



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 522-9200 Fax: (808) 522-9209

Web: [www.hongwanjihawaii.com](http://www.hongwanjihawaii.com) Email: [hqs@honpahi.org](mailto:hqs@honpahi.org)



**FEBRUARY 2021**

### BISHOP'S CORNER



#### Excerpts from Bishop's Messages of the 109th Legislative Assembly Bishop Eric Matsumoto

Aloha Kakou! Welcome to the 109<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii! I would like extend a special warm welcome of Aloha to our guests from the Buddhist Churches of America, the Jodo Shinshu International Office and, for the first time, the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada. E Komo Mai!

Let me emphasize that we are continuing to focus on the Sangha. The Sangha lives guided and inspired by the Buddha-Dharma. In Shin Buddhism, we fully acknowledge our limitations and imperfections. I am aware that, many times, directly or indirectly and totally or partially, a cause and/or condition of others' and/or my own suffering. However, even such a limited person like myself in this imperfect world, can certainly try to live according to the ideals of Buddhism.

Just as the COVID vaccine is giving us hope in our battle with COVID-19, Amida Buddha's Light also provides us with guidance and gives us hope as it tempers our blind passions (bonno)! I firmly believe that we need more of the Buddha-Dharma to inspire and guide us as a Sangha. We have a whole host of challenges to face that has been brought on and/or aggravated by COVID-19 including our financial situation (similar to what many others in our communities are facing). Let us be guided by the Dharma or Teachings. The key to solutions for us (a Buddhist organization) is connected to the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Once again, I ask for especially the help of the ministers to share the nurturing aspect of Jodo Shinshu Teachings and the values, perspectives and behaviors that come about from encountering the Nembutsu Dharma. Gomonshu's "Our Pledge" summarizes some of the dynamics. For me, our trying to follow "Our Pledge" is not a self-power effort, but rather, our responding in gratitude to Amida Buddha and made possible by Amida Buddha. Even Rennyō Shōnin attributes our being able to control our minds to Amida Buddha's Other Power. To me, from feelings and thoughts of mottainai, mooshiwakenai and arigatai that we experience, due to the Unconditional Compassion of Amida Buddha we find embracing us arises the aspiration to try to live a life that is more in accord with the Dharma (highly imperfect as it may be).

This year, I would like to direct the entire Hawaii Kyodan including all State Committees as we engage in our individual projects, endeavors and committee work to see how we can make manifest in some measurable way our Theme and Slogan "Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect." How can we promote and make manifest empathy and respect in our Sangha and larger community? It is

not hard to see that what our world really needs is more empathy and respect for all. Ultimately, it is Amida Buddha that is doing the nurturing, but I believe as recipients of that nurturing, we can try, imperfect as we may be, to promote empathy and respect in the world starting with our own actions.

Regardless of whether your temple is currently open or not, let us remain diligent in our efforts to contain the virus, stop the unnecessary suffering and deaths from COVID-19, help our healthcare system and professionals nearing exhaustion, better the conditions such so that our economy will be able to get back on its feet by continuing to practice safety measures for a while longer. Together with our President, I would like express my gratitude to all temples and affiliates for following the safety directives, guidelines and recommendations. Ministers and Temple Lay Leaders especially, thank you for putting so much of your time and energy into keeping our temples and members safe, secure, and still try to fulfill our purpose of sharing the Dharma including helping those who need help physically with your mask-making projects, food delivery, cooking of meals for the young and elderly, and assuring our members that they are not alone in this time of severe isolation. To all of our preschools, schools, and adult care facilities and other affiliates and programs too, thank you for doing your best to maneuver through this pandemic and still provide care and/or continue your activities. Ministers and Temple office staff, thank you for being on the forefront to continue serving our membership. Of course, I cannot leave this topic without acknowledging the tremendous effort put forth by the HQ Staff.

As we all know, COVID-19 has direly affected our Hawaii Kyodan. Most acutely, in the area of finances and our traditional in-person method of sharing the Dharma. The greatest short term hurdle our organization faces is overcoming the financial crisis brought on by the Pandemic. In these precarious times, Headquarters including the Office of the Bishop, will continue to make some decisions based on the fact that we are right now in a crisis situation and facing extraordinary circumstances. I ask for your understanding and cooperation. We must all work together, ministers and lay people, to find ways in which we can regain and even better our financial foundation so that we can continue to carry out our mission or purpose of sharing the Dharma. It can also be the other way around that the more people are touched by the Dharma the more they will support us. It behooves us to become more creative, innovative and flexible and open in this time of crisis and even beyond.

Online and social media is not perfect and has limitations, but we have entered a new age of propagation and fundraising with the internet and social media an integral part of it. It is clear that there is a significant group of people out there in the world that are hungry for the Dharma, but they do not live near a temple, are unable to come to a temple or the internet is their preferred way of receiving the Dharma. We should look into this idea of an Online Sangha. It might even be a new category of members for Hawaii Kyodan or temples.

I gratefully note that even in these difficult times, various entities of Hawaii Kyodan are continuing to work on providing meaningful resources in hopes that more people will come to know the Great Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha. Please look forward for announcements for our State Ministers Association and BSC-OBE. At Headquarters, in the spirit of empathy and respect, we will continue to do our best to get us through this Pandemic. If you need assistance, please contact us.

In two years, in 2023, we will be observing the auspicious 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching. Also the next World Buddhist

Women's World Convention, will be held at the same time. We need to start planning and thus in the first half of this year I will be calling a meeting so we can start preparing for these auspicious events.

A special word of appreciation to the HQ Staff: Derrick Inouye, Rev. Takahashi and Dianne Sumida including Joy Nishida for their help with our first ever Virtual Online Regular Giseikai.

To conclude, truly, it is because of the support, dedication, commitment and generosity of all of you, Ministers and Lay Members, which makes it possible for Hawaii Kyodan to not only exist, but also share the Nembutsu Teachings and contribute to the betterment of our Hawaii. I express my deepest appreciation to one and all including our State President Dr. Warren Tamamoto. Once again, "Everyone, thank you" and "Namo Amida Butsu."

### **GISEIKAI MESSAGE FROM THE JODO SHINSHU HONGWANJI-HA GOVERNOR GENERAL BISHOP CHIKO IWAGAMI**

On the occasion of the 109th *Giseikai* of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, which is being conducted online, I humbly extend my appreciation to you, the ministers and sangha representatives from throughout the state of Hawaii. I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to you all for your continuing efforts in propagating Jodo Shinshu and maintaining the temples within your respective district.

First I would like to extend my condolences to those who passed away from COVID-19, and I also would like to offer my sympathy to the people who are currently undergoing treatment for the disease.

The situation might differ depending on the area, but for almost every place in the US, gathering at the temple has been restricted and a lot of temple activities, including religious services, cannot remain intact. In the midst of such difficult times, I am truly grateful that many of you have been seeking new measures to actualize Buddhist wisdom in society. Some make the best use of the internet to share the Dharma and rejoice the Nembutsu teaching together with others. On the other hand, some feel close to and regularly contact those who are most likely to be isolated, such as, senior people who do not have access to the internet.

On the New Year's Day, Monshu Ohtani Kojun presented the following message, "Now we have to live a life with COVID-19, and it brought to our society drastic changes that caused many people unprecedented distress and suffering. Human bonds are always important, but in such severe circumstances, warm relationships between people have become vital to enabling everyone to feel at ease. I hope many are able to find peace of mind in listening to the teaching of Shinran Shonin and interacting with one another through temple activities." In accordance with his words, I raise my expectation to you to continue your insightful schemes to spread the teaching and allow the sangha to feel at home at each temple.

Here in Kyoto, we are making arrangements for the Joint Celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching that is scheduled for 2023. Although the pandemic has forced us to set every plan as provisional, we sincerely hope that we will be able to make this joyful occasion come true to share our appreciation for the teaching with every one of you.

In closing, it is my hope that the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will continue to prosper and that many fruitful results will arise from this annual meeting.

February 12, 2021

Governor General Iwagami Chiko  
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

## HHMH 109<sup>TH</sup> GISEIKAI LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The 109<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii was held on February 12-13, 2021 virtually via Zoom. All programs such as Opening Service (Memorial Service for the Ingo recipients in 2020 as well as past ministers and members of HHMH), Plenary Session, Workshops, Installation of Officers, Directors, Advisors, Sanmu, and Kanji ministers, and Special Recognition of the retirement of Rev. Bruce Nakamura were conducted using Zoom.

Delegates from the Hongwanji temples throughout Hawaii discussed and passed the following resolutions:

1. 2021 HHMH Budget
2. Communications Strategic Team
3. Ewa-Kapolei Merger
4. Condolence and Appreciation – Reverend Shoin Hoashi, Rose Sadako Nakamura, Reverend Arthur Marutani, and S. Stanley Okamoto

In the workshop, we were fortunate to have a guest presenter Reverend Marvin Harada, the Bishop of Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). He did the presentation and addressed the issues of membership and emphasized the development of Buddhist Education programs.

Reverend Kiyonobu Kuwahara, a guest from the Jodo Shinshu International Office (JSIO), did the presentations about the organization, projects, and activities. Makawao Hongwanji Mission, Moiliili Hongwanji Mission, Puna Hongwanji Mission, and Windward Buddhist Temple did presentations about the effective ways of using the website, social media, online tools for online services, temple activities, fundraising, etc.

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii expresses our deepest gratitude to all those who attended and supported the first virtual Legislative Assembly.

## OFFICERS, ADVISORS, AND DIRECTORS OF HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII FOR YEAR 2021

President:	Warren Tamamoto (H)		
Immediate Past President:	Pieper Toyama (H)		
Vice Presidents:	Dennis Tashiro (H)	Carolyn Uchiyama (O)	Lynne Matsumura (K)
	Michael Munekiyo (M)	Earl Tanaka (H)	
Secretary:	Russell Nonaka (O)		
Assistant Secretary:	Sharon Nohara (M)		

Treasurer:	Wayne Toma (H)		
Assistant Treasurer:	Wendy Harman (H)		
Advisors:	Alan Goto (H)	Dexter Mar (H)	Keiji Kukino (H)
	Stanley Sasaki (O)	Rodney Moriyama (O)	Wayne Fujioka (K)
	Floyd Nagoshi (M)	Ivan Nakano (H)	Frederick S. Nonaka (H)
	Harold Uyeno (H)		
Honorary Advisors:	Roy Miyamoto (H)		

Directors:			
Honolulu (6)	Benjamin Bruch	Joel Determan	Wendy Harman
	Wayne Toma	Raymond Takiue, Jr.	Dennis Tashiro
Oahu (5)	Russell Nonaka	Rene Mansho	Miles Tamura
	Carolyn Uchiyama	Evan Watarida	
Kauai (2)	Lynne Matsumura	Fay Tateishi	
Maui (4)	George Borg	Sharon Nohara	Sharon Higuchi
	Michael Munekiyo		
Hawaii (7)	Arthur Taniguchi	Burt Tsuchiya	Earl Tanaka
	David Oshiro	Linda Nagai	Helen Shirota-Benevides
	Clifford Furukado		

## MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENTS

**Rev. Mieko Majima**, currently serving at Kapaa Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister, was assigned to the Headquarters as the Office of Buddhist Education Assistant as of February 1, 2021. Rev. Majima will continue her assignment to Kapaa Hongwanji Mission as its resident minister.

**Rev. Shindo Nishiyama**, currently serving at Jikoen Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister and Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Acting Rimban (Chief Minister), will be relieved of his duties at Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as of February 28, 2021.

**Rev. Kazunori Takahashi**, currently serving at the Headquarters as the Executive Assistant to the Bishop, will be assigned to Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Acting Rimban from March 1, 2021 to June 30, 2021 while he continues his duties as the Executive Assistant to the Bishop. Rev. Takahashi will be assigned to the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Rimban as of July 1, 2021.

**Rev. Masanari Yamagishi**, currently serving at the Headquarters, will be assigned to Kamuela Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister as well as Honokaa Hongwanji Mission, Kohala Hongwanji Mission, and Paaulo Hongwanji Mission as their Overseer Minister as of May 1, 2021.

**Rev. Daido Baba**, currently serving at Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Associate Minister, will be assigned to the Headquarters as the Executive Assistant to the Bishop as of July 1, 2021.

## CONDOLENCES

**Mr. Shigeru Sakata**, a member of Kamuela Hongwanji Mission, passed away on November 15, 2020. Mr. Sakata served as the President of Kamuela Hongwanji Mission for two years. The Ingo of SHOU-GO-IN 照護院 which means "One who always illumines and protects" in recognition of his life of nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on November 30, 2020.

**Mr. Harry Zenjiro Nakamura**, a member of Kahului Hongwanji Mission, passed away on December 3, 2020. Mr. Nakamura served as the President of Kahului Hongwanji Mission from 1989 through 1994. The Ingo of KOU-KOU-IN 香光院 which means "One imbued with the fragrance of light" in recognition of his life of nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on December 4, 2020.

**Mr. Meiji Hirose**, a member of Wailuku Hongwanji Mission, passed away on January 5, 2021. Mr. Hirose served as the President of Wailuku Hongwanji Mission for two years and the Board of Directors for many years. The Ingo of SHOU-YU-IN 勝友院 which means "Excellent Good Friend" in recognition of his life of nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on January 6, 2021.

**Mr. Stanley Yoshio Oishi**, a member of Puna Hongwanji Mission, passed away on January 13, 2021. Mr. Oishi served as the President of Puna Hongwanji Mission from 2005 to 2006. He also contributed the Puna Community and strongly supported Pahoia YBA, Pahoia Lions Club, Pahoia Nikkei Jin Kai, Sugar Cane Growers Association, Famers of America, and more. The Ingo of ZEN-NU-IN 善友院 which means "Virtuous True Teacher" in recognition of his life of nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on February 5, 2021.

## 2021 KAUAI HONGWANJI COUNCIL NEMBUTSU SEMINAR

Kauai Hongwanji Council will host a Zoom Nembutsu seminar with Dr. Rev. Kenneth Kenshin Tanaka (Professor Emeritus, Musashino University, Tokyo) on April 10, 2021 from 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm HST. The topic is "An Introduction to the Essence and Practice of Shin Buddhism (2): Nembutsu Meditation and the Meaning of Amida Buddha and Pure Land for Everyday Understanding."

Registration is required. Please go to the link (<https://forms.gle/39JArh9rJzWGs3AE8>) and fill out the information. Registration deadline is Sunday, April 4, 2021. Maximum capacity is 100 people, first come first serve. A Zoom link will be emailed three days prior to the seminar. Registration fee is free, but donations can be made to "Kauai Hongwanji Council". If you have any questions, please contact any of the Kauai temples:

Kapaa Hongwanji Mission at (808) 822-4667  
Lihue Hongwanji Mission at (808) 245-6262  
West Kauai Hongwanji Mission at (808) 335-3195

## COURTESY VISIT FROM MR. UDI BAR-DAVID

Bishop Eric Matsumoto received a courtesy visit from Mr. Udi Bar-David, cellist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Founder & Artistic Director of ARTolerance (<https://artolerance.org>) on January 28, 2021. He carries the mission of interfaith understanding by utilizing music as a vehicle and promotes peace and harmony interfaith dialogues and understanding around the World including in the Middle East.

Mr. Bar-David visited and played the cello in the spirit of interfaith understanding and paid tribute to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii that propagate the teaching of Buddhism, promoting peace and harmony, and reducing divisions and hatred in today's society.



Here is the link to watch his performance. This is titled "Prayers Across Traditions."  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJcwR7fMWow&feature=youtu.be>