



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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February 2023

### BISHOP'S CORNER

#### "Sharing Joy Together"

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



As we slowly transition from Winter to Spring, like the many flowers and trees in Nature, let us begin to prepare ourselves to fully blossom too. For me, every year, the gift of cherry blossoms from Kamuela, reminds me that Spring is just around the corner and brings joy to me. It warms my heart which motivates me to want to share that beauty and the joy with others.

The joy we feel when we see beautiful flowers is seen by others around us. It is a very spontaneous expression and sharing which occurs very naturally. The Joy of the Dharma we feel is the same. It is not a contrived joy or a joy which I, calculatedly, try to share. For ultimately,

the source of that joy is not me, but comes from the flowers themselves or in the case of the Joy of the Dharma from the Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion itself.



As Shinran Shonin explained in one of his poems, *The light of compassion illumines from afar; Those beings it reaches, it is taught, Attain the Joy of the Dharma, So take refuge in Amida, the great consolation.* Also, in his major writing "The True Teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way," he noted that *when we realize the diamondlike true mind (shinjin), we...unfailingly gain ten benefits in the present life. What are these ten?* Of the ten, number seven is *The benefit of having great joy in our hearts.* It is explained that this joy is a very special kind of joy. It is not one that will dissipate or fade after a while for it comes about *when they touch for the very first time that which is timeless (dharma-body), and therefore a joy that they have not known in the world of samsaric transmigration.* This deep joy is a very big part of Jodo Shinshu and the life of Nembutsu.

In 2023, especially, as our theme and slogan is *Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Joy Together*, let us freely allow our awareness, joy and gratitude of Namo Amida Butsu express itself. This is one major way in which we (you and I), as the Nembutsu Sangha, can share the Teachings of the Buddha and the temple with others. By our naturally expressing our joy and gratitude, let our family and friends wonder, and hopefully ask us, "Why are you always so happy and grateful?" For many, this will be the joyous condition that could lead to their discovery of Namo Amida Butsu. It will be the opportunity to introduce to them the Nembutsu and invite them to temple.

At the same time, an important component which should be in place at every temple, is when people come to our temples we should be able to sincerely and happily welcome them. Thus, I would like to encourage every temple to have a Welcoming-Membership Committee which kindly assists those who come to our temples to continue their journey or quest including hopefully eventually become members.

Our temples, and each one of us, should be inviting, welcoming, nurturing and supportive places centered on the Buddha-Dharma.

As a well-known Buddhist says goes *Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.* Also, let us keep in mind the saying *To live a single day and hear a good teaching is better than to live a hundred years without knowing such a teaching.* To make manifest the above Dharma Teaching, please know that Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii continues to share Buddhist teachings and perspectives by continuing to regularly have Sunday Services, Buddhist Seminars and Retreats such as the Spring Session, BSC Summer Session, MLA Retreat and YESS Camp, participate in interfaith and other community organizational events like UN Interfaith Harmony Week, and support other community programs like the Ohana Arts' youth musical "Peace on your Wings" so we may fulfill our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Mission Statement *To share the living Teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism so all beings may enjoy lives of harmony, peace and gratitude* and our purpose as stated in our Hongwanji Constitution *The organization transmits the wisdom and compassion of Amida Tathagata to all people, and in doing so, contributes to the realization of a society in which everyone, both within and outside of the organization, is able to live a life of spiritual fulfillment.* This is our mission and vision that should unite and guide us in all of our endeavors.

In particular, as Jodo Shin Buddhists, let that deep joy that we experience of being accepted as we are and forever embraced by Amida Buddha's all-inclusive Wisdom and all-embracing Compassion express itself and let us naturally share it with others with the wish that others too, may come to know and experience the same joy and happiness. More than ever, let us live the Nembutsu by responding in gratitude to Amida Buddha by "Sharing (the) Joy (of Namo Amida Butsu) Together" by talking about Amida Buddha and reciting Namo Amida Butsu as a manifestation of the saying "As the light of a small candle will spread from one to another in succession, so the light of Buddha's compassion will pass on from one mind to another endlessly."

Thank you and Namo Amida Butsu/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion.

## **GISEIKAI MESSAGE FROM THE JODO SHINSHU HONGWANJI-HA GOVERNOR GENERAL BISHOP CHIKO IWAGAMI**

On the occasion of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii 111<sup>th</sup> Giseikai, I humbly extend my appreciation to you, the ministers and sangha representatives from throughout the state of Hawaii. I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to you all for your continuing efforts in propagating the Jodo Shinshu tradition and maintaining the temples within your respective districts.

I would first like to express my sympathy to those who have been directly affected by COVID-19. Though nowadays, countries are adopting policies of "living with the virus," infections remain high in many areas. In addition, another significant global issue has been brought about on February 24, 2022, when the Russian military invasion into Ukraine began. Throughout the year, visual images of the people suffering from the devastation caused by the war have been shown on TV and it makes us face the harsh reality of war. The global pandemic has brought about social division among people, particularly when it spread at furious speeds a couple of years ago and as a result, social instability has spread in various forms throughout the world. Amid such circumstances, Russia's aggression against Ukraine occurred. This

incident has prompted many countries to put more emphasis on their military power and equipment which is stirring up people's fears and anxieties. Being aware that these issues are fundamentally caused by our own self-oriented mindset that every one of us possesses as a human being, I cannot help but renew my appreciation for the value of Buddhist life relying on the Dharma as the foundation.

In his Message on 'Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching,' Monshu Ohtani Kojun provides us with the following words, "When we are touched by this warm compassion and learn of Amida Tathagata's wish for our life, we are empowered to live at ease, share joy and sadness with people, and a world of mutual respect and support opens up." Receiving and deeply reflecting on this message, let us recite in unison the 'Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching' while endeavoring to share the teaching in effective ways that is in accord with the time and age.

As announced, the Joint Celebration of the 850<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching will be observed at Hongwanji from March 29, and we are preparing for the occasion. It would be wonderful if we are able to celebrate this special event together with the Hawaii delegation in Kyoto.

In closing, it is my hope that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will continue to prosper and that many fruitful results will arise from this annual meeting.

February 10, 2023



Governor General Iwagami Chiko  
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

### **HHMH 111<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (Giseikai)**

The 111<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) was held on February 10-11, 2023, in-person at the Hawaii Betsuin and via Zoom. Special guests were able to attend in-person from the Buddhist Churches of America (President Terri Omori, Terri's husband Ford Omori and Secretary Darlene Bagshaw), Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (Bishop Tatsuya Aoki, President Laura Sugimoto) and Jodo Shinshu International Office (Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara). Ministers, delegates, HHMH Directors, observers and guests attended from every district.

On Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, we were able to participate in an inspiring, motivational and educational Pre-Giseikai Rap Session led by Revs. Bob and Patti Oshita entitled "A Flourishing Sangha". Pieper Toyama shared a presentation on organizational decline and more importantly, ways to avoid organizational decline. This was an excellent session with meaningful audience participation.

At Friday's Opening Service attendees were uplifted by the combined voices of lay leaders and ministers singing and chanting. Bishop Chiko Iwagami, Ms. Linda Nagai and Rev. Shingo Furusawa started the Assembly off in the right direction with inspirational messages. Ingo recipients from 2022 were recognized with a moment of silence. Ingo recipients for 2022 were:

Ernest Kiichi Wakimura	Ewa Hongwanji Mission
David Shunichi Ikawa	Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin
Sadao Harold Aoki	Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin
George Takashi Okamoto	Wailuku Hongwanji Mission
Emiko Serikaku	Waipahu Hongwanji Mission
Rev. Sandra Sanae Hiramatsu	
Rev. Midori Ogawa Kondo	
Wayne Katsuyuki Nishida	Wailuku Hongwanji Mission
Rev. Yoshikazu Saito	
Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani	
Clifford Katsuhiko Tamura	Waianae Hongwanji Mission
Richard Nishihara	Lahaina Hongwanji Mission

Delegates from the Hongwanji temples throughout Hawaii discussed and passed the following resolutions:

- 2023-1 Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Budget
- 2023-2 Dissolution of the Implementation Maintenance Committee
- 2023-3 Establishment of a Hawaii Kyodan Communications Coordinator Position
- 2023-4 Commemorating the Triple Celebration of Shinran Shōnin’s Birth, Establishment of the Jōdo Shinshu Teaching, and Founding of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
- 2023-5 Resolution of Condolence and Appreciation for Reverend Midori O. Kondo, Mr. David Ikawa, Mrs. Jane Fumiko Obana Uyeno and Mr. Sadao Aoki

Presentations to the Legislative Assembly included:

- 1) Presentation by Pacific Buddhist Academy Head of School Mr. Josh Hernandez-Morse
- 2) Future of American Buddhism Conference Report by Mr. Jon Matsuoka, Rev. Blayne Higa and Rev. Cristina Moon (<https://futureofamericanbuddhism.com/>)
- 3) New Dharma Partnership-presentation by Ms. JoAnn Yosemite and Rev. Shindo Nishiyama
- 4) West Kauai Hongwanji Special Presentation by Rev. Tomo Hojo, Ms. Faye Tateishi & Ms. Shirley Kakuda: West Kauai Hongwanji donated \$250,000 to the HHMH in order to establish the Shinichi and Sumako Hironaka Minister’s Welfare Fund to be administered in the same manner as the Richard Taniguchi Fund.
- 5) A special request by Honokaa Hongwanji President Miles Okumura to help Ukrainians stranded in Hawaii by the war in their home country.

On Saturday at our morning service we installed our 2023 Hawaii Kyodan Officers, Directors, Advisors, Sanmu and Kanji Ministers. We gave special recognition to retired ministers Rev. Richard Tennes and Rev. Arthur Kaufmann. We also recognized Mr. Alan Kubota for his many years of service to HHMH as a photographer.

At Saturday’s plenary session, we confirmed Bishop-elect Toshiyuki Umitani as the next Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii by a unanimous vote. Bishop-elect Umitani shared his appreciation with the assembly. The Hawaii Federation of Jr. YBA shared a slide/video presentation of their activities. Special guests from the BCA, JSBTC and JSIO expressed their appreciation and shared their comments/observations with the Assembly.

Bishop Eric Matsumoto shared his Special Report and Remarks with the Assembly. This was his last Legislative Assembly as Bishop of the HHMH and he was recognized with a warm and sustained standing ovation. The Legislative Assembly adjourned with Nembutsu led by Bishop Eric Matsumoto.

The Aloha Luncheon of the 111<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and the 48<sup>th</sup> Living Treasures of Hawaii Program was held at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Coral Ballroom after the conclusion of the 111<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

### CONFIRMATION OF NEW BISHOP

**Reverend Toshiyuki Umitani**, the Resident Minister of Moiliili Hongwanji Mission was confirmed as the 17<sup>th</sup> Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii at the 111<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. Bishop-elect Rev. Umitani will officially assume the Office of the Bishop effective July 1, 2023.



### OFFICERS, ADVISORS, AND DIRECTORS OF HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII FOR YEAR 2023

President:	Warren Tamamoto (O)		
Immediate Past President:	Pieper Toyama (H)		
Vice Presidents:	Wendy Harman (H)	Russell Nonaka (O)	Fay Tateishi (K)
	Gary Murai (M)	Joseph Gusman (HI)	
Secretary:	Carol Yamamura (M)		
Assistant Secretary:	Sharon Nohara (M)		
Treasurer:	John Toguchi (H)		
Assistant Treasurer:	Alan Tomita (H)		
Advisors:	Alan Goto (H)	Dexter Mar (H)	Rodney Moriyama (O)
	Carolyn Uchiyama (O)	Alton Miyamoto (K)	Michael Munekiyo (M)
	Ivan Nakano (HI)	Frederick S. Nonaka (HI)	Harold Uyeno (HI)
Honorary Advisors:	Roy Miyamoto (H)	Keiji Kukino (H)	
Directors:			
Honolulu (5)	Wendy Harman	John Toguchi	Alan Tomita
	Joanne Kealoha	Prudence Kusano	
Oahu (6)	Russell Nonaka	Myra Nohara	Rene Mansho
	Clifford Togo	Miles Tamura	Evan Watarida
Kauai (2)	Wayne Fujioka	Fay Tateishi	
Maui (4)	George Borg	Sharon Nohara	Carol Yamamura
	Gary Murai		
Hawaii (7)	Edwin Hara	Burt Tsuchiya	Delbert Nishimoto
	Miles Okumura	David Oshiro	Joseph Gusman
	Jason Hashimoto		

## THE 48<sup>TH</sup> LIVING TREASURES OF HAWAII

The Living Treasures of Hawai'i, sponsored annually by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i, selected as honorees for the 48<sup>th</sup> event year **Fred Keakaokalani Cachola, Jr., Fredrick Nonaka, Hiromi Nakai Peterson, and Peter Young.**

**Fred Keakaokalani Cachola, Jr.** is a retired educator who spent most of his career as director of Kamehameha School's Extension Education Division. He was also an early leader of the Polynesian Voyaging Society and the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana.

**Frederick Shigeru Nonaka**, is the owner of Fred's Nursery, a successful landscape contractor for 50 years. Along with a running a successful business, Nonaka has devoted over 70 years to the sustainability and improvement of the Hongwanji and Hawai'i Island communities and was co-founder of Pacific Buddhist Academy.

**Mrs. Hiromi Nakai Peterson** was born in Hiroshima City, Japan, and is Hibaku Nisei, a child of atomic bomb victims of World War II. As a high school Japanese language teacher at Punahou School she led a team that published a five-volume textbook, *Adventures in Japanese*; now the most widely used Japanese language textbook in the nation at the secondary school level.

**Peter Young** served as Chair of the State of Hawai'i Board of Land and Natural Resources. During his term, the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (NWHI) was given the Hawaiian place name, *Papahānaumokuākea*. When rules for the NWHI were being considered, Young proposed rules to prohibit fishing and all other extractive uses, as well as to limit public access. The rules were unanimously adopted

The 2022 Living Treasures awardees were also recognized at the luncheon, including taiko drum master **Kenny Endo**; University of Hawai'i professor and Pacific peoples expert **Patrick Kirch**; and renowned kumu hula and recording artist **Keali'i Reichel**.

The luncheon was at the Coral Ballroom, Hilton Hawaiian Village on February 11, 2023 and approximately 430 people attended the first in-person event since the Pandemic began. Dennis Sekine and Hailama Farden were the Masters of Ceremony, Lehua Matsuoka offered an 'oli, and Pa'ahana provided Hawaiian music.



2022 and 2023 Living Treasures of Hawaii Honorees and family.



The newly installed Officers, Advisors, Directors, Sanmu and Kanji Ministers of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Photos courtesy of Mr. Alan Kubota (Hawaii Betsuin)



*West Kauai Hongwanji Special Presentation  
by Rev. Tomo Hojo, Ms. Faye Tateishi & Ms. Shirley Kakuda  
Photo courtesy of Mr. Alan Kubota (Hawaii Betsuin)*



*The Certificate of Appreciation was presented to  
Mr. Alan Kubota  
Photo courtesy of Rev. Daido Baba*

### MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENT

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will welcome its newest minister **Reverend Charlene Kihara** beginning March 1, 2023. Rev. Kihara is currently undergoing the Hawaii Kyodan Onboarding Program at Headquarters and she will be assigned to Headquarters half-time, and half-time assigned to Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin as an Associate Minister as of March 1, 2023.



### HAWAII KYODAN SUPPORTS RELIEF EFFORTS IN SYRIA AND TURKEY

In response to the devastating series of earthquakes that struck Syria and Turkey on February 6, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Committee on Social Concerns has made \$3,000 donations to Doctors Without Borders ([www.doctorswithoutborders.org](http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org)) and World Central Kitchen ([www.wck.org](http://www.wck.org)) for a total of \$6,000 to support relief efforts in the region.

Here in Hawaii, we know all too well how natural disasters can impact families and communities and how it takes time and resources to recover. Please consider making your own donation to support the people of Syria and Turkey in their time of need. Mahalo!

### BSC 2023 SPRING VIRTUAL SEMINAR

Date: March 25, 2023  
Time: 10 a.m. – 12 noon (HST)  
Speaker: Rev. Jon Turner (Orange County Buddhist Church)  
Topic: Fellow Travelers in Shin Buddhism  
Platform: Zoom

Let's hear about the journey of a fellow Shin Buddhist traveler, Rev. Jon Turner. Rev. Turner was introduced to Shin Buddhism when his family began attending the Orange County Buddhist Church (OCBC) in 1999. Later he joined the Minister's Assistant Program. In 2010, Rev. Turner graduated from the Institute of Buddhist Studies at Berkeley with a master's degree in Buddhist Studies and received his Tokudo ordination. In 2017 became a fully ordained Kaikyoshi minister at OCBC.

Our founder, Shinran Shonin referred to his followers as equal companions and “fellow travelers” (Ondobo Ondogyo) in the Dharma. Shinran taught us that, without exception, we are all “brothers and sisters” embraced by Amida Buddha’s Wisdom and Compassion.

The program will explore this unique Shin Buddhist understanding that developed from Shinran’s life experience as a monk and then a lay teacher. We urge all Jodo Shinshu followers (ministers and members) to become fellow travelers and listeners of the Buddha-Dharma.

**Everyone is Welcome!** Register online at: <https://forms.gle/CvXJCZhsKe4Gguv17>

Or, fill in the lower portion of the flyer, then clip and mail to the BSC.

### 2023 BCA NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Mr. David Atcheson (Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin) and Mr. Wayde Toyama (Kahului Hongwanji Mission) will represent Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and attend the 2023 Buddhist Churches of America National Council Meeting which will be held via Zoom on February 18 and February 23-26, 2023.

### PBA’S 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TAIKO FESTIVAL

Tickets are on sale now for PBA's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Taiko Festival at Moanalua High School’s Performing Arts Center! The event will take place on March 5, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. The theme is Senri No Michi, meaning journey of a thousand miles. Be sure to reserve your seats before they sell out!

More information on the event and how to purchase tickets can be found online here: <https://pacifcbuddhistacademy.org/giving/taiko-festival>

Thank you for supporting PBA, as all proceeds will enhance our unique peace-based programs!



### 2023 KAUAI HONGWANJI COUNCIL NEMBUTSU SEMINAR

Kauai Hongwanji Council will host a Zoom Nembutsu seminar with Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji (Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church) on Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. The topic is " The Great Undercurrent of Life."

Registration is required. Please go to the link (<https://forms.gle/gD7abvnQJQAENbtQ8>) and fill out the information. When you complete the seminar registration, you will receive an automatic confirmation email from Google forms. Registration deadline is Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. Maximum capacity is 100 people, first come first serve. We will email you a Zoom link three days prior to the seminar. Registration fee is free, but donations can be made to "Kauai Hongwanji Council ". If you have any questions, please contact any of the Kauai temples.