



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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BISHOP'S CORNER

"Amida Buddha's Pure Land and A hui hou"

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



In the midst of the O-Bon Season especially if you are observing your First O-Bon after parting with someone dear to you, I am sure you are thinking of/remembering "loved ones gone to the Other Shore (Pure Land)" to use the words of Cecilia Lindo. If tears well up in your eyes, for most of us, that is perfectly natural. You need not feel bad. However, I hope that you are not experiencing only sadness, grief and loneliness for there is also joy, hope and assurance.

In Hawaii, many times after we get together, we use the phrase *A hui hou* which means "Until we meet again" to say goodbye to each other. The appreciation being that, though we are saying bye to each other, it gives a sense of continued connection in that we will see each other again and thus this is only a temporary parting.

In a similar way, commonly, a phrase of the Smaller Sukhavativyuha Sutra (*Amida Kyo*) known as *Kue issho* or "will be able to meet together in one place" provides much solace, hope and continued connection between those who have lost someone and those who have passed away in that both will be able to meet in the Pure Land.

Strictly speaking, the line in the sutra says "because they will be able to meet together with such sages of supreme virtue there." It is in response to the question, "...people who hear of that land should aspire to be born there. Why?" There is a deeper profound reason as to why we should entrust and aspire to born in Amida Buddha's Pure Land.

Amida Buddha's 1st Vow promises that the Pure Land and its residents are free of suffering, self-centered greed and domination by power with the 3rd Vow promising equality of one and all. The 11th Vow of the Buddha promises that all who are born in the Pure Land "dwell in the stage of the truly settled and necessarily attain nirvana" which means that all who, at the end of their life, are born in the Pure Land by the virtue of True Entrusting (Shinjin) of Amida Buddha's 18th Vow will instantly become a great "sage." Amida Buddha's Great Wisdom and Compassion, is promising that we are all, with no exceptions, being promised not only peace and happiness, but also unlimited life and the great perfection. In other words, we will each be the best "I" that "I" can be. In this regard, "I" am still "I," but at the same time not exactly the same "I" as "I" have been ultimately transformed into the most perfect and wondrous "I" that "I" can be, enlightened. Thus, though it can be sad and we may experience sadness and being lonely after a loved one's death, when we become aware of Amida Buddha's Great Wisdom and Compassion and what it is

promising each of us, we should also feel assured that we are still connected and that a great joy and positive change awaits all of us including that we will be able to meet each other again.

“A hui hou,” is not only a greeting. This is my interpretation and understanding, but the Indigenous culture of Hawaii believes that once you meet someone you are forever connected and the probability of meeting again is high. Likewise, in Pure Land Buddhism, “Kue Issho” are not only words engraved on gravestones, but true reality where all come together again. The Pure Land is truly a compassionate realm of oneness and inclusiveness with connectivity to one and all.

Please know that the activity of Amida Buddha’s Compassionate Name (Namo Amida Butsu) and Light will not cease until one and all are not only nurtured and embraced, but we become it. This is the Pure Land. Shinran Shonin describes the Pure Land as “The Land of Immeasurable Light” and “The Land of All-Knowing Wisdom.”

During this O-Bon Season, as you remember your dear loved one(s) at a O-Bon Service or Bon Dance to which anyone and everyone is invited to attend, please take this opportunity being presented to you through your loved one(s) to become aware of the Great Aspiration of Amida Buddha and the world of A *hui hou* where we will all certainly meet again.

To conclude, let me share the entire verse/stanza of the Bon Dance Song “Joy and Peace” * mentioned above.

*The beat of the taiko goes boom, boom, boom
And sends a message of good cheer
To loved ones gone to the Other Shore
Who’ve passed their love of Amida to us.*

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

*Click on the following link <http://honpahi.link/joyandpeace> to view a video of the Bon Song (lyrics by Mrs. Cecilia Lindo) and Dance (choreographed by Mrs. Edna Muneto and danced by Ms. Estelle Araki) “Joy and Peace” created by Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

HAWAII KYODAN FUNERAL SERVICE (UPDATE)

Reverend Yoshiaki Fujitani, the 11th Bishop of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, passed away on May 17, 2021, at the age of 97. The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii sponsored funeral service has been rescheduled for Saturday, August 13, 2022 at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. The visitation will be held from 1:30 pm to 2:45 pm which is open to the public to be followed by the Funeral Service at 3:00 pm. Due to limited parking space, carpooling is recommended. Livestreaming of the service will also be available. The streaming link will be shared later.

MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Rev. Alan Urasaki, earlier this year, retired from his chaplaincy position with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Effective April 11, 2022, he is Resigned Minister of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Rev. Richard Tennes, currently serving at Kahului Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister, will be retiring from the active ministry of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii as of August 12, 2022. Rev. Tennes became a Kaikyoshi minister in March, 2008 and has served at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin and Kahului Hongwanji Mission.

Rev. Tennes served Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for 14 years. Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii would like to express our deepest appreciation and gratitude to Rev. Richard Tennes for his dedication and effort of spreading the Buddha-Dharma to our members and community. Thank you, Rev. Tennes and congratulations on your retirement.

(Ministers of Maui District Minister's Association are asked to oversee Kahului Hongwanji Mission during the absence of the resident minister.)

Rev. Mariko Nishiyama, currently serving at Pearl City Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister, will be assigned to Aiea Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister and Pearl City Hongwanji Mission as its Oversee Minister as of October 1, 2022.

Rev. Shawn Yagi, currently serving at Aiea Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister, will be assigned to Lihue Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister as of October 1, 2022.

BSC 50th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION ONLINE SERVICE

“Happy 50th Birthday, BSC!” It was August 18, 1972 that the Buddhist Study Center opened its doors to the Public. It was the dream of Former Bishop Kanmo Imamura to create a study center in Honolulu and, initially, with the assistance of the leaders of Hawaii Betsuin such as Mr. Richard Sasaki and individuals like Dr. Alfred Bloom that dream became a reality. Rev. Ryo Imamura and Rev. Tatsuo Muneto were the first Co-Directors of BSC in 1972. The present BSC building was dedicated on August 20, 1995. It seems like August is the month for BSC.

Thus, in commemoration of its 50th Anniversary, a commemorative online service will premiere on the BSC YouTube Channel on August 3, 2022 to celebrate. Unfortunately, we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic and feeling its effect, however, plus the fact that BSC supporters and friends are found all around the world, we decided to do an online 50th Anniversary Service. Please join us to watch the Service on August 3, 2022 at 5 PM on the BSC YouTube Channel. Please use the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUWzJg0lcuY5tdIGef9O9HQ> (or search **BSC Hawaii** on YouTube)

As part of the commemoration, a special workshop series by Dennis Hirota Professor Emeritus of Ryukoku University will focus on Shinran Shonin in August 2022. Please view the flier for details. (<https://bschawaii.org/blog/event/bsc-50th-anniversary-lectures-prof-dennis-hirota/>) Thank you so very much to one and all for your support of the Buddhist Study Center! Once again, “Happy 50th Birthday, BSC!”

For more information, please contact the Buddhist Study Center. Thank you.

CANCELLATION AND TIME CHANGES - BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER (BSC) 50th ANNIVERSARY PRESENTATION

Due to COVID related issues, the BSC has had to make changes to the BSC 50th Anniversary Presentations. We have cancelled Prof. Charles Hallisey's lecture on August 13th, and have moved Prof. Dennis Hirota's lectures on August 6th and 20th to 2:00 - 3:30 PM Hawaii time for both dates. Prof. Hirota's lectures will now only be online via Zoom, so please make sure to register for his workshops if you are interested.



Prof. Dennis Hirota will be giving a workshop about “Encountering the Words of Shinran” on August 6th and August 20th as a part of the 50th Anniversary for the BSC. Both of these workshops will be held online, via ZOOM.

This workshop will introduce materials designed to help readers interested in understanding what Shinran Shonin said in his own words. Through the provided materials, it will be possible to become familiar with important passages from his writings as he wrote them. No prior knowledge of Japanese language is necessary.

During each workshop, we will practice reading sample passages from Shinran Shonin with the help of romanization, literal translation, and simple grammar notes. After the workshop, it will be possible to continue using the materials for a number of important passages selected from Shinran Shonin's writings.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-kduXvdbYljzEhld2RemjO-5Lzybgfd_ojShH2dN-G2pVaA/viewform

If you have any questions about this announcement, please contact by emailing kwong@honpahi.org or calling BSC 808-973-6555.

3rd ANNUAL RING YOUR BELL FOR PEACE DAY

DATE: Wednesday, September 21st, 2022

TIME: Program is 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. (Bell ringing is 9:00 -9:05 a.m.)

PLACE: ZOOM – International participation promoting Peace

Interfaith gathering hosted by Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and greeting and encouraging individuals and organizations to proudly ring their bells for Peace!



For registration information, more will be shared later.

For questions, contact Rene Mansho, HHMH Peace Day Committee Chairperson, phone: 808-291-6151 or email renemansho@hawaii.rr.com

Our goal is to have all 32 Honpa Hongwanji temples participating on September 21st!

2021-2022 SOCIAL CONCERNS FUND DRIVE UPDATE

Reminder that the current Social Concerns Fund Drive will run till August 31, 2022. The Committee on Social Concerns requests that temples please submit all collected donations to Hawaii Kyodan HQ by September 30, 2022.

Through your generosity, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii is able to support worthy organizations and programs with funding to continue their work in our community. Your support also allows us to provide compassionate aid during times of disaster and the ability to respond to social issues affecting our community. Because of your commitment to promoting the Buddhist values of compassion and loving kindness, we have been able to support humanitarian relief efforts for those affected by the war in Ukraine and the volcanic eruption in Tonga. We have also been able to support a suicide prevention workshop being planned by the Samaritan Counseling Center of Hawaii, ongoing disaster relief planning by Hawaii Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (Hawaii VOAD) and helping food banks on every island in their work to alleviate food insecurity.

We also continue to award Golden Chain Grants to cultivate a culture of compassionate service in our community as well as COVID-19 Resilience Grants to help temples acquire PPE and cleaning supplies to operate safely during the ongoing pandemic.

Your support directly impacts our community. Mahalo for your generosity!

In Gassho,
Rev. Blayne Higa, Chair
Committee on Social Concerns

RSG EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IN PBA

Ryukoku Sogo Gakuen (RSG) will be holding the Educational Program for International Understanding at PBA on July 28th - September 9th. The object of this program is to nurture individuals with an international orientation founded on Buddhist values and perspectives through deepening their mutual understanding of differing cultures and societies. 6 students from 4 RSG high schools in Japan will have a homestay in Hawaii and attend PBA with the PBA students.