



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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JULY 2021

### BISHOP'S CORNER

#### An O-Bon Reflection "Are you connected?"

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



O-Bon is a time of remembrance, reflection, realization, rejoicing, and responding in gratitude. Connected to what, you may ask. Well, everything and everyone would be the ultimate answer.

Are you connected to your past? O-Bon is a time of remembrance when we remember and honor (not worship) our predecessors which for most of us would be our own family members, but the sphere could be larger and more inclusive. In many cases, the good life that we live today are a result of the determination, perseverance, sacrifices, and struggles of previous generations of our family and friends. Rarely, is it only my own effort. Thus, O-Bon is a time in which we pause from our hurried busy lives to remember our past and especially loved ones and those closest to us who have passed on. We remember them with gratitude for what they have done for us.

Are you connected to your present? As we reflect with the Buddha's Teaching/Dharma as our guide, we come to realize how interdependent all life, all existence is. A fundamental Buddhist Teaching is "Because of this, that arises; because this does not exist, that does not arise." Simply, it is about connections and relationships. We cannot exist without others. This includes not only other people, but also our natural environment like the plants and animals, the oceans, the land and the sky and everything of and within it and even more. A fundamental and basic Buddhist emphasis or perspective is that all life and all existence is interconnected and interrelated. This is an important realization to have, which can make a big difference, as we have a tendency to be self-centered and focus on myself or only my small circle. A realization that wants to happen at O-Bon time is our interconnectedness with all others and the expression of our joyful appreciation and gratitude to those others.

Are you connected to your future? Just as the life and deeds of our predecessors have influenced my life, the way I live my life will also impact those of future generations. We cannot ignore, anymore, the consequences of our human actions which are causing much of the current natural and man-made disasters and unprecedented severe weather phenomena that are occurring all around the globe. One of the anticipated outcomes of O-Bon is a more balanced life or lifestyle with a new perspective. In contrast to a life of greed and self-centeredness, a life of moderation, oneness, and appreciation and gratitude to others based on interdependence.

What brings about this awareness, gratitude and change in perspective? It is the Wisdom and Compassion of Enlightenment. In our Hongwanji Tradition, this Wisdom and Compassion is given a name and identity called (the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light) Amida Buddha or (the Buddha's Name Which Calls Us to entrust and the Buddha's Name Which We Call in gratitude) Namo Amida Butsu. Amida Buddha's aspiration or vow is to, literally, save all life, all existence by unconditionally embracing us, just as we are with all our imperfections, promising us the Great Enlightenment or Supreme Nirvana with our birth in the Pure Land at the end of this finite life. From the perspective of Great Compassion, we don't need to perfect ourselves (or become good first) to be saved. However, to me, that does not mean that we remain completely idle and static and we can try to aspire for greater things. Great Compassion is unconditional and includes all and from profound gratitude to it, we lament our continued imperfect self, but try to live being less self-centered, selfish and arrogant as encouraged by the Buddha-Dharma. We begin to understand and appreciate the Oneness of All Life and connectedness of everyone and everything including Amida Buddha and myself.

In Hongwanji, we refer to Obon as a "Gathering of Joy." Yes, there is sadness especially if you have recently loss someone dear to you and this is keenly felt at O-Bon time especially if you are observing your First O-Bon (after someone's passing), but there is also the supportive guidance, embrace and joy of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha which surrounds us especially the Unconditional Compassion of Amida Buddha or Namo Amida Butsu. I hope that you can feel, come to know, experience that connection and relationship we each have with Great Wisdom and Compassion! The Oneness of All!

I want to conclude today by sharing a personal interpretation and connect it to my thoughts shared above. Recently on July 20, 2021, Jeff Bezos and Mark Bezos successfully traveled to space on Blue Origin. In a news interview, Mark was asked "How did it change you?" He responded "In the best sense, I have never felt smaller than I did today. It was an incredibly humbling and beautiful sense of personal scale. Right? That I am such a small part of all of this." Brother Jeff interjected, "Look at the Earth from up there. It will make you more humble." Their comments share the same sentiment, the wonder and insight, that many other astronauts had including Hawaii's Lieutenant Colonel Ellison Onizuka. This sense of humility, I think, is another outcome of O-Bon. As we realize the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of all life, all existence, we become humbler too. Thank you and Namo Amida Butsu.

## ONLINE BON DANCE EXPERIENCE 2021

It's that time of the year again! O-Bon Season is here, but unfortunately, we will not be able to experience the traditional Bon Dance as we know it, once again. Although, it cannot compare to an in person Bon Dance, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii would like to present a new Online Bon Dance Experience for 2021. It will feature dances, a few easy recipes, and recollections and reflections by bon dance enthusiasts from across the state.



A still photo from a pre-COVID event used for Online Bon Dance Experience 2020.

Bon Dance Experience 2021 will premiere on the HHMH YouTube channel on Friday, August 13 at 7 p.m. HST. To join others in watching the premiere, visit our YouTube channel page at that time (shortcut link: <http://honpahi.link/youtube>). As we get closer to the premiere date, a direct link to the premiere will be shared on our website, <http://hongwanjihawaii.com>, as well as on social media. Viewers will also be able to view the video after the premiere, however, live chat will not be available.



Please share this information with family, friends, and community. See you on August 13, 2021 at 7 p.m. HST for the premiere of HHMH Bon Dance Experience 2021!

Pre-COVID photo of West Kauai Hongwanji Mission's Waimea Bon Dance set up.

## STATEWIDE NEWSLETTER

The Hawaii Kyodan Executive Board has approved a proposal by Bishop Eric Matsumoto and President Warren Tamamoto to publish a quarterly statewide newsletter with a first issue tentatively planned for the fourth quarter of 2021. The newsletter will be printed in a newspaper format and mailed to every member and every temple within the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

The benefits of having a statewide newsletter include (but are not limited to):

- Allow Bishop Eric Matsumoto to share his personal message with every member of the Hawaii Kyodan.
- Create a sense of unity in the Hawaii Kyodan by sharing information between districts, temples and members. We are all part of a larger organization and we are active in our respective communities, throughout our state and even the world.
- Share the Dharma with our Sangha, so that they can understand and feel the impact of the Teachings on their everyday lives.
- A statewide newsletter would be the official publication of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. It would be a permanent record of HHMH activities. It would also be available in electronic format and portions of the newsletter could be used at the temple or district level.

We humbly request that ministers and temple leaders across our state support us in this exciting new project by:

- **Suggesting a name** for our statewide newsletter.
- **Submitting articles, interesting stories and photos** for our newsletter.
- Please send your suggestions for a newsletter name/title and ideas for articles to: [newsletter@honpahi.org](mailto:newsletter@honpahi.org)
- **Temple Presidents submitting a list of temple members with mailing addresses** to Headquarters as soon as possible. An address template (excel spreadsheet) will be sent to each Temple President for submission.

## CONDOLENCE

**Mrs. Rose Sadako Nakamura** passed away on July 10, 2020, at the age of 91. She was the co-founder of Project Dana and served as the Founding Administrator from 1989 to 2017, an Honorary Advisor of HHMH, a former President of Hawaii Federation of BWA, a former President of Moiliili Hongwanji Mission, and a President of Moiliili Hongwanji BWA. The ingo of CHOORAI-IN 頂礼院 which means “One who deserves the pinnacle of respect and gratitude” was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on July 11, 2020. Her private funeral service was held on July 10, 2021 at Moiliili Hongwanji Mission officiated by Bishop Eric Matsumoto.

**Mrs. Hisako Hatta**, wife of the late Rev. Shoyei Hatta, passed away at the age of 93 on April 11, 2021. The ingo of KOU-RAI-IN 光麗院 which means “One who cast a radiant resplendence” was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on June 26, 2021.

**Reverend Yoshiaki Fujitani**, the 11th Bishop of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, passed away on May 17, 2021, at the age of 97. Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii sponsored funeral service is scheduled for Sunday, August 15, 2021, at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin under the officiation of Bishop Eric Matsumoto. Visitation will be held from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm open to the public, followed by the funeral service at 4:00 pm by invitation only. A Livestreaming of the funeral service will be available. Please email [hqs@honpahi.org](mailto:hqs@honpahi.org) for link information.

**Rev. Yoshikazu Saito**, a retired minister of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, passed away on June 16, 2021 at age of 92. More detailed information regarding the funeral service will be shared at a later date. Rev. Saito became a Kaikyoshi Minister in March 1959 and served the following temples;

March 1959 – September 1963	Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin
September 1963 – August 1974	Koloa Hongwanji
August 1974 – August 1978	Lahaina Hongwanji
August 1978 – December 1986	Papaikou Hongwanji
December 1986 – March 1995	Pearl City Hongwanji
March 1995 – August 1998	Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin
August 1, 1998	Retired

**Rev. Yoshiko Shimabukuro**, a retired minister of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, passed away on July 20, 2021, at the age of 109. More detailed information regarding the funeral service will be shared at a later date. Rev. Shimabukuro became a Kaikyoshi Minister in June 1940 and served the following temples;

June 1940 – November 1940	Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin
November 1940 – September 1941	Lihue Hongwanji
September 1941 – December 1942	Jikoen Hongwanji
December 1942 – October 1953	Eleele Hongwanji
October 25, 1953	Resigned

After resigning, Rev. Shimabukuro continued teaching at Eleele (Hanapepe) Hongwanji Gakuen until June 30, 1968. During the war years, she helped all temples on Kauai by conducting services and other activities.

**Rev. Prof. Hisao Zuio Inagaki**, respected minister, professor, scholar, translator, writer and devout Nembutsu-sha, passed away on June 6, 2021, at the age of 92. An internationally attended 49 Day Remembrance Service was held in his memory on July 24, 2021, from the Horai Kaikan, Kobe, Japan. Appreciation messages and remembrances were shared from all over the world such as Japan, Europe, Canada, South American, Hong Kong, Australia, Mainland US, and Hawaii. Bishop Eric Matsumoto represented Hawaii Kyodan. Various other organizations and entities like IBS, IASBS and the Shin Buddhism Translation Series also paid tribute to Rev. Hisao Inagaki for his lifetime of dedication and commitment to the sharing of Buddhism including Jodo Shinshu with the world and his life of Nembutsu. Messages were translated in Japanese, English, and Chinese. He generously established “The Inagaki Saizo (Zuiken) and Hisao (Zuio) Dharma Sharing Fund” at Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii in 2014.

### HHMH ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

At the 2021 Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Legislative Assembly, a resolution was passed which calls for the formation of a Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Online Communications Team. Its purpose or goal is to "assist requesting temples in the establishment of social media venues such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook." Additionally, "assist temples with online communication needs by means of mutual support group, how-to and best practices documents, a connection to HQ-hosted resources such as web hosting and online conferencing tools, and or other means." Therefore, the Office of the Bishop would like to appoint the following individuals as members of the Online Communications Team.

Rev. Kerry Kiyohara (Main Contact)

Dave Atcheson

Keri Kubota

Dean Sakamoto

Rev. Kazunori Takahashi

Kerrie Wong

Ex-Officio are: Bishop Eric Matsumoto, President Dr. Warren Tamamoto and EA Rev. Daido Baba.

The Online Communications Team can be contacted via the email address: [online@honpahi.org](mailto:online@honpahi.org)  
Please contact the Online Communications Team for assistance, questions and concerns.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL RING YOUR BELL FOR PEACE DAY

“Please join our 2nd ANNUAL RING YOUR BELL FOR PEACE DAY, sponsored by Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, partnering with the United Nations Association of Hawaii, University of Hawaii KTUH, many interfaith, cultural, community organizations and avid individuals who all share the same ideals and goals of peace everywhere and for everyone.



Dates: Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Times: 8:45am – 9:30am (HST)

Place: Zoom

Register: <http://www.hongwanjihawaii.com/peaceday2021>

After you register, we will send you a Zoom link for the program that starts at 8:45 AM, Opening Ceremony, at 9:00 AM, Bishop Matsumoto will lead us in a moment of silence, honoring all those who have strived for the achievement of peace.

At 9:01 AM, all participants on the Zoom call and Facebook Live program will begin ringing their bells for peace for 5 minutes. You will see scenes of people in Hawaii and all over the world ringing their bells.

The International Day of Peace was established by the United Nations in 1981 and, since 2001, has been celebrated on September 21. That date is also recognized as Peace Day in Hawaii, thanks in large part to members of the Hawai'i Federation of Junior Young Buddhist Associations who successfully advocated for the legislature to officially recognize Peace Day.

For questions, contact Rene Mansho, HHMH Peace Day Committee Chairperson, phone: 808-291-6151, / [renemansho@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:renemansho@hawaii.rr.com) or your District Council representative. Our goal is to have all 33 temples participating on September 21st! Imua Peace Day!”

## SAVE THE DATES: SUMMER DHARMATHON, AUGUST 23-27, 2021

The BSC Summer Session has featured, and will continue to feature, noted national and international speakers for the benefit of its attendees. However, there is one rich source of Dharma learning and ideas that is as close as our own Nembutsu Sanghas. These Sangha are made up of our ministers and lay people and their acquaintances within the State of Hawaii. They have much to offer if we make the effort to feature them. So, with that in mind the BSC Program Committee has started a new program, the Summer Dharmathon that will rely on that pool of speakers.

The new program, Summer Dharmathon, will start by featuring 10 Hawaii Kyodan Ministers. The topic will be the Hawaii Kyodan 2021 theme and slogan: Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect.

Dates: Monday, August 23 – Friday, August 27

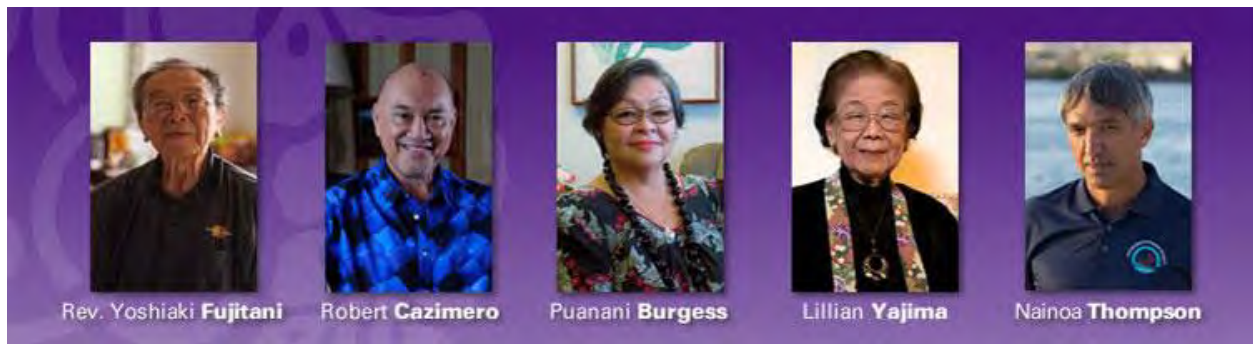
Times: 6:30pm – 8:30pm (HST)

Platform: YouTube Livestream

## LIVING TREASURES OF HAWAII SPECIAL PROGRAM ON YOUTUBE

The Living Treasures of Hawaii special television show, “**Life and Light: Wisdom of Hawai’i’s Treasures**” is now available to watch on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube channel. It features interviews with five past honorees (Robert Cazimero, Puanani Burgess, Lillian Yajima, Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, and Nainoa Thompson).

Direct link to this program is [https://youtu.be/4icqI84m\\_lo](https://youtu.be/4icqI84m_lo)



## 2021 KAUAI HONGWANJI COUNCIL AUTUMN NEMBUTSU SEMINAR

Kauai Hongwanji Council will host a Zoom Nembutsu seminar with Dr. Rev. Mutsumi Wondra on October 20 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm HST. The topic is "The Tragedy of Rājagrha – What did Shinran Shōnin want to tell us?"

Registration is required. Please register at <https://forms.gle/iU9JMi3Rm2B9e1K99>. When you complete the seminar registration, you will receive an automatic confirmation email from Google forms. Registration deadline is Wednesday, October 13. Maximum capacity is 100 people, first come first serve. We will email you a Zoom link 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) 245-626  
West Kauai Hongwanji Mission at (808) 335-3195

## MONTHLY ONLINE SEMINARS BY HAWAII DISTRICT MINISTERS ASSOCIATION

Since July 2021, the Hawaii District Ministers Association created a monthly online seminar. The August online seminar will be given by Rev. Masanari Yamagishi of Kamuela Hongwanji Mission on Saturday, August 14, at 10 - 11 am. The topic is "Relationship between Amida Buddha and Shakyamuni Buddha"

Registration is required. Please go to the registration link (<https://forms.gle/bQToK62Pi6J2UoD78>). If you already have registered before, no registration is required. If you have any questions, please contact [<hawaii.kyogakkai@gmail.com>](mailto:hawaii.kyogakkai@gmail.com)