

Shaku Kaufmann Self-Introduction

July 2018

Fellow Buddhists and Fellow travelers on the Nembutsu Path, Aloha Kakou,

My name is Arthur J. Kaufmann and I have just taken residency as minister at the Lihue Hongwanji Mission as of July 15th. Before I go on, I must thank all the Sangha members that were and are involved in making improvements to the parsonage. Your kind efforts are much appreciated, thank you all.

Although this is not my first time on Kauai, it is the first time I shall serve as a resident minister. The first time I heard of Kauai was back in 1992 when Iniki was headed to the islands. The night before it hit Kauai, it was headed straight to Honolulu where my future wife was doing her internship at the VA in psychology. I could hardly believe my ears when the next day, I heard that Kauai and the Waianai coast had been hit by the Iniki. I thought for sure that Honolulu would be hit. As a result of that, Judith my wife to be, who had been trained and certified in Traumatology, and was given a team to go over to Kauai to talk story with the folks there and see what they needed. Despite the condition of the Island, my wife fell in love with Kauai and loves Kauai to this day.

In preparing to work here, Rev. Takahashi invited me over to meet the board of directors and see some of your beautiful Island home. It was a whirlwind tour which included Kapa'a, Lihue and Hanapepe plus some of the care homes and hospitals that I would be visiting on a monthly basis. In visiting Kapa'a and Hanapepe we stopped at their respective temples and visited with Revs. Majima and Hojo. I had worked with Rev. Hojo at the Hawaii Betsuin on Oahu and had met Rev. Majima when she first came to the Islands. The Sensei's gave me pamphlets on their temples and I was able to read about their history including the formation of West Kauai.

Through reading about their histories and Lihue's I got a strong sense of dedication of their Sanghas for their temples. I was impressed by the fact that the Kauai temples had each had celebrated their centennials. I thought, what today lasts for a hundred years? I further got the feeling of real dedication by the Sanghas of Kauai and of course, this is vital to the survival of our temples, no matter where they may be. This caring is something I have recently been giving Dharma talks on which stresses the importance of the Sangha.

It will take time adjusting to this new situation here at Lihue and I ask your patience with me. I shall also need to learn how the Kauai temples interact in certain occasions and with the 4 Kauai Buddhist Council and I look forward to learning your way of doing things as I become a resident of the Garden Isle, Kauai.

In Gassho, Shaku Art J. Kaufmann