



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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### BISHOP'S CORNER



#### Let's Persevere!

Bishop Eric Matsumoto

In "The Teaching of Buddha," published by BDK, it states *"Endurance (perseverance) is one of the most difficult disciplines, but it is to him (her) who endures that the final victory comes."* (Parenthesis are mine). As I think about it, the word or virtue for December might be "perseverance."

First and foremost, in light of our situation with the COVID-19 Pandemic with possibility of two vaccines being administered, we must continue to be diligent and persevere a little while longer. Let us not let our guard down now because vaccines have been approved. It will take time for the vaccines to take effect around the world. In a way, this might be one of the most difficult periods in that because we have such hope and the probability of improving the situation is so high and close, we relax and let our guard down too soon and that could prove to be disastrous. It would be a disaster on top of a disaster. We must persevere to the very end! Only then, can we say we have truly persevered.

As we gratefully celebrate Bodhi Day (December 8<sup>th</sup>), if the former Prince Siddhartha Gautama had not persevered to the very end to overcome anger, greed and ignorance, we would not be observing Bodhi Day every December and there would be no Buddhism in tangible form in our world. Also, if our Jodo Shinshu predecessors of 800 years ago did not persevere in pursuing the Nembutsu Teachings from Shinran Shonin, as we find in the Tannisho, *"Each of you has come to see me, crossing the borders of more than ten provinces at the risk of your life, solely with the intent of asking about the path to birth in the land of bliss,"* we, today, might not have been able to hear these wonderful teachings too. Even right here in Hawaii, we have people like the late Chiyono Sasaki of Kona who persevered and did not give up and thus experienced a joyous awakening of untold joy and gratitude. In the words of Rev. Muneto (taken from "Dharma Treasures, Spiritual Insights from Hawaii's Shin Buddhist Pioneers") *"When the conscious effort of a nembutsu practitioner to grasp shinjin is dropped by appreciating the work of true compassion (Amida Buddha), the person begins to walk on the path of unobstructed freedom."* (Parenthesis are mine.)

However, what is interesting to note is that whether it be Sakyamuni Buddha or the countless Jodo Shinshu followers, they all give credit to others and not to themselves. Similarly, in our perseverance to keep practicing good hygiene and safety measures into 2021, let us do so in gratitude to medical experts and healthcare professionals, and essential workers who at the risk of their own lives with incredible

strength and fortitude are caring for and trying to protect us. If we don't do it for ourselves, let's do it to honor them out of gratitude. As you know this is the theme of the "Mahalo Video Series" found on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube Channel. Our healthcare professionals are doing so much, but it is unrealistic for us to assume that they can continue at this pace forever. As a community, as a nation, as the world, we must all come together and in unity persevere by listening to and following the recommendations of our medical experts and healthcare professionals in order to stop the spread and bring the virus under control. Also, let's see how we can support local businesses especially smaller businesses which are also struggling to survive. We can do this, but only if we act together! This year and next, the most important holiday gift to each other and our personal new year resolution in 2021 may be perseverance by each and all of us in continuing to follow safety measures and procedures. Let's persevere by letting wisdom guide as we are inspired by compassion and respond in gratitude! Thank you.

***Bishop Matsumoto's video messages are also available on the HHMH YouTube Channel:***

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5p2UQ0W-gN4Up41QotZr6OsqcntoYVyE>

### **SPECIAL SESSION OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

The Special Session of the Legislative Assembly was held on November 21, 2020 online via Zoom. This session was held to discuss the resolutions below. As a result of the voting, both resolutions were adopted.

1. Resolution 2020-03: Resolution to Amend Hawaii Kyodan Bylaws to allow electronic meetings
2. Amend the 2020 Hawaii Kyodan Budget, Resolution 2020-01

### **VIRTUAL APPRECIATION EVENT FOR MR. PIEPER TOYAMA, HAWAII KYODAN OUTGOING PRESIDENT & DR. WARREN TAMAMOTO, HAWAII KYODAN INCOMING PRESIDENT**

The Virtual Appreciation Event to honor and extend our deep appreciation to Mr. Pieper Toyama who provided wonderful leadership as the President of HHMH during the past 6 years, and to welcome Dr. Warren Tamamoto as our newly installed President of HHMH was held on November 21, 2020 online via Zoom.

Traditionally, the Aloha Luncheon was held soon after a presidential transition occurred. However, we held the Virtual Appreciation Event instead of the luncheon due to the current pandemic situation. Approximately 160 people throughout Hawaii and even from the mainland participated in the event.

By request of Outgoing President Mr. Pieper Toyama, HQ created a new fund called "Legacy of Gratitude Fund" with donations received in lieu of lei and gifts to Mr. Toyama as Outgoing President.

The purpose of the fund, by donor request is to be used at the discretion of the Bishop and State President, is to help sustain Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's ability to share the Shin Buddhist Teachings so that Buddhist values and perspectives can continue to touch the lives of Hawaii's people and the dynamic teaching of Namu Amida Butsu can find its way into the lives of all for generations filling people's lives with untold gratitude.

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii continues accepting donations for this fund. If you wish, please make a donation via the link below or send HQ a check payable to “Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii” with a note “Legacy of Gratitude Fund” in the memo line.

**Legacy of Gratitude Fund**

[https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted\\_button\\_id=KAKMWA8LDX8NC](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=KAKMWA8LDX8NC)



**PROPAGATION PROGRAM GRANT COMMITTEE**

The Propagation Program Grant Committee would like to inform you that we made necessary adjustments to the Instruction and Guidelines due to COVID-19.

- **Rule Number 10: Addition**

Added “However, in special cases, the two-year limit may be extended by the committee on a case by case basis.” Due to COVID-19 some projects may be delayed from their original schedule.

*# 10, All projects must be completed within two years of the starting date of the project. However, in special cases, the two-year limit may be extended by the committee on a case by case basis.*

- **Rule Number 15: Amendment**

Currently, not many people use a disk or CD. Instead, we ask applicants to submit a PDF file.

*# 15, Convert the completed project into a PDF ~~a disk or CD (Microsoft Word)~~ and send to the Chair of Propagation Grant Committee.*

- **Rule Number 16: Suspend for Three Years**

We decided to suspend rule number 16 for three years which is "16. Request for major equipment purchases will not be considered. However, reasonable small items and supplies expenses may be acceptable." Many temples and affiliated organizations are looking for a new propagation style due to COVID-19. This change will provide more opportunity to support new, innovative, creative ideas or activities focusing on Buddhist Education and the propagation of Dharma.

For more information regarding this program or to apply, please check with your resident minister or HQ.

## **HMMH YOUTUBE CHANNEL PROGRAM**

HMMH continues to provide online programs as listed below. Videos will premiere on HMMH YouTube channel and become available on-demand. Please share this information with your family and friends and subscribe to it to continue receiving updates.

<https://www.youtube.com/honpahongwanjissionofhawaii/>

HMMH YouTube Channel has been continuing the statewide Online Dharma Message every Sunday since July. In the meantime, many Hongwanji temples came to have Online Sunday Programs, so this program will finish in the end of December. The videos of online Dharma Message will remain available on the YouTube Channel. Please listen to the messages repeatedly.

### ■ **ONLINE DHARMA MESSAGE**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5p2UQ0W-gN4DTm65ALR0loYZc2\\_OHwwi](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5p2UQ0W-gN4DTm65ALR0loYZc2_OHwwi)

12/06	9:30am	<a href="#">Hawaii Buddhist Council Bodhi Day Service (Speaker: Dr. Kenneth Tanaka)</a>
12/13	11:00am	<a href="#">Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani (Moiliili Hongwanji Mission)</a>
12/20	11:00am	<a href="#">Rev. Richard Tennes (Kahului Hongwanji Mission)</a>
12/27	11:00am	Rev. Shinkai Murakami (Wailuku Hongwanji Mission)
12/31	7:00pm	Rev. David Fujimoto (Mililani Hongwanji Mission)

### ■ **HEALTH CARE HEROES MAHALO VIDEO**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5p2UQ0W-gN5sjQAQfelHck0UAxLmO2Vb>

Wednesdays 12:00pm "Health Care Treasures" and Essential Workers

## **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Great news! The first COVID-19 vaccine approved for use on an emergency basis has been delivered to designated locations throughout our state. Healthcare workers and residents of long-term care facilities are receiving the first available doses. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility for the vaccine, please contact your healthcare provider.

The following pages include important resources regarding the COVID-19 vaccine which would be helpful to you and your temple members.

■ **COVID-19 Vaccine Q&A with Ronald Balajadia, Hawai'i Department of Health Immunization Branch Chief**

<https://hawaiicovid19.com/vaccinefaq/>

■ **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

Unfortunately, scammers are already scheming to take advantage of the situation. Here's what you need to know to avoid a vaccine-related scam (advice from the Federal Trade Commission):

- You likely will not need to pay anything out of pocket to get the vaccine during this public health emergency.
- You can't pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
- You can't pay to get early access to the vaccine.
- No one from a vaccine distribution site or health care payer, like a private insurance company, will call you asking for your Social Security number or your credit card or bank account information to sign you up to get the vaccine.
- Beware of providers offering other products, treatments, or medicines to prevent the virus. Check with your health care provider before paying for or receiving any COVID-19-related treatment.

If you get a call, text, email — or even someone knocking on your door — claiming they can get you early access to the vaccine, **STOP. That's a scam.** Don't pay for a promise of vaccine access or share personal information. “