



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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**FEBRUARY 2015**

### **GISEIKAI 2015**

The 103<sup>rd</sup> Giseikai Legislative Assembly of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii was held on February 13-14, 2015 at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin.

#### **Message from Bishop Chiko Iwagami, the Governor General of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha**

On the occasion of the 103<sup>rd</sup> *Giseikai* of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, I humbly extend my appreciation to you, the ministers, and sangha representatives from throughout the state of Hawaii, for gathering to discuss the many concerns being faced. In gratitude, I also humbly commend you for your continuing efforts in propagating Jodo Shinshu within your respective districts.

As of June 6 last year, the Jodo Shinshu tradition was transmitted to the present Monshu Ohtani Kojun, as he was appointed as the 25<sup>th</sup> Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha head priest and Hongwanji *jushoku* (resident priest). This year, on January 16, following the last service of the annual Goshoki Hoonko at Hongwanji, Monshu Ohtani Kojun presented his *Goshosoku* Message on the *Dento Hokoku Hoyo*, in which he announced that the Commemoration of Accession shall be scheduled for the years 2016 and 2017. *Dento Hokoku Hoyo*, or The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition, consists of a series of ceremonial, religious services, through which it is proclaimed to the Buddha and masters, that the Jodo Shinshu tradition has been officially transmitted to the new Monshu. It is anticipated that through the observance, the Jodo Shinshu teaching shall gain prosperity and Hongwanji in its entirety shall achieve further growth.

Buddhism teaches us of the truth of life and the principles of living in this world. Both inside and outside Japan, we are facing numerous, difficult issues. However, as our founder, Shinran Shonin had aspired, "May peace and tranquility prevail throughout the world," let us together strive to take steps one by one, in a unified effort with the Buddhist wisdom as our guide.

In closing, it is my hope that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will continue to prosper and that many fruitful results will arise from this annual meeting.

#### **Welcome Message by Bishop Eric Matsumoto**

Good Morning and Aloha!

I would like to welcome everyone to this year' Legislative Assembly with a special welcome of Aloha to our guests from BCA, Dr. Kent Matsuda and Mrs. Dianne Kujubu Belli. Thank you for joining us! Although the day ahead is long and the schedule full, I hope that you will be able to experience some of Hawaii's Aloha. Also, welcome to Rev. Daido Baba and Rev. Bryan Siebuhr, Associate Ministers at Hilo Betsuin and Mr. Josh Morse, our new PBA Head of School, to your first Giseikai/Legislative Assembly.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those who served as Officers, Directors, Advisors, Honorary Advisors, Committee Chairs and Committee members of the various Standing and Special Committees and Boards of Hawaii Kyodan and other volunteers who helped us in 2014. Thank you very much.

In this New Year, for those returning and for those coming on board, thank you for your dedication and commitment to the Dharma, your temples and Hawaii Kyodan for without your support all of this would not be possible. Of course, I need to thank the HQs Staff for all their hard work especially for this Legislative Assembly. Truly, without all of your support everything would not be possible. Ultimately, it is possible because of Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion and our membership responding to that Wisdom and Compassion that Honpa Hongwanji is able to make a difference.

However, it is not only within our Organization and among the Membership that we are making a difference. I hope you have noticed that we are also impacting society and making a difference in Hawaii's future and even beyond Hawaii.

I would like you to know that we are still receiving so many requests from the larger community seeking our cooperation, participation and guidance of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. We, Hawaii Kyodan, are receiving many inquiries about the death penalty, immigration reform, divesting, human trafficking, being mindful, anti-bullying and help in establishing Gandhi Day in Hawaii to name a few. I can say with confidence that more people in the community are becoming more aware of Buddhist perspectives and also understanding and appreciating them and thus seek our cooperation and/or participation in their programs, projects and events.

I would like to commend those ministers, lay leaders and temples that are reaching out to the larger community with not only charitable works, but also Buddhist Education and other workshops and forums that bring awareness and resolution to issues and concerns of our society. May our temples, not limited to members, become a gathering place for the people of the community. Thank you to the temples that are trying to become more open, welcoming, cordial and a compassionate caring presence. The Sangha is very important. Your efforts are appreciated and as I see it is critically linked to our future.

As we begin a new year, let's follow our Theme and Slogan. Our theme and slogan for this year reads "We seek awareness of our current situation and as a result of our understanding of ourselves, our community, and our needs, we seek opportunities from which we create a new vision which will plan for the future."

Since our new President took office, a year ago, much of this past year has been focused on making observations, gathering information, and receiving input. Starting from this year, we will have more in depth discussion, firm the vision and begin some implementation. What we were doing is following our theme and slogan. The information gathered confirms that we cannot remain the same. Up until now, whenever we spoke of change, I think, many people's thinking was that we were trying to change for the sake of change. But from this point on, this is not the case. We have to change! I don't want to sound too pessimistic, but if we do not we will go the way of the dinosaurs or if you use Japanese history we might say we are heading towards the final days of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Looking at our vital statistics, our membership is around 5, 200. Again, 5000 is not a magic number, but as I mentioned previously, we should use the number 5000 as gauge of urgency which means we need to start making successful changes in the next few years. I anticipate that it will be a busy year for committees like Central Research and Planning, Personnel, Temple Effectiveness, Social Concerns, and Ministerial Training to name a few (of our close to 30 committees) and I would like to, together with our President,, announce today, that we are forming an Ad-Hoc Committee for Organizational Effectiveness to address this vital concern chaired by the ever competent Mr. Michael Munekiyo. I promise that your President and I will, most assuredly, continue to work closely together with all of the committees and affiliates to move forward, but we will need all of your help!

Yes, we have struggles and concerns, but we also have wonderful things happening like Dharma Light Buddhist Education is growing, we are a partner of a world-wide movement Charter for Compassion International, last year Project Dana celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Living Treasures of Hawaii Program is 40 years old and as we, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, continue to celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Hawaii

into 2015, a highlight of our Anniversary projects is the youth musical “Peace On Your Wings” which was born through a collaborative effort of Ohana Arts and Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. I may be biased, but I think it is the best musical of year! I want to thank the Districts for your support of the Musical as it travels to each Island and I hope that you are proud as a Hongwanji member to be able to share this Musical with its message of peace, compassion and interdependence with the entire State of Hawaii and possibly beyond as performances are being planned in Los Angeles, possibly New York and maybe even Japan.

“Peace on your Wings” too, is another way that we are sharing the Dharma with others. It is an opportune time to share Buddhism with others. People are receptive to the Teachings and thus here is the great opportunity to share ourselves-Hawaii Kyodan and the Dharma with more people. As was mentioned last night at the Rap Session, as Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “I have a dream...” well, the Buddha has one too. And thus we should have one too. As Shinran Shonin exclaimed “May there be peace in the world and may the Buddha’s Teaching spread!” Another quote from last night’s Rap Session “Are you inspired enough to inspire others?” I ask for your help and support so that our temples and Hawaii Kyodan can become an even more viable organization and the Nembutsu Dharma can begin to guide an even wider spectrum of society. Let us move forward as a Sangha! Thank you and may we have a meaningful Legislative Assembly!

Entrusting in the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light/Namo Amida Butsu

## **A President’s Giseikai Reports – Pieper Toyama**

### 1. Introduction

- a. I have spent this past year learning more than doing. And if there is one thing I learned, it is that serving as president of this organization is like herding cats. Some temple cats have a mind of their own and they know where they want to go; others mill around wandering where they should go; and still others just move along with the crowd more or less together. The challenge facing the shepherd of cats is to help the cats to agree in what direction to go and help them move along in an orderly fashion as much as is possible with cats.
- b. One of the compass points that indicates our direction is our yearly theme. This year the theme is EMBRACE CHANGE: AWARENESS. We seek awareness of our current situation and see opportunities as a result of our understanding of ourselves, our community, and our needs.
- c. Guided by this theme, I have spent the past year becoming aware of our current situation and trying to understand our organization. And these are four things that I have learned:
  - i. There are wonderful events and activities taking place in temples and among temples. These events are inspirational and energizing and emotional.
  - ii. There is a need to develop Dharma messages and ways of communicating the Dharma that resonate among different groups that are in different stages of life, facing different challenges, using different ways of communicating.
  - iii. Maintaining financial and manpower resources to sustain temples is becoming an increasing challenge.
  - iv. And of course governing the collection of temples that make up Kyodan is like herding cats.

2. Based on my awareness of our current situation and who we are, these are my five priorities:

- a. Support propagation and education efforts to spread the Dharma
  - i. Simplify the message; Make it come alive in one’s personal daily life.
  - ii. Market our message, our activities, our identity.
  - iii. Create inviting, warm, and supportive places for prospective members.
  - iv. Focus and energize our educational efforts

- b. Provide for the Well-being of Ministers
  - i. Clarify ministerial roles and responsibilities.
  - ii. Provide for ministers' benefits that serve them now and into the future including housing support that will enable ministers to own their own homes upon retirement.
  - iii. Establish a Ministers' Well-Being Committee to understand and provide for their needs so they can fulfill their responsibilities freely.
- c. Maintain the Health of Temples
  - i. Support effective planning for the future, using the Temple Effectiveness model that Glenn Hamamura, Alan Goto, and Rod Moriyama have trained the Kauai, Oahu, and Honolulu Districts to apply.
- d. Restructure the Kyodan to Improve its Capacity to Support Temples through Prudent Planning, Program Implementation, and Governance
  - i. Structure Committees so they work in clusters of teams towards Strategic Goals and Objectives
- e. Explore alternative sources of revenue to fund operations.
  - i. Begin discussions about how to leverage available resources to fund Kyodan operations.
  - ii. Open dialogue with small temples that are challenged with declines in manpower and financial resources to determine how the Kyodan and other temples can assist.

Finally I caution you that next year may not bring large visible change in my areas of priority, but I assure you that discussion will begin. I will report these discussions with you so you can continue to share input as action is shaped that will lead to changes you want to see.

### **Resolutions of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Assembly**

- #01 HHMH 2015 Budget (adopted)
- #02 Authorizing ex-officio committee status for designated positions (adopted)
- #03 Centralization of minister's health insurance costs (adopted)
- #04 Increase widows aid (adopted)
- #05 Resolution of condolence and appreciation for Mr. Harold Makoto Date (adopted)
- #06 Resolution of appreciation for 50 years of active ministry to the Reverend Tatsuo Ken Muneto (adopted)
- #07 Resolution of appreciation and condolence - Mr. Richard Hiroshi Zukemura (adopted)
- #08 Resolution to explore coordinated statewide Hongwanji gatherings (adopted)

### **Emergency Resolutions of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Assembly**

- #01 Resolution of appreciation and condolence – Mr. Sadamu Saiki (adopted)
- #02 Resolution of condolence and appreciation – Mary Mitsue Tanouye (adopted)
- #03 Resolution of appreciation and condolences for Mrs. Esther Chiyoko Fujioka (adopted)
- #04 Closing of the Hana Hongwanji (adopted)
- #05 Resolution of appreciation and condolence – Mrs. Shimeji Kanazawa (adopted)
- #06 Resolution encouraging support for the current Pacific Buddhist Academy Capital Campaign for a new school building (adopted)
- #07 Resolution of appreciation to Keiji Kukino (adopted)

## Bishop Confirmation

At 103<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Assembly, the Bishop Selection Committee submitted its selection of Bishop Eric Matsumoto for the position of Bishop for the next term. Whereupon, the delegates of the 103<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Assembly unanimously confirmed Bishop Eric Matsumoto as the Bishop of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for another 4 years.

## Officers, Advisors, and Directors of Honpa Hongwanji for year 2015

President:	Pieper Toyama (H)		
Immediate Past President:	Alton Miyamoto (K)		
Vice Presidents:	Jerry Tamamoto (H)	Glenn Hamamura (O)	Carol Valentine (K)
	Richard Nishihara (M)	Gordon Heit (HI)	
Secretary:	Carol Yamamura (M)		
Assistant Secretary:	Miles Okumura (HI)		
Treasurer:	Keiji Kukino (H)		
Assistant Treasurer:	Debbie Kubota (H)		
Advisors:	Roy Miyamoto (H)	Rose Nakamura (H)	Rev. Chikai Yosemori (H)
	Masami Nishimoto (O)	George Otani (O)	Wayne Fujioka (K)
	Stanley Okamoto (M)	Gordon Cockett (M)	Barry Taniguchi (HI)
	Barry Mizuno (HI)	Richard Fujii (HI)	
	Edward Fujimori (H)	Yoshio Iwai (O)	
Honorary Advisors:			
Directors:			
Honolulu (7)	Stacy Bradshaw	Dexter Mar	Jerry Tamamoto
	Debbie Kubota	June Sutterfield	Keiji Kukino
	Nancy Shimamoto		
Oahu (5)	Glenn Hamamura	Robert Asato	Donald Matsumoto
	Carolyn Uchiyama	Francis Uyeno	
Kauai (2)	Carol Valentine	Roy Nishida	
Maui (4)	Richard Fukumura	Richard Nishihara	Carol Yamamura
	Charles Hirata		
Hawaii (6)	Richard Onishi	Kelvin Sewake	Helen Shirota-Benevides
	Miles Okumura	Frederick Nonaka	Gordon Heit



## Living Treasures of Hawaii Recognition

The 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Living Treasures of Hawaii Recognition Luncheon was held on February 14, 2015 at the Hilton Hawaiian Village and the following individuals were recognized as the Living Treasures of Hawaii for the year 2015 (picture from right):

- Puanani Alama
- Dr. Bernice Hirai
- Laura Ruby
- 
- Barry Taniguchi
- S. Haunani Apoliona
- Paulette Nohealani Kahalepuna



The HHMH also recognized Rev. Mary David for her retirement and Rev. Tatsuo Muneto for his 50 years of service to Hawaii Kyodan. (Picture: Rev. Tatsuo Muneto and Mrs. Edna Muneto receiving a certificate of appreciation from Bishop Eric Matsumoto.)



## HONGWANJI MINISTERS PARTICIPATE IN THE RAINBOW EKIDEN

Five ministers from HHMH State Ministers Association will be participating in the Rainbow Ekiden which will be held on Sunday, March 8, 2015 to raise awareness of Honpa Hongwanji in the community and to support PBA's Capital Campaign for their new school building. Ekiden is a long distance relay race which is commonly seen in Japan. Each runner will run 5km (approximately 3.1 miles) from the Kapiolani Park up to the Diamond Head lookout point and turn back to the starting point. Rev. Kojun Hashimoto, a minister of Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission, appealed to the State Ministers Association for participation and the following five ministers were selected. Those ministers' participation to the Ekiden race is sponsored by the State Ministers Association.

1. Rev. Satoshi Tomioka (Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin)
2. Rev. Tomo Hojo (West Kauai Hongwanji Mission)
3. Rev. Shinji Kawagoe (Papaikou Hongwanji Mission)
4. Rev. Kojun Hashimoto (Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission)
5. Rev. Ai Hironaka (Lahaina Hongwanji Mission)

The State Ministers Association is selling this beautifully designed T-shirt, and its proceeds will go to PBA for their Capital Campaign. To order, please submit the attached sheet to your temple minister. Your encouragement and support on this project will be greatly appreciated.



## THE INTERFAITH ALLIANCE HAWAII

### NON-VIOLENCE: Philosophy and Practice in World Religions

#### *A facilitated dialogue with Mainland and Local Scholars*

*Sponsored by The Interfaith Alliance Hawai'i through a generous gift to Eden Seminary from Armin and Shirley Limper, who are former United Church of Christ Missionaries and live in Hawaii, for creating programs that engage the wider community in theological thinking on religions and religious people of the world.*

Thursday, March 12th 2015 at 6:30 p.m. @Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin

The panelists are expected to include:

**Dr. Ismail Elshikh**, Imam of the Hawaii Muslim Association (still to be confirmed)

**Bishop Eric Matsumoto**, Honpa Hongwanji of Hawaii

**Rabbi Peter Schaktman**, Oahu Jewish Ohana

**Dale Bishop**, former Executive Minister of UCC Wider Church Ministries, is a Middle East Scholar and has written extensively on Iran, Lebanon and the Israeli-Palestinian issue. He most recently served as Pastor of First Congregational UCC in Rhinelander, Wisconsin.

**Damayanthi Niles**, Professor of Constructive Theology at Eden Theological Seminary, teaches in the areas of interfaith studies, comparative theology, contextual theology with particular interest in Asia, and language of theology in a landscape of conflict and violence. [www.eden.edu/s/1645/index.aspx?sid=1645&gid=1&pgid=456](http://www.eden.edu/s/1645/index.aspx?sid=1645&gid=1&pgid=456)

**David Greenhaw**, President of Eden Theological Seminary and Professor of Preaching and Worship, is a frequent speaker and preacher at gatherings around the world. Most recently, he lectured and preached in Ghana, taught at the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon, and participated in a World Council of Churches conference on Christians in the Middle East.

The moderators will be:

- Pieper Toyama, President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
- Sister Joan Chatfield, M.M., Ph.D.

## WAIPAHU HONGWANJI MISSION ADULT DAY CARE CENTER

Waipahu Hongwanji Mission Adult Day Care Center (WHMADCC) is happy to announce that we are expanding our membership discount program. Currently, only members of the Waipahu Hongwanji Mission enrolled at the WHMADCC qualify to receive a 10% discount on their applicable enrollment fee. This new program will allow more people to qualify for this benefit. **(Please refer to the attached for program details and qualifications.)**

If you or someone in your immediate family is currently a member of any Hongwanji temple within the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii system, you may qualify for this membership discount. The member no longer has to be the person enrolled at the WHMADCC for this discount to apply.

All of our fellow Sangha members are important to us so we hope that this expansion to our discount program will help ease some of the financial stresses during these difficult times.

On behalf of the WHMADCC, we would like to thank you for all of your support during these past years and look forward to continuing our goal of providing the most compassionate and professional care possible. We remain dedicated to fulfilling this mission and will continue to try and think of innovative ways to accomplish our goals.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the WHMADCC Director, Alexa Olaivar at 678-1770.

In Gassho,

Adrian T. Koizumi, Chairman

### DONATION TO HONPA HONGWANJI

You can now make a donation to Honpa Hongwanji through online with your Credit Card. Please visit our website at [www.hongwanjihawaii.com](http://www.hongwanjihawaii.com) and click "Donation to Honpa Hongwanji" on the main page. Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donations are tax deductible to the maximum extent allowable by law.