



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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BISHOP'S CORNER

Exquisite Manifestations of True Entrusting

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



Recently, I was honored to participate in a temple anniversary celebrating the temple's 125 years of history and re-affirm its legacy. In my mind, this particular temple, which was founded in 1897 which makes it the third oldest temple in Hawaii, has two rich intertwining noteworthy legacies.

First, the inspiring spiritual legacy of the temple as captured in the book *"Dharma Treasures, Spiritual Insights from Hawaii's Shin Buddhist Pioneers"* by Rev. Tatsuo Muneto which captures the spiritual journey and religious experience of some remarkable people of the nembutsu of this locale. Some have gained the attention of renowned scholars of Buddhism such as the late D. T. Suzuki and others while less known still provide us with valuable insights

into Shin Buddhism which may also help us in our own spiritual quest. For example, *"Joyful brightness, having entrusted everything to Amida, I am saved just as I am!"* by Jutarō Oshima or (part of) Ume Hirano's encouragement *"If you truly love your child, teach him/her well about the teaching of Buddha, attaining birth in the Buddha land of peace. That is the compassion of parents that forever remains."* and the words of Iwaichi Nakamura who said, *"In the timeless process of birth-and-death, for the first time I was made to realize the Other Power of Amida Buddha. My understanding resulted from listening, but listening is nothing, but a little scratch on a precious gem. I trusted my understanding instead of trusting Amida. Until now, I was satisfied with my understanding. But, my understanding does not save me; It is Amida who saves me."*

Second, there is the wondrous physical manifestation of the first legacy which is the beautiful temple, as a Nembutsu Dojo, with its prized koa wood pews and unique Hawaiian Sandalwood image of *"Amida who saves me"* carved from Hawaiian Sandalwood harvested from the mountainous hills above the temple. However, did you know that there is an "older brother" image of the current Amida Buddha (which has returned home to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii)? Apparently, there develop a crack as often happens with wood and thus a second block of sandalwood was sent to Japan and that Amida Buddha image has been the temple's Object of Reverence since 1933.

By now, I am sure that many of you have guessed that I am referring to Kona Hongwanji. I sincerely hope that this legacy of Nembutsu, not only at Kona Hongwanji, but all of our temples in Hawaii will not be forgotten and will manifest itself with the sound of Namo Amida Butsu being gratefully recited and carried

forward by us, of the present Sangha, so that future generations will also be able to encounter the unparalleled and unconditional Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha as happened in the past.

Let us take to heart the words of our current Spiritual Leader, the 25th Gomonsu, His Eminence Kojun Ohtani's words to *"Secure one's own entrusting heart to the Dharma, guiding others to the same path"* and Shinran Shonin's words *"I praise Amida's wisdom and virtue, So that beings with mature conditions throughout the ten quarters may hear. Let those who have realized shinjin, constantly respond in gratitude to the Buddha's benevolence."*

To close, please join me to recite Namu Amida Butsu or The Buddha-s Name That I Call in gratitude, in response to Namu Amida Butsu, The Buddha's Name Which Calls Me to entrust. Namu Amida Butsu. Namu Amida Butsu. Namu Amida Butsu/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion.

OBITUARY NOTICE

Mr. Richard Nishihara, a member of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, passed away on September 8, 2022. He was a president of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, Chair of Maui Hongwanji Council, and HHMH Kyodan director. The Ingo of DAI-GYOU-IN 大樂院 which means "One who lived a life of Joyful True Entrusting" in recognition of his life of Nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on October 10, 2022.

MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Rev. Bert Sumikawa, currently in charge of Windward Buddhist Temple as a Retired Kaikyoshi Minister, will be relieved from that position as of November 1, 2022. However, Rev. Sumikawa will continue to assist as a mentor minister for Rev. Brennan. He will continue to provide ministerial services to Kapolei Buddhist Sangha.

Rev. Barbara Brennan, will be assigned to Windward Buddhist Temple as a Kaikyoshi-ho minister as of November 1, 2022.

Rev. Charlene Kihara, started her onboarding program at Hawaii Kyodan Headquarters from October 1, 2022. Her program will continue at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin from October 24, 2022.

MINISTER LAY ASSISTANTS GATHER FOR ANNUAL TRAINING RETREAT

On October 8-9, 15 Minister Lay Assistants (MLA) met in Honolulu at the Buddhist Study Center with 4 faculty to learn how to better assist their temple ministers. The Hawaii MLA program is designed to nurture lay volunteers interested in helping in spiritual tasks and Dharma-centered projects at their temples. Continued steps towards becoming a minister are totally optional.

Nine temples (Hawaii Betsuin, Honomu, Jikoen, Kona, Moiliili, Papaikou, Puna, Wahiawa, and Windward) were represented with a variety of MLA, Certified MLA, Certified MLA with Tokudo, and Kyoshi in attendance. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship, making new Dharma friends, and renewing old ones.

Study of temple rituals included creating a sacred space for worship, altar setup, meaning of religious objects, chanting, and developing a meaningful service order. Dharma communication workshops provided opportunities to deliver meaningful and relevant messages at worship services. The 2-day retreat was challenging and worthwhile, with most MLA's saying there was not enough time to cover as much as they wished.

The 2023 MLA Retreat will learn from this gathering and improve the program for more attendees to take steps along the Shin Buddhist path. Plan to join us next year!



AFFIRMATION RITES

The Affirmation Rites was held by the Hawaii District Ministers Association in conjunction with the Kona Hongwanji Mission 125th Anniversary on Sunday, October 16, 2022. In the solemn atmosphere, 6 individuals participated in the ceremony and received a Buddhist Name from Bishop Eric Matsumoto.

The Affirmation Rites is a ceremony in which the one takes refuge in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and pledges his/her faith before Amida Buddha. The Buddhist Name is the name given to those who follow the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and pledge to live their lives as a Buddhist. Congratulations!



2022-2023 SOCIAL CONCERNS FUND DRIVE

The month of November is a special time for reflecting on gratitude. Observing Eitaikyo and celebrating Thanksgiving are opportunities to appreciate the innumerable causes and conditions which sustain our lives and how we are deeply connected to the world around us. It is in this spirit of profound gratitude that we begin our Annual Social Concerns Fund Drive. The fund drive will begin November 1, 2022 running till August 31, 2023 and we request that temples submit their collected donations by the end of September 2023.

Through your generosity, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii is able to support worthy organizations and programs making a positive impact in our community. Your support also enables us to provide compassionate aid during times of disaster and the ability to skillfully respond to issues affecting our local and world communities.

Because of your commitment to promoting the Buddhist values of compassion and loving kindness, we have been able to support humanitarian relief efforts for those affected by the war in Ukraine and the volcanic eruption in Tonga. We also sponsored a series of suicide prevention events organized by the Samaritan Counseling Center of Hawaii, supported ongoing disaster relief planning by Hawaii Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (Hawaii VOAD), renewed our support of The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii, and assisted food banks on every island in their mission to alleviate food insecurity.

We continue to award Golden Chain Grants to help nurture Dharma in action as well as COVID-19 Resilience Grants to help temples acquire PPE and cleaning supplies to operate safely during the ongoing pandemic.

Fund Drive envelopes have been provided to temples wishing to use them. Extra envelopes are available in limited supply. Please make all checks payable to **YOUR TEMPLE**. Your temple will then remit one combined check to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Your support of our Annual Social Concerns Fund Drive is greatly appreciated. Mahalo!

In Gassho,

Eric T. Matsumoto
Bishop

Rev. Blayne Higa, Chair
Committee on Social Concerns

MAUI NEMBUTSU SEMINAR 2022

Date: November 19th – 20th, 2022
Location: Makawao Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (Livestream is also available)
Guest Speaker: Rev. Bob Oshita (Former Rimban, Sacramento Buddhist Church)
Topic: CHANGE OR DIE
Free Registration: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Pmd4gNCi_qWarhTBF8xF3m53-TbduKhUrfxgZVU01zs/viewform?mc_cid=800874b68a&mc_eid=40444d72d2&edit_requested=true
(Pre-registration is required for joining both in-person and via livestream)

HAWAII DISTRICT ONLINE BUDDHIST SEMINAR 2022

Date & Time: Saturday, December 10th, 2022, 10 a.m. -11:30 a.m.
Platform: Zoom
Keynote Lecturer: Rev. Tatsuo Muneto
Topic: Never Alone: Shin Buddhism and End-of-Life Care.
Free Registration: <https://forms.gle/TokgewPPZps1dvuh7>

TEMPLE CELEBRATION (Additional to last month's information)

November 2022 Mililani Hongwanji Mission 45th Anniversary

SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENT

KAUAI HONGWANJI COUNCIL NEMBUTSU SEMINAR

Date & Time: Friday, November 18th, 2022, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Guest Lecturer: Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji (Resident Minister, Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church)
Topic: A Look at Shinran Shonin's Life and Thought
Platform: Zoom
Registration Fee: Free (Accept donations to "Kauai Hongwanji Council")
Online Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/52xuXUfLduCuXh1PA>