



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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November 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP



At my first Hawaii Kyodan Board of Directors Meeting as the new Bishop in August, I requested that I would like to visit all the temples during the first year of my tenure. The purpose of my visit is to personally connect with the temple members and express my appreciation for their support and dedication to the HHMH. During the first five months as the Bishop, I was able to visit several temples on various occasions. I am very grateful for the ministers and temple leaders who kindly welcomed me to their temple Sangha.

I wish to share all of my experiences of these visits, but this time, I would like to write about my experience at Kohala Hongwanji Mission on the Big Island. I was invited to attend the Honokaa's Peace Parade on October 21. Since I have never been assigned to any of the Big Island temples, I thought this could be an excellent opportunity to experience the work of the Big Island ministers. So, I rented a car (they gave me a Dodge Challenger) and drove a total of 190 miles from Hilo to Kona. I joined the Honokaa Peace Parade and visited Paauiho Hongwanji on Saturday. The Kamuela Hongwanji Board members kindly prepared a delicious potluck dinner that evening. I officiated the Sunday Service at Kamuela Hongwanji Mission and then drove to Kohala Hongwanji Mission on Sunday.

After enjoying the beautiful Kohala Mountain Road, I was greeted by six temple members at Kohala Hongwanji (President Ms. Wendy Nickl). The temple building, which was dedicated in 1977, is beautifully maintained by the temple members. The altar design is unique, very simple with clean lines and geometric angles. There are special touches like a hidden sliding tray built into the altar. Along with some traditional altar ornaments and the statue of Amida Buddha, the tables and their special square gold wallpaper pieces were put up by Kohala members. The large hanging wooden wisteria carving on the front of the temple building was made by a plantation employee who was skilled in carving and woodwork. I was very moved to learn that many hands went into all aspects of the temple's construction.

I visited the Kohala Hongwanji Cemetery after that. I placed my hands together in Gassho in honor of those placed at the gravesite. I deciphered some of the aged gravestones that say, "Hiroshima-ken" and "Yamaguchi-ken" etc. They must be gravestones of the early immigrants from Japan who established the foundation of the Japanese-American community in Hawaii. They have left a lasting and positive impact on Hawaii, contributing to its economic development, cultural diversity, and social cohesion. I wondered if this place could be the closest gravesite to Japan, their home country, on the Big Island.

A visit to Kohala reminded me of the sacrifices, dedication, and contributions of our forefathers. In November, we observed Eitaikyo. Eitaikyo is often translated as the Sangha Memorial Service. It is the service to pay tribute to those who passed before us. They dedicated their lives and handed down the joy of the Nembutsu to us. Eitaikyo is a momentous occasion to thank our forefathers and then listen to the teaching, which is a gift from our forefathers. Our forefathers did not just leave a wonderful temple building for us. They also left us a wonderful place where we can feel, experience, and appreciate the warmth of life and the warmth of Namo Amida Butsu.



As recipients of Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion, we have a responsibility, with a sense of gratitude and appreciation, to share such warmth of life (the joy of interdependence) with others. Let us together create a temple, a community where all people, regardless of their religious, ethnic, or cultural background, can assemble to receive guidance and inspiration, and realize that our lives are always illuminated, affirmed, and appreciated within the Compassionate Light of Amida Buddha.

Namo Amida Butsu

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani, Bishop

THE 41st WORLD JODO SHINSHU COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING

When: October 1, 2023 (Japan Time)

Where: Via Zoom

Participants: Governor Keisuke Miyoshi, International Affairs
Vice Governor Hisashi Kato, International Affairs
Rev. Hideaki Saito, Director of the International Center
Bishop Marvin Harada, Buddhist Churches of America (BCA)
President Terri Omori, BCA
Rev. Michael Endo, BCA Office of the Bishop
Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, Jodo Shinshu International Office
Bishop Tatsuya Aoki, Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada
President Laura Sugimoto, JSBTC
Bishop Shun-ei Kajiwara, Sul-Americana Da Seita Jodo Shinshu Honpa Hongwanji (Brazil)
Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
President Warren Tamamoto, HHMH
Rev. Daido Baba, HHMH Executive Assistant to the Bishop
Rev. Charlene Kihara, HHMH Headquarters

Agenda: Reports

Overseas District Reports shared by each district

Honzan Reports

- Joint Celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching
 - Maui Wildfires
 - Dana for World Peace
 - English Tokudo Shurai Training and Kyoshi Training
 - Survey on Overseas Temple Affiliated Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Priests
 - Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha International Students
 - Kaikyoshi-ho Wagesa
 - Relocation of the International Department Office
- JSIO Reports (shared 2022 and 2023 Activities)

Highlights of Honzan Reports

(1) The Joint Celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary was conducted from March 29 to May 21, 2023, over five sessions over a course of 30 days. 75,000 delegates were said to have attended the celebration. On May 10, the designated day for overseas Hongwanji temples to attend the ceremony included 780 delegates from the overseas districts and regions. (BCA 513, Hawaii 167, Canada 36, South America 19, Taiwan and Hong Kong 40, and others 5.

(2) Maui Wildfires - In support of recovery efforts, the 'Relief Support for Maui Wildfires' fund drive has been set up within Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha permanent support fund, 'Tasukeai Undo Bokin,' and a fundraising campaign is underway.

(3) The English Tokudo Shurai Training - For 2023 English Tokudo Shurai (training) will be held in person in Kyoto from December 6-16, 2023, at the Nishiyama Betsuin in Kyoto, Japan. Participants are 10 from BCA and one from Hawaii.

(4) Relocation of the International Department Office – Due to the deterioration of the current Hongwanji International Center building, the International Department office will be moving from the International Center to the Administration Building sometime within this fiscal year calendar. The International Center will no longer be used.

Agenda: Business

New Business

- Improvement of Training Program in Japan
- Young Buddhists' International Cultural Study Exchange (YBICSE)
- Next host district and dates

Highlights of New Business:

(1) Currently, Honzan is thinking of continuing to have the Kyoshi Training in Jodo Shinshu Center, Berkeley, CA. That being the case, after the Tokudo Training in Japan, there is not much opportunity to go to the mother temple, Hongwanji for overseas ministers. To create more opportunities and connections, Honzan is planning to have a short session at the Hongwanji in Kyoto before official assignment as a Kaikyoshi minister.

(2) YBICSE program may resume in 2024. The official announcement will be determined later.

CONDOLENCE

Mr. Steven Don Lee, a member of Kahului Hongwanji Mission, passed away on October 2, 2023. Mr. Lee served as the President of Kahului Hongwanji Mission. The Ingo of AI-GYO-IN 愛樂院 which translates as “One who rejoices in the most profound dharma” in recognition of his life of Nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani on October 28, 2023.

2024 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The 2024 HHMH Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) will be held on February 9 & 10, 2024 in the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin Social Hall and via Zoom. The Legislative Assembly Aloha Luncheon & Living Treasures of Hawaii Recognition will be held on Saturday February 10, 2024 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Coral Ballrooms. The registration fee is \$125.00 for both delegates and observers and \$100.00 for the luncheon only. The registration forms were sent on November 8, 2023 to the Temples & Council Presidents. Please submit the completed registration form through your temple by December 31, 2023. The 2024 Giseikai documents & Zoom link will be emailed to attendees in early February 2024. For the Rap Session, the registration and fee will be determined.

ANNUAL APPRECIATION GATHERING FOR THE RETIRED MINISTERS AND THEIR SPOUSES

On November 1, 2023, Bishop Umitani and President Dr. Tamamoto hosted the annual appreciation luncheon for the retired ministers and their spouses. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were not able to hold this gathering for the past three years. Bishop Umitani officiated over the opening service at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin Hondo. During the service, the names of the ministers and their spouses who passed away during the past three years (14 individuals) were read, and the participants had a moment of silence in their memory. Bishop Umitani and President Dr. Warren Tamamoto expressed their sincere appreciation for the contributions that the retired ministers and their spouses made to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and conveyed the appreciation that the current ministers have for their mentors and teachers. After the service, the retired ministers and their spouses gathered and enjoyed a beautiful bento meal at the Bishop’s Residence. It was an excellent time to reconnect with mentors and old friends.



COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS UPDATE

The Committee on Social Concerns recently made the following donations from the *Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief Fund* to support recovery efforts on Maui:

\$10,000	Rev. Ai Hironaka (Omimai)
\$10,000	Maui Foodbank
\$5,000	A Cup of Cold Water
\$5,000	The Maui Farm
\$10,000	Hawaii Community Foundation Maui Strong Fund
\$5,000	Red Cross of Hawaii
\$10,000	World Central Kitchen

As of October 31, we have raised close to **\$700,000** and distributed **\$288,400** from the *Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief Fund*. Combined with **\$28,000** distributed from our *Social Welfare Fund*, **we have given a total of \$316,400 in emergency aid.**

Previous donations from the Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief Fund:

\$10,000	Hawaii People's Fund Maui Aloha
\$5,000	Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement Kāko'o Maui Fund
\$5,000	Maui Mutual Aid via Grants Central Station
\$1,400	Rev. Ai Hironaka (Omimai)
\$1,000	Rev. Gensho Hara of Lahaina Jodo Mission (Omimai)
\$1,000	Rev. Takayuki Meguro of Lahaina Shingon Mission (Omimai)

We also gave **\$2,000** Omimai to each member of Lahaina Hongwanji and other members of our Hawaii Kyodan Ohana who were impacted by the wildfires totalling **\$210,000**. The Maui Wildfire Emergency Response Ad-Hoc Committee provided the list of recipients.

Through our *Social Welfare Fund*, we were able to immediately support relief efforts on Maui in the aftermath of the disaster giving **\$28,000** to various organizations and affected individuals. Your generous support of our Annual Social Concerns Fund Drive ensures we have the ability to respond quickly when disasters strike.

\$10,000	Hawaii Community Foundation Maui Strong Fund
\$10,000	Maui Food Bank
\$5,000	Hawaii Red Cross
\$1,000	Makawao Hongwanji to support evacuees and first responders at local evacuation center with food and water.
\$1,000	Rev. Ai Hironaka of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission (Omimai)
\$500	Rev. Gensho Hara of Lahaina Jodo Mission (Omimai)
\$500	Rev. Takayuki Meguro of Lahaina Shingon Mission (Omimai)

In the spirit of compassion, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii established the Maui Wildfires Disaster Relief Fund. All donations collected will go to support Lahaina Hongwanji Mission and relief efforts on Maui. If you could help support this effort, we would truly appreciate it.

You will find a large button for Maui Wildfires Disaster Relief near the top of our Donate page:
<https://hongwanjihawaii.com/donate/>

QR code for Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief Fund through PayPal



Updates for Maui Wildfires Disaster will be shared on our website at <http://honpahi.link/fire>
Mahalo for your generosity and support during this time of tragedy.

TRIPLE CELEBRATION BUDDHIST EDUCATION SERIES

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Triple Celebration Committee has organized a Triple Celebration Buddhist Education Series to be held online throughout the year of 2024.

Topics in the education series align with the structure of the *Kyogyoshinsho*, a work written by Shinran Shonin in 1224 that was the basis for establishing the Jodo Shinshu Tradition. The *Kyogyoshinsho* shows the way of attaining enlightenment (sho) through reciting the Name of Amida Buddha (gyo) caused by entrusting heart (shin) which is taught in the Larger Sutra (Kyo).

The education series will consist of 4 main topics:

1. The Significance of the establishment of Jodo Shinshu Tradition
2. Essence of Kyogyoshinsho
3. Transmission of Jodo Shinshu from the past to present
4. The world is waiting for Buddhism and Shinran Shonin

The first two sessions are on Saturday, January 13 & Saturday, January 20 from 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (Hawaii Standard Time). The featured speaker will be Dr. David Matsumoto of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley. His lectures are “What is Mahayana Buddhism?” and “What is Pure Land Buddhism?”

The series will continue in February with two lectures, and then from March through August there will be one session per month. Please see the attached flyer for more details.

More information about individual sessions, including specific session flyers, is available on the Buddhist Study Center website.

Organizers hope the series will help participants relate the teachings to their lives, bring the Buddha’s wisdom to social issues, and inspire individual temples to hold Buddhism classes. The overarching goal is transforming people’s lives guided by Amida Buddha’s Primal Vow.

The sessions will be delivered online via Zoom. To receive the Zoom link, please register using this link: <https://forms.gle/kXbGaoyLyqKe2w629>

MOILIILI HONGWANJI “HONGWANJI FOR MAUI SHIRT”

With the fires that devastated Maui in August 2023, Mō‘ili‘ili Hongwanji is hosting a special project - Hongwanji for Maui Shirt. All proceeds will benefit Honpa Hongwanji Mission (HHMH) and be dispersed into the community on Maui & Lahaina Hongwanji Mission/their members for ongoing relief efforts.

Background of the shirt: A modern design while incorporating some Aloha, our sagarifuji wisteria, and the Maui Island flower- lokelani.

Price: \$25/each (small to extra-large). \$27/each (2XL). Additional donations are welcome. Place your order today at <https://www.moiliilihongwanji.org/hongwanji-for-maui-shirts/>

Pickup or Shipping: We encourage you to pick-up your order at Mō‘ili‘ili Hongwanji Mission. We can ship for an additional fee. Please note that we can ship to the neighbor islands and continental US. Additional time is needed to process all orders.



HQ BOOKSTORE UPDATE

HHMH HQ Bookstore is now selling jewelry that was handmade by PBA students in their elective classes.

PBA said “Students grades 9-12 in Beginning Jewelry Making at PBA created these pieces for their final project. The beads are made of mixed materials and the metals are gold and silver plated over brass. Half of each purchase will go back to the student artist to support their entrepreneurship experience and the other half to support the HHMH bookstore.”

Sales prices range from \$5 to \$30. All the jewelry is so cute and attractive. It will be a good holiday present for you, your family, and your friends. Please stop by the bookstore at the HQ Office to browse the jewelry made by talented PBA students.

