



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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MAY 2016

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S MESSAGE ON THE 2016 KUMAMOTO EARTHQUAKE

I would like to express my heartfelt sympathy to those who were affected by the Kumamoto Earthquake that struck the Kyushu region of Japan on April 14, 2016.

To those who have lost their lives, and the family and friends of the bereaved, I extend my deepest condolences. Sharing in the sadness of those who have been evacuated from their homes and being unable to establish contact with their friends and relatives, I cannot imagine the anxiety that is felt. It is my hope for the safety of all missing persons and a speedy recovery of all that have been affected.

Immediately following the first earthquake, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist organization started a relief fund and has been making arrangements to dispatch relief assistance to the affected areas. A Kumamoto Earthquake Emergency Headquarters at the Hongwanji headquarters in Kyoto and an on-site disaster management office at our Kumamoto district office have been established to grasp a better understanding of the situation in the area so that we may be able to provide those affected with the appropriate support both physically and emotionally.

The difficulties and stress that come with staying at evacuation sites and the on-going aftershocks are resulting with anxiety about what the future entails. Paying our deepest respects to those who have devoted themselves to on-site relief activities in the affected areas, we will also do our utmost in contributing to relief support and caring for the safety of all people and a quick recovery of the area.

April 19, 2016

Governor General Chiko Iwagami

Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

KUMAMOTO EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND

The earthquakes on April 14 and April 16 in Kumamoto Prefecture, Japan killed scores of people and caused extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure. Nearly 400 Hongwanji temples suffered damage, up to and including structural collapse.

Hawaii Kyodan responded immediately with an initial \$5,000 donation to Honzan to help those impacted by the quakes. Further, a "Kumamoto Earthquake Relief Fund" has been created to allow temples, members and friends in Hawaii to contribute towards the relief effort. The funds will be sent to Honzan to support Hongwanji-related temples and those who are affected from this disaster and also to the Consulate General of Japan assisting with donations to aid victims of the earthquakes.

The special collection will run through June 30, 2016, and we are requesting each temple to collect donations and submit one check (to Headquarters) payable to "Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii" with "Kumamoto Earthquake Relief Fund" noted on the check. Donations can also be made on-line by using the Donate link at hongwanjihawaii.com.

*****Please find the attached flyer of the Relief Fund.***

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S MESSAGE ON THE PBA GRADUATION

Congratulations class of 2016!

As you are seated here, I am sure that you are reflecting on the many memories you have of the time you have spent here until today.

Graduation marks the end of one of many chapters in one's lifetime, and at the same time, it is also the starting point as you set off toward a new goal. As you take flight from Pacific Buddhist Academy, you will carry the memories of your days here at the PBA together with your hopes and dreams in the next phase of your life.

On this special occasion, I would like to share with you the spiritual legacy of this school, that is, the Buddhist concepts of *kansha* and *doryoku shōjin*, each of which refers to "gratitude," and "effort and devotion."

For the first concept of "gratitude," Hongwanji has been encouraging people to recite the "words of gratitude before meal," which go as follows,

We are truly grateful for this opportunity to share this wonderful meal thanks to all living beings who have made this occasion possible. In deep gratitude, *Itadakimasu*.

Our lives are supported by a number of elements, such as the nature including the sun, the earth, the water, as well as other lives that we actually take, including those of vegetables, meats, and fish. In addition, through the uncountable causes and conditions, we are enabled to receive each meal. Being aware of this fact and appreciating everything that allows us to be alive, let us express our gratitude by placing our palms together. This is the feeling of gratitude, or *kansha no kokoro*, that we would like to promote among people.

Let us now reflect on the second concept of "efforts and devotion," or *doryoku* and *shōjin*. *Shōjin*, is a Buddhist term which overlaps with the principle of *doryoku*, or efforts.

According to records, Sakyamuni Buddha's last words were as follows, "Fellow practitioners, this is the message I would like to leave for you. Nothing remains the same. Work ceaselessly and do not stop doing so."

Through these words, Buddha implies the importance of dedicating one's lifetime to learning. Giving it your all, while being cautious.

This is what we must always keep in mind. At times, things may go as planned, while other times it may be very challenging. In society, we have a tendency to value only the outcome. Therefore, it is natural to focus only on the results, however, though the results may not turn out as expected, do not let it keep you down for long, or continue dragging this feeling with you. The same could be said for when things go well. Boasting about your achievement and staying in that state will not get you anywhere. It is important to continue aiming for your next goal and being able to continue moving forward. Only then, can one truly become an admirable and beautiful person in the true sense.

As you, the graduating class of 2016, continue to expand your wealth of knowledge, it is my hope that you will continue to say "Thank you" with the spiritual legacy of this school expressing "gratitude" within each of yourselves throughout life, becoming a person of respect and characteristic beauty. Doing so, I am confident that a bright future will await you.

In closing, let me once again congratulate you on your graduation. Thank you.

May 5, 2016
Bishop Chiko Iwagami
Governor General, Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

THE ACCESSION CEREMONY TOUR

The Accession Ceremony (The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition; *Dento Hokoku Hoyo* 伝灯奉告法要) will be conducted from October 2016 through May 2017 (a total of 80 services) at our mother temple (Honzan) in Kyoto, Japan.

The Accession Ceremony is conducted before Amida Tathagata and Shinran Shonin to formally announce that the newly-inducted Head Priest (25th Gomonshu Kojun Ohtani) shall take on the responsibilities as Monshu, following in the footsteps of his predecessors to spread the Dharma to new generations and embracing the opportunity to spread the Nembutsu teaching to a greater number of people. It is also a festive occasion welcoming everyone to celebrate the inauguration of the new Monshu.

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii has coordinated two special tours with a spiritual significance to participate in the Accession Ceremony and to enrich your spiritual understanding and appreciation as well as sightseeing and fellowship.

October 2016 Tour: Registration Closed

March 2017 Tour: Registration extended until August 31, 2016

****If you are interested in joining in the tour, please see the attached information from JTB or website at <http://hqs963.wix.com/hhmhdhhtour>**

BSC SUMMER SESSION 2016 “MINDFULNESS AND BUDDHISM IN AMERICA”

Lecturer: Professor Jeff Wilson

Dr. Jeff Wilson is an associate professor of religious studies and East Asian studies at Renison University College. He is the author of *Mindful America: The Mutual Transformation of Buddhist Meditation and American Culture* and numerous other books and articles on the adaption of Buddhism and mindfulness in America. **Dr. Jeff Wilson** will draw on his recent book “*Mindful America*” to provide a thorough look at the Mindfulness movement in America today and address its implications for Hawai‘i.

Mindfulness is the most popular aspect of Buddhism in contemporary America, and secularized mindfulness practices are now embedded in schools, hospitals, therapy, the military, and many other aspects of our culture. From stress relief to Star Wars, mindfulness has become an unavoidable part of our society. But what is mindfulness, and where does it come from? What changes has it made on America, and what changes has America made on mindfulness? What are its upsides and downsides? And how can secular mindfulness practitioners and active Buddhists learn from and support one another?”

Dates;

July 11-15, 2016; Buddhist Study Center
July 16-17, 2016; Kauai District
July 18, 2016; Maui District
July 19, 2016; Oahu District
July 20, 2016; Honolulu District
July 21-22, 2016; Hawaii District

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST ALUMNI/AE!

(From "What's New at PBA" May 12, 2016 edition, <https://www.pacificbuddhistacademy.org>)

Mahalo to everyone - parents, grandparents, guardians, teachers, trustees, staff, alumni, and many friends - for sharing and celebrating a rite of passage with our seniors at Pacific Buddhist Academy's Baccalaureate Service and Commencement Exercises last week. Congratulations and best wishes to our young scholars who crossed the stage to begin a new chapter in their exciting life journeys. We look forward to your coming back to tell us about your college experience and other roads traveled. Our newest group of alumni/ae is now official!



DHARMA-CON 2016 "TOUCHED BY KINDNESS"

April 16-17, 2016, Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin Sangha Hall

Congratulations to Hawaii Island for taking to heart the Hongwanji theme "Embrace Change." Their innovative idea of banding together two organizations - Hawaii Island Hongwanji Council & Hawaii Island Buddhist Women's Association - to host a conference worked and participants gathered from throughout the state.

This piece on the first page of the conference booklet was the sentiments shared throughout the weekend.

"Touched by Kindness" by Rev. Bruce Nakamura

(Adapted & Inspired by "Yasashisa ni Deattara")

*If you are touched by kindness, share it with others.
If you think you are fortunate, spread its joy to others.
If you meet suffering, patiently endure and go forward.
If you are lonely, open your heart and let others in.
If you see change, let your old self die to new opportunities.
Value these rare encounters to be truly human and a Dharma friend.
Like flowers connecting in circles of Aloha,
We are one in the heart of Great Compassion
To become Amida Buddha, touching all with Kindness.
Namo Amida Butsu*

The conference opened with a service and it was wonderful to see Pacific Buddhist Academy graduate Blayne Nakasone, student at UH Hilo as the MC. In the welcome messages shared by Bishop Eric Matsumoto, Council President Keith Yamakawa and BWA President KT Cannon Eger were messages of: the importance of the Sangha and opportunities to share the Dharma; to create wonderful places and pass the message along; and together we can do so much more - a spiritual filling station.

Keynote speaker Mayor Billy Kenoi shared a simple message of values brought by the Issei from Japan that have been handed down to each succeeding generation of respect, perseverance, and gratitude. Even though we may see tragedy daily on the news, we can empower ourselves by sharing a smile, giving a hug, or waving a shaka sign that will help others. That is the gift Hawaii has for the world - share your aloha!

In the breakout session in small facilitated groups, we thought about how we have given kindness to others or how others have given kindness to us. We shared our experience with our partners, then with the whole group. We placed the post-it notes on a T-chart of tangible kindness or intangible kindness vs. the past, present and future. Varying experiences of kindness opened our eyes to the ways it occurs in our daily lives.

After a delicious spaghetti lunch, we had the opportunity to attend two workshops from the six available. BJ Soriano ran two workshops - "Pen a Song of Kindness" and "Gathas for Humanity." The others were "Brew a Cup of Kindness" (about tea), "Buddhist Values in Literature," "Live in a Kinder & Healthier Hawaii " (Blue Zone's Project), and "Weave a Lei of Kindness."

A banquet awaited us at dinner with prepared by the Hilo Betsuin and Puna Hongwanji. After dinner was a presentation by Koichi Sayano of the Los Angeles Betsuin. He is currently the vice president of the Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League. He had a power point presentation of FDSTL that helped the attendees understand the organization. They will be having their conference on April 30-May 1, 2016 in Sacramento.

Following this was the entertainment portion with the Maui group from Lahaina, Kahului, Wailuku, and Makawao with leader Rev. Tennes singing the "Banana Boat Song" with Buddhist lyrics. Next was the Honolulu group from Moiliili and Hawaii Betsuin singing "Living Gratefully" and a song with lyrics from PBA student Megan Sakata and music by Debbie Kubota "Peace is a Seed". We ended the evening with Tracy Tsuha from the Four Temple Council singing a cappella a song he merged of "Nembutsu" and "Yesterday" and he called it "Nembutsu Yesterday."

On Sunday the Dharma message was given by Bishop Matsumoto at the morning service and Pieper Toyama wrapped it up by sharing his reflections of the conference. The conference paved the way for streamlining the operations of Hawaii Kyodan and increase opportunities to share the Dharma.

This week, for the first time in America's history, the President of the United States has acknowledged and celebrated the main Buddhist holiday of Vesak (Saga Dawa). Well done Obama!

WHITE HOUSE ACKNOWLEDGES BUDDHIST OBSERVANCE

According to a report by Tensung Repa, dated May 3, 2016, "This week, for the first time in America' history, the President of the United States has acknowledged and celebrated the main Buddhist holiday of Vesak".

Bishop Eric Matsumoto was one of several Buddhist leaders from across the Nation who sent a letter of recommendation encouraging the President to recognize this important Buddhist observance.

