



Makawao Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

March 2022

P.O. Box 188, Makawao, Maui, HI 96768

Office Phone: (808) 572-7229

E-mail: makawaohongwanji@gmail.com

Website: makawaohongwanji.org

Resident Minister: Rev. Kerry Kiyohara

MAKAWAO HONGWANJI MISSION
P. O. BOX 188
Makawao, HI.—96768

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
PERMIT NO. 6
Makawao, HI 96768



Find us on:
facebook®

SUNDAY SERVICES IN MARCH ARE IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM

Sunday, March 6, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
FIRST SUNDAY FAMILY DHARMA SERVICE

Sunday, March 13, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
FAMILY DHARMA SERVICE

Sunday, March 20, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
DHARMA FAMILY SERVICE

Sunday, March 27, 2022, 9:00 a.m.
DHARMA FAMILY SERVICE

WE GO TO THE BUDDHA FOR GUIDANCE

WE GO TO THE DHARMA FOR GUIDANCE

WE GO TO THE SANGHA FOR GUIDANCE

NAMO AMIDA BUTSU

Let's Re-open the Temple Together!

With hope in our hearts, let us join together to re-open the Makawao Hongwanji as a thriving, vibrant, “kind and gentle” community of communities, a temple that creates the time, place, and occasion for learning, spiritual growth, and compassionate service to the community, welcoming everyone to ‘come as they are’ to the Buddhist path of wisdom, compassion, and harmony.



Simply opening the doors of the temple will not be enough. Without Sangha, the Temple is just a box. We need your help to re-open the temple!

“Is it safe?”—one of my all-time favorite scary scenes in a Hollywood movie is Sir Lawrence Olivier and Dustin Hoffman in the dentist chair scene in “Marathon Man.” The sound of the drill...bzzzzzz!... “Is it safe?...Scary movies aside, this question, “Is it safe?” is something our human brain must consider every moment of every day, not just during a public health emergency. Let’s reflect upon the meaning and significance of this question from a Buddhist perspective.

Buddha taught that human nature is to be self-centered, ego-centric, attached stubbornly to a false idea of “self” (ME = My Ego). Thus, the question we are asking is really, “Is it safe **for ME?**”—Will I get infected? Will I suffer? Will I die?

As Buddhists, however, we must try our best to cultivate the heart of compassion for others: “Is it safe **for Others?**” —Will others get infected, suffer, and die?

Inevitably, human nature is to focus solely on, “Is it safe for ME?” Here, we are confronted by the Truth of Impermanence of all things, people, and phenomena arising from causes and conditions. The Buddha taught human existence is simply Birth, Aging, Illness, Death: born human, your body and mind will decay with time, you will get sick, you will die. This Truth cannot be changed, as much as we may pray, wish, or try to delude ourselves. This Truth is easy to acknowledge and yet extremely difficult to accept.

Thus, the reality is we cannot change the course of the pandemic by ourselves—I am unable to make COVID-19 go away even though that is what I want. And yet, our collective thoughts, words, and actions—what we all do together as a community of communities—will affect the consequences and outcomes.

As we re-open the temple, you will ask yourself, “Is it safe?” As we welcome guests and new visitors to Buddhism and Makawao Hongwanji, you will ask yourself, “Is it safe?” As we re-start volunteer ‘*hōsha*’ (repaying one’s debt of gratitude) activities, such as refreshments after service, maintaining the temple grounds, cleaning the temple and columbarium, changing the flowers, etc., you will ask yourself, “Is it safe?” The Buddhist answer is “Maybe.” Not a very satisfying answer, I know, but that is reality-as-it-is, not reality-as-my-Ego-wants-it-to-be.

Path Forward: Break Out of My Shell and Take Baby Steps

“Reaching out to others,
I will share a smile and gentle words.
Just like the Buddha, who always calls out with Aloha.”

—His Eminence Monshu OHTANI Kojun
The 25th Head Priest of the Hongwanji, Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha
(English translation by Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii)

The wisdom of Monshu OHTANI Kojun encourages us to “break free of our shell” and reach out to others with a smile and kind words, just like Amida Buddha who is always calling out to us with Great Love and Great Compassion.

Thus, I encourage everyone to take Monshu Ohtani’s words to heart: Break out of your shell, come to the temple, *give* the gift of aloha to everyone you encounter, share smiles and kind words, and re-connect with old friends, make new connections, discover or create new communities of shared interests—our collective thoughts, words, and actions as a sangha ‘ohana community will all add up to the re-opening the temple.

As the resident minister of Makawao Hongwanji, I support every community that is re-starting or starting up new. Let’s do this! As a *kaikyōshi* (literally, “servant who opens the Teachings”) minister, I will reach out to all communities to open the teachings of Buddhism to anyone, just as they are, including offering refresher courses for long-time Hongwanji sangha members, haha!

Will things change again? Maybe.

Will we have to close the temple again? Maybe.

Will we have to make new posters again? Maybe.

By reaching out to others, sharing a smile and kind words—living aloha—to everyone you encounter each day, you create the Dharma and Sangha ‘ohana of Makawao Hongwanji, and your thoughts, words, and actions will help everyone to break free of the ‘shell’ of isolation created by the public health emergency.

Let’s re-open the temple by re-opening our hearts and minds to the Truth of Impermanence, the inherent uncertainty of human life.

Following the guidance of CDC, State Department of Health, County of Maui, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, and Makawao Hongwanji Mission Temple Council, our priority is protecting the health, safety, and well-being of Makawao Hongwanji ‘ohana, the Sangha of the temple: members, *kupuna*, *keiki*, affiliated organizations, guests, visitors, seekers, and the community which we are allowed to live.

As of February 25, 2022: Hawaii remains the only state with an indoor mask mandate; CDC is expected to change its guidance based less on number of infections and more on hospital capacity. Thus, our Temple COVID-19 Protocols continue to be:

Phase I

Masks: ON

Hands: CLEAN

Distancing: PLEASE

Assuming CDC guidance will change and State of Hawaii will relax the indoor mask mandate, we will shift to:

Phase II

Masks: Optional

Hands: Clean

Distancing: Optional

As a Hongwanji Temple in Hawaii, our mission, our vision, our dream is to: “Open the Teachings” to all people without discrimination or judgement, to be a Hongwanji Hawaii Temple that lives the Teachings by being open, diverse, and inclusive, a refuge for all who walk in the temple gates.

NamoAmidaButsu! See you all soon!

Mahalo,

Rev. Kerry

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My first year as the temple President was a very interesting and challenging one for me. Some of the most used words at council meetings were new to me, like zoom, social distance, mask wearing, open temple, close temple etc. I'm proud to report that your officers, directors and advisors continued meeting every month to make sure our sangha remained healthy. We were forced to cancel most of our major events and fund raisers, the Bazaar and Garage Sale in July, our Winter Garage Sale in December and our Obon Festival in July. However, we were able to adapt and did a Virtual Obon Festival and a very successful Bento, Chow Fun, food and Plant drive-thru sale in July. Our dedicated kitchen helpers were always around to make our popular sambaizuke whenever daikon was donated.



I want take this opportunity to share some of the important highlights that your leadership team has accomplished in 2021.

Our Funeral/Nokotsudo Director Sharon Nagoshi and her committee worked very hard to rewrite and clarify some of the policies of the Nokotsudo or Columbarium. They also assisted in several funerals and services throughout the year, including a special Kyodan So service for Mr. Yoshio Kijima.

Membership Co-Directors Diane Kosaka and Sharon Higuchi kept good accounting of our membership and sent letters to members reminding them of our membership fees requests. 2021 welcomed 6 new sustaining members to our sangha. A new welcome letter kit was also created to be sent to all new members.

Activities Director Bobbi Nakagawa had to cancel many of our in-person activities like Obon, Hanamatsuri and Fujimatsuri, but they were replaced with virtual presentations. Our combined 115 Anniversary of Paia Hongwanji and 50th Anniversary for Makawao are being planned for October, 2022.

Repair and Maintenance Director Calvin Higuchi was busy all year with small and large projects of our aging campus. A water leak in our social hall was repaired and a major upgrade to our electrical system in our kitchen was done in October. I'm sure that you can see that our beautiful campus was kept well maintained by regular volunteers including Ray Nakagawa, Michael Nakagawa, Floyd Nagoshi, Sydney Nako, Allison Nakagawa, Rogers Ishizu, Paul Nishida, Kevin Yokoyama and Jo Ann Wong. I'm sure there are others who helped, but these guys and gals were regulars in keeping our landscape beautiful. We could still use more volunteers to assist if anyone is interested.

Properties Co-Directors Gail Hamai and Ray Nakagawa reported that our rentals were fully occupied throughout the year, which gave us a positive cash flow and helped greatly with our finances. Also, a major undertaking this year was the sale of our Pauwela Cemetery property.

While some may question the Board's decision to sell the Cemetery, I'd like to explain the reasons that compelled us to consider the sale of the Pauwela Hongwanji Cemetery. Beginning in January of 2020, we received several complaints from our Pauwela neighbors of the homeless camping in our cemetery property. Ray Nakagawa, who has been maintaining the property since 2015, after Harold Makimoto had done it himself for many years, replaced the chain gate at the entrance to our property. However, incidents and complaints, such as noise and people camping there have

Continues on Page 5

continued. In addition to the problems with the homeless, the board had been concerned about continued maintenance of the cemetery property. In October, Ray announced he would no longer be able to maintain the cemetery. As our membership is aging, it has become more difficult to get volunteers to maintain the property. Future costs of hiring grounds keepers in perpetuity would put a great weight on our budget for future generations to come. Then in May 2021, I received a letter of proposal to purchase the property. The council was notified about this and after much discussion, an overwhelming majority agreed that we should entertain the offer and a Pauwela Cemetery Sales Committee was formed. In June we met with Honpa Hongwanji Board members including Bishop Eric Matsumoto and President Warren Tamamoto. The result was that Makawao Hongwanji was given permission to entertain a formal offer for the sale of the property. With the professional guidance of Lawyer Glenn Kosaka and Real Estate broker Leslie Ann Yokouchi, who provided their services, pro-bono, we negotiated and came to terms with the buyer.

On December 1, 2021, we opened escrow for the sale. We expect it to close very soon. Once escrow is closed, as part of the agreements, Makawao Hongwanji members can be assured that: The Property will be maintained in its current or better condition in perpetuity including, but not limited to upkeep, security and maintenance of the cemetery and access. The buyer shall establish a Cemetery Reserve Fund to ensure that it is maintained as described. Also the deed requirement grants Makawao Hongwanji, Honpa Hongwanji, Ministers and members thereof, and descendent families of honored ancestors interred, the right of access and express permission to use of the cemetery property.

Moving on to Finance. Our Director of Finance Glenn Hamai and our Treasurer Fred Wong have done a great job in overseeing our finances and providing accurate and timely reports. Fred has helped our finances by applying for two PPP loans from our government and getting forgiven on both loans, which means that we didn't have to pay anything back.

Jean Heselden, our efficient Secretary, has been hard at work arranging for all our meetings with important information sent to us before and after each meeting. She also assists Reverend Kerry in running our zoom meetings and coordinated our beautiful Peace Day display on our lawn. I am amazed at her level of energy.

Vice President Karen Ishizu had a leadership role in many of our activities including Hanamatsuri, Shinnen Kai and all our drive thru food sales. She also ran the council meetings in my absence. I think she could be our President very soon.

Although our campus was opened and closed several times in 2021, one thing that was always open and kept us in communication was our award winning Makawao Hongwanji Newsletter. Rain, snow or covid, our newsletter was delivered thanks to editor in chief Bobbi Nakagawa and assistant editor Gail Hamai, and their many helpers. If you're wondering what award they won, it was the Makawao Hongwanji Presidential Award

I would also like to offer my congratulations to Jamie Yokoyama, a young lady we've watched grow up with our sangha and who is now the President of the Maui Jr. YBA. As a side note, the YBA is currently selling a McDonald's coupon book to raise funds. You may see Jamie after our meeting.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we are fortunate to have the technical, business and religious guidance of Reverend Kerry Kiyohara. His technical skills have kept our temple and many others in communication with zoom, face book and you tube posting of Sunrise Service, Eitaikyo chanting, several funerals and Barkely the Dog. He was also instrumental in developing new Nokotsudo policies and the Perpetual Eitaikyo fund. His wife Mimi was also very active while doing the manufacturing and selling of her tasty jams. She also coordinated our Annual Halloween drive thru Trick or Treat.

I also want to welcome our new council advisors Nalani Archebeque, John Yanell and Robert Yoshioka. Robert has been around for many years and we're glad to see serve as an adviser.

In closing, I'd like to thank all our officers, directors, advisors, Sangha members, and our many temple friends for their great support and dedication during a challenging 2021. Working together, I am very happy with what we have done and look forward to a more stable 2022.

May you all be happy and well!

Clyde Hamai - President

FUKUNAGA DANA AWARD

On Sunday, February 27, the Fukunaga Dana Award was presented to Glenn Hamai by Wailuku Hongwanji President, Michael Munekiyo. The Fukunaga Dana Award is presented to a member of each of the four Maui Temples by Wailuku Hongwanji to honor members who are selected to have served their temples with much dedication to their Buddhist Temple and Sangha at various levels, from District to State affairs.

Glenn served as President for two terms and continued as Vice-President of Finance. He and his wife have always shown their Dana to our church by participating in religious activities through Nembutsu or other seminars and attending Sunday Family Service with their children and now grandchildren.

Through his family-owned business, he has shown care and compassion by helping many Maui organizations with monetary donations as well as direct participation by serving as a member or officer of different community groups.

Being from a long-time Hongwanji family, his Buddhist upbringing continues to be reflected in his life. He would be described as open, encouraging, and thinking about others. He would be described as hard working, taking on tasks and getting them done.

With gratitude for Glenn's many years of contribution, service, and dedication to our church, we would like to congratulate him on the Tadaichi Fukunaga Dana Award.



L-R: Kathy Hamai, Glenn Hamai, Mike Munekiyo, & Reverend Kiyohara.

IN MEMORIAM

Makawao Hongwanji Mission extends its deepest sympathy to families that have recently lost a loved one:

Family of the **Late Mr. LeRoy Michio Shibuya** (76) who passed away on January 26, 2022.

Family of the **Late Mrs. Harriet Harue Owara** (92) who passed away on January 31, 2022.

Family of the **Late Mrs. Namiko Nakagawa** (99) who passed away on February 11, 2022.

March & April 2022 Memorial Anniversaries

(Please call Temple Office to schedule your service—572-7229)

1st Year Memorial Service 2021

March 15 Yoshiharu Nakamura

1st Year Memorial service 2021

April - None

3rd Year Memorial Service 2020

March 01 Ross Yeimei Tamayose

3rd Year Memorial Service 2020

April 16 Kenneth Yuji Oishi

April 25 Edwin "Ed" Yamamura

7th Year Memorial Service 2016

March 27 Shizuko Nellie Kawabe

7th Year Memorial Service 2016

April 13 Kazuko Kay Yoshioka

April 22 Shirley Hamai

13th Year Memorial Service 2010

March 25 Takeo Otsubo

13th Year Memorial Service 2010

April 07 Elroy Fujio Yamashiro

April 25 Mitsue Hamai

17th Year Memorial Service 2006

March 30 Hiroshi Horiuchi

17th Year Memorial Service 2006

April - None

25th Year Memorial Service 1998

March - None

25th Year Memorial Service 1998

April 06 Kiyome Nagata

April 14 Kazumi Tanimoto

33rd Year Memorial Service 1990

March - None

33rd Year Memorial Service 1990

April - None

50th Year Memorial Service 1973

March 03 Hideo Nakamura

March 09 Goichi Hifumi

March 14 Francis Takakura

March 26 Tokiyo Tanaka

50th Year Memorial Service 1973

April 14 Kame Tanahara

April 27 Kaji Ikeda



Donations - Makawao Hongwanji Mission can operate only because of the generous donations from many, many people. All donations are humbly received with sincere gratitude and appreciation. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO HAVE YOUR DONATION PRINTED IN THE NEWSLETTER, OR IF YOU WISH TO HAVE YOUR DONATION LISTED AS ANONYMOUS, PLEASE INDICATE SO BY ATTACHING A NOTE TO YOUR CONTRIBUTION.
Thank You!

Contributions January 27, 2022 to February 21, 2022

DONATION:

Christine Kubo
Annette Tashiro
Joann Yosemori
Hiroko Noda
Pearl Rockett

In memory of Chester and Shirley Kawaharada – Timothy and Joyce Guillermo
In memory of Tsunezo and Sawayo Mizoguchi, Nobuyoshi Jio, Michael Suda – Mr. and Mrs. Terrie Mizoguchi

In memory of Kazuo and Misao Tamura – Merle and Lorna Beghtel

In memory of June Hironaka – Noboru Hironaka

In memory of Violet Onikama – Burton Onikama

In memory of Chiyoko Karimoto, Haruyuki Yamanaka – Yvonne and Toshio Kishi

In memory of Yoshio Kijima – Melvin and Ruth Takemoto

3rd year memorial for Michael Suda, 3rd year memorial for Ross Tamayose, 17th memorial for Hiroshi Horiuchi – Robert and Iwa Yoshioka

New Year donation – George and Alice Fukushima

NOKOTSUDO:

Harold Makimoto

Hiromi and Jo-Ann Tanaka

In memory of Harumi Kawaharada – J. Kawaharada

In memory of Masato and Dorothy Matsui, Kakusuke and Sen Matsui, Tamaho and Kikue Oda – Mae and Paul Matsui, Patsy and Gary Matsueda

OFUSE:

Mavis Suda

Flower arrangement – Leslie and Alice Yamanaka

7th year memorial service for Haruyuki Yamanaka – Family of Haruyuki Yamanaka

13th year memorial service for Dorothy Matsui – Family of Dorothy Matsui

17th year memorial service for Namiko Noda – Family of Namiko and Hyoza Noda

33th year memorial service for Hyozo Noda – Family of Namiko and Hyozo Noda

In memory of Dorothy Matsui – Patsy and Gary Matsueda



NAMO AMIDA BUTSU

March Sunday Services: In-Person and Livestream

March 6 First Sunday Dharma Family Service (in-person)

March Monthly Memorial (*shōtsuki*) and Birthdays

Rev. Kerry's Dharma Talk for Spring Equinox (Higan) will be live-streamed to Jikoen Hongwanji in Honolulu

March 13 Dharma Family Service

March 20 Dharma Family Service

March 27 Dharma Family Service

Sunday Schedule

6:30 a.m.	Sunrise Service
6:50 a.m.	<i>Eitaiyō</i> Chanting
8:30 a.m.	Chanting the <i>Shōshinge</i>
8:45 a.m.	Children's Dharma Story Time
9:00 a.m.	Dharma Family Service
10:00 a.m.	Potluck Refreshments in Social Hall
11:00 a.m.	Workshops, Lectures

Coming Soon! In-Person and Livestream Experiences

Experience Buddhism: Think. Say. Do.

Introduction to Buddhism

Introduction to Worship at Makawao Hongwanji

Introduction to *Sahō*: Creating Dharma

Meditation

Quiet Sitting

Chanting

Introduction to *Hōsha* ('repay one's debt of gratitude')

Hongwanji Refresher Course

Lay Minister Assistant / Pre-Tokudo / Tokudo

FOOD BANK

March is MHBT food drive. Please support our local Food Bank by bringing your canned goods to the temple office during the month of March. Temple office hours are Monday thru Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Thank you for your support.



Florence Sakae celebrated her 104th birthday in February!!! She is still going strong and in good spirits. Doesn't she look great!

MAKAWAO HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Council Minutes Highlights

February 13, 2022, viz Zoom

1. Minister's Report: Report submitted. COVID situation discussed and council's consensus is that we can resume in-person activities this month. For religious services, we will continue to follow our usual COVID protocols.
2. Pauwela Cemetery Management: Report submitted. Much appreciation to Attorney Glen Kosaka for his perseverance and hard work on behalf of the temple in locating documents to satisfy title company.
3. Cub Scouts request for outdoor use of temple lawn for 2/26/2022 activity, following COVID protocols, is approved.
4. Annual Membership Meeting 2/27/2022: Will be in-person and online attendance.
5. SimpliSafe Alarm System: Ray Nakagawa reported on research into alternative systems in response to the high number of false alarms.
6. COVID Test Kit Distribution: Diane Kosaka and Gail Hamai worked on plan to distribute test kits.
7. Central Maui Hanamatsuri: Karen Ishizu reported on a video-only celebration to be broadcast on 4/10/2022. MHM will make its video on Sunday 4/3/2022.
8. Scouts: Lorin Kosaka is appointed as Chartered Organization Representative for Scouts.
9. Buddhist Education: Rev. Kerry is the Commissioner for Buddhist Education for Maui and welcomes grant requests.
10. Repair & Maintenance: MHM BWA will sponsor project to repair women's and men's restrooms as a 115th anniversary project.
11. Membership: Report submitted.
12. Funeral/Columbarium: Report submitted.
13. Properties: Report submitted. Many thanks to all the volunteers for their hard work in maintaining the temple grounds as well as Pauwela Cemetery. Thank you to Nalani Archibeque and John Yannell for helping with redemption of recyclables.
14. HHMH Board of Directors: Carol Yamamura attended her first meeting as a Director.
15. Legislative Assembly (Giseikai): Report submitted.
16. BWA: Carol Yamamura reported that 2022 BWA State Conference will be held virtually only. For the BWA World Convention in May 2023, there are 149 from Hawaii who plan to attend.
17. Dharma School: Sharon Nagoshi is hopeful that in-person Dharma School will commence in March.
18. Preschool: Bobbi Nakagawa reported that school still needs an additional teacher. School also received COVID testing kits.
19. Cub Scouts: Will hold an outdoor "fishing" activity on temple lawn, following appropriate COVID protocols.



(Full text of Council meeting and reports can be obtained from the Temple Office.)

Annual General Membership Meeting—February 27, 2022

Highlights

Call to Order by President Clyde Hamai.

Minutes for 2021 Annual Membership Meeting by Sec. Jean Heselden. COVID-19 prevented us from having an in-person Annual Membership Meeting in 2021. In order to vote on pending matters, paper ballots were mailed by Council Secretary Jean Heselden to all sustaining members. Included in the mailing were President Floyd Nagoshi's report on 2020 actions and activities of the Temple Council, 2021 budget materials, and a copy of the Makawao Hongwanji Mission bylaws with proposed amendments.

Bylaws were amended to authorize the temple council to take action at meetings held electronically, in-person, or a combination of the two and to specify that a majority vote of approval is necessary for a valid action of the Council. The Executive Board was authorized to hold electronic meetings in the same manner as the Council. Other amendments related to the number of Directors of the Council, counting their votes, and updating the name and duties of the Funeral Services/Nokotsudo Committee, now named the Funeral Services/Columbarium Committee. Unanimous approval was given for all 3 ballot items: (1) Actions and Activities of the Temple Council in 2020. (2) Annual budget for 2021. (3) Proposed bylaws amendments. Thirty-four ballots were returned by the February 5, 2021 deadline. Copies of the newly amended bylaws are available in the temple office and will be stored on Rie's computer in the office in both Adobe Acrobat and WORD formats. Report Submitted by: s/ Jean Heselden, Secretary of the Temple Council.

The President's Report on 2021 Activities and Actions of the Temple Council , (See President's message on page 4 of this issue.) , and the Budget for 2022 were unanimously approved. (The Financial report is available to any sustaining member upon request.)



Makawao Hongwanji Buddhist Temple 2022 Officers, Directors, and Advisors

PACK 18 ACTIVITY

By: Sheri De Jesus

Pack 18 had their first back to in-person pack meeting. In addition, the cub scouts learned how to tie fishing knots, casting, safety, and outdoor ethics. They even got to create gyo-taku prints! Mahalo for allowing us back on the Hongwanji grounds. We had a great day!



PACK 18 ACTIVITY



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 522-9200 Fax: (808) 522-9209

BISHOP'S CORNER

“Compassion of my Religion’s Founder”

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



Recently, an invitation from Murabbi (Missionary) Matiullah Joyia of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community of Hawaii was extended to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to participate in the 2nd World Religions’ Conference with the theme “Compassion of my Religion’s Founder.” At the conference, 6 world religions (Baha’i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam) presented a variety of chants or sacred readings and the compassion of their respective faiths. Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Office of the Bishop was honored to be asked to represent the Buddhist Tradition while Rev. Yuika Hasebe chanted “The Tradition of Shinran Shonin” (Shonin Ichiryu no Sho) as our contribution.

I began by explaining that the Buddhist Tradition is vast and varied in its approach as it recognizes that people’s individual abilities and capabilities differ. Thus, I often refer to the illustration of a large tree or a spectrum to describe Buddhism. Further, as we all know, the Founder of Buddhism is the Historic Buddha, Sakyamuni, who was born in Ancient India as Prince Siddhartha Gautama, but for this presentation, I focused on Shinran Shonin, who we revere as the Founder of Jodo Shinshu or Shin Buddhism.

Although I have to admit I had to think about what I would share for as we know Shinran Shonin would never say about himself that he was compassionate. Of course, this is not to say that we of later ages cannot regard him as being compassionate for he truly was!

I decided to focus my presentation on Shinran Shonin’s gratitude for the Great Compassion of Amida Buddha. For Shinran Shonin, the Compassionate One is Amida Buddha, not himself. Shinran Shonin, out of awareness of Amida Buddha’s compassion, was moved to share that compassion with others. In a poem of hymn, he wrote

*Persons who truly realize shinjin
As they utter Amida’s Name,
Being mindful of the Buddha always,
Wish to respond in gratitude to the great benevolence.*

Thus, for Shinran Shonin, even in exile, he devoted the latter half of his 90 year life to sharing the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha or the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light as expounded in the Larger Sukhavativyuha Sutra in which a universal Buddha whose reach is cosmic in proportion makes unprecedented vows to lead all with no exceptions to Supreme Enlightenment to the extent that this Buddha conditions the Buddha’s own personal attainment of Perfect Enlightenment with the enlightenment of all other forms of life. In almost all of the 48 vows made by this Buddha, the phrase, “If, when I attain Buddhahood, (if such and such is not so) ...may I not attain perfect enlightenment.” are part of the vows.

In the Jodo Shinshu or Shin Buddhist Tradition, Enlightenment reaches out to us, not as rigorous and demanding religious practices or even in the form of meditation, but the Calling Voice of Enlightenment

Continues on Page 15

Continued From Page 14

beckoning us to please wholeheartedly entrust, just as you are, in the Compassionate 18th Vow. Shinran Shonin's reading of the 18th Vow, in part, is

If, when I attain Buddhahood, the sentient beings of the ten quarters, with sincere mind entrusting themselves, aspiring to be born in my land, saying my Name perhaps even ten times, should not be born there, may I not attain the supreme enlightenment.

Thus, in the Jodo Shinshu Pure Land Tradition, central is the Buddha's Name of "Namo Amida Butsu." It is the form in which the Buddha approaches us and at the same time the Great Practice and also our gratefully responding to it by reciting it in awareness, joy and gratitude of that all-inclusive and all-embracing compassion. Ultimately, even our awareness and gratitude are because of the Buddha's compassion not my own compassion or endeavor. Therefore, our entrusting can be described as an Endowed True Entrusting brought forth by Enlightened Wisdom and Compassion, that is Namo Amida Butsu, itself.

As a final point, I introduced the special characteristic of Shin Buddhism as experienced by Shinran Shonin, which truly expressed the all-inclusiveness and all-embracing aspect of Great Compassion which reaches out to save the "spiritually foolish being" (bonbu). I made sure to mention that this quote (to follow from the *Tannisho*) is often misinterpreted as endorsing negative behavior which it does not! It adds a new dimension to Great Compassion. If Great Compassion is great compassion it has to be equally accessible and applicable to one and all including those who by some other standards may not be included. Great Compassion reaches out to those who are not able to help themselves and thus only speaks of True Entrusting. For it is the nature of Great Compassion or the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light to include all. Thus, Shinran is known to have said,

*"Even a good person attains birth in the Pure Land, so it goes without saying that an evil person will."
"It is impossible for us, who are possessed of blind passions, to free ourselves from birth-and-death through any practice what(so)ever. Sorrowing at this, Amida made the Vow, the essential intent of which is the evil person's attainment of Buddhahood. Hence, evil persons who entrust themselves to Other Power are precisely the one who possess the true cause of birth. Accordingly, he said, "Even the good person is born in the Pure Land, so without question is the person who is evil."*

Many people were confused about the true nature and intent of Great Compassion and thus Shinran Shonin devoted his entire latter part of his life clarifying what the Shin Buddhist Teaching was all about, a non-dichotomous Compassion.

To close, Shinran Shonin said, *"How joyous I am, my heart and mind being rooted in the Buddha-ground of the universal Vow, and my thoughts and feelings flowing within the dharma-ocean, which is beyond comprehension! I am deeply aware of the Tathagata's immense compassion, and I sincerely revere the benevolent care behind the masters' teaching activity. My joy grows ever fuller, my gratitude and indebtedness ever more compelling. Therefore, I have selected [passages expressing] the core of the Pure Land way and gathered here its essentials."* Again, it was out of awareness, joy and (especially) gratitude of Amida Buddha's Great Compassion, which he found embracing a "spiritually foolish being" that he saw himself as, that motivated Shinran Shonin to dedicate his life to sharing about Great Compassion so that others too would come know and experience Great Compassion. Thank you very much.

NAMO AMIDA BUTSU

2022 SPRING VIRTUAL NEMBUTSU SEMINAR

Sponsored by the Honolulu & Oahu Hongwanji Councils and the Office of Buddhist Education

Building Sangha Together: *Nurturing Dharma - Centered Communities*

Saturday April 30 | 9a - 11a (HST)

Community has always been a strength of Shin Buddhism in America. Innovative and responsive community building grounded in the Dharma has enabled temples to thrive for more than a century. However, the traditional ways of building Sangha have been less effective as we face new challenges during this time of pandemic. Rev. Blayne will explore what it means to be Sangha in today's world. How do we journey together as spiritual friends? And how can we nurture an authentic community of fellow travelers inspired by the Buddha's teachings? Participants will have an opportunity to cultivate Sangha through a facilitated group discussion.



Reverend Blayne Higa
Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

"Bring your whole self as we learn & grow in the Dharma together."

AGENDA

9:00am - 9:05am:
Welcome

9:05am - 9:45am:
Guest Speaker Rev. Higa

9:45am - 9:55am:
Q & A Session

9:55am - 10:00am: Break

10:00am - 10:30am:
Breakout Group Discussion

10:30am - 10:55am:
Breakout Group Sharing

10:55am - 11:00am:
Closing

Until 11:30am: Free "Talk Story" Time

REGISTRATION IS FREE | Deadline April 22, 2022

CLICK LINK TO REGISTER

[<https://forms.gle/4ShPw8emshpmm9Sm8>]

Donations are welcome— Funds will be designated for Buddhist Education.

CLICK LINK TO DONATE

[<http://bit.ly/hhmhdonate>]

Please make checks payable to: Oahu Hongwanji Council. Mail registration form & checks to:
Mililani Hongwanji, Attn: Nembutsu Seminar, P.O. Box 893308, Mililani, HI 96789

QUESTIONS? Please contact Mililani Hongwanji office (808) 625-0925.

Visit our Dharma Hub for more statewide educational offerings | [<https://bschawaii.org/calendar>]