



**STATUS REPORT OF THE HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII'S  
MAUI WILDFIRE EMERGENCY RESPONSE AD HOC COMMITTEE  
September 7, 2023**

The Maui wildfires have resulted in significant loss of life and property with far-reaching and unimaginable impacts. The overwhelming response of individuals and organizations (such as FEMA and Hawaii Community Foundation) have brought much needed resources to the Island, and equally important, an unyielding spirit of ALOHA to strengthen the resolve of the people of Maui.

The town of Lahaina has been devastated and among the tragic losses was Lahaina Hongwanji. In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, coordinated efforts of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) and the Maui District Hongwanji Council were organized to identify measures needed to address complex issues arising from the disaster. The Office of the Bishop, the HHMH’s Social Concerns Committee, and the Maui District Hongwanji Council’s Maui Wildfire Emergency Response Ad Hoc Committee collaborated to advance administrative, funding, and on-the-ground efforts to support the Maui Community, Reverend Ai Hironaka and his family, and members of the Lahaina Hongwanji.

This collaboration was facilitated in part, through the Maui Wildfire Emergency Response Ad Hoc Committee, which include representatives of the Office of the Bishop, Social Concerns Committee and each of the Maui District Hongwanji Temples (ministers and lay of Lahaina, Lanai, Kahului, Makawao and Wailuku). Given the scope and scale of the disaster and the organizational responses required to address issues, Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani designated the Ad Hoc Committee as an official ad hoc committee of the HHMH. In this capacity, the HHMH’s Ad Hoc Committee serves as a central coordinating forum for addressing the needs of Lahaina Hongwanji and other Maui Hongwanji temple members affected by the disaster.

While the Ad Hoc Committee’s discussions have touched upon a complex and wide-ranging set of concerns, the following summary provides a partial listing of the work being done and supported by the Committee at this time.

<b>SUBJECT MATTER</b>	<b>PARTIAL LIST OF COORDINATION REQUIREMENTS</b>
Administrative Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coordinate and follow-up with insurance carrier</li> <li>▪ Create and implement centralized call-in center at Headquarters</li> <li>▪ Establish and manage fundraising programs</li> <li>▪ Coordinate and follow-up with vendors servicing Lahaina Hongwanji (e.g., Spectrum)</li> <li>▪ Communicate with HHMH temples and affiliate organizations regarding response efforts</li> </ul>
Minister and Temple Member Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create, update, and maintain Lahaina Hongwanji temple member data base</li> <li>▪ Facilitate securing of temporary lodging accommodations for Reverend Hironaka and Family</li> <li>▪ Communicate with Lahaina Hongwanji temple leadership to facilitate information exchange, including identification of member needs</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appoint single point-of-contact minister to facilitate and conduct religious services for Lahaina Hongwanji members (in coordination with Reverend Hironaka)</li> </ul>
Fundraising and Distribution of Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitor fundraising progress and support Social Concerns Committee in identifying fund distribution needs</li> <li>▪ Develop process for immediate fund distribution to Lahaina Hongwanji members</li> </ul>
Maui-Based Temple Activities to provide support to Lahaina Hongwanji Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invite Lahaina Hongwanji members to attend Sunday services at other Maui Hongwanji temples</li> <li>▪ Gather with Lahaina Hongwanji members at Kahului Hongwanji every Tuesday morning</li> <li>▪ Gather with Lahaina Hongwanji members at Wailuku Hongwanji every Thursday morning</li> </ul>

Separate from the Ad Hoc Committee's effort, which focuses on support for Lahaina Hongwanji and its members, the Social Concerns Committee has provided direct support to the Hawaii Community Foundation's Maui Strong campaign, and support to Lahaina Jodo Mission and Lahaina Shingon Mission ministers.

Fundraising by the Honpa Hongwanji continues via HHMH's MAUI WILDFIRE DISASTER RELIEF FUND. Donations to the Fund can be made in the following ways:

1. Online at [www.hongwanjihawaii.com](http://www.hongwanjihawaii.com) by clicking on the "Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief" button under the "Donate" tab.
2. Through GoFundMe at the following link: <https://gofund.me/ff77a520>
3. Check and cash donations can be sent directly to Hawaii Kyodan Headquarters. Please make check payable to HHMH and in the memo line designate "Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief" to ensure proper credit.

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As recovery efforts continue, new issues arise for consideration by the HHMH, the Social Concerns Committee and the Maui Wildfire Emergency Response Ad Hoc Committee. Regularly scheduled meetings of the Committee will continue to ensure a comprehensive and compassionate response to this unprecedented disaster.

In Gassho,

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani, Bishop  
Dr. Warren Tamamoto, President  
Mr. Michael Munekiyo, Chair of Maui Wildfire Emergency Response Ad Hoc Committee