



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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Please note that the Headquarters Update is an official monthly communication from the HHMH Headquarters to the temples, ministers, lay leaders, and affiliates of the Hawaii Kyodan. The Headquarters encourages you to share the news in this update with your temple or community members.

HHMH REPRESENTED AT WHITE HOUSE VESAK

The International Buddhist Association of America (IBAA) hosted the Fifth Annual Vesak Lamp Lighting Ceremony at the White House in Washington, D.C., on June 11, 2026. This year's ceremony brought together Buddhist leaders, monastics, and representatives from diverse traditions, along with ambassadors and dignitaries from South and Southeast Asia, in a spirit of friendship, cultural understanding, and peace.

Representing the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani attended the event together with Bishop Marvin Harada of the Buddhist Churches of America and Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara of the Jodo Shinshu International Office.

Vesak commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and parinirvana of Shakyamuni Buddha. Celebrated by Buddhists throughout the world for more than 2,500 years, Vesak was formally recognized by the United Nations in 1999 as an international day of significance.

This year's White House Vesak Ceremony was organized by Mrs. Wangmo Dixey, President of the IBAA, in cooperation with the White House Faith Office, particularly Pastor Paula White-Cain.

In her welcome message, Mrs. Dixey stated:

"This year is especially meaningful as our nation celebrates the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. It is fitting that we gather in this historic place, representing many cultures, traditions, and faiths, united by our shared aspirations for peace, understanding, and a better future for all. We are supported by the enduring American ideals of religious freedom and mutual respect—values that have allowed diverse spiritual traditions to flourish and contribute to the richness of our nation."

Mrs. Dixey also noted that Buddhism is practiced today by hundreds of millions of people around the world. Across the United States, nearly 4,000 temples, monasteries, meditation centers, and practice communities serve people from all walks of life. One of America's unique strengths, she explained, is that the Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana traditions have all flourished side by side. While many countries may be home to only one Buddhist tradition, the United States offers opportunities for Buddhists of different traditions to learn from, appreciate, and support one another while remaining united in their shared values.

The ceremony included messages from representatives of the White House Faith Office, the lighting of lamps, and chants and aspirations offered by representatives of the Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana traditions. Bishop Marvin Harada lit the ceremonial lamp on behalf of the Mahayana tradition. Bishop Harada, Bishop Umitani, and Rev. Kuwahara then joined other Mahayana representatives in chanting sutras and offering aspirations for peace and harmony.

Reflecting on the experience, Bishop Umitani shared:

“It was truly a privilege and honor to participate in the Vesak Ceremony at the White House. As I joined the service, I felt the beauty of diversity and the richness of the Buddhist traditions that have flourished throughout the United States. As one of these traditions, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii has both a place and a responsibility to continue sharing the Buddha’s Wisdom and Compassion—values that transcend differences and unite humanity.”



The Vesak was held in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House grounds.



(From left) Bishop Marvin Harada (BCA), Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara (JSIO), Mrs. Wangmo Dixey (IBAA), and Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani (HHMH)

67th ANNUAL HONPA HONGWANJI MINISTERS' ASSOCIATION SEMINAR

The 67th Annual Honpa Hongwanji Ministers' Association Seminar was held via Zoom on June 2–3, 2026, hosted by the Kauai Ministers Association. We were honored to welcome Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji as our keynote speaker.

Rev. Dr. Miyaji presented a four-part lecture series entitled “The Two Truths Theory and Its Impact on Jodo Shinshu in America.” Through his thoughtful presentations, participants explored the historical development of the Two Truths Theory and its influence on the understanding and transmission of Jodo Shinshu in the American context. The lectures provided meaningful opportunities for learning, reflection, and discussion among 27 participants, including active and retired ministers from Hawaii, BCA guest representatives, and Tokudo Minister’s Assistants.

The seminar also included live question-and-answer sessions, allowing participants to engage directly with Rev. Dr. Miyaji and further explore the themes presented in the lectures. We are deeply grateful for his time, preparation, and willingness to share his knowledge and insights with us.

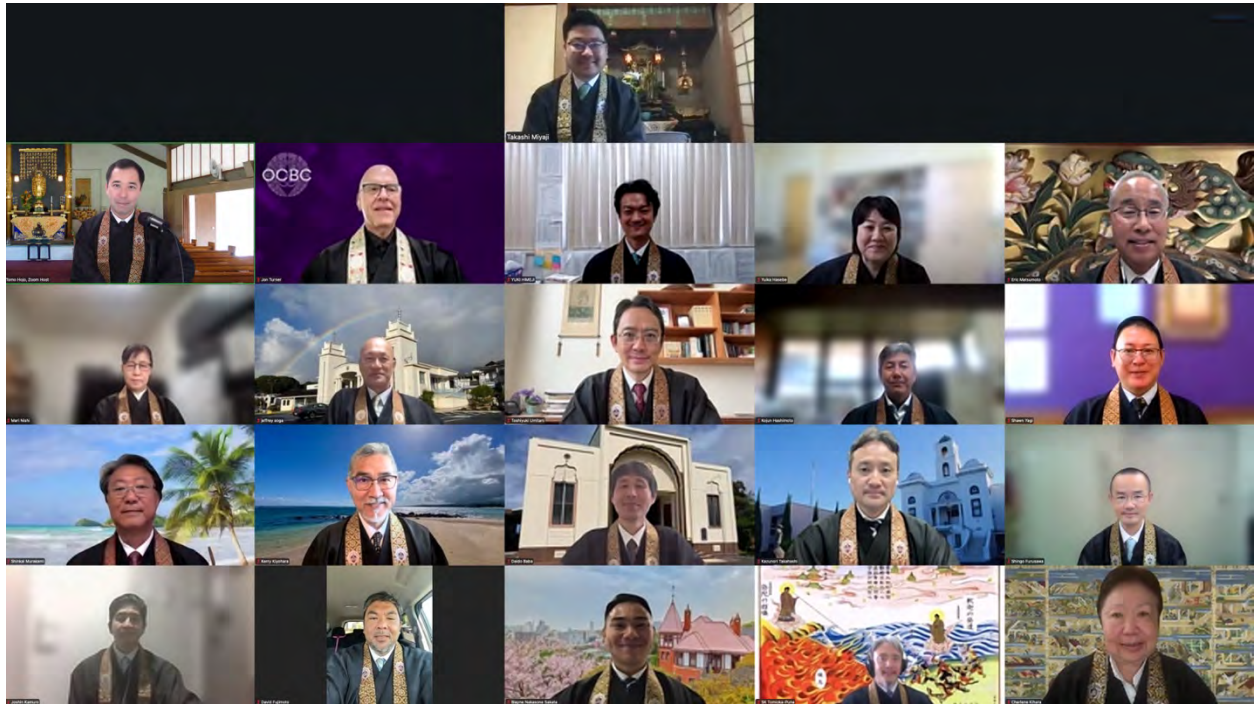
The seminar also included the regular meeting of the State Ministers Association. Since 2021, the seminar had been conducted via Zoom, and this year marked the conclusion of that format. Beginning in 2027, future seminars will be planned and coordinated by the newly established State Ministers Association Seminar Planning Committee.

We were also pleased to welcome BCA representatives Rev. Jon Turner and Rev. Yuki Himeji, who joined us and offered reflections during the closing portion of the seminar.

On behalf of the Kauai Ministers Association, we extend our sincere appreciation to Rev. Dr. Miyaji, Bishop Umitani, all participants, and everyone whose efforts contributed to the success of this year's seminar.

Submitted by Rev. Tomo Hojo

Chair, 67th Annual Honpa Hongwanji Ministers' Association Seminar



69TH JR. YBA CONVENTION

***The 69th Jr. YBA State Convention was held at the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin on June 19-21, 2026, hosted by the Jr. YBA of Hawaii. Below is the message from Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, as posted in the Convention Booklet.*

On behalf of the Ministers and *Sangha* members of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, I warmly welcome you to the 69th Jr. YBA State Convention. I sincerely hope that through connections, learning, and fellowship with your Dharma friends, you will deepen your understanding of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and find joy in being part of our vibrant Hongwanji community here in Hawaii.

This year's Convention theme, **"Sangha Means Family,"** beautifully reminds us of a message we may recognize from Lilo & Stitch – *"Ohana means family, and family means no one gets left behind or forgotten."* Similarly, the *"Sangha"* is the family of Amida Buddha, and it is a place where we support, accept, and walk together through this precious and unrepeatable moment.

At this convention, you'll come to realize you're not alone. You are always part of our *Sangha*, a family where everyone, regardless of who they are or what they do, is valued and accepted just as they are. Those who listen to the teachings of Amida Buddha become aware of the truth that we are all embraced by Amida Buddha's all-encompassing Wisdom and Compassion. This Compassion reaches us through the

Name of “Namo Amida Butsu.” Whenever and wherever we recite “Namo Amida Butsu,” we are not alone. We find that our lives are always surrounded by Compassion and illuminated by Light. We are one Ohana, one Family, and one *Sangha* within Amida Buddha.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the members and advisors of the United Jr. YBA of Hawaii for your dedication to making this convention possible. To all participants: Through the friendship you build, the experiences you share, and the Dharma you listen to, I hope you will feel that sense of connection and belonging. May this weekend be filled with joy, laughter, and meaningful moments that remind you that your *Sangha* is always here for you.

Namo Amida Butsu

Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani

LAHAINA INTERFAITH COUNCIL HOLDS A SPECIAL HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

The Lahaina Interfaith faith leader group that has been meeting monthly has grown into a cohesive group full of compassion and deep empathy. Currently, this group, who has named themselves Lahaina Interfaith Council, represents Waiola UCC Church, Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, Lahaina Jodo Mission, Lahaina United Methodist Church, Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, and Maria Lanakila. The discernment of hosting an interfaith service honoring these new connections and remembering those who died in the fire as a result came forth. All are invited to this service on August 1, 2026, at 9:00 am at the temporary worship pavilion of Lahaina Methodist Church. The service is purposefully being held a week prior to offer a place of comfort and community of peace as all anticipate the 8th of August. (See attached flyer or honpahi.link/flyers0626.)

BEWARE OF UNUSUAL EMAILS USING MINISTER NAMES

Reports are coming in about Hongwanji members receiving scam emails that use minister names in the “From” line. These emails typically ask for “discreet” assistance via email. Engaging would inevitably lead to requests for money in some form (like gift cards), security breaches, etc.

This is not the first wave of these so-called “phishing” emails.
You know what to do: Do not reply. Delete!

More sophisticated phishing emails may “spoof” an email address so that it looks like one you recognize. This is where your internal radar is especially important. Does the email content seem unusual or out-of-character? Does it try to create a sense of urgency or include links or attachments you are not expecting? If there is any doubt, use a known phone number to contact the person for verification.



This is a good time to review resources made available in connection with our May 2025 “Intro Class on Cybersecurity: Email Scams & More.” At the top of the list are two info cards on avoiding phishing. Find the resources here: honpahi.link/cybersecurity Stay cybersafe,

– David Atcheson, HHMH Communications Coordinator

JOB OPPORTUNITY AT THE HHMH

The Headquarters/Office of the Bishop is looking for an Administrative Assistant. The position is at the HQ office is fulltime 40 hours per week Monday to Friday (on-site). This position will provide administrative, financial, & event coordination to the HQ, Kyodan Board of Directors, & committees. HHMH provides medical insurance, vacation/sick leave, 401k with matching. Please contact Derrick Inouye (Business Manager) at 808-522-9200 or at dinouye@honpahi.org.

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 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.

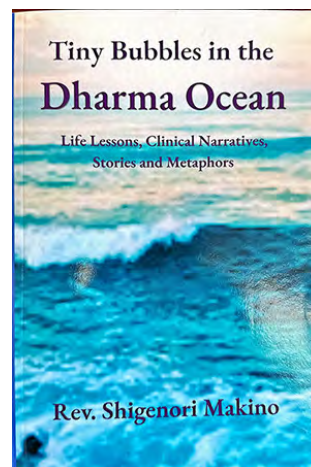
REV. SHIGENORI MAKINO “TINY BUBBLES IN THE DHARMA OCEAN”

At a ministers’ seminar in Hawaii, a young minister once asked why his Dharma talk failed to move anyone. The answer he received was simple - and piercing: “Because you didn’t touch their hearts.”

In *Tiny Bubbles in the Dharma Ocean*, Rev. Shigenori Makino reflects on that moment and invites us into a quiet, profound exploration of how we truly connect - with others, and with ourselves.

Drawing on decades of experience as a Buddhist minister, chaplain, and teacher, Rev. Makino reveals how the deepest truths are not found in complicated explanations, but in simple, living words — words that arise from deep listening, sincere reflection, and genuine experience. Inspired by the spirit of haiku and the Buddhist principle of skillful means, these teachings use story, metaphor, and gentle insight to bring the Dharma to life.

In a world filled with noise, distraction, and uncertainty, this book offers something rare: a chance to pause ... to listen... and to rediscover what truly matters.



Each reflection is like a tiny bubble rising through the vast ocean — quiet, fleeting, yet filled with meaning.

Rev. Shigenori Makino is a Retired Minister of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Rev. Makino's new book is available for purchase at the HQ Bookstore for \$10 per copy. Please contact Yoshiko Umitani at (808) 522-9202 or hqbooks@honpahi.org.

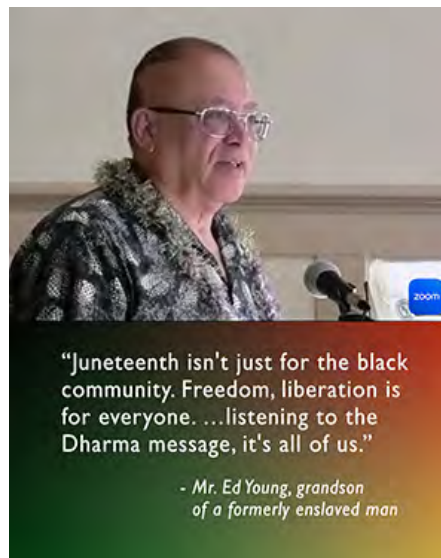
HONGWANJI RECOGNIZES JUNETEENTH WITH HOLIDAY, SPECIAL SERVICES

In December 2021, the HQ office was closed due to COVID and Hongwanji Hawaii statewide board was meeting by Zoom. On the table was possible adoption of Juneteenth as a new paid holiday for ministers and staff. Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, observed annually on June 19.

2020 had seen a racial justice movement following the killing of George Floyd, and, the same year, the Honolulu City Council proclaimed June 19th as Juneteenth for the City and County of Honolulu. In 2021, the State of Hawaii recognized Juneteenth as a special day of observance, and Juneteenth also became the first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

This was the context for Hongwanji Hawaii's discussion of the Juneteenth agenda item. In the end, the Personnel Committee's recommendation to add Juneteenth as a new holiday was approved overwhelmingly in a 25 to 3 vote.

By the time of the board's vote, at least one temple — Windward Buddhist Temple — had already held a special Juneteenth Service (June 20, 2021). The speaker was Ed Young, grandson of a formerly enslaved person and an adherent of the Bahá'í Faith. Mr. Young has also spoken at Juneteenth Services at Moiliili Hongwanji (2024) and Hawaii Betsuin (2026). At Hawaii Betsuin, Mr. Young read the entire Honolulu City Council's 2020 Juneteenth resolution. It includes important historical information about the Hawaiian Kingdom as well as Black people in Hawaii. You can see and hear Ed read the resolution in a YouTube video of that service's messages: honpahi.link/jtreso



UPCOMING EVENTS REMINDERS

- **Bon Dance Season Underway:** Find the Statewide Hongwanji dance/service schedule at honpahi.link/bon26
- **2027 Hawaii Kyodan Calendar** – Call for submission of the photos that show “Nurturing Nembutsu: Living Aloha” Info: honpahi.link/flyers0526
- **BSC Summer Session** with Rev. Dr. Aaron Proffitt, July 26-29. Registration: honpahi.link/bscss26
- **Young Adult Retreat (YAR):** “Wabi-Sabi” with Rev. David Fujimoto on September 6-7, 2026. Info: honpahi.link/yar26
- **BSC Fellowship Club Car Wash:** September 13, 2026, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Info: honpahi.link/flyers0526