



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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LET US CONSIDER...

Bishop Eric Matsumoto

As we witness what is unfolding in our Nation after the 2016 Elections, there is room for concern as emotions and feelings run high, but let us have faith in ourselves as residents of America and also as humanity.

For me, the wise counsel of Prince Shotoku comes to mind. Prince Shotoku lived in a period of uncertainty and needed to unite various factions so that the country could be unified, better organized and prosper. He mentioned some guiding principles which are still important for us, today, to consider. As Article 1 in his 17-Article Constitution, he emphasized the value of harmony in society with the words "Harmony is to be valued." He sought harmony and collaboration among the various individuals and factions that were divided and wanted them to work together towards a common goal, a unified nation. Prince Shotoku realized how we, many times, each tend to emphasize and focus on our own viewpoints and disregard that of others to the point of not even lending an ear. He realized that if we each continue to do this we would get nowhere as no discussion could even begin. The Prince was very astute and sensitive to the fact that, too often, we are driven by our egos and also our emotions and feelings like anger, fear, doubt and arrogance. Thus, in Article 10, he shares his wisdom when he says,

Let us cease from wrath and refrain from angry looks. Nor let us be resentful when others differ from us. For all people have hearts and each heart has its own leanings. Their right is our wrong, and our right is their wrong. We are not unquestionably sages, nor are they unquestionably fools. Both of us are simply ordinary people. How can any person lay down a rule by which to distinguish right from wrong? For we are all, one with another, wise and foolish, like a ring which has no end.

From *A Guide to Japanese Buddhism*-BuddhaNet www.buddhanet.net/nippon/nippon_partIII.html

He sincerely revered The Three Treasures of Buddhism which also speaks of the middle way in which we avoid extremes. As the Historic Buddha shared if the strings of a lute are too tight it will break, on the other hand, if the strings are too loose the lute will not produce its music. What is needed are mutual respect, balance, trust, participation and collaboration and adherence to the virtue of non-violence by all of us. Moreover, we should see the value of interdependence by realizing that we are all interrelated and interconnected as Indra's Net, beautifully and profoundly, shares. It is a fact that we affect each other locally, nationally, internationally and even galactically through our thoughts, words and actions and how we approach a matter is just as important as the goal or objective. The intent of this message is not to dissuade people to express their thoughts through peaceful rallies and methods. As we face our challenges (to alleviate suffering and promote peace, happiness and people's welfare) as a Nation, this message is suggesting that we must consider ways, approaches and outcomes which emphasize the oneness and equality of life with all its diversity, foster mutual respect and harmony amongst all, and will nurture unity in our Nation and the World from today and into the future. In Hawaii, I believe, the Spirit of Aloha will guide us in our endeavors. As a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, I say, may we (all) be guided and inspired by an All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion.

Let us "Mutually reflect, respect and interact."

HHMH SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT AND FELLOWSHIP TOUR



The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu tradition (Accession Ceremony) or Dentō Hōkoku Hōyō started on October 2, 2016 and continues until May 2017. This special observance is being conducted before Amida Buddha and Shinran Shonin at the Main Temple (Honzan) in Kyoto to formally announce that His Eminence Kojun Ohtani has taken on the responsibility of Monshu. He is thus following the footsteps of his predecessors to spread the Dharma with an emphasis on sharing the Nembutsu teaching to a greater number of people throughout the world. A total of 80 services will be conducted during this time. Honzan has designated two dates for overseas members (October 21, 2016 and March 31, 2017) to participate in this auspicious observance.

On October 14, 2016, a group of members from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii led by Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani and Rev. Kazunori Takahashi joined in a special Japan tour to participate in the Accession Ceremony and as well as to enrich their spiritual understanding and appreciation of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition. The group also visited the following sites and places associated with the 8th Head Priest of the Hongwanji, Rennyo Shonin. Included were Honshuji, Takayama Betsuin (Higashi Hongwanji), Yoshizaki Betsuin, Eiheiji, Hieizan Enryakuji, Tsumura Betsuin and Osaka Castle. It was truly an educational and gratifying experience to visit those historical sites and to meet with the ministers/members who shared their joy, appreciation, and commitment of the Buddha-Dharma.

On the morning of the Accession Ceremony on October 21, members from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, together with the members from the Buddhist Churches of America and the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, were privileged to have a private audience with the Gomonshu. The staff of the Hongwanji International Center had arranged this special audience for the overseas members, and the Gomonshu kindly took the time for us in spite of his very busy schedule. Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani and daughter, Ms. Naho Umitani, delivered messages of appreciation to the Gomonshu on behalf of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. It was a very heartwarming experience for each participant to shake hands and have a group picture with the Gomonshu.

Then in the afternoon, the Accession Ceremony was held at both Goei-do (The Founder's Hall) and Amida-do (The Amida's Hall) simultaneously. Hawaii members were seated in the very front section of the Amida-do. Both halls were filled with people, and the voice of the Nembutsu resounded in the temples during the newly introduced "Hosan Dento Saho" ritual. The earth actually shook during this ceremony, as a large earthquake in Western Japan was felt in Kyoto and the ceremony was interrupted for 15 minutes and then re-started!



Immediately after the Accession Ceremony, a "Dharma-Light Gathering" was held and the Ohtani Family (Gomonshu, Lady Ruzumi Ohtani, 5 year old son and infant daughter, Former Gomonshu, and Former Lady Noriko Ohtani) were introduced. During the Interview, the Gomonshu and Lady Ruzumi Ohtani delivered messages in English for the overseas participants. Lady Ruzumi Ohtani encouraged us to continue to follow the Nembutsu path by holding the Dharma close to our hearts as our spiritual foundation. The Gomonshu said, "I would like to extend my heartfelt welcome to you for coming all the way here. I am very happy to be able to observe this commemoration together with the delegates from overseas as well as those from across Japan. I hope to see you all again in your own respective districts."

(Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani, Executive Assistant to the Bishop)

One of the tour participants, Gail Hamai, wrote a reflection of the tour in the Makawao Hongwanji Newsletter. Her reflection can be found on page 11-12 of the following site;
<http://makawaohongwanji.org/november2016newsletter.pdf>

CONGRATULATIONS!

Rev. & Mrs. Daido Baba welcomed a baby girl. **Anna Baba** was born on October 10, 2016 weighing 5lb. 14oz. She is their third child, the first daughter and the first Hawaii-born child in Baba Family.

Rev. Daido Baba currently works at Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Associate Minister. Congratulations to Rev. & Mrs. Baba!



KUMAMOTO EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND



On September 26th, Bishop Eric Matsumoto and Reverend Toshiyuki Umitani presented a donation of \$21,403.50 for Kumamoto earthquake relief from the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to Consul General Yasushi Misawa, the Consulate General of Japan.

HMMH collected a total amount of \$46,403.50 of which \$25,000 was provided directly to Honzan for relief efforts of damaged Hongwanji temples and members impacted by the earthquake.

BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER FELLOWSHIP CLUB PARTICIPATES IN A YOUNG PERSON'S FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT KAPIOLANI MEDICAL CENTER



Extra life is an annual event where gamers across the nation join forces to raise funds for the Children's Miracle Network hospitals (CMN), by pledging to play games for 24 hours. The primary beneficiary of CMN efforts in Hawaii is Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children. Since the inception in 2008, the event has raised over \$22 million.

The Buddhist Study Center Fellowship Club put together a team to help support the cause. On November 5, they have successfully played both board games and/or video games for 24 hours. More importantly, the team raised \$1,500 benefiting CMN Hospitals. This put the Buddhist Study Center Fellowship Club team within the top 11% of all teams in the nation. It was a fun event and went to a great cause. The club hopes to participate in the event again in 2017.

MINISTER'S LAY ASSISTANT RETREAT HELD AT THE BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER

November 4 to November 6, 2016

Purpose of the Retreat is to provide the opportunity to review and enrich the participants' skills and knowledge associated with Jodo Shinshu and the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha. Also it is a time that participants can get to know each other better as friends and fellow travelers on the Path of Nembutsu. Conventional lecture and question and answer forms of presentation was generally employed. Rituals and etiquette associated with the Hongwanji temple and service tradition was taught through interactive

mentoring by the instructors. As much as possible actual performance of skills or articulation of knowledge was encouraged. Participants were also asked to help with all aspects of the Retreat as one family and community. Because it takes time and practice to assimilate the skills knowledge perspective or active Minister's Lay Assistants are encouraged to attend and repeat attending the Retreat.



Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani provided the participants in the standard practice and ritual within the Nishi Hongwanji Tradition and Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki reviewed Basic Buddhism and introduced the participants to an approach that reveals Jōdo Shinshū doctrinal concepts through the study of Shōshinge a gatha written by Shinran Shōnin.

The participants were: Linda Nagai from Kona Hongwanji, Rod Moriyama from Wahiawa Hongwanji, Joy Nishida from Kailua Hongwanji, Wayne Nishida from Wailuku Hongwanji, Jaryd Oshiro from Jikoen Hongwanji, Chris Richardson from Lanai Hongwanji, Dennis Tashiro from Kailua Hongwanji, and Pieper Toyama from Jikoen Hongwanji. All successfully completed the Retreat and returned to their respective temples to continue to be mentored by their mentor ministers. Their mentor ministers will decide the appropriate time to request the Bishop designate them as Certified Minister's Lay Assistant. The certification formally recognizes role the Minister's Lay Assistant and a satisfactory level of competence but does not entitle them to assist. In the end it is either the temple's Resident Minister or Rimban's decision to have anyone assist a minister for that specific temple.

(Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki, BSC Director)

ANNUAL APPRECIATION GATHERING FOR THE RETIRED MINISTERS AND THEIR SPOUSES



The annual appreciation gathering for the Retired Ministers and their spouses was held on November 10, 2016. 13 retired ministers and spouses attended this year's gathering. At the Opening Service which was held at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, Bishop Eric Matsumoto and Mr. Pieper Toyama expressed their appreciation on behalf of the current active ministers and the members of HHMH. This service was also dedicated to the following ministers/spouses who passed away this year; Rev. Sonny Abangan, Mrs. Kimiko Okano, Rev. Chikai Yosemite, Mrs. Haruko Hoashi, and Mrs. Amy Nakanishi.

KAUAI HONGWANJI COUNCIL JOINT DHARMA SCHOOL SUNDAY SERVICE



Kauai Hongwanji Council held a joint Dharma School Sunday Service at Salt Pond Beach State Park on November 6, 2016. It was held as a Dharma School membership drive. 46 Dharma School students, families and ministers got together for a service and activities. One of the icebreakers was a golf ball spoon relay. After that we divided into three groups; Preschool to elementary school, middle school to high school and adults. Each temple prepared one activity for each group. The three temples' Sangha had a wonderful fellowship. One member said, "Let's get together once a year and have service at the beach." Another member said, "The service was so beautiful since the ocean was behind the Obutsudan."

(Rev. Tomo Hojo, West Kauai Hongwanji Mission)