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GOJI

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NEWSLETTER
of the

Honpa Hongwanji
Hawai'i Betsuin
hawaiibetsuin.org

2024 Slogan:

*"Building Healthy
Sanghas: Sharing
Nembutsu Moments"*

BETSUIN
MINISTERS

Chief Minister
Rev. Yuika Hasebe

Ministerial Staff
Rev. Shingo Furusawa
Rev. Blayne
Nakasone Sakata
Rev. Charlene Kihara

New Year's Greetings from OHTANI Kojun Monshu

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



Over the last year, innumerable people worldwide have been affected by natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and forest fires. I was particularly shocked by the wild fires that devastated the island of Maui in the state of Hawaii. This disaster completely destroyed the temple hall of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission and one temple member was reported to have lost his life. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to all who have perished in those calamities. I would also like to express my sympathies to those who are still coping with the dire situations. It is my sincere hope that all who have been af-

affected will soon be able to return to a normal daily life.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022 is still continuing. Not only that, conflict between Israel and Palestine has once again flared up from October 2023, embroiling nations concerned with victimizing a large number of people many of whom are civilians. Looking at the appalling state of the world, the following words of Sakyamuni Buddha come to mind. "Everyone fears violence and is scared of death. In consideration of all life, do not kill and do not make others kill."

Every one of us who has received life as a human being, no matter the reason, must be ensured equally of human rights, and no one's life should be threatened. In reality, however, conflicts and terrorist attacks have occurred everywhere in the world and for many people, their right to live and exist has been threatened. As Buddhists who aspire for peace, we must keep Sakyamuni Buddha's words seriously in our hearts and pursue our endeavor of contributing toward world peace and security.

During the last year, we observed the Joint Celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching at Hongwanji, Kyoto for a total of 30 days, divided into 5 sessions during the period from March 29 to May 21. On this occasion, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to those who came to Japan to attend, as well as those who supported it in various ways. This celebratory event could be realized only because our predecessors have cherished the Jodo Shinshu teaching as their spiritual foundation for many years no matter when or where they were, and carefully transmitted it to us today.

Let us, too, continue listening to the teaching as the center of our life while cherishing each day.

January 1, 2024
OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

President's New Year's Message for 2024

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Warren Tamamoto



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, 2024. The year 2023 was an eventful one. Many of our Sangha were able to attend the Joint Celebration (Commemoration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching) at our Honzan in Kyoto on May 10, 2023. The Joint Celebration program was well organized and meaningful. The 17th World Buddhist Women's Convention (WBWC) followed on May 11 and 12 at the modern (although 50 years old) Kyoto International Conference Center. These two events were a highlight of the year for those who were able to attend. I will always remember the warm welcome that we received from our hosts at the Honzan and at the World Buddhist Women's Convention.

Soon after our return from Japan, we said "Mahalo and Aloha" to outgoing Bishop, Rev. Eric Matsumoto, Mrs. Tamayo Matsumoto, Chika and Caden at a luncheon in July. In August we warmly greeted incoming Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, Mrs. Yoshiko Umitani, and daughters Naho and Riho at a luncheon.

Then, the disastrous Maui Wildfires of August 8, 2023 destroyed the historic town of Lahaina. Our Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, located near the center of the town was not spared. The temple, social hall, and minister's residence burned to the ground. Only the columbarium appears to have survived the fire. Fortunately, Rev. Ai Hironaka and family along with many other temple members evacuated in time. However, we have learned that one temple member lost his life in that fire. It appears that 2023 will be remembered

as the year of the Maui Wildfires and the year that Lahaina Hongwanji was lost to the fire. This was a great loss for Lahaina town and the entire Hawaii Sangha.

However, this was not the end of the story. Community, state and federal agencies rushed into action and are still on the ground in Maui, planning for the future of Lahaina town and helping those displaced by the fire. Maui temple ministers and Sangha have warmly supported Lahaina members displaced by the fire. The Hongwanji community statewide, nationally and internationally has responded with compassionate action in the form of postcards, letters, gifts and generous monetary donations. Like the recent "disaster" that affected us, the COVID-19 pandemic, we learned that we are adaptable and we are resilient. The Lahaina community, and Lahaina Hongwanji Sangha in particular, I believe will respond with grit and determination.

Our theme and slogan for 2024 is "Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Nembutsu Moments." We live with joy and gratitude for Amida's universal and unconditional compassion for us. Since we are connected with and care for the people around us, we share our Nembutsu moments, so that others may awaken to, and appreciate the Buddha's limitless Compassion. In this way, we can each contribute to building healthy Sanghas.

With Gassho,
Warren Tamamoto
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



GOJI

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DEADLINE:

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

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Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani's New Year's Greetings

To welcome the New Year, I would like to extend my heartfelt greetings to you all. On behalf of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all of you for your support, dedication, and participation in our services and activities.

Since I took the Headquarters Office as the new Bishop last July, I have been able to visit some of your temples. I bow my head to the ministers, temple leaders, and temple members for their tireless effort in protecting their temples and sharing with others the joy of Namo Amida Butsu. Each temple has its challenges and opportunities. As a community of people joined together revering the teaching of Shinran Shonin, let us work toward the realization of a society in which everyone can live a life of spiritual fulfillment.

This year, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will observe the Triple Celebration at Ala Moana Hotel on September 7-8, 2024. The Triple Celebration commemorates the 850th Anniversary of the Birth of Shinran Shonin, the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teachings, and the 135th Anniversary of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. The Steering Committee is working hard towards the two-day celebration event and its related programs. I would like to invite you all to attend this auspicious anniversary.

Our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Theme and Slogan for 2024 is "Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Nembutsu Moments." What are the "Nembutsu Moments"? These are the moments when the voice of the Nembutsu, "Namo Amida Butsu," sponta-



neously flows from our lips.

The main body of the Sutra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life explains the Forty-eight Vows of Amida Buddha, who undertook to establish a Pure Land for the enlightenment of all sentient beings. Shinran Shonin regarded that our act of saying "Namo Amida Butsu" is derived wholly from the working of Amida's Vow. It means that the sound of "Namo Amida Butsu," the promise Amida Buddha made to embrace and never abandon all beings, is already fulfilled and extended to all beings. It is the calling voice from the Buddha of Immeasurable Light and Life that holds the Buddha's boundless empathy, concern, and compassion toward all beings. Such a message of universal compassion reaches into our hearts and minds, and flows from our lips spontaneously as "Namo Amida Butsu."

What we experience in our daily lives could be the opportunities to ascertain and appreciate the truth of Boundless Wisdom and Compassion that embraces our lives. Let us experience, savor, appreciate, and share the Nembutsu moments with our families and friends in our daily lives.

May the sound of the Nembutsu flow from our lips. May the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha inspire and guide us always. Namo Amida Butsu.

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani, Bishop
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

PLEASE JOIN US & GEORGE TAKEI AT HONPA HONGWANJI HAWAI'I BETSUIN HONDO

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2024

9:30am Special Service
"What Buddhism Means to Me"
 (Free admission)

5pm "George Takei Reflects on Day of Remembrance"
followed by food & entertainment at Pacific Buddhist Academy
 (Fundraising event - Tickets at \$150)

All proceeds will support social justice initiatives at the temple and other nonprofit organizations (including Spill the Tea)

Event presented by:
 Honolulu Hongwanji Council
 Pacific Buddhist Academy

Community partners:
 Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center
 Japanese American Citizens League, Honolulu Chapter
 Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i
 University of Hawai'i LGBTQIA+ Center



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER
GEORGE TAKEI
ACTOR/CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST



[HHHB.LINK/TAKEI](https://hhhb.link/takei)

For sponsorship information please contact: Jon Matsuoka at jmatsuoka@hawaiibetsuin.org

New Year's Greetings!...



Message from Ribbon Yuika Hasebe Happy New Year!

I would like to express my deepest appreciation for your support and thoughtfulness for Hawaii Betsuin. This year, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii will celebrate the 850th anniversary of the birth of Shinran Shonin, the 800th year of the establishment of Jodo Shinshu and the 135th anniversary of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. During its 135 years of rich history, HHMH has been through so many challenges and turmoils. I sincerely bow my head to our predecessors to express my appreciation for their effort to protect and share the Dharma. Through those 135 years, 800 years, 850 years, and from infinite eons ago, the Great Compassion of Amida Buddha reached us here and now. Being embraced by Amida Buddha's Compassion and wisdom, I am looking forward to welcoming the new year together with you, and facing forward and walking into days which are about to unfold in front of us. In gassho, Namo Amida Butsu.

Rev. Blayne Nakasone Sakata



Happy New Year everybody! I hope you all had a great holiday. How did you start your New Year? Did you come to the temple for the first service of the year? I was at the temple; did I see you? Or maybe you were at the mall buying Fukubukuro (Lucky Bag)? However you may have spent it, I hope you were all staying healthy and happy.

I would like to again just thank you all for accepting me as the new minister in our organization as well as ask for your cooperation and support as we start the new year. With our mutual cooperation and support, we welcome this special year. If you didn't know by now, we are having a Triple Celebration: Shinran Shonin's 850th Birthday, 800 years since the founding of Jodo Shinshu, and 135 years of Jodo Shinshu history in our beautiful Hawaii. Through this celebration I hope that we can all

not only have a wonderful celebration but also grow in the Nenbutsu together as one community. We, the recipients of those who have recited the Name, Namo Amida Butsu before us should honor them and their efforts by promoting the joys of Amida Buddha's great Wisdom and Compassion. In order to do so, we must work together. So, as the year begins, and with the Triple Celebration coming up soon, let us reflect, act, and listen to the Dharma as we together perpetuate Jodo Shinshu into 2024.

Rev. Shingo Furusawa

Happy New Year!
Thank you very much for your help and kindness last year. I would like to ask for your continued support this year.

In Gassho.
Rev. Shingo Furusawa



Rev. Char Kihara

Happy New Year! Shinnen Akemashite Omedetou!

It is hard to believe that the year has ended, and a new year has begun. For the last two-and-a-half years, it has been a tumultuous time of war, violence, illness, and natural disasters. Despite this, there have been moments of inspiration, advances in science and medicine, and the return of species of animals thought to be extinct.

Next year will be the Year of the Wood Dragon. I hope that you have a won

BWA News and Events

Fujiko Motobu

JANUARY 2024 BWA EVENTS

- Jan. 01, Mon.; New Year's Day Service
- Jan. 06, Sat.; Hosha: sign up on Google drive
- Jan. 15, Mon.; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Jan. 21, Sun.; General Membership Mtg. #1
- Jan. 28, Sun.; 4th Sunday, BWA refreshments at 9:30 am service
- The January Ex Bd meeting will be a Zoom meeting TBS

HAPPY NEW YEAR - AKEMASHITE OMEDETO GOZAIMASU

It is year 2024, the year of the DRAGON, according to the Chinese horoscope. The last four years, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 were devastating with a lot of hardship and turmoil all over the world. Maui suffered from a great fire in Lahaina; thus, many lost their homes and all of their possessions, and people were burned to death as well and peace and tranquility are yet to come. For some of the people, they will live in the memory of devastation for decades. Some of the others suffered serious illnesses with Covid starting the wicked sickness, followed by other illnesses. Many vaccines were issued to all to prevent more illnesses and deaths. Yet, there are some people who do not believe in vaccines and take the chance that they will stay healthy. Lahaina Hongwanji burned and must be rebuilt in the future. The minister's home also was destroyed, but luckily the minister and his family members were able to escape and find shelter.

People suffered enough for four years, so let us hope that beginning in 2024, things will change for the better. The afternoon Sunday service stopped and has yet to restarted. For the few that used to attend the 1:00 pm afternoon Sunday service, it is a sad state

of affairs if the temple will not start the service. Even if just one member attends the service, it would be nice

to have it be continued. Perhaps year 2024 should be "the Year of Learning" for the members and we should establish an organization of ministers and members that meets once a month or so to discuss things regarding Jodo Shinshu teachings. We have been studying the teachings all these years and perhaps never understood their meaning. For



continued on page 9

Hawaii Betsuin BWA Celebrates 125 Years of Service to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha

Over 70 BWA members, ministers, and guests gathered in the beautifully-decorated social hall for the **Hawaii Betsuin BWA 125th Anniversary and Year End Party** on Dec. 17. The creativity, caring, and commitment of BWA President, Jo desMarets, and her Planning Committee could be seen in all aspects of this celebration -- the magical transformation of the hall, the appealing centerpieces, favors, and goodie bags, the delicious Fukuya lunch, the meaningful and enjoyable program, the exciting give-away of many prizes -- and even the decorating of canes!



Co-MCs, Cindy Alm and Wendie Yumori, introduced each wonderful program segment.

First, Sharyn Sekine and Norine Liem conducted the initiation of new BWA members and Sharyn provided bio highlights of each one. The new BWA members in attendance at the party, Hyacinth

Dezenobia, Susan Hashimoto, Cindy Kakutani, and Zoey Yamamoto, were warmly presented a long-stemmed rose and small gift by the BWA's honored nonagenarian (90 and above) members, Lillian Inatsuka, Tomo Mohideen, Fujiko Motobu, Karen Oda, and Ruth Tokumi.



Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani delivered a congratulatory message on the occasion of the BWA's 125th Anniversary. He encouraged everyone to be mindful of all that we have been enabled to receive and to treasure each other's presence and the precious moments shared during the celebration.



Penny Atcheson led everyone in a great educational game that focused attention on the timeline of **125 years of Honpa Hongwanji Hawai'i Betsuin Buddhist Women's** placed on each table. Each participant was given four cards, each card describing an historical BWA fact or historical event that could be placed on the timeline, but only if the same fact or event was "called" by Penny. The first person to place all four cards was the prize winner -- a guest, Alice, was the first to yell, "Yatta!"

Hoonko Services at Hawaii Betsuin on January 14~~21~~, 2024

We welcome all to attend the Hawaii Betsuin's 2024 Hoonko Service, scheduled for Sunday, January 14~~21~~, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

What is Hoonko?

Hoonko is Shinran Shonin's memorial day. On this date, followers of Jodo Shinshu worldwide express their sincere gratitude to our founder, Shinran Shonin, who dedicated his life to spreading the joy and teachings of the Nembutsu Path.

Both the Nishi Hongwanji and Higashi Hongwanji sects observe Hoonko but at different times. Nishi Hongwanji has a service from January 9 to January 16, whereas Higashi Hongwanji has its service in November.

Shinran Shonin's life was remarkable as he realized the ultimate truth about his mortality from a young age. He realized that everything was finite. Shinran Shonin learned about death and dying when his mother became sick and passed away when he was about four years old. After his mother died, Shinran Shonin was placed in a monastery on Mount Hiei. He was about nine years old and received his Tokudo ordination.

Through the many causes and conditions surrounding his life and hardships, Shinran never gave up his mission to share the Nembutsu teachings with everyone he met. What an incredible life he led, and even today, we can appreciate Shinran Shonin's sharing of the Light of Amida Buddha.

In Japan, the celebration service of Hoonko consists of reciting the Shoshinge and a special reading from the Shinran Dene, also called

the Godensho scrolls, compiled by Kakunyo Shonin. These scrolls are painted scenes with autobiographical notes of Shinran Shonin's life from childhood until his death and inurnment.

Hoonko Day Speaker:

Rev. David Fujimoto was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. He attended Hongwanji Mission School and graduated from Farrington High School. He went on to the University of Hawaii, Manoa and obtained a BA in Psychology. He returned to Farrington to teach, and work in the athletic training room as an assistant trainer.



His path to the ministry started when he became the assistant to the director at the Buddhist Study Center, where he received his Tokudo

Ordination in 2007. He received his Master's in Buddhist Studies from the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, California, in 2010. In 2010 he received his Kyoshi in Kyoto, Japan and received his Kaikyoshi status in 2011.

In 2015 he attended the University of Hawaii Hilo where he studied Spirituality in Health Care, and in 2023 became a Board-Certified Chaplain with an interest in Embedded and Deliberative Theologies and its role in Jōdo Shinshu Buddhism in Hawaii.

He has served as an associate minister at Hilo Betsuin, resident minister at Puna Hongwanji, and is currently serving Mililani Hongwanji and overseeing 'Ewa Hongwanji.

In March 2024, he will be the resident minister at Moiliili Hongwanji.

"We Shall Overcome." DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 2024 PARADE

The Hawaii Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition extends an invitation to the community and its many organizations and individuals to participate in our annual MLK Celebration Parade, this year on Monday January 15, 2024.

The parade begins at Magic Island with the formation of organizations at 7:30 a.m., then moves out 9:00 a.m., traveling on Kalakaua Avenue through Waikiki to Kapiolani Park. Get your parade shoes on! Honolulu District is sponsoring our multi-temple participation this year, and we will have a bus!

For more information, contact Steve Lose at lohse@hawaii.edu

Hawaii Betsuin January 2024 Speakers Schedule

1/7

Regular service

Japanese: Rev. Shingo Furusawa

English: Rev. Yuika Hasebe

1/14

Regular Sunday (MLK Jr. Theme)

Japanese: Rev. Toyokazu Hagio

English: Rev. Shingo Furusawa

1/21

Hoonko

Japanese: Rev. Shigenori Makino

English: Rev. David Fujimoto

1/28

Japanese: Rev. Yuika Hasebe

English: Ms. Annette Kam

Hawaii Betsuin General Membership Meeting and New Year's Party 2024

Sunday, January 28, 2024
11:30 am - 2:00 pm

in the Social Hall

1727 Pali Hwy Honolulu, 96813

Ticket Prices:

Senior 65+ \$15

Adult 18-64 \$20

Child 5-17 \$12

Under 5 Free

For Ticket Info, scan...



hhhb.link/NYparty24

Deadline to Purchase Tickets:

January 21, 2023

Lunch by Shiro's
Entertainment * Games * Prizes



We're Collecting Aloha Shirts

The Betsuin BWA continues to collect aloha shirts for distribution to our military serving overseas. Please contact Jo desMarets (purpleldy2@aol.com) to donate aloha shirts or for more information!



Search for "Hawaiian Shirts for Deployed Soldiers" on Facebook to see photos of our heroes receiving their Aloha Shirts while serving in remote locations around the world!

"Hawaiian Shirts for Deployed Soldiers"

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR PARADE

Monday

15 January, 2024

ANNOUNCEMENT

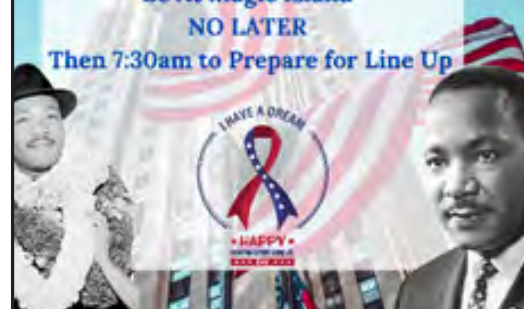
To All Parade Participants

PLEASE

Be At Magic Island

NO LATER

Then 7:30am to Prepare for Line Up



Message from Jon Matsuoka, Executive Director

At the start of the New Year, it is customary to think of resolutions for the coming year and reflect on the year that just ended. Each passing year brings us closer to end of life and a chance to reconcile impermanence. In 2023 my mother, Yoshie Kurokawa Matsuoka, passed. She was born over a century ago on a small farm in Vista, California to Japanese immigrants from Toyama Prefecture.

As with most Nisei, we got small and intermittent doses of her life story and had to draw from multiple sources to piece together a coherent narrative. Friends from Vista Hongwanji who were familiar with the region's history shared that the Kurokawas were one of the first Japanese to settle there. Their arrival came a mere 40 or so years after the Emancipation Proclamation and 30 years after the eradication of Native "hostiles" from the American plains and Southwest. It was a hardscrabble life for Japanese immigrants who faced blatant racism and were forbidden to own land. My grandfather, Seizo, recurringly leased raw land from white farmers to clear it

of rocks and vegetation. Once land was suitable for cultivation the farmers would promptly break the lease. Back then immigrants had no rights or legal recourse. Mom believed Grandpa died at a young age from exhaustion and overwork.

Soon thereafter World War II broke out. Japanese American families were callously whisked from their homes and communities and put in concentration camps. Her family was placed in Poston, Arizona, when she was a teenager. After a couple of years into the war, young women were able to leave the camp and move inland. She left Poston to attend nursing school in Chicago while her brother served his country and her widowed mother was left alone in camp. Through injustice, confusion, loss, and isolation, I'm convinced that Grandma's strong conviction to Buddhism saved her.

When the war was over the family convened back in Los Angeles. Mom met Dad at a Nisei singles function, courted and got married,



Yoshie Matsuoka



Jon Matsuoka

and settled in the Crenshaw District where I grew up. While raising four kids, Mom had a long career in public and private sector nursing. She lived long and well until the onset of dementia about 10 years ago. We were able to pool our resources together to keep her at home under the care of incredibly conscientious and compassionate caregivers.

I learned that when people grow old and senescence alters cognitive function, it doesn't make them less interesting or worthy. Thoughts unfiltered by politeness and correctness presses us to respond with equal candor. Mom couldn't remember what year it was, who was president, what she had for lunch but the line between her ego and spirit was never finer. Having forgone propriety, past and future, she lived purely in the moment. Conversations were direct, honest, and often very funny.

The system demeans elders for lack of productivity while condoning their capacity for wisdom. Compassion for frail elderly follows true pro-life ethos -- an appreciation for the living across all phases. So much more than souls wasting and waiting to die, the aged are exemplars of ingenuousness. I am blessed and grateful to have had my parents with me so late into life and will carry and continue to grow from their stories of resilience and resolve until my time comes.



Hawaii Betsuin to host “watch party” for Triple Celebration Zoom lectures in January

Want to go to Jodo Shinshu class together? We can try it out this month, January 2024. You are invited to come to the Hawaii Betsuin Lounge on Saturday morning January 13 to watch Dr. David Matsumoto answer, “What is Mahayana Bud-dhism?” and “What is Pure Land Buddhism?” This is the first online Buddhist education session leading up to the Triple Celebration. It will be presented live on Zoom from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.



“But It’s Zoom,” you say. “I can watch that from home.”

You certainly can — and if that’s the best way for you to participate, great! But if gathering in person to watch the lectures and share refreshments (popcorn and beverages?) and conversation before and after is

appealing to you, please come. “We have the technology,” much like how we can have a minister from a remote



location speak at our Sunday service.

Either way, we encourage you to register for the education series by using the QR code or visiting

forms.gle/fDZmLGBZuW1AHata8.

In addition, for the watch party, RSVPs to webmaster@hawaiihetsuin.org are helpful. Registering ensures you are notified of any changes. Mahalo! Plan to come to the Lounge a little before the lecture or stay a bit after.

We’ll decide about watch parties for the February to August sessions based on participation in the January watch party. *Submitted by David Atcheson*

BWA News and Events continued from page 5

example, who was Amida Buddha? Was he human? Who was the first person to recognize him? We should all have opportunities to inquire and ask questions regarding Jodo Shinshu teachings so we can fully understand that it is a religion for the living. Let us recite the Nembutsu frequently as Shinran Shonin did, and live a life of goodness.

HEALTHY LIVING FOR ALL

Some of us who are ignorant thought that Buddhism was a religion for the dying and funerals are conducted by the Buddhist ministers. Then 33 days, 49 days, one year, three years and so forth, memorial services are held by the families who visit the temple in remembrance of the deceased. Among the Buddhists, the deceased are remembered very honorably. There is nothing wrong with this practice; however, the young ones should be taught the reasons why these memorial service dates are important.

Women are basically very strong people. As the years go by they keep

up with building their endurance and stamina. If you are inactive or just sitting around you may lose your ability to be independent. You can rest when you need to but you must keep moving throughout the day doing activities that you enjoy. Stationary bicycling or chair exercises provide a break from inactive sitting. Gardening and yard work and walking in your neighborhood will get you out in the fresh air. Moving more and sitting less boost your energy and preserve your mobility.

One 79 year old woman shared this with us. “Smile and love yourself more by staying active and doing what you love most. Smile because you are alive and can enjoy the company of your family and friends. Smile and everyone will remember you with a happy face. Every day is Thanksgiving Day. Be happy and thrive.” Let us all smile and live a happy life from now on. Namo Amida Butsu.

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME HUMOR?

#1. A businessman gets on an elevator in his office building. A woman already inside greets him saying, “TGIF.” He smiles at her and replies, “SHIT.” The woman looks at him puzzled, and again says, “TGIF.” Again the man answers her with “SHIT.” The woman says, “Do you know what I am saying? TGIF means Thank God Its Friday.” “I know,” replies the man. “But SHIT means “Sorry Honey, it’s Thursday.”

#2. Manuel wasn’t feeling good so he went to see a doctor. After examining him, the doctor said, “You take these pills two days running and skip a day. Come back in one week.” After one week, Manuel goes back to the doctor. The doctor asked, “Manuel, did you follow my instructions?” Manuel said, “I wen try but I just couldn’t do it. I didn’t mind the running but the skipping one wen wear me out. I no can skip one whole day.”

New Year's Greetings contiued from page 4... Rev. Char Kihara

derful New Year. As the New Year approaches, let us reflect on the ocean of the Dharma as we imagine all of the possibilities before us to learn and share the Dharma in the new year.

Let me tell you a story from the Tang Dynasty in China that does that. It is called the "Well Frog."

One day, a tortoise was walking near a well and heard someone singing loudly. The Tortoise peered into the well and saw a frog sitting on a stone at the bottom of the nearly empty well. The Frog was sitting and singing happily.

'Hi there, Frog!' the Tortoise said, "Why are you sitting in an empty well?" The Frog stopped singing when he heard the Tortoise and said, "Hello, friend Tortoise, this is my home. It's the best place in the world! It is not empty. There is food for me to eat and water for me to drink. I can play in the shallow water, and there are many places for me to sit in the sunlight."

"Friend frog, you are missing out on seeing the world if you just stay in your little well. Let me give you a tour of the world outside of your well. I will show you my home which is the sea! The sea is so big that you cannot see the end of it. The water is deep, and there are so many fishes and plants and places to hide and play! There are so many delicious things to eat in the sea!" said the Tortoise.

"Aren't you curious about the world outside of this well?" the Tortoise asked.

"I am not sure," said the Frog. "How will we go there?"

"Get on my back and I will take you

there!" said the Tortoise.

The Frog sat on his stone to think about what the Tortoise said. "Okay, let us go to your home, the sea!"

The well frog climbed out of the well, hopped onto the back of the Tortoise, and sat down. As this was the first time he had ever been outside the well, he sat on the back of his friend, Tortoise, and looked around at everything. 'Wow, this is truly wonderful,' he thought. "Look at the flowers, plants, trees, animals, and insects." "I can feel the sun on my skin and feel the wind." "I can't wait to go to Tortoise's home, the sea!"

As the friends began their journey, Well Frog sang happily as he rode on the Tortoise's back on his grand adventure! "I am going to the sea! I am going to the sea!" Frog was so comfortable sitting on Tortoise's back that he closed his eyes and took a short nap.

After the Tortoise had walked a bit, he stopped near a sandy cove. "We are here, friend. This is my home, the sea!" said the Tortoise.

Well Frog opened his eyes and hopped off Tortoise's back. He felt the sand between his toes and on his feet for the first time. The sand was warm and gritty. He sniffed the air and could smell the saltiness of the ocean. He licked the air with his tongue and could taste the salt. Sitting in the sand, he was amazed by all he saw and could not say anything.

This story teaches us that we cannot have a small and narrow point

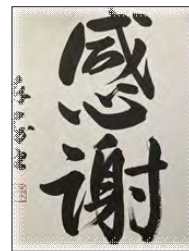
of view. We can see the opportunities and possibilities before us only by thinking of the big picture. Amida Buddha is like the Tortoise who has guided the Well Frog to the sea. Amida Buddha teaches us to learn the Dharma, which is deep and boundless like the ocean. The Buddha shows us that we cannot be stuck in a narrow point of view if we want to experience the compassionate Primal Vow.

Have a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Rev. Char Kihara

Your family name and Buddhist concepts in Kanji

Makes a great holiday gift and family keepsake for younger generations. Standard custom artwork on 12x10" sheet is \$60. A scroll from Japan is an additional \$28.



Hiromi Peterson, Master Calligrapher and 2023 Living Treasure of Hawaii honoree, has generously offered her services as a fundraiser for Hawaii Betsuin.

For more information, please contact Jon Matsuoka at 808-536-7044 or jmatsuoka@hawaiibetsuin.org

Scouting News Girl Scout News and Events

Amy Yonamine
Cadette Troop 383

On October 8, 2023, the Honpa Girl Scouts supported the Susan G. Komen More Than Pink Walk to fight against breast cancer. The scouts passed out pink ribbon leis that were handmade by the five Honpa Girl Scout troops. They also provided the cancer survivors with goodie bags, rose, drinks, breakfast bentos, and yogurt. When the walkers finished, the girls congratulated them and got to talk to some of the survivors of breast cancer. It was an exciting time for the girls to meet so many people from different backgrounds. Twelve scouts reported for duty at 5:30am and stayed until the program was finished. It was amazing to see people raise thousands of dollars to help people who are diagnosed with breast cancer, and it felt good to support an organization that has affected thousands of people and helped so many become healthy again. We were proud to be a part of this important event.



Make the Betsuin Part of Your Legacy

Through tax strategies you can leave real estate properties and IRA Roth accounts, required distribution amounts, and stocks to the temple, and:

- Increase rental income without the challenges of management.
- Avoid or significantly decrease taxes on the donation.
- Secure lifetime income.
- Ensure that your children and heirs are taken care of.

Planned Giving experts are now working with Hawai'i Betsuin to support our long-term sustainability while making sure that your financial needs and those of your descendants are met.

For more information please contact: Jon Matsuoka, Executive Director, Hawai'i Betsuin
808-536-7044
jmatsuoka@hawaiibetsuin.org

Queen Lili'uokalani
Ho'oku'ikahi Reconciliation Service

HONORING QUEEN LILI'UOKALANI & MARY MIKAHALA FOSTER
LEGACY OF JUSTICE & NONVIOLENCE
ANNUAL INTERFAITH GATHERING
JANUARY 19TH, 2024
6:30PM

HONPA HONGWANJI HAWAI'I BETSUIN
MAIN TEMPLE
1727 PALI HIGHWAY
&
PACIFIC JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION CENTER
&
HISTORIC HONOLULU CHURCHES

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT



In Memoriam



NOVEMBER 2023

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

November 2023

- | | | | |
|------------|------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 12/17/2022 | NOSAKA, Leroy Kuichi (79) | 03 | ISHIDA, Hisato (95) |
| 01/20/2023 | NISHIMOTO, Herbert
Tsumoru (94) | 03 | MURAKAMI, Stephen
Vincent (77) |
| 05/18/2023 | OMOTO, Walter Miyuki (85) | 03 | UYEDA, Harry Akira (91) |
| 09/19/2023 | KAWATA, Rose Otsuru (95) | 04 | FUJIMOTO, Setsuko (83) |
| 10/10/2023 | AWAKUNI, Roy Hajime (83) | 05 | SUEYOSHI, Ethel
Sumie (92) |
| 10/10/2023 | TSUBOTA, Leighton Hidemi (71) | 24 | SUMIDA, Carol Lynn
Takeko (78) |
| 10/18/2023 | SEIGAKU, Eleanor Kazuko (96) | 26 | TANABE, George Hideo (92) |
| 10/25/2023 | AKISADA, Patsy Kaori (96) | | |
| 10/26/2023 | SHIMOKAWA, Daniel
Kenichi (76) | | |

Radio Programs
KZOO (1210 AM)
Japanese Language,
SATURDAY AT 7:30 AM
JANUARY 2024

06... Gomonsu
Kojun Ohtani and
Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani
13...Rev. Yuika Hasebe
20...Rev. Toyokazu Hagio
27...Rev. Shingo Furusawa

Information Regarding Sunday Services

Attendee limits for in-person funerals and memorial services are now based on room capacity and families' comfort levels. Other service options are available. Please call the Betsuin office at (808) 536-7044 for current information and to plan for your family's needs.

Services are open to in-person attendees and a Zoom option continues to be available for the 9:30 a.m. English-language Family Services. The 8 a.m. Japanese language services continue in person only.

Many past services are available for replay on the Hawai'i Betsuin YouTube channel. For current information on Betsuin services, including Zoom connection details, see the online calendar at hawaiihetsuin.org. You may also check the Betsuin Bulletin sent by email on Fridays (subscribe at hawaiihetsuin.org/email-signup/). Or, you can call the Betsuin office at (808) 536-7044.

Schedule of Monthly Nursing Home Services

Leahi Hospital

Service every 2nd Tuesday at 10:00 AM

Hale O Meleana

Service Every 2nd Friday at 10:30 A.M.

Hale Ho Aloha

Service Every 3rd Tuesday at 10:00 A.M.

Maluhia Hospital

Service Every 3rd Wednesday at 10:00 A.M.

2024 Memorial Service Schedule

2024 is the memorial year for those who passed away in:

2023: 1st year	2012: 13th year	1992: 33th year
2022: 3rd year	2008: 17th year	1975: 50th year
2018: 7th year	2000: 25th year	1925: 100th year

The great practice is to say the Name of the Tathagata of unhindered 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 Namu-amida-butsu.

-Shinran Shonin