Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 522-9200 Fax: (808) 522-9209
Web: hongwanjihawaii.com Email: hqs@honpahi.org

JANUARY 2026

We extend our sincerest aloha to you!

2026 Hongwanji Slogan
"Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude"

As we embrace 2026, we sincerely thank the members and friends of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for your steadfast support, commitment, and involvement in our services and programs. We look forward to continuing our shared spiritual journey and celebrating the joy of life together at the Hongwanji temples throughout Hawaii.

May your days be filled with gratitude in the awareness that Amida Buddha's boundless Wisdom and Compassion surround us always.

Namo Amida Butsu

HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII
Headquarters, Office of the Bishop
and Buddhist Study Center

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani, Bishop

Yoshiko Umitani, Bookstore

Dr. Warren Tamamoto, President

Rev. Blayne Higa, Buddhist Study Center Director

Derrick Inouye, Business Manager

Dianne Sumida, Administrative Assistant (not pictured)

Emi Hashi, Children and Youth Activities Specialist

David Atcheson, Communications Coordinator

2026 NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FROM HIS EMINENCE GOMONSHU KOJUN OHTANI

As we welcome the arrival of the New Year, I extend my sincere greetings.

In recent years, natural disasters—including typhoons, torrential rains, earthquakes, and large-scale wildfires—have occurred with increasing frequency both in Japan and around the world, causing devastating damage and casualties. I offer my heartfelt condolences for those who lost their lives, and I express my deepest sympathy to all who have been affected. I fervently hope that you may all regain normalcy in your daily lives as soon as possible.

Last year marked a significant milestone, the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. In July, I had the honor of attending memorial services in Okinawa, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki—places that suffered destruction beyond words—and had the precious opportunity to listen to the accounts of those who lived through the war. I once again engraved in my heart the words of Sokunyo Monshu who said at the 1995 "50th Anniversary of the End of World War II Memorial Service for All the War Dead": *"We cannot help but feel deep remorse before the Buddhas and Spiritual Leaders for the fact that we were unfaithful to the teachings of our Founder and actively cooperated with the war in the name of Buddhism."* With renewed recognition of our organization's wartime responsibility, I reaffirmed my resolve as we continue forward on this path.

In the postwar years, our organization began its journey by refusing to avert its eyes from the fact of its active cooperation and involvement in the war, and by striving to build a peaceful society in which all people may live in spiritual fulfillment. We must continue to confront these truths with sincerity and ensure that such errors are never repeated. Even now, around the world, wars and conflicts persist, and countless precious lives remain at risk. In such times, let us hold close to our hearts Shinran Shonin's aspiration—*"May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teaching spread!"*—and walk each day in harmony with this wish.

January 1, 2026

OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

This translation is prepared by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

2026 年 年頭の辞

新しい年を迎えるにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。

まず、近年、日本をはじめ世界各地で台風や豪雨、地震などの自然災害や大規模な山火事などが頻繁に発生し、甚大な被害がもたらされています。犠牲となられた方々に謹んで哀悼の意を表しますとともに、被災された皆さまに心からお見舞い申し上げます。皆さまが一日も早く、平穏な日常を取り戻されますことを心から願っております。

さて、昨年は第二次世界大戦の終戦から 80 年という節目の年でした。私は 7 月に、この戦争で筆舌に尽くしがたい惨禍がもたらされた沖縄・広島・長崎の追悼法要のご縁をいただき、戦争体験者の方々のお話を聞かせていただく尊い機会を得ました。そして、平成 7 年・1995 年の「終戦 50 周年全戦没者追悼法要」における、「宗祖の教えに背き、仏法の名において戦争に積極的に協力していった過去の事実を、仏祖の御前に慚愧せずにはおれません」との教団の戦争責任にかかる即如門主のお言葉を改めて心に刻み、これからも歩んでいく決意を新たにいたしました。

戦後の教団の歩みは、戦争に積極的に協力・加担した事実から目をそらさず、その反省を踏まえ、誰もが心豊かに生きられる平和な社会の実現を目指すことから始まりました。私たちは、その事実と真摯に向き合い、決して同じ過ちを繰り返してはなりません。現在も世界各地で戦争や紛争は続いており、多くの尊い命が脅かされています。そのような中にあって、宗祖親鸞聖人の「世のなか安穏なれ、仏法ひろまれ」との願いを常に心に留めて、日々の歩みを進めてまいりましょう。

2026 年 1 月 1 日

浄土真宗本願寺派

門主　大谷光淳

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM BISHOP TOSHIYUKI UMITANI

Happy New Year!

As we welcome another year, let us once again be mindful that we are all embraced by Amida Buddha's boundless Compassion. With deep gratitude, I look forward to walking the path of the Nembutsu together with all of you in the coming year. I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation for your continued understanding and support of the various activities of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

In October of last year, I had an opportunity to visit Ryukoku University in Kyoto. While there, a framed calligraphy on the wall caught my eye. It read, "共結来縁" ("Let us together form the karmic bond to come"). This particular work was written by Rev. Shunkai Matsuura, the former Chief Priest of Mibu Temple in Kyoto and a graduate of Ryukoku University. With his calligraphy, he expressed the wish that "people from various backgrounds come together, cherish the bond they share, and move forward toward a common goal."

I found these words truly inspiring. Upon returning to Hawaii, I learned that this phrase originally comes from an ancient Chinese poem: "Mountains and rivers may divide us, but the wind and moon share the same sky. Sending this robe to my fellow disciples (of the Buddha), may we together form a karmic bond." Over 1,300 years ago, Prince Nagaya of Japan had these words embroidered on a thousand robes sent to the Tang dynasty, wishing that, even though we are different, our shared goal is to spread the teachings of Buddha. It is said that the great Chinese master Ganjin was deeply moved by this message, which inspired him to cross the sea to Japan to transmit the Buddhist precepts.

In our Hongwanji Sangha, too, people of many backgrounds come together. Each of us carries our own karmic conditions—unique and irreplaceable by others. There are moments when we may wish that someone could take our place, or when we long to carry another's burden, but ultimately, we each must walk our own path. At times, this journey makes you feel lonely or uncertain.

Yet, Amida Buddha never abandons us. Out of immeasurable Compassion, Amida Buddha fulfilled the Vow to bring every being to the Pure Land. That compassionate calling—"Namo Amida Butsu"—reaches each one of us, here and now. Through the Nembutsu, we come to realize that the path we once thought we walked alone is in fact illuminated by Amida's Light and is shared with many fellow travelers. From that awareness arises a heart of gratitude and joy.

Let us make this year another opportunity to listen deeply to Amida Buddha's compassionate calling. In keeping with our 2026 theme, "Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude," may we live each day with appreciation and share the joy of a life of gratitude with others.

May this year be filled with the warmth of Amida's Compassionate Light, peace of mind, and the joy of the Nembutsu for you and your loved ones.

In Gassho,

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani
Bishop
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

新年のご挨拶

皆様、新年あけましておめでとうございます。

今年も皆様と共に、阿弥陀如来のお慈悲に生かされていることを聞かせていただき、お念仏とともに歩んでまいりたいと思います。新年を迎えるにあたり、日頃よりハワイ本派本願寺の諸活動に対してご理解とご協力を賜っておりますこと、厚く御礼申し上げます。今後とも変わらぬご支援を賜りますよう、心よりお願い申し上げます。

昨年の十月、仕事で龍谷大学を訪れた際、部屋の壁に掛けられていた一つの額に目が止まりました。そこには「共結来縁（ともにらいえんをむすばん）」と書かれており、龍谷大学の卒業生で京都・壬生寺の貫主であられた松浦俊海師の書でした。松浦師はこの言葉に「さまざまな背景をもつ人々が出会い、このご縁を大切にしながら、共に目標に向かって歩んでいこう」という願いを込められていたそうです。

大変すばらしい言葉だと感じ、ハワイに戻って調べてみると、この「共結来縁」はもともと「山川異域　風月同天　寄諸仏子　共結来縁」という漢詩の一節であることを知りました。「住むところは違えども、風や月のめぐみは同じ空のもとでつながっている。この袈裟を送ることで、仏子としてのご縁を結びたい」という意味の言葉です。この詩は 1300 年以上前、日本の長屋王が唐へ送った千着の袈裟に刺繍されていたもので、中国の高僧・鑑真和尚はこの言葉に深く心を動かされ、日本に戒律を伝える決意をされたと伝えられています。

ハワイ教団にも、実に多様な人々が集います。私たちはそれぞれ、誰にも代わることのできない業を抱えながら生きています。誰かに代わってもらいたい、あるいは代わってあげたいと思っても、最終的には自らが受けとめていくしかありません。ときに孤独や不安に包まれることもあります。

しかし、そのような私たちを決して見捨てることなく、「必ず浄土に生まれさせる」と誓いを立てられたのが阿弥陀様です。その優しく、そして力強い呼び声が「南無阿弥陀仏」となって、今ここにいる私たち一人ひとりに届いています。

その呼び声を共に聞かせていただく仲間として、私たちは出会いました。暗い道を一人で歩んでいると思っていたその道は、実は阿弥陀如来のお慈悲の光に照らされた道であり、多くの仲間と共に歩む道であったことに気づかされるとき、自然と感謝と喜びの心が湧いてまいります。

今年もまた、阿弥陀如来の呼び声「南無阿弥陀仏」を聞かせていただく一年にいたしましょう。教団テーマ「Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude（感謝を分かちあう）」のもと、報恩感謝の生活のすばらしさとその喜びを、多くの方々と共に味わってまいりましょう。

結びに、本年が皆様にとって、阿弥陀さまの慈光とお念仏の温もりに包まれた、安らぎと喜びに満ちた一年となりますよう念じつつ、新年のご挨拶とさせていただきます。

合掌

海谷聡之
ハワイ本派本願寺　開教総長

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE KYODAN PRESIDENT DR. WARREN TAMAMOTO

Happy New Year! Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

Aloha kākou! I hope that you and your loved ones are in good spirits as we enter the New Year – 2026!

Yes, another year has gone by quickly. I can look back at the past year and I'm happy that the year has gone well for my family. At the same time, I am aware that we are all a year older. I am sure that each one of us can recall losing a dear friend, colleague or family member this past year. Let us take a moment to be grateful for the connection that we enjoyed and still do enjoy with that person or persons.

It has occurred to me more than once in the past year that I won't be here forever. This realization often happens when I first get up in the morning. I think to myself, "Hey, I'm over 70!" Maybe it is because I must stretch out the stiffness in my fingers in the morning ("welcome to the land of osteoarthritis" says my friend the rheumatologist). I stretch muscles in my low back and legs before I can "bounce" out of bed. Realizing the truth of the impermanence of life makes me try to make the most of every day.

Our theme and slogan for 2026 is, "**Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude**". Shinran Shonin taught that the Nembutsu, the name of Amida Buddha, verbalized as *Namo Amida Butsu* is an expression of gratitude. The Nembutsu, *Namo Amida Butsu*, is our grateful response to Amida Buddha's Calling Voice. *Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude* reminds us that every moment of our lives, Amida Buddha embraces us with immeasurable Wisdom and Compassion. We respond to Amida's compassionate calling voice with profound gratitude.

This is my last New Year's Greeting to you as President of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Our Hawaii Kyodan Bylaws specifies term limits for the office of President and the last of my three terms will end with the close of our Legislative Assembly in February 2026. I plan to remain active on the HK Board of Directors as Immediate Past President and I look forward to seeing many of you in the future via Zoom or in person at various activities.

Serving as your president has been a wonderful life experience for me. I have made Dharma friends across our state, nationally and internationally. I have experienced many "Nembutsu Moments" learning about and living Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all of you for assisting in our mission to "share the living teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism so that all people can have lives of harmony, peace and gratitude". Your dedication, creativity and determination in sharing the Nembutsu teachings makes a difference in our world.

I hope that you will enjoy peace and happiness in the New Year!

"As one little candle lights another, so the light of Buddha's compassion will pass from one mind to another mind endlessly". (The Teaching of Buddha)

With Gassho,

Warren Tamamoto
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

2026 THEME AND SLOGAN "NURTURING NEMBUTSU: SHARING GRATITUDE"

Living with the Nembutsu gently guides our hearts toward gratitude, humility, and connection. Nurturing the Nembutsu becomes not only a journey of personal transformation but also a shared joy that goes beyond our individual lives. The Nembutsu is a living reminder of our interconnectedness and a celebration of the many blessings we receive. It is a heartfelt acknowledgement that our life is only possible through countless causes and conditions.

Gratitude is the foundation from which spiritual growth begins. When nurtured, gratitude changes our perceptions, allowing us to see the extraordinary in everything around us. In the practice of Nembutsu, gratitude isn't just reserved for big gestures or rare moments — it is woven into every fleeting moment of our daily life.

To nurture Nembutsu is to cultivate a grateful awareness of life as it is. Sharing gratitude with others enhances its transformative power, building bonds of empathy and mutual understanding, breaking down barriers, and reminding us of our shared humanity. As Gomonshu Kojun Ohtani writes, "Rather than to simply live day in and day out as if we are just 'going through the motions,' in the teaching's illuminating light we can find clarity and meaning in our lives. Not separating ourselves from society, it is important that we live within the priceless interconnections that we have with one another and support each other."

Living the Nembutsu means training our heart and mind to return to gratitude repeatedly. Over time, we become more open, more compassionate, and less quick to judge others. Our burdens feel lighter, and our joy grows even greater, as our founder Shinran Shonin reflects in his sacred writings. Nurturing the Nembutsu is not about perfection but about perseverance. The willingness to start again and to remember gratitude, especially during challenging times, is an act of courage and trust in Amida Buddha's compassionate Vow.

Nurturing Nembutsu is a continuous, dynamic journey of self-discovery and spiritual transformation, an invitation to cultivate gratitude deep within our hearts. The essence of Nembutsu is gratitude: for life, connection, and the Buddha's boundless compassion that sustains and nurtures us. May we always remember to give thanks—for every breath, every lesson, and every act of kindness—and may our gratitude shine as a beacon of hope in a troubled world.

Namo Amida Butsu,

Rev. Blayne Higa
Director
Buddhist Study Center
Office of Buddhist Education