



# Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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December 2022

### BISHOP'S CORNER

#### "Why?"

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



The end of the year is a time of reflection. What kind of year was 2022 for you and your loved ones? What kind of year do you want 2023 to be?

In general, coming out of the pandemic, we anticipate that 2023 will be a much better year as we resume much of our pre-pandemic activities. However, it is also a fact that 3 whole years have passed and, directly and indirectly, the world including ourselves have changed in many ways.

On one hand, the Pandemic showed how susceptible we are to worldly conditions and, at the same time, our resilience. However, as we move forward, it is not merely a simple matter of resuming pre-pandemic activities by scheduling them. We need to connect more than ever with each other including with the Dharma and our purpose as an organization.

Have you ever wondered "why" the Bodhisattva Dharmakara (Amida Buddha) made vows such as in the Buddha's realm there would be no hellish, craving-ghostly, and beast-like existences or that one and all would be of radiant pure gold, or that everyone's appearance would be equally pleasing to all, or that each would possess the wisdom to see into the minds of others, and thus...know the(ir) thoughts, and that those who, even now, receive the Buddha's Light will become soft and gentle in body and mind?

Did you know that Sakyamuni Buddha promised that "In the future, all the sutras will become extinct. However, out of compassion and pity, I will ensure that this (Larger) sutra alone remains for a further one hundred years. Those sentient beings who encounter this sutra will attain emancipation in accordance with their aspiration."

Do you know why "When the (Historic) Buddha finished expounding this sutra, Bodhisattva Maitreya (see photo), the bodhisattvas from (all) the ten quarters (of the universes), the Elder Ananda, all the great sravakas, and all those who were in the assembly, without exception, rejoiced upon hearing what the Buddha taught."?



Do you know why Shinran Shonin was able to read the (Larger) Sutra in the following way "If there are persons who, having heard the Name of that Buddha, leap and dance with joy and say it even once, know that they receive the great benefit; that is, they acquire the unexcelled virtues."

Do you know why our Hongwanji Denomination’s Constitution states our purpose as “...The organization transmits the wisdom and compassion of Amida Tathagata to all people, and in doing so, contributes to the realization of a society in which everyone, both within and outside of the organization, is able to live a life of spiritual fulfillment.” and why our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Mission Statement reads “To share the living Teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism so all beings may enjoy lives of harmony, peace and gratitude.”?

If you don’t, in 2023, I would encourage you and those who have a connection with you to visit your nearest Hongwanji temple to find the answers. I sincerely hope that in the New Year, we will be able to meet at the temple with the Nembutsu of Awareness and Gratitude in our hearts and be able to share that Joy with each other to bring to life our Hawaii Kyodan Theme and Slogan for 2023 “Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Joy Together.” I close by expressing my wish that 2022 closes for you in a meaningful way which prepares you for a bright 2023. Thank you and Namu Amida Butsu/Entrusting the All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion.

### **BENEDICTION FOR THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY BY REV. BLAYNE HIGA**

On December 5, 2022, Rev. Blayne Higa, Resident Minister of Kona Hongwanji, offered the Benediction at the Inauguration Ceremony for Governor Josh Green and Lt Governor Sylvia Luke.

Governor Green, Lt. Governor Luke, Distinguished Guests, and the People of Hawai’i. Aloha!  
It’s an honor to offer this aspiration as we celebrate the beginning of this journey—this new beginning. Please join me in a moment of meditation and reflection as we offer our goodwill and loving kindness to our new Governor, Lt. Governor, and their Administration.

The Buddha teaches that nobility is not a matter of one’s birth or status, but rather is a matter of one’s actions and conduct.

Leadership is about action in service to others. To place the welfare of those we serve as the highest aspiration.

A true leader demonstrates nobility by listening. A true leader knows that they alone do not have all the answers. A true leader speaks honestly with a heart and mind of compassion. A true leader offers protection, shelter, and safety equally to all. A true leader tempers their ego and selfishness by losing themselves in service to others.

Living with this spirit of a bodhisattva—an enlightened being who sacrifices their own awakening, ensuring no one is left behind, may you undertake this noble vow of service to the people of Hawai’i.

So go forth, and lead.

Lead with compassion for everyone.

Lead with integrity in all that you do.

Lead with courage to make difficult decisions.

Lead with wisdom to discern the wholesome from the unwholesome.

Lead with vision for a brighter future for us all.

And always lead with the spirit of Aloha in your heart.

Entrusting in the dynamic activity of all-inclusive wisdom and all-embracing compassion, we call the Honored Name of Amida, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life in gratitude, joy, and awareness.

Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu, Namu Amida Butsu. Mahalo!

You may also watch the video for his heart-felt message of encouragement, hope, and Aloha through this link. [A Benediction on Leadership \(blaynehiga.com\)](https://blaynehiga.com)

## PERSONNEL

**Ms. Kerrie Wong** will be resigning from the position as the Assistant to the Director of the Buddhist Study Center, effective January 6, 2023.

## STATE DHARMA SCHOOL GATHERING

Our 4<sup>th</sup> Virtual Statewide Dharma School Gathering, “Sharing Our Joy” will be held on Sunday, February 19, 2023 from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm on Zoom. Our service will feature Dharma School student emcees representing each of our Hongwanji districts. Acting Rimban Yuika Hasebe, from the Hawaii Betsuin will be our guest speaker and will also present a message in the Adult Breakout Room. Dharma School students will be in their own breakout rooms creating haiku based on the theme, “Sharing Our Joy,” then sharing their creations once all participants return to the main meeting room. The last hour will be a gathering for Dharma School Teachers/Educators and will feature a Dharma School resource presented by Reverend Kevin Kuniyuki along with some time for sharing of successful in-person activities by Dharma School teachers. We welcome participants of all ages to join us! ([Registration Link](#))

## DOCUMENTARY FILM – CARVING THE DIVINE

The Hawaii premiere of the award-winning documentary film “Carving the Divine” will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2023, 11:30 am - 2:00 pm at Hawaii Betsuin, sponsored by Buddhist Study Center, Hawaii Buddhist Council and Hawaii Betsuin. It provides a fascinating look into the journey of mastering a 1,400-year-old tradition of the Busshi. Yujiro Seki has captured on film a world unknown to most. The journey of becoming a master sculptor of Buddhist images is one in which one also gets to know oneself. Meet the producer, Yujiro Seki in person. “Carving the Divine” has been shown at 30 film festivals in 22 countries winning awards at 13 festivals such as the Best Director Award of a Foreign Language Documentary at World Cinema Milan and premiering at the famous Raindance Film Festival in London.

## PEACE ON YOUR WINGS

“[Peace On Your Wings](#)” an [Ohana Arts](#) original musical based on the true story of Sadako Sasaki and her one thousand paper cranes, written by composer Jenny Taira and lyricist Laurie Rubin; directed by Cari Chung; and choreographed by Dani Hannah Bensky. Sadako Sasaki was made famous for having folded over a thousand paper cranes to fulfill an old Japanese legend that would grant one wish to anyone who would fold one thousand cranes. To this day she is a reminder of innocent victims of war, and her story of her thousand paper cranes have inspired a movement of folding cranes for peace.

“Peace On Your Wings” was born from an idea sparked by Bishop Eric of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to create a touring musical with a Buddhist message. Composer and Ohana Arts co-founder Jenny Taira suggested the writing of a musical adaptation of 12 year-old Hiroshima atomic bomb victim Sadako Sasaki’s true story. “Peace On Your Wings,” shares the message, “Ichi-go ichi-e,” meaning “one chance, one meeting,” or “today is the first and last day of your life” through Sadako’s determination to focus on living every moment of life to the fullest, even as her health steadily declined. She became world famous for folding over a thousand paper cranes to fulfill the challenge presented by an old Japanese legend which promised that a wish would be granted to the folder of a thousand origami cranes. Long after her passing, her story lives on, and her paper cranes have become the symbol of a global peace movement.

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii provided funding through grants to produce the show for an Oahu premiere in 2014, and a subsequent tour to the neighbor islands of Kauai, Maui, and the Island of Hawaii in 2015. The show has been embraced by Jodo Shinshu Buddhist communities nationwide, and the show has continued touring with performances in Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, San Jose, and Sacramento.

Ohana Arts will be remounting the production this February 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the historic Hawaii Theatre. This short 1-weekend run will premiere a newly revised version of the show (with new songs!) that will be taken to Hiroshima next summer for its official JAPAN PREMIERE, starring this all-youth, Hawaii-based cast! There are only four performances, so be sure to book your tickets early.

Honpa Hongwanji members receive a 10% discount using the code: HONPAFRIENDS  
(Please don't share this discount code on the social media.)

Buy tickets: <http://hawaii theatre.com/peaceonyourwings>

Learn More about "Peace On Your Wings": <http://peaceonyourwings.com>

Learn More about Ohana Arts: <http://ohanaarts.org>

## KA LEO KĀHEA SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Is something interesting happening at your temple? *Ka Leo Kāhea*, the statewide newsletter of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, informs and connects every member of our statewide Sangha. Through this connection, temples and districts learn from and help each other, thus strengthening our organization. Bishop Eric Matsumoto, President Warren Tamamoto, and the newsletter team invite you to contribute articles. Below are the deadlines for submitting articles for 2023.

March issue – January 15, 2023; June issue – April 15, 2023; September issue – July 15, 2023; December issue – October 15, 2023.

Here are some submission guidelines.

Articles should be 500-1000 words, typed, in Microsoft Word. Please include the author's (or contact's) name and title, temple or affiliation, and suggested article title. Articles should be submitted as an email attachment and sent to [newsletter@honpahi.org](mailto:newsletter@honpahi.org). Please include the article title or subject in the file name. Please do not format articles with photos.

A photo or photos to accompany the article will enhance the presentation. Images should be at least 2MB in size. The image files should be from the original phone (not from text messages). Please send each image as a separate JPEG or TIFF file. Send article and photos separately. Include photo captions with the text. Do not embed images in Word documents or send PDF files.

Feel free to email us if you have any questions. We look forward to receiving your wonderful articles and photos!

## SAVE THE DATE: BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER SPRING SESSION 2023

### Buddhist Study Center Spring Session 2023

“FELLOW TRAVELERS IN SHIN BUDDHISM”

Date & Time: Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, 10 a.m. -12:00 p.m. (HST)

Keynote Lecturer: Rev. Jon Turner (Orange County Buddhist Church)

Platform: Zoom

## JR. YBA REPORT

Hi Everyone,

On behalf of the Hawaii Federation of Junior YBAs, we hope you are all doing well! The last few months, Juniors have been busy with their Hawaii Buddhist Youth Month fundraising efforts. Every year, the congregation picks an organization they would like to support through community-focused or fundraising events. The year of 2022, we are supporting World Central Kitchen, a Humanitarian organization currently working to support victims in Ukraine. Listed below are a few events our Juniors led to help fundraise. A portion of their proceeds will go to World Central Kitchen to support their work.

- Hawaii: Managed a feed the hungry project
- Honolulu: Planning a CPK fundraiser & sold shaved ice at Bon Dance
- Kauai: Recycled temple members' cans and bottles
- Maui: Baked and sold sweet potato Manju to temples
- Oahu: Baked and Distributed Manju at temples across the Central Oahu district

Overall, all the Uniteds' fundraisers or community service efforts were successful. Thanks to Mr. Burt Tsuchiya, who led a Manju making workshop at the 2022 Jr. YBA Convention, some of the Uniteds could apply his lessons and baked delicious Manju, which pleased many customers.

We are currently looking forward to two in-person events. After conducting meetings and get-togethers virtually over the last two years, it will be nice to see everyone together again. In January, the United of Maui will host the Winter Federation Meeting- the first In-person Federation Meeting since the pandemic. In the summer of 2023, the 66th Jr. YBA State Convention will be held. Hosted by the United of Oahu, the theme is Sangha- Our Interdependent Environment, which is inspired by the television series *Avatar the Last Airbender* and focuses on Environmental Awareness.

After passing a resolution in 2022, anyone can join our organization regardless if they are members of a temple. If you have any questions or are interested in joining, please check our website: <https://www.hawaiijryba.com/>. We encourage you to join!

In Gassho,  
Chad Okawa,  
President, Hawaii Federation of Jr. YBAs