



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

**On Sunday, October 20, 2024, the Wailuku Hongwanji Mission, led by Resident Minister Rev. Shinkai Murakami, President Mr. Michael Munekiyo, and Chair of the 125th Anniversary Committee Mr. Danny Topp, celebrated its 125th Anniversary. Temple members, friends, and community members gathered to witness this significant occasion. The commemorative service, officiated by Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, featured the ministers of the Maui District and the chanting of the newly established Shoshinge. Representatives from various temple organizations offered incense, followed by Bishop Umitani's dharma message, recognition of Keirokai (honoree members), and congratulatory messages from State Senator Troy Hashimoto, a representative of Maui Mayor Richard Bissen, and Maui County Councilwoman Yuki Lei Sugimura. Rev. Shinkai Murakami expressed gratitude in his message concluding the service. Below is the Aspiration shared by Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani at the service's start.*

"ASPIRATION"

I humbly declare to Amida Tathagata, the master in the West who made the Vow, to Shakyamuni Buddha, the master of this world, and to all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future in the ten quarters.

Here today, with reverence, we adorn the altar and earnestly recite the sutras in observance of the 125th Anniversary of the Wailuku Hongwanji Mission.

In carefully reflecting, the history of Wailuku Hongwanji Mission began in 1898 when Reverend Hojun Kunisaki arrived on Maui as the first Hongwanji minister officially dispatched by Honzan. Rev. Kunisaki dedicated his life to spreading the Buddha-Dharma here on the island of Maui, and his spirit was carried forward by successive ministers and lay members. Through their tireless efforts, the teachings of Amida Buddha have touched the hearts of countless individuals, guiding them through life's challenges with wisdom and compassion.

From the time the first temple building was erected at the corner of Wells and Market Streets in 1902, Wailuku Hongwanji Mission has served as a spiritual home for those who seek a place of refuge. This temple has been a beacon of light, offering a space where people from all walks of life have found solace, comfort, and inspiration in the Dharma. For 125 years, Wailuku Hongwanji has fostered a sense of belonging, nurturing deep spiritual connections and lasting friendships.

Over the years, this temple has been a gathering place for both members and non-members to share moments of joy, laughter, solace, and comfort. It has been a sanctuary where tears of sorrow and grief have been met with the gentle embrace of Amida's compassion, and where celebrations of life's milestones have been marked with heartfelt gratitude. This sacred space has witnessed the unfolding of countless life stories, each woven into the rich tapestry of the temple's history.

Today, we express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to all the ministers and members who have dedicated themselves to this temple. We honor the vision and hard work of those who laid the foundation, as well as those who continue to sustain and nurture this community today. Through their efforts, the invaluable torch of the Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion has been kept alight, illuminating the path for future generations.

As we commemorate this significant milestone, let us renew our commitment to the teachings and spirit of our predecessors. We will inherit their spirit and devote ourselves to listening to the Buddha-Dharma. We will share the joy of Nembutsu and strive to realize a society where all lives are equally embraced, affirmed, and appreciated. Beyond time and space, the Light of Amida Buddha continues to shine upon us, illuminating our path even more brightly than ever.

With reverence, let us recite the Nembutsu, feeling Amida Buddha's gentle call to us, expressing our gratitude for living within the Buddha's Vow. Namo Amida Butsu.

TRIPLE CELEBRATION

We are thrilled to share the excitement of the Triple Celebration held on September 7 and 8, 2024.

We are pleased to announce two new Triple Celebration multimedia resources! One is a set of photo carousels available on the Hongwanji Hawaii website with images captured by Alan Kubota, Lenscapes Photography. Six carousels capture highlights from all parts of the big event. A shortcut link will take you there: <http://honpahi.link/3cphotos>

Another resource is a Triple Celebration playlist on the Hongwanji Hawaii YouTube channel. You'll find a 12-minute video produced by Project Local with event highlights and interview clips (not to be missed!). You can also see Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji's keynote address with slides, Yamaguchi Gagakukai's amazing performance of "Hawai'i Aloha," and the prelude by the Triple Celebration Choir. Find the playlist here: <http://honpahi.link/3cvideos>

These resources supplement the one previously shared for the Triple Celebration Online Buddhist Education Series, a separate YouTube playlist now accessible using the shortcut <http://honpahi.link/3clectures>. And if you'd like to check out the electronic booklet created by Jean Heselden and used by attendees at the event, see: <http://honpahi.link/3cbooklet>. In it are some archival photos that Rev. Miyaji remarked upon in his keynote address.

Correction Regarding the Omission of the Triple Celebration Choir in the Previous Issue

In the previous issue of the HQ Update, we regretfully omitted mention of the Triple Celebration Choir's contribution. We sincerely apologize for this oversight and any misunderstanding it may have caused.

The Choir, organized specially for this historic event, included over 60 singers from across the state, many of them first-time choristers. Their enthusiasm and dedication during rehearsals on Oahu, self-practice on the neighbor islands, and a joint rehearsal on the morning of the service were essential to the success of the event. The choir's beautiful singing at the 135th Anniversary resonated throughout the venue, adding a solemn touch and spreading the warmth of the Nembutsu to all participants.

We also wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the Triple Celebration's success. Whether behind the scenes or on the frontlines, every individual's effort played an important role. This event was a true reflection of the collective spirit of our community.

We deeply appreciate the Choir's contribution and the support of everyone involved. Moving forward, we will ensure that all contributors are properly recognized in future publications.

Rev. Ai Hironaka and Rev. Tomo Hojo
Triple Celebration Steering Committee Co-Chair

2024-2025 SOCIAL CONCERNS FUND DRIVE

The Committee on Social Concerns is excited to announce the launch of the 2024-2025 Social Concerns Fund Drive which will begin on November 1, 2024, and run till August 31, 2025.

Your generosity enables the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii with the ability to support worthy organizations and programs making positive impacts in our community. Your selfless giving also enables us to provide compassionate aid during times of disaster and the ability to skillfully respond to issues affecting our local and world communities.

Through an overwhelming outpouring of support, we raised almost \$1 million through our Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief Fund and distributed over \$300,000 to support the members of Lahaina Hongwanji and the Maui community in the aftermath of the devastating wildfires of August 2023. We will continue to lend our support on their long road to recovery.

So far this year, we have continued our support for improving mental health care, building community resiliency, and humanitarian aid in Gaza as well as relief efforts in Japan in the aftermath of the Noto Peninsula Earthquake. We have made donations to organizations such as the Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii, Vibrant Hawaii, and World Central Kitchen.

We continue to award Golden Chain Grants to help nurture Sangha-based compassionate action and launched the Dana Matching Grant Program to multiply the impact of charitable giving by organizations in the Hawaii Kyodan Ohana. We hope you will take advantage of these innovative programs that help to share our values in the wider community.

A sample fund drive letter was distributed to all temples in September. Donation envelopes have also been provided to temples wishing to use them. Extra envelopes are available in limited supply. Reminder to please make all checks payable to your respective temple. Your temple will then remit one combined check to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Mahalo for your continued support of our Annual Social Concerns Fund Drive!

2025 GISEIKAI LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

In preparation for the 113th HHMH Legislative Assembly, which is scheduled for February 7-8, 2025, notice #1 has been sent out from the Business Manager. Some key deadlines to remember are:

- October 31, 2024: Vital Statistics
- November 15, 2024: Giseikai Resolutions
- December 15, 2024: Committee Reports
- December 31, 2024: HHMH Directors Nomination, Giseikai Registration, Rap Session Sign-up
- January 31, 2025: Directory Information.

Your timely submission is greatly appreciated.

SAVE THE DATE: UPCOMING EVENTS

PBA LIGHTING OUR WAY BANQUET

Date: Friday, November 15, 2024

Time: Reception at 5:00 p.m. • Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

Location: Ala Moana Hotel by Mantra

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.