



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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NOVEMBER 2019

BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



As we enter the last months of the year, you might be thinking “Where did the year go?” Soon, a new year will be upon us. For the past 5 years, our theme has been “Embrace Change,” but though we will be starting a new series beginning in 2020, it does not mean that we should stop being guided by our current theme of embrace change. However, the time has come for the start of a new set of Theme and Slogans. Thus, from 2020-2024, our new theme will be “Building Healthy Sanghas” with a series of slogans for each year. Our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, next 5 Year Theme and Slogans are:

- 2020: Building Healthy Sanghas: Embracing Generosity and Openness,
- 2021: Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect,
- 2022: Building Healthy Sanghas: Connecting with Others,
- 2023: Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Joy Together and
- 2024: Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Nembutsu Moments.

We will be focusing on the Sangha. A Sangha that is nurtured by the Buddha-Dharma. As a Sangha, the thoughts, words and actions of every individual, ministers and lay, are very important and makes a difference.

In the book, “The Teaching of Buddha” by BDK, it shares about ministers that *“Those who wish to teach the Buddha’s teachings...must be concerned about four things: first, they must be concerned about their own behavior; second, they must be concerned about their choice of words when they approach and teach people; third, they must be concerned about their motive for teaching and what they wish to accomplish; and fourth, they must be concerned about great compassion.”*

For lay people, it shares *“Lay followers should not only believe in the Three Treasures...by themselves, but also...help others...to awaken...an unshakable faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, so that they, too, may share in Buddha’s compassion.”*

However, how do we share the Nembutsu Teaching? I recall Rev. Masao Haneda having said, we are “looking at becoming another example of the workings of true compassion.” Let us, the Sangha, clergy

and lay, jointly together share our awareness, understanding, joy and gratitude of the Buddha-Dharma by becoming that evidence that Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion is indeed true and real and working in this world.

Recently, my eyes rested on a message by Gomonsu in which he said, "*Shinran Shonin is the person who shows us how we can live our lives despite our egocentric tendencies. Although we might not be able to completely eradicate our blind passions, within the embracing light of Amida Buddha (underline is mine) we can live each moment of our lives with true meaning.*

Rather than simply live day in and day out as if we are just "going through the motions," in the teaching's illuminating light (underline is mine) we can find clarity and meaning in our lives. Not separating ourselves from society; it is important that we live within the priceless interconnections that we have with one another and support each other." Gomonsu has been emphasizing or focusing on how we live as Nembutsu Followers. Yes, I am imperfect and negative impulses and self-centered thoughts do not disappear until birth in the Pure Land, but there is also something happening as we live our life, day to day.

I have been emphasizing that the life of a Shin Buddhist is one of responding in gratitude to the Wisdom and Compassion of Namo Amida Butsu by reciting the Nembutsu and trying to live our life guided by the Dharma as it is one of the Ten Benefits we receive in the present life. However, our responding in gratitude is also the workings of Amida Buddha. To be sure, it is I who is responding in gratitude, but further I am also being nurtured by the Light of Amida Buddha. In fact, the source of anything positive or good comes about because of Amida Buddha's Light(s) which is illuminating us. In the Larger Sutra, it says that "*Sentient beings who encounter this light have the three defilements swept away, and they become soft and gentle in body and mind. They dance with joy, and the good mind arises (underline is mine) in them. When those suffering pain and travail in the three evil courses see this light, they all find respite and are freed of afflictions. After their lives have ended, they all gain emancipation."* The key words here are "find respite" and "freed from the afflictions" and the Chinese character for "see" which also has the meaning of to "meet" or "encounter." We are being nurtured and encouraged by Amida Buddha's 12 Lights.

Let us, as individuals, but also, collectively, as the Hongwanji Sangha respond in gratitude! The Sangha must come to life! What is most important is reciting the Nembutsu in awareness, joy and gratitude and trying to live guided by the Dharma. In order to do this, we must know what the Dharma or Teaching is saying. Thus, I humbly ask that you together with other family members and friends come to listen to the Buddha-Dharma which can enrich all of lives. Imperfect as we may be, it is our humble, respectful, warm and harmonious relationships and interactions with people that is one of the crucial elements in the sharing of Jodo Shinshu with others.

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

CHANGE OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF JODO SHINSHU HONGWANJI-HA

The Hongwanji Sokyoku has announced the following changes to their Governing Board of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha effective on November 1, 2019.

〈Outgoing〉

Governor	Reverend Gyoshin Ikeda
Governor	Reverend Keiichi Abe
Governor	Reverend Gien Yamashita
Vice Governor	Reverend Ryotetsu Takenaka
Vice Governor	Reverend Takayuki Hironaka

〈Incoming〉

Governor	Reverend Kuson Takeda
Governor	Reverend Rigaku Mitsuoka - in charge of International Department
Governor	Reverend Zensho Ashikaga
Vice Governor	Reverend Shoshin Kumona
Vice Governor	Reverend Kenyu Takaya - in charge of International Department

CONDOLENCES

Mrs. Roseline Tsuyuko Yano, a member of Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission, passed away on September 15, 2019. She served as President of the Wahiawa Hongwanji Sunday School known today as Dharma School. She was involved with Sr. YBA, Jr. YBA and 4-H Club and was a Bon Dance instructor. In 1992, she was elected Wahiawa Hongwanji Kyodan President. She was the first woman to be elected to this office and served for ten years. She was also President of the Wahiawa BWA and Oahu District BWA.

The Wahiawa Hongwanji Kyodan Funeral Service was held at Mililani Memorial Park & Mortuary on Saturday, November 9, 2019 under the officiation of Bishop Eric Matsumoto. The Ingo (Posthumous Title) of FU-SHOU-IN 普照院 which means “One whose presence illuminated all” in recognition of her life of nembutsu was conferred.

2020 LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The 2020 Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) will be held on February 7 & 8, 2020 at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. The Legislative Assembly Aloha Luncheon & Living Treasures of Hawaii Recognition will be held on February 8, 2020 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort. The registration fee is \$105.00 for both delegates and observers, \$85.00 for the luncheon only and \$15.00 for the Rap Session. The Registration form and other documents that need to be submitted to HQ were already mailed to the temples and organization leaders. Please submit all the documents to HQ by the deadline described in the letter. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

ANNUAL APPRECIATION GATHERING FOR THE RETIRED MINISTERS AND THEIR SPOUSES

The annual appreciation gathering for the Retired Ministers and their spouses was held on November 6, 2019. 13 retired ministers and spouses attended this year's gathering. The Opening Service was held Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. At the service, Bishop Eric Matsumoto and Mr. Pieper Toyama expressed their appreciation on behalf of the current active ministers and the members of HHMH.



WAILUKU HONGWANJI MISSION 120TH ANNIVERSARY

Wailuku Hongwanji Mission celebrated its 120th Anniversary on Sunday, October 20 in Wailuku. The mission was established in 1898 with the arrival from Japan of Reverend Hojun Kunisaki of the Jodo Shinshu sect of Buddhism. A commemorative service was held which recognized keirokai members, those eighty years and older, for their dedication and service to the temple. Among the thirty-two keirokai in attendance were centenarians Misao Tengan, Edith Omuro and Tomiko Yamagata. Affiliate organizations represented at the service included the Wailuku Hongwanji Preschool, Gakuen (Japanese Language School), Boy Scouts Troop 40, Cub Scouts Pack 40, Girl Scouts Troop 24, Judo and Karate Clubs.

The celebration event featured games and entertainment by the Dharma School students and Dharma Strummers ukulele group. A buffet lunch was served in the social hall to a gathering of 180 temple members and guests.

The 120th Anniversary Fund Drive raised \$120,000 to purchase the photovoltaic system which is currently being leased and to convert a storage room near the temple entrance to a handicap accessible restroom.



From left to right: Centenarians Misao Tengan, Edith Omuro, Tomiko Yamagata with Rev. Shinkai Murakami

Throughout the years, Wailuku Hongwanji Mission has maintained a vibrant sangha and strong affiliate ties. It has grown into a community temple which continues to enrich the lives of all who participate in its programs.

KAUAI DISTRICT 130TH COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

Happy 130th Birthday to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii! On Sunday, October 6, the Kauai Hongwanji Council held the 130th Commemorative Service and a Peace Panel Discussion, at the West Kauai Hongwanji Mission-Hanapepe Temple. Bishop Eric Matsumoto delivered the dedication and Dharma message for the service. A birthday cake and singing Happy Birthday to Honpa Hongwanji added to the joyous celebration. Everyone enjoyed the delicious lunch and birthday cake.



The highlight of the afternoon was a Peace Panel Discussion, “Manifestation of Peace, Various Perspectives, with Rev. Mieko Majima as the moderator. The guest panelists were Bishop Eric Matsumoto, Bishop Kosen Ishikawa, Jodo Mission of Hawaii and Koloa Jodo Mission, and Kahu Sherman Thompson, Chaplain of Kamehameha School, Kapalama. They each shared their perspective of peace from their personal, religious and community aspect. We look forward to celebrating Honpa’s next anniversary as we put our hands together in gassho and recite Namu Amida Butsu.

KAUAI UNITED BWA LONESOME GRAVE PROJECT

The Kauai United Women’s Association and members of the West Kauai Hongwanji, Lihue Hongwanji and Kapaa Hongwanji decorated the graves at the Veterans Cemetery in Hanapepe, Kauai on November 10, 2019. Each year the BWA organizes and encourages everyone to assist in decorating the graves for the annual Veterans Day Service which is held on November 11. With everyone’s help, all the graves were beautifully decorated with flowers and greens.



Shaku Arthur Kaufmann officiated the service which was held at the cemetery and gave a Dharma message in honor and remembrance of the veterans who served our country and will never be forgotten.

BWA NEWS

16th WBWC Panel Speaker – Carol Valentine

Carol Valentine of Lihue Hongwanji was Hawaii's representative on the World Buddhist Women's Convention panel. She spoke on the theme of the Convention, "Live the Nembutsu." Carol gave practical ways that we can live the Nembutsu in our everyday lives. She quoted Dr. Mark Unno when she said, "The real teaching is the living Dharma; small gestures with sincerity, humility, and generosity."



Carol then spoke about four qualities that she considers central to Buddhist practice: Gratitude, Kindness, Compassion, and Interdependence. For each, she gave examples of ways we can manifest them in our lives.

Gratitude – say "thank you" to people, even those who are doing their job. Feel grateful for: your first cup of coffee in the morning, laughter, your family, having a place to live.

Kindness – do the right thing without promise of a reward. Don't gossip. Hold a door open for the person behind you. Use kind and gentle words. Smile.

Compassion – If we can help others, then we should. Listen more than you talk. Let go of control. Make people feel comfortable if they ask for help.

Interdependence – Everything we touch was touched by many other hands before we had the chance to receive it. Silently thank the hundreds of people who make your life possible. Recycle every chance you get; admit when you are wrong; share an umbrella with someone when it is raining.

Thank you, Carol, for representing Hawaii Federation BWA in such a meaningful way.

Save the Dates!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade – January 20, 2020

HMH Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations will continue their participation in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade. Let's have a strong showing this year, demonstrating our Buddhist belief in the equality of all beings. All temple members, Dharma School students, Jr. YBA members, and friends are invited to join us. We hand out origami cranes to those watching the parade, so if you love to fold cranes, please help us out. Give them to your temple BWA president or to Lois Toyama. To protect the planet, please bring your own water bottle. It's lots of fun! Please join us.

4th Annual BWA Tea – February 6, 2020, 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

This annual BWA tea is an opportunity for BWA members from around the state to gather in an informal setting, renew old friendships, and cultivate new ones. It's held right before the Giseikai Rap Session in the Ministers' Dining Room so that BWA members attending Giseikai have a chance to mingle and chat with others from around the state. All BWA members are welcome to attend... even if you're not planning to attend Giseikai. There's always good food and good fun!