



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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JANUARY, 2017

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FROM THE GOMONSHU KOJUN OHTANI



At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to you.

This past year, we have been observing the ceremony known as The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition since last October. This service will be continuing until the end of May over 10 sessions and a total of 80 days. The participation of the many delegates from both domestic and overseas districts has revitalized the atmosphere of all of our temple activities, and for that I am truly happy and grateful to each and every one of you.

Through holding the service together with you fellow Nembutsu followers, I am able to personally experience how the Jodo Shinshu teaching has not only been passed down to us over the span of nearly 800 years, but also how it has been delivered to many regions of the world beyond national borders. I believe that we have the Jodo Shinshu teaching today precisely because it served as the spiritual foundation for all of the preceding Nembutsu followers.

Shinran Shonin revealed his understanding of the Dharma known today as Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. It is a teaching for those of us who constantly struggle with various worries and hardships in life. Let us continue to listen to the teaching and share our own appreciation of the Dharma with family and friends in the hope that we can follow the Nembutsu path together with them.

January 1, 2017

OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

年頭の辞

新しい年のはじめにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。

本願寺では、昨年10月1日より本年5月31日まで10期80日にわたって伝灯奉告法要をお勤めしています。海外からの皆さまも含め、たいへん多くの方々にご参拝・ご協力いただき、法要をお勤めできていますことは、まことに有難く、感謝申し上げます。

皆さまとともに伝灯奉告法要をお勤めして、浄土真宗のみ教えが800年近くの時を経て私たちに伝えられ、また、日本だけでなく世界各地に伝わっていることを改めて実感しています。それぞれの時代の中であって、浄土真宗のみ教えが一人一人の方の生きていく依りどころ、支えであったから、今日まで絶えることなく受け継がれてきたと思います。

親鸞聖人は、さまざまな出来事に悩み苦しむ私たちのために、浄土真宗のみ教えをお示しく
ださいました。本年も浄土真宗のみ教えを聞き、ご家族の方などご縁のある方々にお伝えいた
だき、南無阿弥陀仏とお念仏申す日々をともに過ごさせていただきましよう。

2017 年 1 月 1 日

浄土真宗本願寺派
門主 大谷光淳

NAMO AMIDA BUTSU & HAPPY NEW YEAR!



In this New Year, please let me express my warmest Aloha and Best Wishes to you for a harmonious, peaceful and reflective New Year filled with the Joy of the Dharma!

As we reflect (including self-reflect) on what is happening around the world including our own nation, there is room for dire concern as aggression, violence, hate, inequality, disrespect, suspicion and mistrust erupt. At times, it may seem all too overwhelming. However, let us not lose hope. May we avail ourselves to the Wisdom of Enlightenment by letting it guide us and may Buddha's Compassion inspire us. Our Jodo Shinshu Teachings share that the Bodhisattva Dharmakara/Amida Buddha gives hope to the spiritually lost foolish being/bonbu by promising the attainment of Enlightenment through the Buddha's Unconditional Compassion by saying

"Entrust yourself to me calling my Name, Namu Amida Butsu." Out of the Joy and Gratitude of True Entrusting for being unconditionally accepted without judgement emerges a deep lament about this imperfect I and an aspiration to live a more Dharma-centered life. In one of his Letters, Shinran Shonin states, "There was a time when for each of you when you knew nothing of Amida's Vow and did not say the Name of Amida Buddha, but now, guided by the compassionate means of Sakyamuni and Amida, you have begun to hear the Vow. Formerly you were drunk with the wine of ignorance and had a liking only for the three poisons of greed, anger, and folly, but since you have begun to hear the Buddha's Vow you have gradually rejected the three poisons, and come to prefer at all times the medicine of Amida Buddha." (*Lamp for the Latter Ages, Letter 20*) Further, says the late Rev. Jitsuen Kakehashi, "The 'turning of the heart' means forsaking the human-centered way of thinking and placing the teaching of the Tathagata at the center of our thought. Being saved means that with the Dharma-centered values, a new view of life is established in ourselves." "In our daily life, we are liable to be dictated to by our self-centered thoughts, but in the mind of nembutsu practitioners who are saddened and pained by this reality, there is a recurring transformation in which, with the heart and mind of the Tathagata's great wisdom and great compassion, we come to look back at our own thoughts and behaviors. When we look at the world with an ordinary human mind, it is distinctly divided into things we love and things we hate, but with the mind of the Tathagata, we are made to know that everyone is equally the Tathagata's indispensably important child. From that standpoint, we realize that we are all brothers and sisters and fellow human beings. Then slowly but steadily, we come to reflect on our self-centered thoughts, reject our blind passions and make efforts to see things and live our lives in a way that can be approved by the Tathagata." (*From "Hearing the Buddha's Call, The Life, Works and Words of Shinran"*).

In this New Year, may the manifestations of True Entrusting such as "the benefit of having great joy in our hearts, the benefit of being aware of Amida's benevolence and of responding in gratitude to his virtue, and the benefit of constantly practicing great compassion" become more evident in our daily lives. As Jodo Shin Buddhists, let us respond to Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion by reciting the Nembutsu and encourage each other to live a life centered on the Dharma including sharing our Awareness, Joy and Gratitude of the Buddha's Great Wisdom and Compassion with others. Truly as Shinran Shonin said, "May

there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's Teaching spread!" Once again, Happy New Year to one and all!

Namo Amida Butsu/ Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion

In Gassho/Anjali,
Bishop Eric Matsumoto
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Embrace Change: Action (Open Communication)



Our theme for 2017 calls upon us to take action to implement our plans for our temples while ensuring open communication to engage all those connected to our temples. Our temples' success in serving its members requires us to spend the time and planning necessary to make open communications happen efficiently and effectively. For every event we plan, for every opportunity for involvement we offer our members, let us consider doing the following: (1) Make clear announcements at our temple services. (2) Make attractive posters for our temple bulletin boards. (3) Print handouts for our members to take home and post on their refrigerators and share with friends and relatives. (4) Post announcements on our temples' websites, newsletters, and Facebook pages. (5) Use a telephone tree or make personal phone calls to senior citizens to get the word out. Use text messages, twitter, and Instagram for the XYZ

generations. (6) Ask all of our temple affiliates to announce it to their members. (7) Do email blasts. (8) Do snail mail blasts with post cards and handwritten notes. (9) Post it on banners outside of our temples. (10) Put out public service announcements on TV stations, radio stations, and publications. (11) Submit news releases to print publications, radio and TV stations. (12) Talk it up among temple members during the coffee-hour talk-story following Sunday Services.

In addition to paying attention to how we communicate, we also need to pay attention to what we communicate. Our temple members should not only know about upcoming events but also about how our temples are doing financially. There should be full transparency of temple operations. Members should know the issues that deal with personnel, facilities, finances, fundraising, temple programs, and strategic plans for the future. By making our temple operations transparent to our members, we open pathways for their input and involvement.

Most importantly, we must join temple ministers in sharing the Dharma. Sharing should not be limited to Dharma Talks during Sunday Services, memorial services, workshops, seminars and newsletter messages. We can begin by seeking meaningful Dharma messages in our personal readings and experiences and find ways to share them so we may enrich the lives of our temple members. We can begin by considering the 12 ways of communication I listed above as means for members and ministers to openly share the Dharma every day.

Open communications in 2017 means that each of us is a receiver and a sender. When our messages connect, they will spark action. Let us each do our part.

Namo Amida Butsu

Pieper J. Toyama, President
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



WE TAKE THIS MOMENT TO SEND OUR WARMEST ALOHA TO YOU!
2017

At the start of the New Year, we send our warmest greetings and express our deepest appreciation for your dedicated support of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. How fortunate we have been to hear the Nembutsu Teachings which is like seeing the rare Silversword in full bloom. May we respond in gratitude to Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion and all that makes our life and living possible and embrace the Buddha's aspiration for peace and harmony in the world.

Respectfully,

Headquarters, Office of the Bishop

Rev. Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

Tamayo Matsumoto

Pieper Toyama, President

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani, Executive Assistant to the Bishop

Arthur Nakagawa, Business Manager

Dianne Sumida, Administrative Assistant

Yoshiko Umitani, Secretary

Office of Buddhist Education & Buddhist Study Center

Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki, Director

Jamie Lyn Itokazu, Assistant to the Director

Kerrie Wong, OBE Assistant

Photo courtesy of Alan Kubota (Hawaii Betsuin)