



# Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission

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 President: Mr Glenn Hamamura \* Minister:

## *New Year's Greeting*

### ***"Immeasurable Light and Life"***

**A**t the beginning of the new year, I would like to send you my greetings from Hongwanji in Kyoto.

Last year was truly a difficult year. At first I had hoped that from April, we could conduct an exciting and lively memorial for Shinran Shonin, one which is observed only once every fifty years. However, the March disaster changed everything. Although I believe that the agony of the disaster-affected people goes beyond anything we can imagine, this catastrophe has brought me to ponder everyday about what we should do, what we can do, and what the future holds. The nuclear power plant accident, in particular, has caused tremendous difficulties for not only the victims in that area, but has also hindered the enthusiasm of people engaged in relief and restoration activities, as well as plunging the future of not only Japan, but also the entire planet into uncertainty and apprehension.

At the same time, we are truly grateful for the monetary and material contributions for our relief efforts and condolences that the people throughout the world have been sending to Japan.

It is easy to grasp the meaning of the sentence "Everything is impermanent," but extremely difficult to accept the truth which it expresses. Being aware of the working of Amida Tathagata's wisdom and compassion could enable you to take a step forward in accepting and realizing this stark truth.

Massive earthquakes and unsettling weather patterns that caused great famine had also taken place during Shinran Shonin's time. It is certain that the teaching clarified by Shinran Shonin, including *shinjin*, the heart entrusting to Other Power and our expression of gratitude as the Nembutsu, corresponds the experiences that he actually went through. In saying Namo Amida Butsu and following the path to the Pure Land where we can attain Buddhahood, we are able to find possibility of solving the issues lying deep in our minds, which cannot be resolved merely by our own attempts and efforts.

We saw a variety of aspects in the tsunami disaster, namely, some past experiences that were well-employed, while others were totally forgotten or ignored, and we were also faced with our excessive trust in scientific technology. How we should control our endless desire that we can never rid ourselves of as long as we are foolish beings and how we can make use of our limited wisdom and capability are issues that I have accepted as our assignment for the new year. Keeping in mind that all life is embraced in the Light of Amida Tathagata, together, let us walk forward.

January 1, 2012

OHTANI Koshin  
 Monshu  
 Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha



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WHM newsletter is published by friends of the Dharma. Volunteers are welcome to serve on the committee. **Please send comments and change of address to WHM office or email at [news@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:news@wahiawahongwanji.org).**  
Roy Higa, Editor



# President's Message

## *January 2012*

***Welcome to 2012.*** This will be a year of many changes, a reminder for all of us of the impermanence of life. First, of course, is that we will be without a resident minister for a number of months. The Hawaii Kyodan has a shortage of ministers at this time, and we anticipate that we will not have any assigned minister for perhaps 3 months or more. The volunteer members that support our functions will be working to help ensure that our standard activities continue. There are many things that need to be done that were automatically done by the minister since he and his family resided at the temple. We will be seeking volunteers to assist in getting these things done and you may find that the availability of certain services we take for granted may be changed in certain ways during this period. Here are some of the services we are working through at this point:

Office hours might vary a little depending on the availability of volunteers to cover the office. We might be unable to cover the office on certain days if we don't have volunteers to man the office. We might be able to ameliorate this by having office coverage on Sunday after service for an hour or so, for people to obtain information and support.

Volunteers will need to open and close the columbarium, and these times might vary.

We will be getting the assistance of ministers from other temples to conduct memorial services, and instead of being able to schedule almost any day and time, we may be directing families to certain days and times of the week, depending on when we can get assistance. Volunteers will be needed to open and close the temple when visiting ministers conduct services.

Sunday services will have some sessions led by volunteers, and others by ministers.

Funerals are coordinated through a mortuary, typically, and they will contact the minister directly. We will remain engaged through the bereavement committee for support.

This seems like a lot of change, but every change is also an opportunity to learn and grow. If you are willing to help with these activities, please contact me through the office, and we will be happy to provide training and a role to assist. You can reach me (or others in the office) at (808)622-4320 or [office@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:office@wahiawahongwanji.org)

In Gassho,

Glenn Hamamura

# BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Eric Matsumoto

## *A New Year's Greeting and Aspiration!*

*I* extend my most sincere best wishes to you for the New Year! In the New Year, please know that truly we are never alone for Amida Buddha as the Name, Namo Amida Butsu, is always with us. The Gomonsu Koshin Ohtani in his book *"The Buddha's Wish for the World"* shares to people who say *"I am not able to say the Nembutsu naturally and spontaneously. What can I do about it?"* *"I first suggest...to say the Nembutsu casually, as if they were simply saying, "Hello," to Amida Buddha."* *"...think that the heart of Amida Buddha is the heart to save all without exception. This heart of Amida Buddha already exists in the depths of our own hearts."* *"Then learn about Buddhism gradually..."* *"Somewhere along the way, you will discover the Nembutsu is more than just a word of greeting."* *"When you become a person who is able to say the Nembutsu, that means you are a person who can sense the presence of Amida Buddha."* *"When you become a person who senses the presence of Amida Buddha in your life, you will say the Nembutsu naturally and spontaneously."* *"...Amida Buddha has been calling out to us from long before. We are always Amida Buddha's deepest concern. When we realize that, we say, "Thank you," with a heart full of gratitude. That is Nembutsu."*

Our theme and slogan for 2012 is "Path of Entrusting: Recite the Nembutsu." For me, the Nembutsu is the Nembutsu of Awareness in which one is aware of the immense Compassion that is Amida Buddha equally surrounding all existence. It is the Nembutsu of Joy in realizing that I too am unconditionally embraced by the Buddha's Great Compassion. And it is the Nembutsu of Gratitude in which reciting "Namo Amida Butsu/I entrust myself to the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light" is a spontaneous expression of my gratitude for being promised Buddhahood/Enlightenment by the Most-Compassionate Amida Buddha.

It is with great anticipation that I greet the New Year in that we will be embarking on the implementation of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's Strategic Plan which addresses many of the challenges and issues we face like providing more support to temples and organizations, PR and Marketing, additional financial resources, ministerial training and including how can we more effectively, clearly and meaningful share and express the Nembutsu Dharma. I ask that you encourage family and invite friends to our temples to listen to the Dharma and may we be active in our community so all lives may be enriched by Wisdom and Compassion.

Finally, together with expressing my appreciation to both ministers and lay, I ask, evermore, for your support, cooperation, participation and commitment as we continue to perpetuate the Buddhist Teachings and move towards becoming an even more open and harmonious Sangha that continues to make a difference in our local and world community.

Thank you,  
Happy New Year and  
Namo Amida Butsu!

In Gassho,  
**Eric Matsumoto**, Bishop

# 2012 Hongwanji Slogan

Rev. David Nakamoto

## **Path of Entrusting: Recite the Nembutsu**

*Namu-amida-butsu receives  
A person just as is.  
When the nembutsu receives a person,  
No matter who or what,  
The person is transformed into the nembutsu.  
Celebrating and blessing life.*

*The Nembutsu takes me as I am.  
Imperfect and incomplete,  
With worries and problems,  
And transforms everything  
Into the contents of highest virtue.*

Rev. Chiso Yanagida (from Aiko Journal, 1978)

Rev. Yanagida in his poem, describes reciting the Nembutsu as the Path of Entrusting – our calendar slogan for 2012, with his saying that Namu-Amida-Butsu receives a person just as is or just as I am. Though imperfect and incomplete, with worries and problems, transforms everything into the contents of highest virtue. (Amida’s great compassion)

What seems to be so special about the Nembutsu path is that it takes you, just as you are and makes no demands upon you to become wiser, better, or more perfect. It does, however, ask us to become authentically real as human beings by awakening to Amida’s compassion that sustains us. Here we recognize our limitations and imperfections as karmic beings that are ultimately transformed into the contents of highest virtue.

Reciting the Nembutsu literally means, “I take refuge in Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Life and Light.” Reciting Namu Amida Butsu testifies as an awakening to our humanity and leads us to the full

realization of the ultimate power of Wisdom and Compassion, which we Buddhist call Buddhahood. Reciting the Nembutsu is a total acceptance of Amida’s Wisdom and Compassion at work and becomes an act of expressing gratitude, naturally arising from an awakening to the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha. A man or woman who lives in the supreme knowledge and profound conviction that he is now encompassed in “Amida’s eternal light which never casts one away” is known as a person who lives the life of Nembutsu.

The Nembutsu therefore, can be seen as the center of our being, the spiritual home where we find the spiritual power that impacts our moral, social, and religious lives. It verbalizes our inner awakening to the reality of life and is the sound of the infinite touching the finite. How grateful we are...how grateful we are.

In Gassho,  
*Rev. David Nakamoto*

# Hawaii Kyodan President

Alton H Miyamoto

## PRESIDENT'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

Aloha and best wishes for a happy and peaceful New Year! 2011 was a challenging year for Hawaii Kyodan. While transitioning between our spiritual leaders, we participated in Shinran Shonin's 750<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service in Kyoto amidst the devastating earthquake and subsequent nuclear disaster. These incidents demonstrated how interdependent we are even as far away as Japan. It also made us realize how fortunate we are, even in this tough economic times. Let us be grateful for all that our ancestors did for us and rededicate ourselves to continue their legacy.

The Bishop's and my visitation of the districts got off to a slow start as did the search for volunteers to serve on the various committees to develop action items for the implementation of the strategic plan. Like a big ship, an organization with deep rooted traditions takes awhile to change directions. But the ship is turning! Over fifty volunteers offered to work on the strategic planning committees. About half of them are individuals who have not been actively involved at a state level. These committees will help us prioritize the challenges we face in the areas of a) ministry, b) communications, c) organizational structure, d) leadership, e) rituals & practices and f) finances.

This is the start of a long process to attain our vision of our members regaining their pride in being a Buddhist and being dedicated and loyal to our temple and organization as did our ancestors generations ago. Central to this process is the need to train our ministers and lay members to take a more active role and share their personal talents with our organization. Don't wait to be asked to help. Stand up and offer your expertise to your temple and Hawaii Kyodan.

Let us be grateful for the teachings of Shinran Shonin which binds the Sangha together and at the same time recognize that we must meet the needs of our changing society. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your patience, understanding, cooperation and support. Your participation is crucial in our leadership role for the international propagation of Jodo Shinshu.

In Gassho,  
*Alton H Miyamoto*, President  
Hawaii Kyodan

*All major religious traditions carry basically the same message, that is love, compassion and forgiveness. The important thing is they should be part of our daily lives.*

*Dalai Lama*

# Dharma Talks

Rod Moriyama

***Happy New Year!*** 2012 is upon us and as we reflect on 2011, it was a terrific year despite the rollercoaster ride in our economy.

Last month, we recognized the contributions of Jimmy Iha, Tasuke Terao and Reverend Kevin. This month, Reverend Kevin begins his new challenge at the Buddhist Study Center providing thought leadership in Buddhism throughout the state of Hawaii. So why am I writing in the newsletter where normally Rev. Kevin writes? I've been asked by Roy Higa, the chairman of the Newsletter Committee, to pinch hit for the time being. Hopefully, with your help and participation, we can evolve in the process to a new level.

This period without a resident minister is a great opportunity for growth as we stretch our lay skills to handle all that is required at the Wahiawa Hongwanji, including the weekly services, columbarium, memorial services, etc, without a resident minister. This will be for a period of at least three months.

In the November newsletter, Reverend Kevin introduced the concept of Habits of Mind. It is yet another exciting way to think about how Buddhist principles can be explained and utilized in modern everyday life. This can't be a surprise! Being a Buddhist is the pursuit of "awareness" or enlightenment. The "TRUTH" is the TRUTH!

With that in mind, we will be asking many individuals to contribute their stories, their "truths", so we as a Sangha can work toward improving ourselves. It should be a very interesting time for all. The structure for these "Dharma Talks" will be framed within the Four Noble Truths, and the Eight Fold Path, and also referencing writings like "Everyday Suchness" by Reverend Gyomay M. Kubose . Along with these writings and documenting experiences within our own Kyodan, we hope to develop a chronicle of our temple members.

We will explore together the quest of living in the

"now" and managing our happiness. I started attending Wahiawa Hongwanji Temple as soon as I started going to school. I didn't realize it then, but as I reflect on the 60 years that have gone by, so many of the principles by which I lived are based on Buddhism. Despite a LONG absence from attending the temple (from age 17 till just recently), the lessons learned through my parents, grandparents, mentors, and friends, and relatives, and even my "adversaries" all come together as my version of reality. Reading about life's lessons in Buddhism, I find that the old adage, "The more I know, the more I don't know" is so true. I look forward to growing with all of you as we learn from each other's experiences and share those lessons that are so important for all of us. Please participate with us through [news@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:news@wahiawahongwanji.org) , and begin asking the questions that will foster meaningful discussion throughout the year.

If you'd like to share an experience and would like some help writing, please feel free to contact me at [rmoriyama@gmail.com](mailto:rmoriyama@gmail.com).

In Gassho,  
*Rod Moriyama*

*Do not dwell in the past, do  
not dream of the future,  
concentrate the mind on the  
present moment.*

Buddha

# Dharma School News

Carolyn Uchiyama

## Holiday Sing-Along

The Dharma school and Sangha Strummers caravanned around homes in Wahiawa and Mililani singing the season's holiday songs on December 9 beginning at 5:00 p.m. We visited the Iwahiros, Nakagawas, Bongiorno's, and A. Kakazus. The Bongiorno's decided to join our group to sing and add to the merry making. We made the season bright for these families and we hope everyone will have one, too.

## Gingerbread Family Activity

On December 11 at 4:00 in the afternoon, we had 7 children and their families join us for the gingerbread making activity in the BWA room. The group included Trevys and Arrya with their parents Tracey and Lynn Okamura who also brought along their nephews Kysen and Ryder. Cy and Jay Acohido brought their friend JoJo. Jason brought his parents Lauren and Charles Kam. They made gingerbread men, snowmen, swords, snakes, and flowers. The children and adults had such imaginations and were able to make two items each.

After forming their pieces, they used candies and cereal pieces to decorate it. The aroma of the baking gingerbread made everyone hungry so they had juice and popcorn with arare for a snack. The final step after cooling was icing the baked gingerbread. Everyone went home proudly displaying his or her piece.

## 2012 Honpa Hongwanji Calendar

The theme and slogan for 2012 is "Path of Entrusting: Recite the Nembutsu." In the fall of this year, the calendar committee from Honpa Hongwanji held a photo contest to collect photos that showed people's Nembutsu Moments. Thomas Kanemaru, Dharma school student from Wahiawa Hongwanji, had his photo and writing selected and it is located on the May page. The calendar will be coming out shortly. Enjoy the various Nembutsu Moments.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **St. Stephen's Food Pantry**

We will collect food on the first Sunday of the month - January 8. Thank you for the food collection all year long in 2011. We collected quite a lot of food for the Pantry. Your continued support was greatly appreciated.

# Wahiawa Hongwanji Sunday Service Schedule

Carolyn Uchiyama

**Dharma School:** We will have Dharma school on January 8.

## January

- 8 - Pieper Toyama and the students from the Pacific Buddhist Academy will kick off the New Year by helping us chant.
- 15 - Alan Goto from Hawaii Betsuin will share his experiences.
- 22 - Cheryl Tomita, former principal of Waikiki School, will share her experiences about her mindful school.
- 29 - Ho'onko service with Rev. Shigenori Makino

## February

- 5 - Luanne Bongiorno will share about life's challenges.
- 12 - Rod Moriyama sat on a panel at the Nembutsu Seminar at Pearl City and he will share his experiences.
- 19 - Rev. Jan Youth
- 26 - Irene Nakamoto

***Any left over mochi from the holidays?***  
**Here is a recipe from Elaine Kawamoto**

### **PUMPKIN MOCHI**



#### **Wet Ingredients:**

- 1- 29 oz can solid-pack pumpkin
- 1- 14 oz. can condensed milk
- 2 blocks margarine, melted
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

#### **Dry Ingredients:**

- 1 box mochiko flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cup shredded coconut--optional

Mix dry ingredients in small bowl. Mix wet ingredients in large bowl. Combine dry ingredients into bowl with wet ingredients. Mix well.

Pout into a well-greased 9 x 13 baking pan. Bake 1 hour at 350 degrees. Cool completely for 2 to 3 hours. Cut with plastic knife.





Front: Frances Abe, Shigeko Abe, Nancy Kunimitsu, Torie Matsuda, Nora Fukuyama, Rev. Kevin, Jean Yonemori Carroll, Sandy Abe  
 Back: Isamu Tatsuguchi, Barbara Tatsuguchi, Andy Abe, Wally Abe, Amy Abe, Shiro Miota

# KAHUKU HONGWANJI MISSION

By Barbara Tatsuguchi

Kahuku had 241 Japanese laborers working for the plantation by 1892. They established a Mission and used ministers from the Betsuin. A temple was built in 1901. The temple was demolished in 1949 and the present temple was built.

Beginning in 1906, there were a series of resident ministers. However, the work and times were so difficult that many of them became seriously ill and died or returned to Japan.

A succession of ministers followed. By then they came from Wahiawa and Waiialua. The more recent ministers were Reverend Sachihide Motoyoshi, Reverend Takamaro Saigusa, Reverend Toyokazu Hagio, and Bishop Thomas Okano. These ministers worked very hard to keep Kahuku active.

By 1962 the membership had dropped to 133 and continued to decline as the 2nd and 3rd generation left the area and the plantation closed.

Mr. Ted Kunimitsu as president of the Kyodan, single handedly kept it going from 1979 to 2008. By that time the membership was down to 19. There are now 17 members with only 4 attending a monthly service. Isamu Tatsuguchi, the vice president and treasurer, committed to keeping the temple going for 4 more years, regardless of the low attendance at the services.

December 31, 2012 will be the last Kahuku service. It will be a time for former members and their families and Kahuku friends to once more gather and to talk story!

Judging from the response to its last Bon dance, the temple was a significant part of the community even for those who were not members.

It was a rallying occasion that drew people from as far away as the east coast and midwest who said they wanted to remember the highlight of their summers while growing up in Kahuku. Many said it would probably be the last time they would be visiting Kahuku. Bon dancers from other temples remembered the Kahuku Farms watermelon that was served after the dance and missed it when it was no longer grown.

*Come and enjoy  
 your temple...*

# Happy New Year to All!

## ELECTION

The election of officers at our December meeting proceeded without a hitch as our present officers and directors consented to serve another term. They are: President, Roseline Yano; Vice-President, Evelyn Komori; Recording Secretary, Barbara Higa; Corresponding Secretary, Doris Matsuoka; Treasurer, Mildred Segawa; Assistant Treasurer, Helen Tanaka; Auditors, Patsy Ibara and Dale Shimaura; Immediate Past President, Betsy Yamamoto; Directors, Patsy Kaya and Ethel Nakagawa.

We encourage members to participate in the activities that will be planned for 2012.

## NEW YEAR PARTY, 2012

In response to those who preferred a party closer to home, the program committee decided to have this year's New Year gathering in our own backyard. Here are the details:

Date & Time: Sunday, March 4, 2012, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Place: WHM Social Hall

Lunch: Ono bento from Kuni Restaurant

Cost: \$11

Program: Fun games that test your physical skills, tease your brain cells and make you want to participate even more. Lots of prizes to reward your effort.

Deadline: February 19, 2012

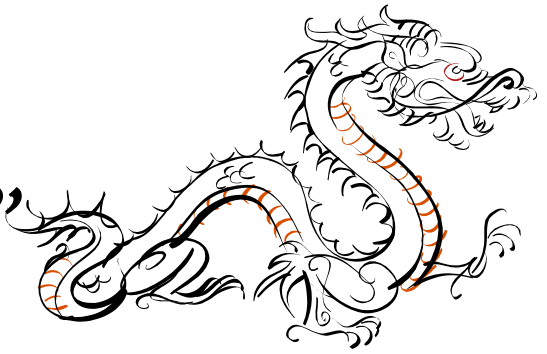
Sign-up for this event will begin at our January 8 meeting. Check is payable to WHM BWA, P.O. Box 860265, Wahiawa, HI 96786, Attention: Treasurer

## DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

Corresponding Secretary, Doris Matsuoka is preparing the membership directory for 2012. Please call her by January 31, if you have changed your residence, telephone number or mailing address.

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

## 2012 "Year of the Dragon"



**D**id you know...

On New Year's eve, bells (joya no kane) are rung at the local temples to speed out the old year. It starts ringing at just before midnight on New Year's Eve and continues into the early hours of New Year's Day, 108 times in all. According to Buddhism, a human being has 108 troublesome desires. The ringing of the bells is to expel these troublesome desires. The New Year is welcomed in by the eating of year-crossing noodles (toshikoshi-soba).

Food, of course, is also a big part of Japanese New Year's celebrations. [Osechi-ryori](#) are special dishes eaten on the first three days of the New Year. Grilled and vinegary dishes are served in multi-layered lacquered boxes (jubako). The dishes are design to be pleasant to look at, and keep for days so that the mother is free from having to cook for three days.

To prepare for "oshogatsu," everybody gets busy doing a big year-end cleaning (oosouji), setting New Year's decorations (kadoomatsu or shimekazari) and preparing New Year's dishes ([osechi-ryori](#)).

Many people who are away from home, return to spend time with their family.

*Make a New Year's resolution.*

### **D**ragon Personality Traits

**Those who are born in the dragon year are innovative, self-assured, brave, enterprising, conceited, passionate, and quick-tempered. The Dragons are often referred to as the free spirits of Chinese Zodiac. Their creative sparks get destroyed when they are restricted. Hence dragon people always look to be free and uninhibited.**

**A beautiful creature, Dragon happens to be flamboyant and colorful. Dragon personality traits range from being energetic, irrepensible and gifted. They are fearless and confident and ready to take up any challenge. In most cases they happen to be successful.**

**Helping others is something that they find pleasure in. One can always count on the dragons for help. They make friends very easily because of their generous personalities. Yet they can be solitary reapers at heart. Those who are born in the Year of the Dragon have a love for outdoor activities and nature. They are extroverts who have a deep love for nature.**

**Having an explorative spirit, the dragon people are very imaginative. They are suitable for any occupation owing to their adaptable nature. They like spending money for charity. When it comes to finances, they are ready to take up risks and big chances. They are very straightforward in their approach when it comes to matters related to financial dealings and can therefore be trusted.**

Editors Notes: The newsletter committee for Wahiawa Hongwanji starts with this edition. We hope to do our best in providing you with current and interesting news of your temple, and the world of Buddhism, along with the teaching of the Dharma. The production committee members are Alfred Paulino, Jerry and Arlene Ogata, Vernon and Ethel Yamamoto and the Wednesday ladies who fold and prepare the newsletter for mailing. We welcome your comments or news. Please contact us via email. [news@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:news@wahiawahongwanji.org). Thank you to all the Volunteers who assist with the newsletter. **Please contact us with any change of address.**  
Happy New Year, Roy Higa