



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



My thoughts as we honor Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni in April

Recently, I attended a presentation offered by Kōkua Mau (Continuous Care in Hawaiian), an entity which provides information on advance care planning, hospice and palliative care in Hawaii. It was a presentation on what is traditionally known as “Ethical Wills” and sometimes “Spiritual Wills” and more recently “Legacy Letters.” According to Wikipedia, “The content may not differ from writers of spiritual autobiographies or memoirs, but the intent makes an ethical will unique. “The generic purpose of the ethical will is to pass on wisdom and love to future generations.” Writing can include family history and cultural and spiritual values; blessings and expressions of love for, pride in, hopes and dreams for children and grandchildren; life-lessons and wisdom of life experience; requests for forgiveness for regretted actions; the rationale for philanthropic and personal financial decisions; stories about the meaningful “stuff” for heirs to receive; clarification about and personalization of advance health directives; and requests for ways to be remembered after death.” Please note that an Ethical Will is not a legal document. I was asked if we had something similar in the Jodo Shinshu Tradition. I could not think of anything widespread as a tradition and/or custom, but immediately what did come to mind was Lady Eshinni’s Letters which she wrote to Lady Kakushinni, her daughter.

In one of her letters, Lady Eshinni laments to her daughter that they are physically separated with her in Niigata and Lady Kakushinni in Kyoto. She says “...I often think of your children and would like to hear the most recent news about them. Oh, will there ever be a chance for me to visit you, or for you to come to see me once more while I am alive? Most likely not!” Lady Eshinni’s Letter 10 continues with her saying “I am ready to go to the Pure Land at any moment. In the Pure Land we will be able to know everything clearly. So I hope that you shall live the life of nembutsu and come join me there. I know that if we can meet in the Pure Land, everything will become clear.”

Here, Lady Eshinni is clearly expressing her deepest wish that her daughter will also entrust in Amida Buddha, recite the Nembutsu and also be born in the Pure Land where they will be able to meet again. To me, this is a very touching conversation between mother and child in which the mother is expressing and sharing her spirituality with her child.

Due to factors like World War II, Buddhism being a minority religion in America, the shift from 3 Generations living under a roof to nuclear families, and the misguided notion that if I encourage my family

(to attend temple) I am forcing them to be Buddhists, many of us tend not to share too much about our Buddhist religion with family and friends. However, I would implore and humbly ask you to, please reconsider and, begin sharing what is important to you. Of course, conversing in person and now would be best, but if it is challenging, how about “Legacy Letter”? Please share with especially your family what is important to you!

As Lady Eshinni shared many other things about her husband Shinran Shonin with Lady Kakushinni, she was able to learn a lot about her father. For example, how kind and thoughtful person he was, how he was always concerned about others and trying to find a way to help others which ultimately was to share the Nembutsu Teaching with them. Thus, Lady Kakushinni was able to revere him and aspired to perpetuate Shinran Shonin’s legacy through preserving his memory by becoming the Rusushiki or Caretaker of Shinran Shonin’s Mausoleum which would eventually evolve into the Hongwanji.

In this respect, the correspondence, communications, the conversation, the letters between Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni played such an important role in the nurturing of Lady Kakushinni and the huge role she would play in the history of Jodo Shinshu. I hope that for us, in Hawaii Kyodan, we can regain this kind of conversation and sharing as it is one of the keys to our future to sustain and grow the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii both financially and spiritually.

Shinran Shonin wrote a hymn or wasan, “I praise Amida’s wisdom and virtue so that beings with mature conditions throughout the ten quarters may hear. Let those who have realized shinjin constantly respond in gratitude to the Buddha’s benevolence.” You might say “I can’t give a Dharma Message about Amida Buddha,” but I would say “You can talk story” as we say in Hawaii. No doubt, the greatest praise to Amida Buddha is our reciting the Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu in our everyday life and living our life guided by the Dharma. Let us share our Dharma enriched life with others just as Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni did with each other and others.

I conclude by quoting the late Bishop Yemyo Imamura “...the entire karma of events throughout this first decade in Hawaii is due to nothing but the manifestation of the compassion of the (Amida) Buddha.” “To think of all those forgetting themselves for the Hongwanji to make today possible, I feel gratitude and am moved deeply even now.” Thank you and Namo Amida Butsu/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion.

HAWAII KYODAN SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS

Reverend Joshin Kamuro, an associate minister of Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, will be on a leave of absence until early September 2019 to study at Dendo-in (the Buddhist Institute for the Propagation of Buddhism) in Kyoto, Japan as a Hawaii Kyodan Scholarship Student.

Mr. Blayne Nakasone Sakata, a member of Waipahu Hongwanji Mission and Puna Hongwanji Mission and a graduate of Pacific Buddhist Academy, has begun his studies and training at the Chuo Bukkyo Gakuin (Central Buddhist Seminary) in Kyoto, Japan as a Hawaii Kyodan Scholarship Student.

CONDOLENCES

Mr. Tatsuo Yoshida, a member of Papaalooa Hongwanji Mission, passed away on February 24, 2019. Mr. Yoshida served as a Temple Officer for many years. The Ingo (Posthumous Title) of JO-KO-IN 常光院 which means “One who constantly illuminated others” in recognition of his life of nembutsu in which he continually showed others the way was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on April 6, 2019.

Mrs. Florence Sumiko Yoshizu, a member of Makawao Hongwanji Mission, passed away on March 16, 2019. Ms. Yoshizu served as a Sunday School teacher for more than 25 years, as president of the Asoka Club from 1984 to 1990 and as board director for the Makawao Hongwanji Preschool in the 1980s and 1990s. The Ingo (Posthumous Title) of SHI-YUU-IN 志勇院 which means “One whose resolution is unwavering and indefatigable” in recognition of her life of nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on April 9, 2019.

Mrs. Teruko Tsumura, the wife of the late Reverend Junjo Tsumura who served as a minister for the Buddhist Churches of America and as the 12th Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, passed away on February 28, 2019 in San Jose, CA. The Private Funeral service was held at San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin on April 11, 2019. HHMH Office of the Bishop sent a koden (condolence gift) with a Letter of Condolence from Bishop Eric Matsumoto and flowers for the Funeral Service. The Ingo (Posthumous Title) of MI-MYO-IN 微妙院 which means “One whose life resonated with delicate and wondrous sounds” in recognition of her life of nembutsu which was always filled with music was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto.

PBA GRADUATION

The Pacific Buddhist Academy will be holding its 13th Baccalaureate Ceremony on May 9, 2019 at 6:00 pm at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. The Ceremony will be officiated by Bishop Eric Matsumoto assisted by the ministers who will represent each district. 10 students will be graduating from PBA this year. The Commencement Exercise will be held on May 10, 2019 at 5:00 pm at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii.

YBICSE – YOUNG BUDDHIST INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL STUDY EXCHANGE

JULY 15-27, 2019

Hongwanji-sponsored educational trip to Japan

- Visiting Jodo Shinshu historical sites including the Hongwanji (mother temple) in Kyoto
- Fellowship with new friends from US Mainland, Canada, South America, and Japan
- Homestay Program
- Learn & experience Japanese Culture
- Share joy of living in the Nembutsu Teachings
- Many other life-changing experiences

Candidate Qualification

- A person who appreciate the Jodo Shin Buddhism
- A Person who is currently in 9th grade through age 25
- In good health

*Fifteen (15) delegates will be selected.

Registration Fee: \$1,600.00

*Rest of the travel expense will be covered by Hongwanji.

*Some meals and other personal expenses are not included.

*Inter-island airfare within Hawaii is not included.

*****Go to <https://hongwanjihawaii.com/blog/2019/04/01/ybicse-2019-applications-invited/> for more information and application. Application deadline is April 30, 2019.***

KAHUKU HONGWANJI SCHOLARSHIP

The Kahuku Hongwanji Mission closed its doors in February 2013 after serving its membership for 111 years. To maintain the legacy of the Kahuku Hongwanji Mission and to develop the future generations of the Hongwanji, Kahuku Hongwanji Mission established a scholarship to support students at the college level.

Eligibility:

- The applicant must be a member of the BSC Fellowship Club or an active member of a Hawaii Kyodan organization.
- The applicant must be a full-time student of an accredited college, university, or a post-high school program in the State of Hawaii, and earn a minimum of 12 college credits per semester.
- The applicant must have a required minimum college GPA of 2.5.
- The applicant must be of college age up to 35 years old.
- The applicant must submit the application form with an essay on “Dharma and My Life”.

Application Deadline: July 31 of the year of application

Scholarship Amount: \$1,500.00

For more information of this scholarship, please contact the HHMH Headquarters at (808) 522-9200 or email at hqs@honpahi.org

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS

Donation to Malama Kauai

A donation of \$5,360 from the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii was made to Malama Kauai on March 15, 2019. The donation will be used to help fund the “Mea`ai on Wheels” program guided by Malama Kauai to provide a daily meal to those still affected by the flooding which occurred in Spring 2018, specifically in the areas around Haena, Wainiha and Hanalei. The coordinator of the “Mea`ai on Wheels”, Hana Neerings, said the program feeds 90 people per day on a budget of approximately \$300 per day. The program is designed for those who are still displaced, have no kitchen, are elderly or have a disabled child or adult in the home. Because of the condition of the road and the continued need to “caravan” in

and out of the north shore area past Hanalei, a trip for groceries might involve a 5-hour trip instead of 1 hour trip, creating a hardship for many, especially the Kupuna. The meal served is a “hot, delicious and mostly organic” meal. As Neerings explained, “We have the best fed Kupuna on the island.”



L-R: Roberta Yanagawa, President of Kauai Hongwanji Council; Carol Valentine, Social Concerns; Hana Neerings, Malama Kauai/Mea`ai on Wheels; Rev. Mieko Majima, President of the Kauai Ministers’ Association.