



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 Email: hqs@honpahi.org



August 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

35th Annual Hiroshima Peace Service Ceremony
Commemorating the 79th Anniversary of the Bombing of Hiroshima

Tuesday, August 6, 2024

Buddhist Message of Peace
Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Today, we gather here in solemn remembrance of one of the darkest chapters in human history – the devastating bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. The city of Hiroshima, a city once vibrant with life, became the epicenter of unimaginable suffering, sorrow, and loss. On this day, we pause for a moment to honor the memory of those who lost their lives and to show our commitment to stand in solidarity with those whose lives were affected by the consequences of war.

Prince Shotoku, the Imperial Regent in Japan during the early 7th century, is widely regarded as the founding figure of Buddhism in Japan. He wrote the following in the Seventeen-Article Constitution.

“For all men have hearts, and each heart has its own leanings. Their right is our wrong, and our right is their wrong. We are not unquestionably sages, nor are they unquestionably fools. Both of us are simply ordinary beings (*Bonbu*). ...For we are all, one with another, wise and foolish, like a ring with no end.”

It is a stern admonishment to us all. It is easy to criticize or judge others, to see the flaws in others while remaining blind to our own. “Bonbu,” a term that refers to ordinary beings, signifies our inherent limitations – our ego-centeredness, our propensity for judgment, and our inability to see beyond our own perspective. Prince Shotoku’s words caution us against the arrogance of assuming we hold the ultimate truth, as this very mindset is what leads to division, conflict, and, ultimately, the horrors of war.

Yet, even as we acknowledge our own bonbu-nature, we find hope in the teaching of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. Shinran Shonin taught us that such a “bonbu” like ourselves is the primal target of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of all-inclusive Wisdom and Compassion. The Light of Wisdom and Compassion shines upon us, illuminating the path from our ego-centered existence to a life of oneness and understanding. It is through this Light that we can transform our minds clouded by greed, anger, and ignorance into hearts of generosity, compassion, and wisdom.

As beneficiaries of this all-inclusive Wisdom and Compassion, I believe each of us bears a responsibility. With hearts of self-reflection, we must cultivate an environment where wisdom and compassion toward one another flourish, transcending boundaries of nationality, race, religion, and all others that separate us. The journey from hatred to understanding, from conflict to peace, begins within each of us.

In one of the Buddhist scriptures called "Sanbutsuge" from the Sutra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life, a statement goes as follows: "The great voice of the Perfectly Enlightened One resounds throughout the ten quarters." It teaches us that there is no place where the voice of Truth does not reach. As we hit the Hiroshima Peace Bell today in commemorating the 79th Anniversary of the Bombing of Hiroshima, may we all listen to this voice of truth, the voice of Wisdom and Compassion, and rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of peace, reconciliation, and the creation of a society where every individual can live in peace, joy, and gratitude.

With humble reflection, I recite the name of the Buddha. Namo Amida Butsu.

MAUI WILDFIRE UPDATE

Note: On Sunday, August 11, 2024, an interfaith "Day of Hope and Prayer" gathering was held for Lahaina residents at the Lahaina Civic Center Gymnasium. Rev. Ai Hironaka and Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani attended the event. Rev. Hironaka, as one of the interfaith leaders who represented the Buddhist organizations in Lahaina, delivered the following message in remembrance of the Lahaina Wildfire, which destroyed much of the town, including the Lahaina Hongwanji Mission buildings, on August 8, 2023.

Good morning Lahaina.

On this day last year, I was living as an evacuee at a friend's house in Kahului. I am deeply grateful to this friend who sheltered about 12 of us evacuees.

The news on cable TV was playing all day long. It was the fourth day after the fire, and I'm sure the two days' supply of clothes I brought was already not enough, but I can no longer remember the details of how I spent my time. However, I clearly remember sleeping in a tent in the patio with my dog.

Two days ago, I visited Duke's Restaurant at Honua Kai for lunch for the first time since leaving the shelter nine months ago. From there, I took my child to school in Kihei. I also took my child to Maui Waena Middle School from there. I fondly recall the daily exchanges of "Good morning" with the security staff. I also remember the time spent eating pork ribs and fish tacos with my family in the room. Honua Kai embraced us evacuees with its grand, beautiful scenery and wonderful rooms, giving us a place to return to. I want to take this chance to express my gratitude to the room owners, whose names I don't even know. However, the Honua Kai I knew felt different. The security gate that protected us evacuees was no longer there. The lobby felt large, maybe because the booths of groups that supported us, like the Red Cross and FEMA, were no longer there. There was no one at Duke's counter where we used to line up for meals every day. There were no more friends with purple or yellow wristbands, and no dogs either. While I was glad to see that Honua Kai was back to normal, my heart tightened with a bit of sadness. It felt as if it was quietly encouraging me, saying, "You don't need to come back here anymore. You'll be fine on your own. You can do it!"

Can we really be fine on our own? I'm not that strong. We often hear "Maui Strong" and "Lahaina Strong," but what do these words really mean? While I was living as an evacuee at my friend's house, a gentleman from the Maui Oil Company, who was delivering relief supplies to Lahaina, stopped by my friend's house

every day to refill ice in our coolers and provide us with needed supplies. He said, "People aren't that strong. Everyone is suffering and struggling. Because we're not strong, we have to help and support each other." At that moment, I felt I understood the true meaning of "Maui Strong" and "Lahaina Strong." These words show a humble and strong expression, bringing together those who suffer and those who help, creating the strongest and most meaningful words in this world.

After the fire, the connections between people have grown stronger. After the fire, we learned how to be close to those who suffer. There are still those who shed tears. But crying doesn't make someone weak. Being told to move forward but not being able to keep up with others doesn't make someone weak. Remembering what was lost in a sudden moment doesn't make someone weak.

Do we really have to do on our own? No, we don't. We have "Lahaina". Lahaina includes Aloha, history, culture, diversity, compassion, and much more, but what's most important is that it's the people who make Lahaina what it is. When we look at the town of Lahaina, now empty of people, many of us may feel the same way.

When you shed tears quietly, I want to introduce you to a Buddha who sheds those tears with you. That Buddha is Amida Buddha. Amida Buddha has the power of Namo Amida Butsu. This means that Amida Buddha enters our hearts, each of us with different emotions, and meets us where we are. For those who want to cry, Amida Buddha cries with them; for those who suffer, Amida Buddha suffers with them. "I won't let you cry alone; I will become your tears and cry with you." "If you can't look forward and only look down, that's okay. I will heal and protect you from that direction you're looking." "I will never leave you alone. I am always with you." Amida Buddha accepts the strong as strong and the weak as weak, embracing us as the Buddha of the six characters, Namo Amida Butsu. When I recite Namo Amida Butsu, my voice reaches my ears. Hearing and feeling that great heart of compassion, I want to walk with the Buddha of the voice who tells me, "It's okay as you are. You don't have to try so hard."

Now, as we reach the one-year memorial, the situation remains difficult. Let's all work together and do our best as we move into the second year.

IMUA

We will not leave anyone behind us.

IMUA

Lets go Lahaina, go together into our second year!

Namo Amida Butsu

2024 YBICSE REPORT

Thanks to support from the Honzan and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Headquarters, six fellow young Buddhists from Hawaii and I had wonderful experiences through the 2024 YBICSE (Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange) program in Japan this summer from July 2 to 12, 2024. This year there were 19 participants and four chaperons from the districts of the Buddhist Churches of America, Hawaii, Canada, and South America.

We stayed at the Hongwanji Monbou Kaikan and participated in morning services at 6 a.m., followed by the Confirmation Ceremony at the Hongwanji. Former Monshu Koshin Ohtani (Zenmon sama) officiated the Confirmation Ceremony on July 5. Ty Wakahiro from Mililani Hongwanji Mission participated in the ceremony and received his Buddhist name.

We went to Hongwanji-related sites, Mt. Hiei and Otani Hombyo Mausoleum, to learn the history of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. At Hiroshima Betsuin we attended the Memorial for All Those Who Perished in War and we heard Hiroshima atomic bomb survivor Mr. Mikio Saiki share his memories and hopes for the future. During the discussion with Mr. Saiki, he told us that he would visit the Pearl Harbor National Memorial in August.

My son, Yuma, and I welcomed him when he came to the Pearl Harbor National Memorial and the University of Hawaii at Manoa to talk about his experience. We were able to hear his testimony again here in Hawaii on August 18. Mr. Saiki said, “We should learn from the past, to share new ideas of the future.” Through the activities at the Honzan as well as by visiting Enryaku-ji Temple on Mt. Hiei, Hiroshima Betsuin, and Tsukiji Hongwanji, we deepened our appreciation of the teachings of Shinran Shonin and learned about the anti-nuclear and peace movements.

I believe that all participants including me can make use of this YBICSE experience in our Nembutsu lives, and we shall endeavor to keep ringing the bell for peace.

In gassho,
Joshin Kamuro, YBICSE Chaperone



In the Hongwanji Goei-do (Founder's Hall) From the right: Rev. Joshin Kamuro, Laethan Chanhmany, Yuma Kamuro, Chad Okawa, Sean Fitch, Kaitlin Nakamura, and Ty Wakahiro.



When we visited the statue of Sadako Sasaki in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park on July 7, 2024, we had a short service in front of the statue and rang the bell for peace.

6TH VIRTUAL STATE DHARMA SCHOOL GATHERING

Everyone of all ages is welcome to join us for our 6th Virtual State Dharma School Gathering “*Sharing Joy Together: The Golden Chain of Love*” on Sunday, November 17. Our featured guest speaker will be D. Trinidad Hunt, granddaughter of Reverend Dorothy Hunt, author of “*The Golden Chain of Love*.” She is an international trainer, author, public speaker, and contributor to 3 “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books. Ms. Hunt will be speaking in-person at Kona Hongwanji and via Zoom across the state. The schedule for this gathering is as follows:

8:45 - 9:45 a.m.	Dharma Educators Session
10:00 a.m.	Intergenerational Service
10:40 a.m.	Breakout Room Activities (Adult Breakout Room, Dharma School Breakout Rooms by grade levels)
11:30 a.m.	Group Sharing Session
12:00 p.m.	End

For the Dharma Message at the Intergenerational Service, Trinidad will focus her presentation on key character traits/values from “*The Golden Chain of Love*.” In the Adult Breakout Room, Trinidad will share a little bit about her grandparents—Reverend Ernest and Reverend Dorothy Hunt, and their history with the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii on the Hamakua Coast of the Big Island under the guidance of Bishop Yemyo Imamura. At the same time, Dharma School students will be in their own breakout rooms divided by grade levels and will create images based on the values of “*The Golden Chain of Love*,” then share their creations with the entire group. Please don’t miss out on this exciting opportunity to hear from D. Trinidad Hunt. We welcome all ages to join us!

MINISTER’S LAY ASSISTANT RETREAT

The HHMH Ministerial Training Committee will host the Annual Minister’s Lay Assistant Retreat at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin on October 12-13, 2024. This retreat is specifically designed for individuals who have been designated as Minister’s Lay Assistants (including Certified MLAs) at their temple and are actively involved in collaboration with their minister mentor. The retreat aims to provide a platform for participants to review and enhance their knowledge and skills relevant to their roles as MLAs. Ministers who have MLAs and/or CMLAs are requested to encourage their MLAs/CMLAs to attend this retreat. Additionally, a travel subsidy may be available for those coming from the neighbor islands. For those who are not yet designated as MLAs but are interested in attending the retreat, please consult with your temple minister about the process of becoming an MLA.

***The registration form is included in this month’s HQ Update.**

PEACE DAY: “RING YOUR BELL FOR PEACE DAY”

DATE: Friday, September 20, 2024

TIME: Program is 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. (Bell ringing is 9:01 -9:06 a.m.)

PLACE: ZOOM – International participation promoting Peace

It’s that time of year again when we take time out of our busy and sometimes complicated lives to celebrate Peace Day in Hawaii. For 17 years the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii’s Peace Day Committee wants everyone in the world to join in PROMOTING PEACE! We all take peace for granted, but in today’s challenging world, we need to set examples and teach our future generations to promote

peace. Please mark your calendars for FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH and make sure you join us for the grandest inter-faith community event! The event is called, “RING YOUR BELL for PEACE”, where we are all logged onto Zoom, about 1,700 of us from all over the world. Since we encourage our youth and schools to participate, we scheduled our event one day earlier than the Peace Day, Sept. 21st date.

Here is the link: <https://bit.ly/PeaceDay2024>

Please register to participate in our 2024 Peace Day Program. All participants will receive a link for the Zoom program and a link for the video of the entire program as a souvenir. We also ask for those who wish to email us their quote: “What Peace Means to Me” which will be included in the program.

A Peace Day Resolution submitted by the Federation of Jr. YBA was passed at the 95th HHMH Legislative Assembly, which was held on February 9-10, 2007. The United Nations chose September 21 to be World Peace Day to promote worldwide peace for all people. On April 19, 2007, then Governor of Hawaii Linda Lingle signed into effect legislation declaring September 21 as Peace Day in the State of Hawaii. It is recommended that each temple, organization, and individual in some way observe “Peace Day” to promote world peace during the month of September.

For questions, call 808-291-6151, email: renemansho@hawaii.rr.com
Rene Mansho, Chair of Peace Day Committee

2025 HONGWANJI CALENDAR PHOTOS CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) Calendar Committee invites members, Dharma friends, and affiliates to provide photos for the 2025 Hongwanji Calendar that capture our Theme and Slogan: **“NURTURING NEMBUTSU: CULTIVATING AWARENESS.”**

- You may submit several photos for consideration by the Calendar Committee for the 2025 Hongwanji Calendar.
- We do welcome cell phone photos. Photos will need to be able to be clearly enlarged.
- Preferably, please submit pictures in landscape format (horizontal), like this flyer.
- For EACH photo, please include a brief caption expressing the 2025 slogan and your name/temple for photo credit.
- If you have questions, please leave a message for Yumi Suzuki at the Hongwanji Headquarters Office Rev. Baba at (808) 522-9200 or email: hqs@honpahi.org.
- For photo submissions, please submit directly to Alan Kubota at lenscapeshawaii@gmail.com. He will respond directly to any technical questions.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

PBA LIGHTING OUR WAY BANQUET

Celebrating Leadership: Join Us for the 2024 Lighting Our Way Banquet

Reserve your seats for Pacific Buddhist Academy’s highly anticipated Lighting Our Way Banquet! Join us on Friday, November 15, 2024, at the Ala Moana Hotel by Mantra. The evening begins with doors opening at 5:00 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:00 p.m.

This event honors individuals and organizations who embody the leadership principles and values that define our school, including



selfless service, gratitude, and compassion. We are delighted to recognize our 2024 honorees: Mabel Hashisaka, William Kaneko, Dr. Takashi Manago, and Claude Onizuka alongside the Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka Memorial.

To become a sponsor, purchase individual tickets, or make a donation to support the Banquet, please visit PBA's Banquet website at <https://pacificbuddhistacademy.org/giving/lighting-our-way> or contact Megan Lee at megan.lee@pbahi.org for more information.

We deeply appreciate your support for our remarkable honorees and look forward to celebrating with you!

2024 KAUAI DISTRICT NEMBUTSU SEMINAR

“Sharing Nembutsu Moments”

Join our seminar for a hands-on activity that will help you apply "Sangha is a way" principles to Nurturing Spiritual Friendships and Dharma-Centered Communities.

Speaker: Rev. Blayne Higa, Resident Minister of Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Date: October 6, 2024

Time: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Location: West Kauai Hongwanji Hanapepe Temple (1-3860 Kaumualii Hwy, Hanapepe) / Zoom

Registration Fee: Free

Donations can be made to the Kauai Hongwanji Council. Please make a check payable to “Kauai Hongwanji Council” and send it to Kapaa Hongwanji Mission 4-1170 Kuhio Hwy, Kapaa, HI 96746.

Registration Deadline: September 22, 2024

Registration: <https://forms.gle/yEeEFP2VWYqP9raP6>

For further information, please contact Kapaa Hongwanji at 822-4667, West Kauai Hongwanji at 335-3195, or Lihue Hongwanji at 245-6262.

Description: The community has always been a strength of Shin Buddhism in America.

Innovative and responsive community building grounded in the Dharma has enabled temples to thrive in Hawaii for the past 135 years. However, the traditional ways of building Sangha have been less effective as we face new challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic world. Let's explore what it means to be Sangha today. How do we journey together as spiritual friends, nurturing an authentic community of fellow travelers guided by the Buddha's teachings?