



# The Messenger

*Building Healthy Sanghas: Embracing Generosity & Openness*

## Calendar of Events

### January 2025

- 05 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service
- 11 Sat 9:00 am- 11:00 am Wait....Don't Die Yet! presentation by Annette Kam
- 12 Sun 9:00 am Hoonko Service with Rev. Yuika Hasebe. (Memorial Service to express our gratitude to Shinran Shonin, our founder, on the day of his death, January 16, 1262.)
- 12 Sun following the service - Installation of WHM Board Members for 2025
- 19 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service
- 26 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service

### February 2025

- 02 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service
- 07 Fri - 08 Sat 2025 Legislative Assembly (Giseikai) - online and in person
- 08 Sun 11:00-2:15 50th Annual Living Treasures of Hawai'i™ Recognition at Hilton Hawaiian Village
- 09 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service
- 16 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service
- 23 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service

## Thank you to our Many Volunteers!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for our annual end-of-year cleanup day on December 15th! Your dedication and hard work made a significant difference.

A special thanks to our amazing refreshment committee for providing a delicious and much-appreciated lunch for our volunteers. Your efforts ensured that everyone enjoyed a good meal with each other after working so hard!



## New Year's Greeting

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

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 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

## 2025 New Year's Message: "Nurturing Nembutsu Cultivating Awareness"

As we stand at the threshold of 2025, I am filled with profound gratitude for the Sangha of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and the spiritual journey we continue to share. The theme for this year, "Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness," reflects not only our collective aspiration but also our personal commitment to deepening our connection with Amida Buddha and fostering a more profound awareness in every aspect of our lives.

The Nembutsu, "Namo Amida Butsu," is much more than a simple recitation. It is the living embodiment of Amida Buddha's all-embracing Compassion, a compassion that transcends all boundaries we create. No one is left behind. No one is excluded from Amida Buddha's deepest aspiration to save all beings. In this truth, we find solace and strength, knowing that no matter our imperfections or struggles, we are always embraced by the boundless Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha.

I, too, wrestle with my limitations—foolishness, selfishness, ignorance, and the tendency to judge or discriminate against others. These failings often cloud my perspective, narrowing my view of the world and of others. Yet, despite these limitations, I am continually reminded that Amida's Compassion does not waver. The Nembutsu is my anchor, a reminder that I am welcomed just as I am into the warmth of Amida Buddha's embrace. My heart and mind are nurtured in this space, and in turn, my Nembutsu becomes a living expression of joy, gratitude, and humility for the life I live within this Compassion.

As we are nurtured by Amida's Compassionate voice, we are also called to cultivate awareness. This awareness is not merely intellectual or passive; it is a dynamic and active practice that calls us to wake up to the reality of our interconnectedness. It invites us to see the world with clearer eyes, to recognize the oneness of all life, and to develop a deeper understanding of the truths that shape our existence.

In today's world, where distractions and self-centeredness abound, cultivating awareness becomes even more crucial. It helps us move beyond the narrow confines of our personal concerns, allowing us to see the interdependence of all beings. It teaches us to live more mindfully, to understand the suffering of others, and to act with greater compassion. The gift of the Nembutsu is this awareness—an invitation to step forward, to embrace others with open hearts, and to recognize that we are all held within the same Compassionate Light.

Let us renew our commitment to live a life of Nembutsu. Let us nurture our hearts and minds by participating in temple services and activities, deepening our relationships with the Sangha, and listening to the Dharma. In doing so, we not only deepen our appreciation of the Nembutsu but also cultivate an awareness that allows us to live more fully and purposefully.

As we step forward into 2025, let us move together with hearts full of joy and gratitude infused with awareness. Let us share the joy of Nembutsu with everyone we encounter, and through our mindful living, let us help to build a world that is more compassionate, more aware, and more connected.

I wish each and every one of you a joyful and peaceful New Year. May the light of Amida Buddha continue to shine upon us and guide us always.

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani  
Bishop  
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



## President's New Year's Message Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

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

I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and in good spirits as we look forward to the New Year, 2025!

As we enter the new year, it is natural to look back at the past year. As I look back at the year 2024, I have many warm and happy memories of family and friends. Wonderful family trips to the mainland USA and Japan. An “epic” hiking trip to Korea. Quiet reflection during temple service on Sunday mornings followed by fellowship and delicious lunches! And for myself, one of the highlights of the year was the memorable weekend we spent at the Triple Celebration (850<sup>th</sup>/800<sup>th</sup>/135<sup>th</sup>) in September, held at the Ala Moana Hotel. There were sad occasions as well, with loss of family and close friends. Reliving memories from the past year, I feel fortunate and I am so grateful for all of the events of the past year. *Ichigo ichie*. I hope that you feel the same way.

Looking forward to the New Year, I do not know what the future holds for us - as individuals, as a community and as a Buddhist organization. Just think, five years ago no one thought that we would need to survive a pandemic or experience a Maui wildfire. However, in the face of hardship, we persevered. We met the challenges placed before us by caring for each other and by working together. I believe we are stronger as a Buddhist organization because of how we, each one of us, responded to adversity.

Our five year theme which begins in 2025, “*Nurturing Nembutsu*” reminds us that the Nembutsu is the “core” of our existence. The Nembutsu, expressed as “*Namo Amida Butsu*” is our expression of gratitude in awareness of Amida’s Compassion. Nembutsu is not just our gratitude, it is our response to Amida’s voice which is calling out to each one of us. “*Nurturing Nembutsu*” reminds us that we nurture the Nembutsu when we share it with others, and in turn we are nurtured by Amida’s love for us. Let us be mindful of the all-embracing Amida and continue on this journey together.

*“Happiness does not depend on what you have or who you are;  
it solely relies on what you think.” - Buddha Sanghas.*

With Gassho,

Warren Tamamoto MD  
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



# Minister's Message - Happy New Year



This year marks the twelfth time my family and I are celebrating the New Year in Wahiawa. Thanks to your help and support, we are having a truly wonderful time, and we are deeply grateful. Arigato Gozaimasu.

The Hawaii Kyodan's slogan for this year is "Cultivating Awareness." One way to cultivate our awareness is by "sharing our gratitude and joy with others."

Last month, we celebrated Bodhi Day, which commemorates the moment Siddhartha Gautama, upon attaining enlightenment, became Shakyamuni Buddha. After reaching enlightenment, he did not keep it to himself. Instead, he chose to share it with his former fellow practitioners. This is called "Shoten-Horin," which teaches us the importance of sharing our joy and enlightenment with others.

This year, one of my personal joys is that Kano has started working with United Airlines, and Shoshi is working hard to succeed in college. Both are living on the mainland, which has given my wife and me the opportunity to rekindle our "honeymoon time" together. I am so happy that my children are gaining valuable experiences. When they return home, it will be even more meaningful. This reminds me of the phrase 俱会一处 ("Kueissho") from the Amida Sutra, which means "we can meet at one place." No matter where we may be, we will always come together at one place through the Buddhist teachings passed down by our loved ones.

I hope this year is even better than the last. Let us continue to listen to the Nembutsu teachings, which will help us strengthen our connections with others and bring us peace.

Namo Amida Butsu

In Gassho,



Reverend Kojun Hashimoto



# President's Report



Getting the temple ready for the New Year and preparing for the general membership meeting was a feeling of elation and confidence that the temple was in good hands. We had a terrific turnout to clean the temple! We were finished so quickly as many hands made light work for all.

We held the General Membership meeting in the temple and reviewed 2024 with a recap of our financial position. With inflation and decreasing membership, our financials were about \$60,000 under budget as of the end of November. The biggest two events were the termite treatment that was 50% over expectations, and fixing the Bonsho roof. Together they amounted to over \$86,000. Our Eitaikyo Endowment Fund is progressing well at over \$600,000 with our goal of \$1,000,000 by 2028. We also announced that we were able to lease the old minister's residence to Bridge Tax Consultants LLC starting in November. Thank you for all of your generous contributions and support throughout the year!

I am so grateful for the hard-working board members, members, and volunteers who contribute their time and effort every week so that we may have the viable setting we have. Jodo-Shinshu is all about the experience of having people working together, laughing, and just enjoying themselves—the development of interpersonal relationships, learning from each other's experiences, and understanding the nature and power of gratitude!

Our new Board of Directors are as follows:

Co-Presidents: Venus Oshiro and Carolyn Uchiyama

Resident Minister (Ex-officio): Reverend Kojun Hashimoto

Vice-President: Dale Shimaura

Co-Secretaries: Jan Fukada and Joy Okimoto

Treasurer: Gaylen Yonamine      Assistant Treasurer: Vivian Murayama

Newsletter Editor: Amy Kanemaru

Revenue Generation: Norman Fujioka, Marcus Oshiro

Buddhist Education: Lillian Lee, Denise Okouchi

Maintenance/Hosha: Brian and Wendy Fukuhara

Past President: Rod Moriyama

Trustee Emeritus: Glenn Hamamura, Calvin Takeshita, Neal Tomita, Jack Tsujihara

Thank you for all the support given to me these past ten years! Please support Venus, Carolyn, and the new generation of officers as they bring new ideas to sustain the "power of GRATITUDE!" Namo Amida Butsu!

In gassho (gratitude),

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rod Moriyama". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Rodney S. Moriyama, President

## Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Calendars

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii 2024 Calendars have arrived. Interested temple members, please call the office before stopping by the office soon to pick one up. Only a limited number of calendars on a first-come, first-serve basis, so come soon! Limit one calendar per member.

**Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 9:00am - noon**

**808-622-4320**

**[www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org](http://www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org)**

**Email: [office@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:office@wahiawahongwanji.org) (allow 48 hours for email response)**

**Columbarium Hours: Daily 10:00am - 3:00pm**

# 2025 Oahu District Poster Contest

Sponsored by the Oahu District Buddhist Education Committee (ODBEC)



**Theme:** “Sharing My Gratitude to Others”

This theme is to follow the Hongwanji’s 2025 Theme and Slogan: “Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness.” This year’s poster contest celebrates the experience of appreciation and gratitude for the Boundless Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha when connecting with others.

**Materials:** 12" x 18" paper will be provided.

**Media:** All forms (ink, crayon, pencil, paint, pen, charcoal, collage, computer generated graphics) will be accepted. Entries must be relatively flat, easily transportable, and not fragile.

**Message:** Encourage each child to include a message, title, or caption on their poster.

**Entries:** No limit on the number of entries per Dharma School. Entries will also be accepted from children of temple families who are not enrolled in Dharma School.

<b>Categories:</b> Division I	Preschool, Kindergarten
Division II	Grades 1 - 2
Division III	Grades 3 - 5
Division IV	Grades 6 - 8
Division V	Grades 9 - 12



**Awards:** For each division as follows:

First place	\$25
Second place	\$20
Third place	\$10
Honorable Mention	\$5 (optional award at judges’ discretion)

**Judges:** Three people selected by the ODBEC will judge all poster entries.

**Deadline:** All entries should be submitted on or before March 2, 2025 to:  
Carolyn Uchiyama/Wahiawa Hongwanji, contact: carolyn2028@gmail.com.

**Identification:** Each entry should have the student’s information on the back, bottom middle of their poster (cut and affix to the back of the poster).

\_\_\_\_\_ (Cut here) \_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade** \_\_\_\_\_

**Temple** \_\_\_\_\_ **Division** \_\_\_\_\_

# Many Volunteers Make Light Work

More photos from our December 15th WHM Clean Up Day



## Jr. YBA Happenings

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!** We hope you had a relaxing holiday season.

ICYMI, our recent roller skating event had low turnout. We'll plan another soon to introduce juniors to our group!

We're busy planning the Winter Federation Meeting (Jan 19-20 at Aiea Hongwanji). Highlights include a Hōkūle'a tour and bowling.

Thank you for your generous Toys For Tots donations!

### Upcoming:

- **Next Meeting:** Jan 12, 12:30 PM, Aiea Hongwanji (Winter Federation Meeting details)
- **Winter Federation Meeting:** Jan 19-20, Aiea Hongwanji
  - Parents, please contact Arynn or Gay if you can help with transportation.

We welcome any youth who are entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade through 2 years after high school graduation are welcome to join Jr. YBA! You do not need to be a member of a temple so bring your friends! Please contact a Jr. YBA member or Auntie Arynn Ishikawa (advisor) at [arynn.m.ishikawa@gmail.com](mailto:arynn.m.ishikawa@gmail.com) or [jrybaofohu@gmail.com](mailto:jrybaofohu@gmail.com) if you have questions or for more information.



# Sangha Day Celebration

Hosted by Pearl City Hongwanji

## MUSIC



*A Journey of Music's Influence on the  
Nembutsu and Life.*

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**

Save the Date - Come and Join Us

Pearl City Hongwanji

858 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Pearl City

Time: 8:30 am to 1:30 pm

**Guest Speaker: Roy Sakuma**

Activities and Workshops for Adults and Children

(Schedule: Registration, Temple Service, History of Music in the Hongwanji, Guest Speaker, Lunch, Lucky Number & Prizes, Karaoke for those who wish to remain)

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Please return this bottom section to Carolyn Uchiyama(WHM Office) by February 15, 2025

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Temple: Wahiawa

# attending: high school or adults: \_\_\_\_\_

# of students in Pre-K to grade 2 \_\_\_\_\_

# of students grade 3 to 5: \_\_\_\_\_

# of students grade 6 to 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch orders:

Mamaya's Salmon Dynamite Bento \_\_\_\_\_ X \$13 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mamaya's Local Combo Bento \_\_\_\_\_ X \$13 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetarian Bowl \_\_\_\_\_ X \$9.50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make checks payable to Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## ***The Family Memorial Service (Hoji)***

Buddhists consider the memorial service a significant occasion to remember the deceased with feelings of gratefulness and love. For Jodo Shinshu followers, the significance of a memorial service is not for appeasing or consoling the spirits of the deceased, but is, rather, the opportunity to pay tribute to and recall cherished memories of the departed while listening to the Buddha-dharma. In other words, the Hoji is not for the sake of the deceased, but is, indeed, for the sake of the living. In remembering the deceased, we acknowledge the influence of the deceased on our lives. (From *Jodo Shinshu – A Guide*, p. 142.)

Extended members of a family and sometimes close friends will gather at a temple or home in memory of a deceased member of the family. Following the service, the family may go out to lunch or dinner or serve a potluck at the home, renewing and strengthening family ties. An important byproduct of this custom has been the reinforcing of family ties with members beyond one's immediate family and a sense of continuity from generation to generation.

Memorial Services are held on the 1st, 3rd, 7th, 13th, 17th, 25th, 33rd and 50th years of passing. After the 1st year memorial anniversary, to figure out memorial service years, start counting from the year of death. Example, for a death in the year 2023, the first memorial anniversary would be in 2024, and the third memorial anniversary in 2025 (to figure out 3rd year anniversary, start with death year 2023 and add 2 more years to get year 2025). Below is the 2025 Memorial Service Schedule. Year 2025 is the Memorial Year for those who passed away in:

<b><u>Memorial Anniversary</u></b>		<b><u>Year of Death</u></b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Isshuki	2024
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Sankaiki	2023
7 <sup>th</sup> Year	Shichikaiki	2019
13 <sup>th</sup> Year	Juusankaiki	2013
17 <sup>th</sup> Year	Juushichikaiki	2009
25 <sup>th</sup> Year	Nijuugokaiki	2001
33 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Sanjuusankaiki	1993
50 <sup>th</sup> Year	Gojukkaiki	1976

### **Important Information Regarding Nenkaï (Anniversary) Celebrations**

This year, Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission will be focusing its Nenkaï celebrations on families with a deceased member anniversary in 2025. Reverend Hashimoto will personally send invitations to these families approximately one month in advance of their loved one's anniversary.

To ensure you receive an invitation, please make sure Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission has your family's most up-to-date contact information, including the name and address of your Point of Contact.

You can easily update your information by contacting our office:

- Phone: 808-622-4320
- Email: [office@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:office@wahiawahongwanji.org)

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.