of peace in a series of five two-hour lecture over five nights.

The study class series livestream will be available online through a link available at the Buddhist Study Center website, <http://bschawaii.org>. Pre-registration is required and the lectures are free and open to the public. Due to concerns with COVID-19, we are limiting the amount of in-person attendees to 30 people. Donations to the Buddhist Study Center are gratefully accepted in the spirit in which they are given. Detailed information and the full syllabus are available at <http://bschawaii.org>. For more information, please call the Buddhist Study Center at (808) 973-6555.

Satellite Seminars on Neighbor Islands:

June 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Kauai:</b> Online Lecture: 10 AM – 12 PM
June 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Maui:</b> Wailuku Hongwanji Sunday Service (Guest Speaker) : 9 AM Lecture at Wailuku Hongwanji: 10:30 AM – 12 PM <b>Big Island:</b> Lecture at Kona Hongwanji: 5 PM
June 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Big Island:</b> Talk Story at Naalehu Hongwanji: 9 AM Lecture at Puna Hongwanji: 2 PM
June 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Oahu:</b> Lecture at Pearl City Hongwanji: 7 PM

**GREEN HONGWANJI COMMITTEE**

“Trees, Please!” a Success at Hawaii Betsuin!

Native Trees and Plants Available Free to Sangha during Earth Day 2022 Celebrations!



Glenn and Sharon Yokoyama

April 22 was Earth Day 2022. On April 15, 16, and 17, Hawaii Betsuin celebrated Earth Day with a Saturday educational Zoom event on food waste reduction and a combined Sunday Earth Day Service for Dharma School and adults.

As part of Hawaii Betsuin’s Earth Day 2022, from Friday April 15 through Sunday April 17, the Hawaii Betsuin Green Team “Trees, Please!” project offered a variety of native trees and plants free to Sangha members. Please see [Earth Day 2022 Happenings at Hawaii Betsuin](#) for more information.

Thank You to everyone who made “Trees, Please!” a successful and fun part of Hawaii Betsuin’s Earth Day celebrations! Thank you to the Malama Learning Center that supplied the native trees and plants and with whom we look forward to future activities. Thank You to Mindy Jaffe who supplied the worm

compost. Thank You to the volunteers who transported the plants, set up, communicated, and staffed the event, and cleaned up after.

Thank You especially to all who adopted native plants during this 3-day event. We started with 50 plants, all found good homes with EcoSangha gardeners, with the final dozen trees going to Ma`ema`e Elementary School for a Family Day.

Hawaii Betsuin recommends “Trees, Please!” as an inspiring project that can engage any Hongwanji Temple! As we celebrate our interdependence with all life and own the impact of our behavior on future generations, let’s aspire to a statewide “Earth Touching Sangha” grateful for every day as an Earth Day!



Steve Lohse and Mindy Jaffe

*Submitted by Steve Lohse, Hawaii Betsuin Board and Social Concerns/Green Team member and chair of the statewide Green Hongwanji Committee.*

## **WORLD PEACE NEEDS YOU NOW!**

The scars of hurt run deep. They are not easy to erase perhaps impossible. Soon it will be 8 decades since WW II ended, but the work of reconciliation continues. In 2007, especially with the establishment of Peace Day in Hawaii, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii has played a major role in promoting peace, abroad and at home. Since 2012, we began a cooperative partnership with Sadako Legacy. Milestone years were 2013, 2017 and 2019 when 3 paper cranes actually folded by Sadako herself were gifted to Pearl Harbor, Wendover Air Force Base and the USS Missouri, respectively. In 2015, on stage at the Hawaii Theater at a performance of the youth musical “Peace on your Wings” by Ohana Arts, her family, older brother Masahiro Sasaki and nephew Yuji Sasaki, emphasized (her) “kind thoughtful consideration of others (omoiyari)” as one of the key components to world peace.

Now, in 2022, there is another significant process for world peace which comes to the forefront which struck a chord with me. In Shin Buddhism, we often speak of transformation (tenjiru). Sadako Legacy discovered a true life story of a dramatic change of heart. In a certain individual who had preserved this flame since the end of WW II with much anger and anguish a transformation had taken place. The individual realized that holding on to negative feelings and emotions does no good and, though I suspect the sense of loss and hurt has not completely disappeared, it changed into an aspiration for world peace. The flame from an ember of the Hiroshima atomic blast preserved for close to 77 years which burned with hatred, anger and anguish from the war, in a recent turn of events became transformed into the aspiration for world peace. The symbolism of the flame, though still the same flame, transformed into one for world peace. Sadako Legacy’s goal is to bring this flame for peace to Hawaii to illumine the path of transformation that we, throughout the world, must all walk to bring true reconciliation and peace to the world.



The Office of the Bishop humbly requests for your support of this project of establishing an eternal flame monument in Hawaii for world peace for all peoples and nations and the creation of a documentary. Please refer to the Appeal Letter for details. The documentary will be in English and Japanese and feature Hawaii too. Its goal is to nurture peace and thoughtfulness in all peoples regardless of ethnicity, nationality and national origin, or religion, but especially the young. Your participation, as individuals, affiliate organizations or temples, in this fundraiser is purely voluntary, but I ask for your continued commitment to world peace. I leave you with Shinran Shonin's words "May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's Teaching spread!" Thank you in advance for your support and contributions. Namu Amida Butsu.



### **SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **2022 LIVING TREASURES OF HAWAII'I™ SPECIAL TV PROGRAM**

Date & Time: Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 7 p.m. (HST)

Channel: KFVE

The Living Treasures of Hawai'i™ has selected three individuals who are Kenny Endo (Taiko Master), Patrick Kirch (Archaeology Researcher), and Keali'i Reichel (Kumu Hula, Musician, Scholar and Community Leader) as the 2022 Honorees. Due to Covid safety concerns, they will be recognized in a TV program.