



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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MARCH 2020

BISHOP'S CORNER



Do not be overwhelmed by fear and isolation! Go to the Buddha-Dharma for Guidance and Assurance!

Bishop Eric Matsumoto

As we, as individuals, our families, our local communities, our Nation, and the World grapple with COVID-19, let us, affirmatively and positively, do what we can to help curb its spread and the suffering caused by it. Please keep yourselves updated on the recommendations and advisories that are being issued by governmental and health care agencies which are trying their very best in battling the Coronavirus, but they need our help too.

In this respect, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii has directed all its temples and affiliated organizations connected with HHMH to, for the time being as much as possible, curtail temple services and activities which require people to gather, out of consideration for the health and well-being of one and all, but especially our elderly who comprise a large portion of our membership for the greater cause of stopping the spread of the Coronavirus. May we avail ourselves to the Wisdom of the Dharma and keep in mind the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of all people and all things. What we each do matters for all of us!

However, the battle being fought is not only external. There is also an internal battle or struggle that we should be aware of that is also taking place. This battle/struggle is also complex. For any living being, self-preservation is a basic instinct, but being a human being, we also have the ability to live not only by instinct, but also by reason and learned and/or nurtured behaviors. As we think of our own health, let us also consider the well-being of others. Though it may be challenging for me as a (bonbu) "spiritually, foolish being" let us think of how we might be able to mutually benefit and help each other especially in these difficult times. Let us be motivated by our gratitude for the Unconditional Compassion of Amida Buddha. Please remember that Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light, no matter where we are is always with us! Thus, it is said that, this is why this Buddha's name is "Amida," who "embraces never to forsake." So, please do not feel and think you are all alone. The Buddha, as Namu Amida Butsu [The-Buddha's-Name-Which-Calls-Us (to entrust)], is always with us at every moment!

As I offer my well-wishes to you and offer my condolences to those who have lost dear family members and friends, may I finally share that Wisdom guides Compassion and Compassion fulfills Wisdom. In these challenging times, may we go to the Wisdom and Compassion of Enlightenment for guidance and

assurance. Namo Amida Buddha/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion [The-Buddha's-Name-Which-I-Call (in gratitude.)]

In gassho,

Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

DIRECTIVES & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII HEADQUARTERS

The Centers for Disease Control on March 15, 2020 has revised their guidelines for community and faith-based organizations. <https://www.cdc.gov>

If there is minimal or moderate spread in your community:

- **Alert! Starting 3/15 and for 8 weeks, CDC recommends all events of 50+ people be cancelled or held virtually.**
- **For organizations that serve people who are at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness, cancel events for groups of 10 people or more.**

Based on these recommendations Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Headquarters has decided on the following matters effective immediately:

- Cancel or postpone the following until after May 15, 2020:
 - Sunday Services
 - Memorial Services
 - Cultural activities
 - Community organizational gatherings/meetings
 - Religious education classes (except online classes)
 - Nursing home group visits, including monthly services
 - HHMH affiliated organizations such as JYBA, BWA, etc., meetings/gatherings (on-line meetings are permissible)
- Continue the following:
 - Bedside / Makuragyo services
 - Small (less than 10) end of life services
- Funeral services
 - Contact family if they can postpone until after May 15, 2020
 - If the funeral service can't be postponed, Headquarters recommends to minimize social contact and maintain social distance to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Japanese Language Schools, Preschools, Hongwanji Mission School, Pacific Buddhist Academy and other schools which may be renting or borrowing temple facilities should follow DOE guidelines.
- Elder Adult Care Programs at Temples will have to decide their course of action at the temple level.

- All Hawaii Kyodan Committees and Task Forces are to have online meetings using GoTo Meetings for the remainder of the year. Primary is the safety of committee members, but there are also other factors influencing this decision. If there is an important need for a face-to-face meeting by your group, please contact HQ and especially Derrick Inouye, way in advance, to discuss the matter.
- Except for emergency or urgent situations, HQ will suspend all air travel. All affiliated organizations of HHMH, state committees and task forces are requested to do the same. For example, please find speakers and human resources in your own respective districts so individuals including ministers do not have to travel interisland. Please consider using audio-visual technology or pre-recorded messages.
- After the March 20th Webinar on Employment Law regarding COVID-19, we will summarize procedures and policies and inform all Active Ministers and Temple Presidents on what happens if a minister or lay employee becomes ill or needs to be quarantined and thus cannot work. For temples which also have lay employees it is recommended that someone participate, first hand, in the webinar to get information. Information has been sent out regarding the webinar.
- Ministers especially, but to all Dharma Educators, please provide guidance to temple members and possibly even your larger community by sharing Dharma insights during this time of heightened crisis and fear being experienced. To aid in this effort, starting Sunday, March 22, 2020, as a State Ministers Association endeavor, with the assistance of Hawaii Betsuin, each Sunday there will be a live stream of a Sunday Service with a Dharma Message which will later be posted on a YouTube Video too. We will inform all Temples and State-wide affiliates of HHMH, how members and friends can gain access to the live stream and YouTube Video.
- Best practices for everyone, including clergy:
 - Stay home if you're sick
 - Clean your hands often
 - Avoid close contact
 - Cover coughs and sneezes
 - Wear facemask if you are sick
 - Clean and disinfect
 - Social Distancing and good air circulation

The situation with COVID-19 is so fluid that matters could change anytime and very rapidly. Ministers and temple leaders, please use your best judgement.

Let us be safe, but not full of fear. Let us go to the Buddha-Dharma for guidance.

Thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Rev. Eric Matsumoto, Bishop and Dr. Warren Tamamoto, President

March 16, 2020

LIVE STREAMING INVITATION LETTER FROM HAWAII HONPA HONGWANJI MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

Dear Family and Friends of the Hongwanji Sangha,

We received the memo from Bishop regarding COVID-19, directing that all temples to operate on a very limited basis providing only essential religious services until May 15, 2020. Especially during this time of uncertainty, we must not forget that we are all connected to each other and moving forward together. Receiving this request from Bishop Matsumoto, the State Ministers' Association endeavors to find new ways to keep sharing the Dharma. As a result, we would like to introduce Live Streaming of Sunday Services through the Hongwanji YouTube channel and HHMH website. (Videos will be available live as well as later on demand.) Please access the link below:

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDuOZdicW9mWq-DNlf19Pyg>

Or the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii website

<https://hongwanjihawaii.com/>

The schedule of speakers is as follows:

3/22	10AM	Bishop Eric Matsumoto (HQ)
3/29	10AM	Rev. Kazunori Takahashi (HQ)
4/5	10AM	Rev. Jeffrey Soga (Waipahu Hongwanji & Waianae Hongwanji)
4/12	10AM	Rev. David Fujimoto (Mililani Hongwanji & Ewa Hongwanji)
4/19	10AM	Rev. Shawn Yagi (Aiea Hongwanji)
4/26	10AM	Rev. Kojun Hashimoto (Wahiawa Hongwanji & Waiialua Hongwanji)
5/3	10AM	Rev. Sol Kalu (Hawaii Betsuin)
5/10	10AM	Rimban Toyokazu Hagio (Hawaii Betsuin)

(Speakers are subject to change)

Please visit our YouTube channel and subscribe to it to continue receiving updates and notifications of new videos!

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. (The Teaching of Buddha) In this time of difficulty, let's try to help each other and not forget that we are all embraced by the Great Compassion.

Special Appreciation to Bishop Matsumoto, Rev. Takahashi, Rev. Kiyohara, Rev. Hironaka, and Mr. Atcheson

And to All Speakers: Bishop Matsumoto, Rev. Takahashi, Rev. Soga, Rev. Fujimoto, Rev. Yagi, Rev. Hashimoto, Rev. Kalu, and Rimban Hagio

In Gassho,

Yuika Hasebe

Chair of State Ministers Association

YESS CAMP ANNOUNCEMENT

On behalf of all the counselors and staff of YESS Camp 37, and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, our hearts go out to all those impacted by COVID-19. In light of these recent events, we would like to formally announce that YESS Camp 37 will be postponed to the tentative dates of September 5-7, 2020 (Labor Day Weekend). As the situation continues to evolve, we may make some more changes, but through it all, we will continue to live compassionately. The safety, health and well-being of our participants has, and always will be, a top priority. Thank you for your patience and understanding during these difficult times.

In Gassho,
Dwight Matsuo, Preston Matsuo
YESS Camp 37 Co-Chairs

CHORALFEST 2020

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's Choralfest 2020 will be held this year on September 26 and 27 at Hawaii Betsuin. This is the eighth such event since 2005. If you wish to participate as one of upwards of 150 singers in the festival choir, please register with your temple office by April 30. For a small fee of \$30, you will receive in May a booklet of choral gathas, a practice CD with which to learn your vocal parts over the summer, all meals at the two-day event, and the chance to sing with friends under the guidance of one of Hawaii's top choral directors, Nola Nahulu, who is also the esteemed conductor of the Hawaii Opera Chorus. Five beautiful choral gathas will be featured, including a remembrance of Hiroshima and Nagasaki seventy-five years ago and a BWA World Convention theme song of 1998 by the Lady Noriko Otani. Whether you are a singer or listener, please note the dates – Choralfest 2020 on September 26 and 27, and sign up by **April 30**.

