



1727 Pali Highway  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

# GOJI

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MAY 2021  
NEWSLETTER  
of the  
Honpa Hongwanji  
Hawaii Betsuin  
hawaiibetsuin.org

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

## Gotan-e Services Scheduled For May 16

Dharma School Service at 9:00 AM via Zoom and  
10 AM English Service via YouTube

May 21st is the birthday of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Shin Buddhism, and his birthday celebration service, GOTAN-E is held every May.

In 1173, Shinran Shonin was born. He had a lot of hardships and difficulties in his life. However, he revealed that Amida Buddha's Compassion is working for us all untiringly, and the Buddha gives us the energy to survive in our lives.



On Sunday, May 16, there will be a Zoom Dharma School Gotan-e Service at 9:00 am, and online there will be a YouTube Gotan-e Service at 10:00 am. Speaker for the 10 AM service will be Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani. Call the Betsuin office to get a link to the Zoom service. Let us celebrate Shinran Shonin's birthday and listen to his teachings at the services.

## Living Treasures Of Hawai'i 2021 Special Program

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i's Living Treasures of Hawai'i program, established in 1976, has recognized over 200 individuals who have demonstrated excellence and high achievement in their field of endeavor and who have made significant contributions toward enriching our society. This year, due to COVID-19 restrictions, in lieu of our traditional luncheon program recognizing new honorees, we produced a special one-hour program, "Life and Light: Wisdom of Hawai'i's Treasures" featuring interviews with five past honorees. The program will air on May 27, 2021, at 7:00 pm (K5 and live stream on Facebook), and May 30, 2021, at 8:00 pm (KHNL). The Living Treasures of

Hawai'i™: "Life and Light - Wisdom of Hawai'i's Treasures" brings together the wise sayings and teachings from five Living Treasures of Hawai'i™ honorees: Robert Cazimero,

Puanani Burgess, Lillian Yajima, Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, and Nainoa Thompson.



This inspirational television special highlights what makes the Living Treasures of Hawai'i™ program unique and shares the history of this prestigious honor that is part of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

## Dharma Message: “The Evil Person as the Chief Object of Amida Buddha’s Primal Vow”

Rev. Sol Kalu

When the historical Buddha Shakyamuni attained enlightenment under the bodhi tree some 2500 years ago in India, the very first teachings he shared with other people was the Four Noble Truths. And the first of the four noble truths is that “life is suffering” or some say, “life does not always go the way we want it to.” It is the goal of Buddhism to liberate all sentient beings from suffering through awakening to the true nature of things, and this awakening was usually achieved during the Buddha’s time by meditation and following a prescribed set of precepts. The monks who devoted their time solely to the attainment of enlightenment formed groups known as sanghas with the historical Buddha Shakyamuni as

the teacher, and this was the early form of Buddhism known as the Theravada tradition.

With the advent of the Mahayana tradition of Buddhism, some hundreds of years after the passing of the historical Buddha, the concept of the Bodhisattva and the Age of Dharma Decline came about. The focus of salvation shifted from the self-practicing monk becoming an arhat to that of the bodhisattva, who delays his attainment of buddhahood in order to help others attain enlightenment. The Age of Dharma Decline known as ‘mappou’ in Japanese is the last of the Three Ages of Buddhism following the death of Sakyamuni Buddha. During this degenerate third age, it was believed that people would not be able to attain enlightenment through the words of Sakyamuni Buddha, and society would become morally corrupted. In Buddhist thought, during the Age of Dharma Decline, the teachings of the Buddha would still be correct, but people would no longer be capable of following them. Only the teaching was there but practice and enlightenment were no longer possible.

Our founder Shinran Shonin, who lived during the Age of Mappou and whose birthday the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji sect of Pure Land Buddhism is observing this month, diligently practiced the asceticism of the Tendai tradition for 20 years on Mt. Hiei but finally came to the realization that such rigorous practices did not lead to his awakening and liberation. Shinran Shonin was troubled by his own blind passions or bonno and despite 20 years of ascetic practices he could not attain the enlightenment he was seeking. After undergoing a 100 day retreat at Rokkaku-do temple in Kyoto, the Bodhisattva Kannon appeared to him in a dream in the form of Prince Shotoku. Prince Shotoku directed Shinran to see

Honen Shonin. Shinran descended from Mt. Hiei, became a disciple of Honen, and during the first year of his meeting Honen Shonin, at age 29, he attained enlightenment or salvation through the Vow of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life. This attainment of salvation through relying solely on the power of Amida’s vow and discarding all sundry practices became the core of Shinran’s teachings throughout his life. Essentially Shinran said that because we are all defiled by greed, hatred, and delusion, we have no chance of gaining enlightenment by ourselves and that by entrusting ourselves totally to Amida Buddha without any calculation or doubt, we are assured of birth in the Pure Land. Shinran stressed absolute reliance on the other power of Amida’s vow. One’s own efforts are useless in achieving salvation. Even faith in the nembutsu arises not through the individual’s own efforts or virtue but is bestowed by Amida’s grace.



One of the major characteristics of Shinran’s teachings is that the evil person, even more than the good person is the chief object of Amida’s original vow. This idea is called “akunin shoki,” which means “evil people have the right qualifications” for rebirth. The reason for this is that good persons will tend to rely on their own merits to achieve salvation, while evil persons, knowing themselves to be without virtue, will be more ready to entrust themselves wholly to the power of Amida’s vow.

In the Tannisho, it is written that out of great compassion Amida Buddha made His Vow for us beings full of evil passion who are unable to set ourselves

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# 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@hawaiiibetsuin.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.

### GOJI STAFF:

Editorial: *Jo desMarets; Dianne Ida, Randy Kawamoto, Rev. Yuika Hasebe, Japanese section editor* Production: *Stacy Bradshaw, Colleen Kunishige*; Circulation: *Stacy Bradshaw*; Contributing reporters from *Hongwanji Mission School, Buddhist Women’s Association, Dharma School & Parents, Project Dana, Wednesday Gang and Gals, Green Team, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Pacific Buddhist Academy, Betsuin Board and Social concerns, and the Kyodan*

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

## President's Message from Dexter Mar



### Realizing Hope, part 4 of 4

By Dexter Mar

#### *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.** □

Hope isn't something that we ask of others, it's something that we have to demand from ourselves. □

Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate

Finally, this month, let's focus on the concluding part of the Hawaii Betsuin hope for our future: **“Inspired by Buddhist values”** How might we become our dream?

Two possible areas were offered in the January 2021 GOJI to be inspired by Buddhist values:

- **Dharma teachings:** supporting youth programs (Hongwanji Mission School, Pacific Buddhist Academy, Boy and Girl Scouts, Dharma School, JrYBA, YESS [Young Enthusiastic Shinshu Seekers] Camp)
- **Golden Chain of Love:** Reaching out to people in Honolulu via programs in Peace, Environment, and Community

- I. Our Buddhist values are skillfully shared through our youth programs. By showing our youth how to live with others, the teachings (4 Noble Truths, 6 Paramitas, Golden Chain of Love, etc.) are demonstrated by adult and youth leaders. The Betsuin's commitment to schools and youth development is a precious jewel. Let's continue to fully support current and future youth programs in all possible ways.
- II. Since 1927, Hawaii Betsuin minister, Rev. Dorothy Hunt's "Golden Chain of Love" has inspired many generations of Hawaii Hongwanji, global Honganji, and all Buddhists to Buddhist values. The Golden Chain of Love beautifully captures the essence of Siddhartha Buddha's teachings and values. **By “keeping your link bright and strong, may you attain Perfect Peace.”** Let's express these values by continuing to reach out to the community with diverse Earth awareness events, Social improvement programs, and Peace services.

Namo Amida Butsu!



## BWA News and Events

### Fujiko Motobu

#### HEALTHY FOOD:

Many of the BWA women live a long life, and this may be due to their good eating habits. Certain onions are good for the heart. Onions that contain the antioxidant quercetin seem to protect against heart diseases by keeping the bad LDL cholesterol from sticking to the arteries. The onions that are rich in quercetin are yellow onions, red onions and purple onions. White onions and scallions are not as rich in quercetin. Japanese women love to make onion pickles (tsukemono) and use colored onions, especially purple onions, that unknowingly have been keeping our hearts strong. So eat up, ladies.

#### THE DIRTY DOZEN: 12 MYTHS ABOUT OUR BRAIN THAT YOU MAY HAVE BEEN BELIEVING

Myth 1: The brain is a complete mystery. This is not true. Scientists have made great strides in understanding the brain. We know more about the connections between the different parts of the brain and their relevance to how we think, move and feel. We can identify the areas of the brain responsible for depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and addiction. After injury or stroke, better rehabilitation can be done.

Myth 2: Older people are doomed to forget things. There is some truth to this; some cognitive skills do decline as we age. However, as you age one gets superior with vocabulary and good at judging of character. We tend to improve over time at controlling our own emotions, weathering stress, and finding meaning in our lives.

Myth 3: Dementia is an inevitable consequence to old age. Dementia is not a normal part of aging.

Myth 4: Older people can't learn new things. This is not true. Older ones may not learn as fast as they used to, but never say "never." Even those with Alzheimer's disease can continue to learn new things.

Myth 5: You must master one language before learning another. This is not true. Children can learn multiple languages when they are young. Children seem to learn a new language more easily than adults because they are less self conscious.

Myth 6: A person who has memory training never forgets. "Use it or lose it."

Myth 7: We use only 10% of our brain. This myth is certainly not true. We do not waste 90% of our brain.

Myth 8: Male and female brains differ in ways that dictate learning abilities and intelligence. Studies are continuing in this area. Alzheimer's seems to strike a disproportionate number of women compared to men. How many times a woman is pregnant over her lifetime is one of the theories being studied. Women have an advantage over men in their verbal abilities. Women can hide symptoms of Alzheimer's with their superior verbal skills.



Myth 9: A crossword puzzle a day can keep the brain doctor away. Unfortunately crossword puzzles flex only a portion of the brain, mostly in word finding ability.

Myth 10: You are dominated by either your "right" or "left" brain. Contrary to what we may have been taught, the two sides of the brain are intricately codependent. Brain scanning technology has revealed that the brain's two hemispheres work together.

Myth 11: You have only five senses; sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing. There are others with "cept" endings, which is Latin for take or receive. Proprioception: A sense of where your body parts are and what they are doing. Equilibrioception: A sense of balance, otherwise known as your internal GPS. This tells you if you are sitting, standing, or lying down. It is located in the inner ear. Nociception: A sense of pain. Thermoreception: A sense of temperature. Chronoception: A sense of passage of time. Interception: A sense of your internal needs, like hunger, thirst, and needing to use the bathroom.

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## BWA News and Events continued from page 4

Myth 12: You are born with all the brain cells you will ever have, your brain is hardwired and brain damage is always permanent. Actually we can rewire our brains and generate new brain cells under the right circumstances.  
(from KEEP SHARP, by Sanjay Gupta, MD)

### HOW TO KEEP A SHARP MIND: MOVE:

Exercise, both aerobic and nonaerobic, they're good for your brain. Do something physical, like a bike ride, push ups, swimming or running. Your exercises will stimulate your mind. DISCOVER: A study from the University of Texas at Dallas says that picking up a new hobby, like painting or digital photography, learning a new software or language can strengthen the brain. Even brushing your teeth with the other arm will stimulate your brain. RELAX: Relaxing is not only a physical thing for the body, your brain needs to cool down too. Poor sleep can lead to impaired memory and chronic stress can impair your ability to learn. Stress is especially bad. NOURISH:

The link between diet and brain health has been anecdotal for a long time. Now there is evidence to show that eating certain foods (e.g. cold water fish, whole grains, extra virgin olive oil, nuts and seeds, fibrous whole fruits and vegetables) while limiting certain foods (those high in sugar, saturated fat, and trans-fatty acids) can help avoid memory and brain decline, protect the brain against disease. Eating well is more important than ever now that we know our diet can affect our brain health. CONNECT: Connecting with others, in person-to-person, face-to-face. Having a diverse social network can improve our brain's plasticity and help preserve our cognitive abilities. Interacting with others helps reduce stress and boosts our immune system. It can decrease our risk of cognitive decline.

Remember to MOVE, DISCOVER, RELAX, NOURISH, AND CONNECT to keep our brains functioning to capacity.

### HUMOR...DON'T JUST SMILE, LAUGH OUT LOUD SO YOUR BRAIN CAN MOVE ABOUT.

Lambs to the left of me, mutton to the right. Here I am. Stuck in the middle with EWE.

SIGN READS: FROG PARKING ONLY...ALL OTHERS WILL BE TOAD.

If your car is running, I'm voting for IT.

I want to grow my own food but I can't find BACON seeds.

This is my STEP ladder. I never knew my REAL ladder.

Bread is like the sun. It rises in the YEAST. And sets in the WAIST.

How come KANSAS and ARKANSAS are pronounced so differently? Pronouncing words that end in -OUGH: Cough, bough, rough, dough, through, and though. (Did you pronounce them the same?)

## Dharma Message continued from page 2

free from the suffering of samsara, through any religious practice. Since the purpose of the Vow is to enable such foolish persons to attain Buddhahood, the person full of blind passions who entrusts himself wholeheartedly to Amida Buddha is the very object of the Vow. The good person who can achieve liberation by his/her own self power is therefore not the real object of Amida's salvatio; for that person, Amida's vow is not necessary. Such "good" people trust in their own self power and not in the Other Power of the Buddha.

How wonderful it is to grasp the full meaning of akunin shoki, for in this

Age of Mappou, only the teachings remain and both practice and attainment are no longer possible. So, in a sense, there is no real "good" person capable of attaining enlightenment though self-effort.

People of this latter age are all "bonbu" without exception, and the compassion of Amida Buddha, through the working of the Primal Vow offers a salvation that is truly boundless and unlimited. It was Shinran Shonin's personal experience while on Mt. Hiei that he realized his limitations as a man, hopelessly mired in the depths of blind passions. He was an akunin at that time in his life, and when he

encountered the teachings of Amida's salvation through meeting Honen Shonin, Shinran received true shinjin which broke the darkness of his mind and enabled him to live in the joy of the Nembutsu life.

In closing, I would like to quote the passage from Shinran Shonin's Koso Wasan:

"Knowing truly that the Primal Vow-- The perfect One Vehicle that brings about sudden attainment-- Grasps those who commit grave offenses and transgressions, we are quickly brought to realize that blind passions and enlightenment are not two in substance." Namo Amida Butsu!



## "Buddhism and Everyday Life." A Seminar with BCA Bishop Marvin Harada

The Honolulu and Oahu Hongwanji Councils and the Office of Buddhist Education sponsored a virtual Spring Nembutsu Seminar on Saturday, March 27, with featured speaker, Bishop Marvin Harada, BCA. This seminar focused on seeing Buddhism in our everyday life by looking at examples from Shin Buddhists whose everyday life experience was their greatest teacher, but based on their deep listening and foundation of the Dharma.

About 170 people registered from Hongwanji temples across the islands, from the BCA, Canada and other Buddhist denominations — Higashi

Hongwanji, Jodo Mission, Soto Mission, Enmanji, BDK.

Thanks to generous donations for the seminar, which were earmarked to purchase copies of Bishop Harada's book "Discovering Buddhism in Everyday Life," we will eventually have 20 copies of this book that will be available to borrow through Hawaii Betsuin.

For those who missed the live seminar, here is a link to a video recording of the seminar—  
[https://youtu.be/zZf\\_XQr-gVE](https://youtu.be/zZf_XQr-gVE)



## Preschool Students Celebrate Earth Day Submitted by Wendy Harmon

Moiliili Hongwanji Preschool

celebrated Earth Day on Thursday, April 22, 2021. The two year old class made planters with recycled water bottles and recycled cups from Coffee Bean & Tea. They painted the bottles and cups and decorated them with shapes, then filled the planters with soil. To complete the activity, organic flower and vegetable seeds were planted in the recycled containers. Everyone is excited to see what grows! The two year old class also participated in activities



Wendy Harman's preschool students at Moiliili Hongwanji Preschool learn about the importance of caring for our Earth on Earth Day!

New For You!

## Betsuin Presents: Dial-A-Dharma Message

Starting in May 2021, the Betsuin is offering a new way to hear the Dharma! It's the **Dial-A-Dharma Message!** This new program is being offered on a trial basis to assist our sangha members who do not have Internet access or are not comfortable using the Internet.

Please call **(808) 536-2456** for English message. Japanese language dharma message coming soon!



that taught them more about being thankful for the environment and the things that surround them. Hope everyone had a Happy Earth Day 2021!

We Love You,  
Moiliili Hongwanji  
Preschool  
Two Year Old Class

## Betsuin Dharma School News Debbie Kubota

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

Our virtual Betsuin Dharma School services continue via Zoom on Sundays at 9 am. Honolulu Dharma School families from Betsuin and Jikoen continue to join us for our services and activities. We are so grateful to have our students support our services by being emcees and reading aspirations. Many thanks to Talin Giang, Ellen Ruckmann-Bruch, Jett Katano, and Byron, Cora and Vincent Saito for their willingness to help.

Our March 7th service theme was Girls' Day and we featured the read-aloud book ***My Name is not Isabella*** during our Dharma School activities with a discussion with our students after hearing the story.

Rinban Hagio shared a Dharma Message about the Lotus Flower and its five virtues on March 14. 1) Purity/free of stain. 2) Virtue of one's stem and flower. 3) Having seeds and a flower at the same time. 4) Many seeds are produced from one flower. 5) Stalk is hard on the outside but hollow on the inside. We congratulated Rinban Hagio on becoming a grandfather and to celebrate, we had a scavenger hunt activity in which the Dharma School students looked for "things that bring them joy" around the house, such as "a picture of your family," "your favorite book," "something you made." It was fun to see what everyone shared.

Our Spring Higan service on March 21 featured Reverend Masanari Yamagishi as our speaker. His Dharma Message focused on the movie "The Wizard of Oz." He related



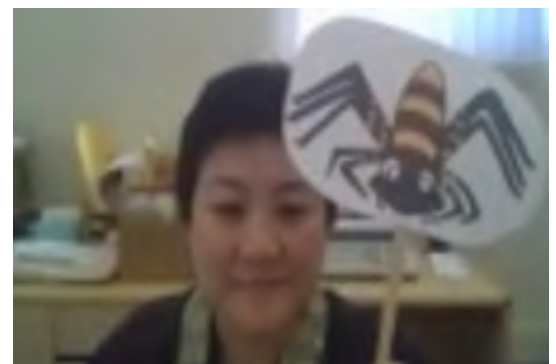
Dorothy's ruby slippers to putting our hands together in gassho; the yellow brick road to the way of Nembutsu; the Wicked Witch to sickness/disaster; the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion to our Dharma Friends (Ministers, Sangha, Dharma School Teachers). We are all finding the path together. As in the story, where Dorothy says, "there's no place like home," being embraced by the Nembutsu gives us a safe, comfortable feeling like being home. To promote the theme of Spring Higan, which is a time of balance and harmony with day and night of approximately equal length, our Dharma School activity was for each family to build a house using playing cards. After their card house building, everyone shared what they learned — "never give up," "don't get frustrated if your house is knocked down, just start over and build a better house," "accept impermanence/change," "you need a good foundation to build a strong card house."

On March 28, the theme was "Respect." The Dharma Message

featured the video "Do Unto Otters." Then for the Dharma School activity, we asked the students/participants to distinguish the difference between respectful and disrespectful activities, such as being quiet in a library, interrupting and not listening, using eye contact when talking to someone and chewing your food with your mouth open.

During our April services and activities, we celebrated Buddha Day (4/11), Earth Day (4/18), and Eshinni-Kakushinni Day together with the betsuin BWA (4/25) featuring Carol Valentine (Lihue Hongwanji Board President) as our guest speaker.

No matter what your age, our virtual services are open to all generations from across our islands and the Mainland. Please contact our Betsuin office if you are interested. Hope to "see" you online with us soon!





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

02.....Rev. Shinkai Murakami  
09.....Rev. Shigenori Makino  
16.....Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani  
23.....Rev. Yuika Hasebe  
30.....Rev. Shingo Furusawa

**NOTICE:**

The Betsuin is now scheduling in person funerals and memorial services with a limit of

9 attendees or hybrid services via Zoom with 9 in person attendees.

Other options are available.

Please call the office at 536-7044 for more information.

On site

Sunday services continue to be **CANCELLED**

The 10 am English services are premiered on YouTube at 10 am Sunday mornings.

**Go to the website  
hawaiiibetsuin.org  
for a link**



**In Memoriam**



**MARCH 2021**

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

2/16 ABE, Howard Chuji (93)

2/21 MATSUMOTO, Kenichi (96)

02 KIRIU, Steven Masato (62)	18 NAKANO, Stanley Hideo (83)
03 AOKI, Jerald Kunio (77)	18 SAKAI, Yukie (95)
03 ASEKA, Patsy Sonoe (94)	25 ITAMURA, Kazuhiko David (95)
06 FUJIMOTO, Robert Rikio (80)	25 MATSUMURA, Elsie Sayoko (83)
09 HIRAE, Clara Kiyoko (97)	25 SUMIMOTO, Helen Toshiye (99)
09 MORIMOTO, Robert Kazama (88)	28 HARUKI, Frank Kazuo (90)
10 HIROHATA, Milton Mikio (80)	29 YAZAWA, Janet Fumie (101)
11 INOUYE, Barbara Mitsuye (92)	

**Nursing Home Services**

**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