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GOJI

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NEWSLETTER

of the
Honpa Hongwanji
Hawaii Betsuin
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2021 Slogan:

Building
Healthy Sanghas:
Nurturing Empathy
and Respect

BETSUIN
MINISTERS

Chief Minister
Rev. Toyokazu Hagio

Ministerial Staff
Rev. Yuika Hasebe
Rev. Sol Kalu
Rev. Shingo Furusawa



New Year's Greetings from the Gomonshu

New Year's Greeting

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

Throughout the last year, the world suffered from the pandemic of COVID-19, which brought tremendous hardship to many people, and we still are not able to see when normalcy would return to our world. On this occasion, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who fell victim to the disease and express my sympathies to those who are currently undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile in the US, the media has widely reported systematic discrimination against African-Americans, social unrest and division among the general public brought on by the presidential election. It concerns me that many people have been left isolated in the midst of hardship.

'Dependent origination' is a universal truth that Buddha Sakyamuni presented. This fundamental Buddhist principle expresses that everything, matter, and phenomenon arises from various causes and conditions. None of us lives by ourselves. We are living while being interconnected and mutually supported by one another. Considering the reality of a divided society, it is important that everyone deeply reflects on the principle of Dependent Origination that represents the true state of the world.

Even though having been introduced to the truth by Buddha Sakyamuni, ordinary people like us are still not able to accept it as it is. Therefore, to guide us to cope with the suffering caused by our own ignorance, Shinran Shonin clarifies Amida Buddha's compassion that always embraces us all. When the world is facing this unimaginable crisis, it is crucial that each of us experiences Amida Buddha's great compassion ourselves, and live each day to the utmost, having that joy and sensation in our hearts as the basis of our life.

I have been told that in this difficult time and situation, many of your sangha have been adopting new measures for sharing the Jodo Shinshu teaching that had not been previously considered. I find such efforts truly reassuring. It is my hope that your temples will continue serving as your spiritual home, and therefore, I sincerely ask for your understanding and cooperation to allow them to be so. With my heartfelt appreciation for each one of you, I would like to conclude my new year's greeting.

January 1, 2021
OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha



Bishop Eric Matsumoto

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Nurtured by Amida Buddha's Light of Wisdom and Compassion

Our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Theme & Slogan for 2021 is "Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect." It is a timely slogan especially as we begin a new year. When we take a moment to reflect on the situation of our nation and our society with the Coronavirus Pandemic, racial discrimination and even the climatic changes that are occurring on a global scale, it is not hard to see what our world needs is more respect and empathy.

The Larger Sutra provides wise counsel "People in the world...should truly respect and love each other, refraining from hatred and envy. They should share things with others, refraining from greed and miserliness. They should always be friendly in speech and expression, refraining from quarrel and dispute." Unfortunately, it laments, "...people in the world...do not believe that performing good deeds brings good results, or that seeking the Way leads them to attaining it."

However, all is not lost in that the Great Compassionate Light of Amida Buddha illuminates, nurtures and unconditionally embraces the spiritually foolish being who cannot completely break free from blind passions and attain enlightenment on one's own. In the Larger Sutra it says "Sentient beings who encounter this light have the three defilements swept away, and they become soft and gentle in body and mind. They leap and dance with joy, and the good mind arises in them. When those suffering pain and travail in the three evil realms see this light, they all find respite and become free of afflictions. After their lives have ended, they will all gain emancipation." Thus, I believe, the late Jodo Shinshu Scholar Rev. Jitsuen Kakehashi was able to say, "When we look at the world with an ordinary mind, it is distinctly divided into things we love and things we hate, but with the mind of the Tathagata, we are made to know that everyone is equally the Tathagata's indispensably important child. From that standpoint, we realize that we are all brothers and sisters and fellow human beings. Then slowly but steadily, we come to reflect on our self-centered thoughts, reject our blind passions and make efforts to see things and live our lives in a way that can be approved by the Tathagata." In this way, thanks to the Working of Other Power, we begin to slowly live in a new awareness and are assured the attainment of Enlightenment at the end of this finite life with our birth in the Pure Land.

His Eminence Gomonshu Kojun Ohtani says, "By listening to the Primal Vow and how it was established by Amida Tathagata, we are enabled to become conscious of our own ignorance and self-oriented inclinations, and through such awareness, we naturally become gentle in word and deed in our efforts of minimizing our egoistic way of thinking." "Even though our efforts may pale in comparison to the Buddha's Compassion, we are at least guided in the proper direction by the Buddha Dharma." Let us take to heart his words.

To conclude, I would like to share His Eminence's "Our Pledge." The original was written in Japanese and his expressed wish was that it be translated by each locale in a way that would resonate with the people of that region. Thus, this is Hawaii's



GOJI

The **GOJI** is a monthly publication of the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, Tel. (808) 536-7044. There is no newsletter published for the month of August.

DEADLINE:

Articles must be submitted no later than the 10th of the month prior to publication by e-mail (execdir@hawaii.betsuin.org), mail (1727 Pali Hwy, Honolulu, HI, 96813) or fax (536-0919). Address submissions to the **GOJI**. Please include your name and contact information. Original images should be labeled on the reverse side with caption and return information.

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The opinions expressed by individual contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin.



Warren Tamamoto MD
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

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



I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and in good spirits as we enter the New Year. The year 2020 was a year to remember, mostly from the effect that the COVID-19 pandemic had on all of us. We experienced lockdowns, isolation from family and friends, and job loss or insecurity. And most difficult of all, some of us lost family or friends to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have kept up with the news, you know that there is a very good chance that 2 or 3 pharmaceutical companies will have vaccines available for the Coronavirus before the end of this year. The good news is that the first two vaccines appear to be very effective in preventing COVID-19 disease. Also, you can be sure that the FDA is looking very carefully at the safety profile for each vaccine. As vaccine availability increases, there is good reason to believe that we may be looking at an optimistic scenario of returning to a more "normal" lifestyle by the summer or fall of 2021. Let's hope that the vaccines continue to show effectiveness with a good safety profile and that enough people will step up and get vaccinated!

Through the difficult times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, our collective Sangha responded by sewing masks for others, helping with daily chores such as shopping or cleaning, sharing meals, delivering produce, and by calling or messaging others. Ministers shared the Dharma through YouTube, Facebook and other electronic media. Small in-person services were held as permitted by law in spite of the risk to our ministers' health.

Our actions through this pandemic confirms that our Sangha is vibrant, caring and compassionate. Although we were separated physically, we connected with others through individual and collective acts of kindness.

As we look forward to the New Year of 2021, let us reflect upon what we are grateful for-life, family, friends and a supportive community. Let us wake up each morning grateful for Amida Buddha's Compassion, which surrounds each one of us.

"Happiness does not depend on what you have or who you are; it solely relies on what you think." - Buddha

With Gassho,

Warren Tamamoto MD
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

NOTICE!

On Saturday, 12/19/20, the Betsuin Office was informed by the US Postal Carrier who delivers mail to the Betsuin that all of the mail she was delivering had been stolen from her truck, including incoming mail to the Betsuin! If you recently sent mail to the Betsuin via USPS, please call the Betsuin office at 536-7044 to confirm that your correspondence was received. Mahalo!



Dexter Mar
President, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsin

A New Year of Hope – The Path Ahead

Our Vision of What We Want to Be:

**“A welcoming place where all share the joy of living
with gratitude and compassion inspired by Buddhist values.”**

Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

Last January this message was titled “A New Year of Opportunity -The Path Ahead”. Oh boy, was it ever an eventful year, full of opportunities to meet unexpected challenges. In the December 2020 GOJI some of our amazing accomplishments were reviewed, so let’s now look ahead to 2021.

With the change of leadership in Washington DC and the Covid-19 vaccine on the way, there is much to be hopeful about. Since “time stood still” in many ways (e.g.: Tokyo Olympics, NCAA sports eligibility, etc.), let’s return to implementing our vision in 2021.

To realize our vision, we will focus on the following areas:

1. **A welcoming place**

- Covid safety: keeping the Betsuin campus “Covid-free”
- Outreach: continuing “virtual” access, and expanding in-person services
- Facilities: starting construction on renovations and beginning the individual campaign.

2. **All share the joy of living**

- Fun and fellowship: re-starting events and gatherings
- Interconnection: developing the Betsuin “Friends” program

3. **With gratitude and compassion**

- Commitment: electing a new Board of Directors for 2022-23
- Dana: raising funds and volunteering

4. **Inspired by Buddhist values**

- Dharma teachings: supporting youth programs (HMS, PBA, Scouts, Dharma School, Jr. YBA, YESS Camp)
- Golden Chain of Love: Reaching out to people in Honolulu via programs in Peace, Environment, and Community

Let’s all make 2021 a great new year of strengthening



If you are unable
to come to the
temple and would
like to have a
minister visit
you in your home,
please call
Rev. Yuika Hasebe
at 536-7044 to
request a
home visit.



We miss you and
do not want to lose
contact with you!



Hawaii Betsuin Ministers and Staff

"Don't chase after the Past
Don't wait for the future
Live fully in this present moment"
Rimban Toyokazu Hagio

Happy New Year! Under the light of Amida Buddha, I hope you all have a peaceful New Year. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all for your support and help during year 2020. Let's put our hands together in gassho and steadfastly walk each day with Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion.

Rev. Yuika Hasebe



Roses are red, violets are blue
I say goodbye to 2020 and COVID-19
And recite the Nembutsu!
Happy New Year to all of you!

Rev. Sol M. Kalu

Bishop Matsumoto continued from page 2

Version (which can also be sung as it has also been put to music by BJ Soriano). In a few short verses, it captures the essence of a healthy Hongwanji Sangha which recites the Nembutsu in awareness, joy and gratitude of Great Wisdom and Compassion, and emphasizes respect and empathy.

Our Pledge

Reaching out to others,
I will share a smile and gentle words.
Just like the Buddha, who always calls out with Aloha.

Breaking away from my greed, anger and ignorance,
I will try to live in peace and harmony.
Just like the Buddha, who shares tranquility and kindness with all.

Moving forward from self-centeredness,
I will share a life of joy and sorrow with others.
Just like the Buddha, whose caring heart always embraces us.

Realizing that I live because of others,
I will strive to live life to the fullest with an attitude of gratitude.
Just like the Buddha, who promises to embrace us all.

Thank you, Happy New Year and Namo Amida Butsu.

In gassho/anjali,
Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Thank you very much for your last year's support even though we faced difficult situations due to COVID-19. I would like to ask for your continued help and support this year. Let us live treasuring each moment of our lives with gratitude to Amida Buddha that always embraces us all.

Gassho.
Rev. Shingo Furusawa



From Your
Betsuin
Staff!



BWA News and Events Fujiko Motobu

COMING EVENTS:

Jan. 1, Fri. New Year's Day service 10:00 am on YouTube
 Jan. 9, Sat. BWA Exec. Bd Mtg 9:00 am via ZOOM
 Jan. 17, Sun. Hoonko Service 9:30 am on YouTube
 Jan. 24, Sun. 1st BWA General Membeship Meeting:
 Installation of Officers, 9:00 am via ZOOM
 Jan. 31, Sun. Betsuin General Membership Meeting
 (Will be via Zoom; details will be forthcoming)

Daihi no Ondo-ku," is our debt to be thankful to Amida Buddha for His Unending Love and Compassion, for His 18th Vow, the Namo Amida Butsu,

Happy New Year to all of you BWA members. Let us all hope that this year will bring forth better health to all of us. Let us all have faith in Amida Buddha and recite the Nembutsu, Namo Amida Butsu from your heart.

"KARMA" Part 3, conclusion, by Tomo Izumi Mohideen

GRATITUDE: Gratitude is the foremost, important thing we must feel. Let us be grateful, first of all, to have being born a human being, the highest form of life, and not an insect, or a plant or an animal. Without gratitude, we cannot feel satisfaction and so, we would feel begrudging and unhappy. One cannot be grateful when unhappy, and so we may not even be able to receive kindness and love from others nor to give to others. Saint Shinran, in his Gatha, "Ondokusan," teaches this very well. "Nyorai

Nembutsu, His Promise of Salvation for all. "Hone wo kudaki temo, Mi o ko ni shitemo, sha subeshi." To have our bones crushed, our bodies turn to ashes, even to that extent, we should and must live our lives in gratefulness to Amida Buddha and to the Saintly Teachers of yore of our sect. It is our unfaltering GRATITUDE and FAITH in Amida Buddha, Saint Shinran and the Masters for the Teachings of Jodo Shinshu, that should fill our hearts with the debt of thankfulness to the extent of the expressions written in "Ondokusan." The Japanese language uses expressions to mean or describe, thus, I like to think that the above expressions are to mean, without hesitation or doubts in our faith and beliefs of their Teachings, to be wholeheartedly grateful.



We must reap what we sow, we are the cause of the result of what happens to us, so do good deeds to make good Karma. Be grateful for what we are and have, and endeavor not to envy or covet for things we do not have. When grateful, we learn that to share and GIVE is also just as nice as to RECEIVE.

Gassho: Namo Amida Butsu

THE END!

CORONAVIRUS CAUSES STRESS

We are all suffering from different types of stress due to the pandemic. Some of these are anger, anxiety, being guarded, having feelings of estrangement, depression, difficulty with other family members, memory problems, nightmares, and sleep problems.

To get rid of some of these stresses, try some of the following. Keep a JOURNAL, write down the things that are causing stress. TALK over with a friend, family member, minister, or counselor about your feelings. PLAY with your pet. DO volunteer work. Be of good HUMOR, laugh. WORK on art, paint, crafts. DO puzzles. READ books that you enjoy. LISTEN to soothing music. TAKE LONG WALKS, but watch your steps, don't fall. MEDITATE, take deep breath. RECITE NAMO AMIDA BUTSU as often as you wish.

HUMOR: What has eight arms and an IQ of 60?..... Don't know? It is four guys watching a football game.

HFBWA Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute

This year, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations will continue their tradition of honoring Dr. King's legacy. Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, we will not be marching in the parade, as we have done for many years. Instead, we will create a video paying tribute to his leadership in the field of Civil Rights. This video will be aired on the Hongwanji YouTube channel on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 18, 2021. Rev. Blayne Higa of Kona Hongwanji will give a short Dharma talk.

In addition, we will be sending each United President a list of activities that individual temples might want to do to honor Dr. King. These are all socially distant activities that will allow each temple to pay tribute in their own way and will allow for participation across the state. We encourage all temples to join us in honoring Dr. King.

Betsuin Dharma School News Debbie Kubota

Virtual Betsuin Dharma School Services and Activities - Sundays at 9:00 am

We all look forward to Sunday mornings at 9:00 am when we can get together with our Dharma School ohana for our virtual Zoom services. We enjoy seeing our Dharma friends from across the Honolulu District with families from the Betsuin and Jikoen attending regularly. Although the COVID-19 situation has caused many challenges, we have opened up many opportunities. It's allowed Dharma School families that have moved far away (like Pam Muneto Inake and her sons, Shaun and Kendrick) to join us from their home in Maryland.

We are so happy that our Dharma School students have taken on emcee and aspiration reading duties during our services. Many thanks to Vincent and Cora Saito, Jayce Labuguen, Shaun Inake, Chris Leu, Kainoa and Kenji Brennan, Keiden and Naya Fuku-

yama and Dean and Kim Williamson for so capably stepping up to fill these roles.

Thanks to Reverends Yuika Hasebe and Sol Kalu, our services have run smoothly. Both of them, along with Rinban Hagio and Reverend Furusawa have been rotating their service duties leading the Vandana Ti-Sarana, Sutra Chanting, delivering our wonderful Dharma messages and leading the singing of Nembutsu.

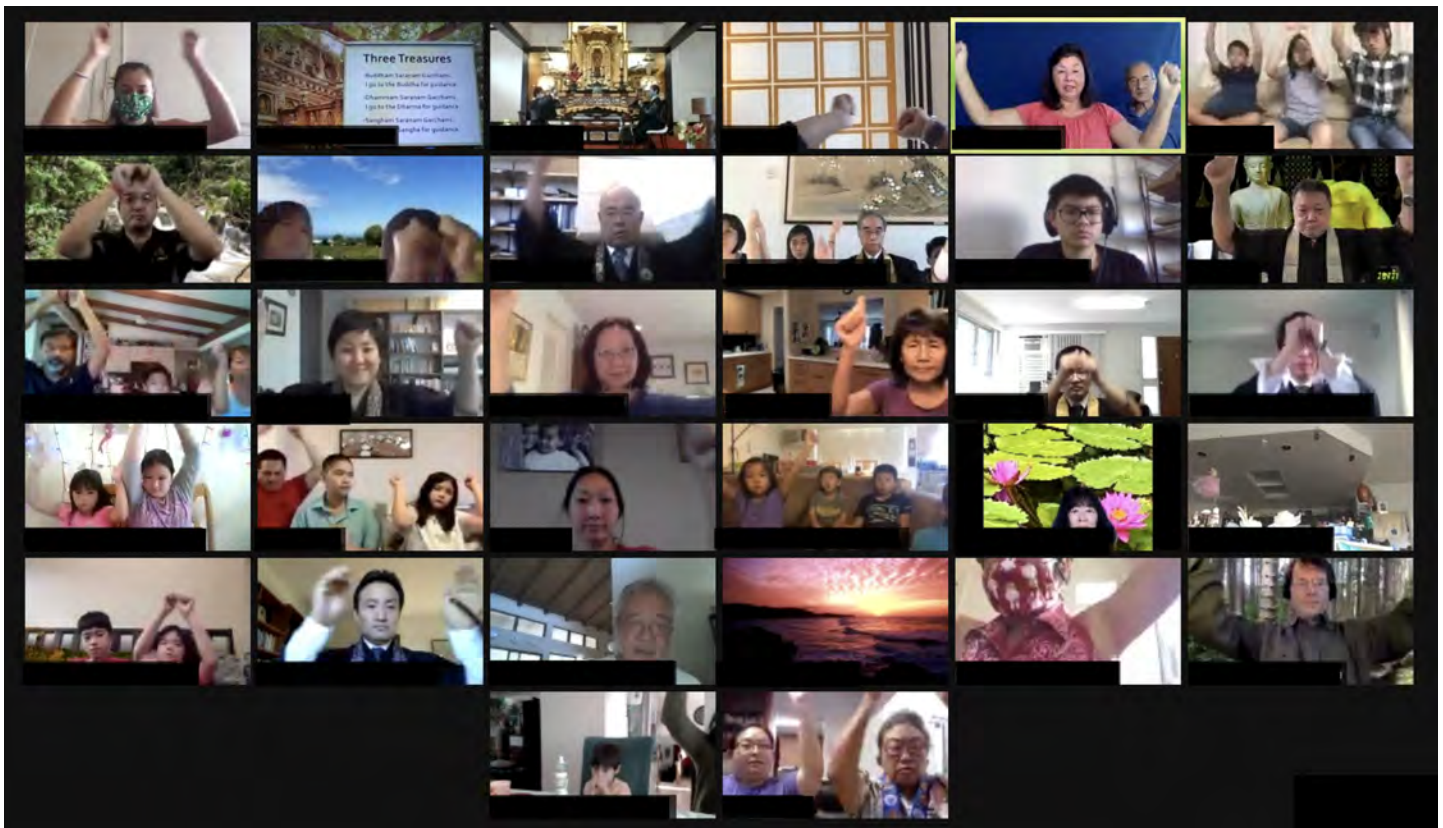
In November, we focused on themes of Random Acts of Kindness and Gratitude for Thanksgiving. We had a short Bodhi Day Service on December 6 before encouraging our families to participate in the Hawaii Buddhist Council Bodhi Day Service.

Sunday, November 13 was an exciting day for our Dharma School. We had a joint service with Hilo Betsuin. Along with

families from both of these temples, we also had some participants from Mililani Hongwanji and a family from Denver, Colorado. So there were three districts plus the mainland represented! Altogether, close to 100 participants joined us that day for service, emceed by Yuma Kamuro. Rinban Hagio shared a meaningful message about teaching children to appreciate all that they have, especially the love from their parents. Participants were divided into breakout rooms to create a picture, poem or statements about giving and generosity. So many fun creations were shared!

We look forward to future joint services with one planned together with Mililani Hongwanji in the New Year.

No matter what your age, our services are open to all generations from across our islands and the mainland. Hope to "see" you online with us soon!



**Radio Programs
JANUARY 2021
KZOO 1210 AM
Japanese Language
Saturday at 7:30 AM**

02 Gomonsu Kojun Ohtani
Bishop Eric Matsumoto
09 Rimban Toyokazu Hagio
16 Rev. Kazunori Takahashi
22 Rev. Yuika Hasebe
30 Rev. Shingo Furusawa

**All Betsuin
on site services
and activities are
CANCELLED
Until Further
Notice**

The 10 am English
services are
premiered on
YouTube



10 am Sunday
mornings.
Go to the website
hawaiiibetsuin.org
for a link

Please call the office
at (808) 536-7044
if you have any
questions.
**We are here
for YOU!**

In Memoriam



NOVEMBER 2020

The Hawai'i Betsuin extends its deepest sympathy to the families of the following members who recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the Nembutsu. Namo Amida Butsu

3/19/2020	YASUDA, Edith Kikuye (95)
7/23/2020	NIKAIDO, Helen Shizuyo (94)
10/12/2020	YAMANAKA, Chie O. (98)
10/29/2020	NIKAIDO, Thomas Tsuyoshi (97)

NOVEMBER 2020

07	MURAKAMI, Tadashi (91)
12	SUMIDA, Yaeko (98)
25	KAKUNI, Noboru (91)
25	OGATA, May Satsuki (95)
26	OKIMOTO, Lyman Yoshiharu (87)
28	MATSUMOTO, Helen Yoriko (84)

Nursing Home Services JANUARY 2021

**Nursing Home Services
are cancelled until
further notice**

2021 Memorial Service Schedule

2021 is the memorial year for those who passed away in:

2020: 1st year	2009: 13th year	1989: 33th year
2019: 3rd year	2005: 17th year	1972: 50th year
2015: 7th year	1997: 25th year	1922: 100th year



The great practice is to say the Name of the Tathagata of un-hindered light. This practice, comprehensively encompassing all practices, is perfect and most rapid in bringing them to fullness. For this reason, it is called "great practice." Saying the Name then breaks through all the ignorance of sentient beings and readily brings all their aspirations to fulfillment. Saying the Name is in itself mindfulness; mindfulness is nembutsu; nembutsu is Namo-amida-butsu.

-Shinran Shonin