



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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APRIL 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

Currently, 20 ministers serve the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii as its active Kaikyoshi Ministers. **Kaikyoshi** are ministers who have completed the two levels of ordination, Tokudo and Kyoshi, and have officially received Kaikyoshi status from the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha (Honzan) as Overseas District ministers. These Kaikyoshi are assigned to various temples or positions within the HHMH and faithfully and compassionately share the teachings of the Other-Power Nembutsu with their temple members and the community. Kaikyoshi serve as Dharma seekers, educators, officiants, and administrators, provide pastoral care, and engage in community involvement and outreach. They have a wide range of roles and responsibilities and endeavor to build a more compassionate sangha and harmonious society rooted in the Nembutsu teaching.

The uniqueness of the Hongwanji tradition is that both ministers and lay members play a vital role in spreading the Nembutsu teachings. Yes, it is the Kaikyoshi Ministers' responsibility to convey the messages and teachings of Shinran Shonin, but lay members also become part of the ministry by sharing the spiritual joy and gratitude they have cultivated over years of listening. And it is only through the people that the teaching would spread. With that understanding, and to assist the Kaikyoshi Ministers, the HHMH developed the Lay Assistant program several years ago. Currently, there are three categories under **Minister's Lay Assistants**: 1) Minister's Lay Assistant, 2) Certified Minister's Lay Assistant, and 3) Tokudo Minister's Assistant.

A **Minister's Lay Assistant** is someone who, under the guidance of the Resident Minister, begins learning and helping at the temple—supporting services, assisting behind the scenes, and gradually deepening their understanding of the teachings.

After some years of training, they may become a **Certified Minister's Lay Assistant**. At this stage, they take on a more active role. They may help lead Sunday services or facilitate Dharma discussions, while continuing to learn and grow under the minister's supervision. Currently, there are 22 Certified MLAs officially recognized by the Bishop.

Some may then take a further step by receiving Tokudo ordination, becoming a **Tokudo Minister's Assistant**. Since this category was recently established by the State Minister's Association, I have designated six individuals as Tokudo Minister's Assistants (including one as a Kyoshi Minister's Assistant). This designation was made in recognition of their dedication to the Dharma and with the expectation that they will mature as ordained individuals and assist the Kaikyoshi Ministers in sharing the Nembutsu teaching within the HHMH community.

On our journey along the Nembutsu path, we are continually reminded that none of us walks alone. Each of us is supported, embraced, and guided by countless causes and conditions. Among these, the presence of those who step forward to serve—our Kaikyoshi Ministers and Minister's Lay Assistants—is a precious gift to our organization.

I would like to take a moment to express my deep appreciation for their dedication. Each of them, in their own way, has responded to the call of the Dharma—offering their time, their sincerity, and their willingness to serve others. This is not something we can take for granted. It is a manifestation of the working of Amida Buddha’s Great Compassion in our midst.

May we continue to walk together as fellow travelers on the Nembutsu path—supporting one another, learning from one another, and sharing the light of the Dharma with all whom we encounter. In this way, may our Sangha continue to grow as a place of harmony, gratitude, and compassion for all.

Namo Amida Butsu,

Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

INGO

Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani conferred the following posthumous titles (Ingo) on those who recently passed away and made exceptional contributions to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and its efforts to share the Nembutsu teaching.

Mr. Wesley Hong Ching Wong Jr. (Wailuku Hongwanji Mission)

SHO-DO-IN 昇道院

Meaning: The one who took the path towards the enlightenment of great nirvana

Mr. Shojiro Uehana (Kohala Hongwanji Mission)

SHO-FU-IN 清風院

Meaning: The one through whom pure breezes softly flow

Namo Amida Butsu

KAHUKU HONGWANJI SCHOLARSHIP

The Kahuku Hongwanji Mission closed its doors in February 2013 after serving its membership for 111 years. To maintain the legacy of the Kahuku Hongwanji Mission and to develop the future generations of the Hongwanji, Kahuku Hongwanji Mission established a scholarship to support students at the college level. A \$2,000 scholarship will be awarded to two students.

Eligibility:

- The applicant must be a student attending or registered for enrollment in an accredited university, college, or post-high school program in the State of Hawaii.
- The applicant must show interest in Buddhism and be active in a Hongwanji program, either at the Hawaii Kyodan level or at a branch temple.
- The applicant must be a full-time student and registered for a minimum of 12 college credits per semester.
- The applicant, at the time of the application, must have a required minimum high school, college, or university in Hawaii GPA of 2.5. (*Those who registered for enrollment and not yet received Hawaii college/university GPA must submit their GPA after the first semester.)
- The applicant must submit the application form with an essay on “Dharma and My Life”.

The application form is attached to the HQ Update and available at honpahi.link/kahuku2k. The application deadline is July 31, 2026. For more information on this scholarship, please contact the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Headquarters at (808) 522-9200 or email hqs@honpahi.org.

2026 BON SERVICE & DANCE SCHEDULE

The schedule for the 2026 Bon Service and Dance at the HHMH temples is attached to this month's HQ Update and available at honpahi.link/bon26. This schedule has been compiled by the Honpa Hongwanji Headquarters for your reference. As details may be subject to change, please contact the respective local temple office directly to confirm the schedule and obtain the most current information.

MUSICAL NOTES

The Music Committee released the April 2026 edition of the Musical Notes Newsletter. It is available on this HHMH web page: <https://hongwanjihawaii.com/blog/2026/03/31/musical-notes-2026-04/>

DR. ARAI'S BUDDHISM CLASS

The Special Buddhism Class with Rev. Dr. Toshikazu Arai begins on May 1, 2026. Deepen your understanding of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism through an engaging, accessible class led by Rev. Dr. Toshikazu Arai. Classes will be held on the 1st Friday of each month at 6:30 PM (Hawaii Time) via Zoom. The textbook *The Path to the Pure Land* will be available for purchase at the HQ Bookstore once it arrives. In the meantime, Dr. Arai will prepare the necessary materials. Please contact Rev. Yuika Hasebe (yhasebe@honpahi.org) with any inquiries. **Registration Link:** <https://forms.gle/i8Aot9sW5T2VzLq5A>

HHMH HAWAII FEDERATION OF BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

15th BWA STATE MEMBERSHIP CONFERENCE

Held at Ala Moana Hotel on March 28-29, 2026 ([6MB, high-res photo](#) available)



BUDDHIST STUDY CENTER SPRING FESTIVAL

The second BSC Spring Festival on April 18, 2026, brought together diverse parts of the Hongwanji Hawaii sangha with community organizations to present a fun and informative community event. The emphasis was “Appreciating Our Ohana.”

Pictured in this sampling of photos are (clockwise from top-left):

- Jikoen Hongwanji’s andagi-making station
- PBA’s performance taiko group, Hyaku Sen Ki Kai, providing an energizing kickoff
- Shakuhachi players performing in the BSC lecture hall
- Body and Brain Yoga workshop with Roy Arakaki, Body & Brain Fitness Center
- No-tech, old-time games station for juggling, table-top “quarters” basketball, and more
- Some leaves on the Gratitude Tree
- The HQ Bookstore area had items for sale as well as free books
- Oubaitori (Japanese and Okinawan folksongs) shared by a group connected to Pacific Buddhist Academy
- Ryukoku University students taught origami



More photos are available [on the HHMH Facebook page](#) (@honpahongwanjihawaii).