



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

## GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

**MARCH 2025**

Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness



**JODO SHINSHU, Teaching of Pure Land  
Amida Buddha's Vow #32, (11<sup>th</sup> Vow) 2/2025  
Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister**

It is the month of Ohigan (the spring equinox), I hope you're fine. In last month's issue, I wrote about Amida Buddha's Vow, 'who wishes for a world where there is no arising of attachment, known as 'the vow of no attachment (10<sup>th</sup> Vow).' Have you been reflecting on that vow as you live about your days? Have you aware that you are unable to live without attachment? It is truly distressing, isn't it? In such times, please utter the Nembutsu, 'Namo Amida Butsu.' This month, I will introduce the next vow, 'The Eleventh Vow, the Vow of Certain Liberation and Extinction or Vow of necessary attainment of nirvana.'

I quote the 11<sup>th</sup> Vow:

If, when I attain Buddhahood, the humans and devas in my land should not dwell in the stage of the truly settled and necessarily attain nirvana, may I not attain the perfect enlightenment.

(The Sutra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life, Page 21)

(My interpretation): If I, Amida, attain enlightenment as a Buddha, but all the people in my land do not dwell in the stage of the truly settled, and if they do not reach a state where great suffering, such as birth, aging, illness, and death, is eradicated and they are no longer subjected to this suffering, then I cannot become a Buddha of Enlightenment.

This 11<sup>th</sup> Vow doesn't explain with many words, however, it contains very important meanings. I'd like to translate the words.

'the humans and devas in my land' means:

People who will be born to Amida Buddha's Pure Land. It also means people who want to go to Amida Buddha's Pure Land. It is also a person who has a goal in life of wanting to go to the Pure Land and be born. It means that it's not a person who continue to live each day the same way, wakes up in the morning, complains to the people around them with selfish heart, and eats and sleep.

'Stage of truly settled' means:

"To live in the Pure Land." It is determined that you will become a Buddha and will not go back to the realm of suffering, that also you will be born in the Pure Land, and therefore you will not be swayed by it no matter what happens.

(Continued to next page)

(From Page 1, Teaching of Pure Land)

‘necessarily attain nirvana’ means:

to perish, to disappear. It also means to cross and to move from the world of impermanence and suffering to a world of permanent dwelling and ease. To cross (be saved) from the "shore" of confusion to the "other shore" of enlightenment, to be guided.

‘may I not attain the perfect enlightenment’ means:

the state that Amida Buddha is trying to reach.

Although the words are not enough, I hope you try to understand what I want to explain.

How do you live in your everyday lives? I hope you don’t live your unrepeatable days with some anxious or fear such as: when you wake up in the morning, your back hurts, legs hurt, you’re getting hard time to see and hear, your head is lightheaded, so you may think, ‘am I getting old,’ ‘am I going to die,’ so you live with much fear everyday. Instead of such, I hope you start your day with: I could wake up today, I can live in a world of joy that I've had a new day today, I've been given life, how grateful and precious I am, and it's a world that has transcended suffering to rejoice.

What if the ground shakes and an earthquake comes? Isn't it frightening and unsettling? That's right, the place where you are standing is a very unstable and wobbly place.

To be continued...



*Come and join our wonderful Ohana at the...*

**Waipahu Hongwanji Mission**

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**  
**Evan Watarida, President of Waipahu Hongwanji**



Dear Waipahu Hongwanji Sangha,

Our 2025 New Year's Party was held on Sunday February 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was a blast with good food, tons of prizes, and amazing entertainment. A special thank you goes to Adrian Koizumi and the party planning committee who put on a memorable event. Special thanks also goes out to Sheree Tamura of Hanayagi Mitsusumi Dance Studio who assembled the entertainment line-up of Ryugen Taiko, Madoka no Kai shamisen, and the Magic of Ron as well as creating the centerpieces. And we are also grateful for everyone who donated prizes, food, and their valuable time.

On February 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, Boy Scouts from Troop 49 of Honpa Hongwanji came and painted the temple stairs and railings and the day care footstools. They also cleaned the ceiling fans, installed wall borders behind the reclining chairs, and planted in the area near the trash bin. Talin Giang, grandson of Rev. Nakanishi, organized the whole event as part of his Eagle Scout service project. It gives our temple a refreshed look before obon.

That same weekend, Rev. Soga, George Sawa, and I also attended the Giseikai Legislative Assembly along with temple representatives from each temple across the state. It was inspirational to see the positive things that other temples are doing to engage their sangha and give back to their communities. The Jr. YBA teens shared all the service projects they are doing on their respective islands. Lahaina temple completed its property clean-up and as they continue to meet with FEMA on the process of rebuilding. Moiliili temple presented a \$28K check to the Lahaina Wildfire Fund which they raised from the sale of custom t-shirts.

For the month of March, a group of Waipahu members will be attending Oahu District's Sangha Day at Pearl City on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is a music theme and the guest speaker will be Roy Sakuma. At our March board meeting we will also begin serious planning for our Bon Dance. This year, we moved the date up a week earlier than in the past to Saturday July 5<sup>th</sup>. So please put it in your calendars.

We are looking for people interested in attending Choral Fest on Sept. 20 -21 at Hawaii Betsuin. This is the first time it is resuming since COVID. The songs will be distributed prior to the event and all participants will rehearse and perform together in September with other members statewide. Those that are interested should sign up by April 30.

Finally, we would like to welcome Nescia Pearl Ponce of Kumon Math and Reading Center who will be conducting classes in our conference room on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. We are excited to have people productively using our spaces during the weekdays. More information on Kumon classes will be coming out soon if you know of potential students.

## WAIPAHU HONGWANJI NEWS



Talin Giang and his friend scout, Troop 49, and family made Waipahu Temple bright and shine.



Dana Day Service was held on Sunday, 2/16/25. Ms. Yumi Suzuki shared her thoughts of Dana (sharing the treasurers) to all participants. All were impressed.

Right photos: Talin Giang, Eagle Scout Candidate, of Troop 49 and his family took leadership to pursue his Eagle Scout Project with his friends scout and families. About 40 people came to Waipahu Hongwanji for two Saturdays. They worked hard. Thank you Talin, Mr. and Mrs. Giang, and all scouts and families of Troop 49.



## Buddhist Women's Association (FUJINKAI) NEWS

We had Dana Day service on Sunday February 16th. The guest speaker was Ms. Yumi Suzuki, a member of Pearl City Hongwanji BWA. She gave us a wonderful message through her own life with her family. The donation for Dana Day was \$276. We would like to designate a donation destination at next month's board meeting. This year's BWA membership fee is \$15. If you haven't paid, please pay. Next month's board meeting will start at 10:30 on Sunday, March 16. Have a nice spring season.



## MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR 2025

<b>1<sup>st</sup> (2024)</b> March	None	<b>1<sup>st</sup> (2024)</b> April 8	Wallace Minoru Takushi
		April 29	Vivian Tomoe Takenaka
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> (2022)</b> March 6	Gayle Chiyomi Miyamoto	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> (2023)</b>	None
<b>7<sup>th</sup> (2019)</b> March 3	Myra Shizuko Oyama	<b>7<sup>th</sup> (2019)</b> April 13	Tadashi Miki
March 22	Thomas Hisashi Kushima	April 17	Kazuko Nakamura
		April 18	Nobuo Uyehara
<b>13<sup>th</sup> (2013)</b> March 6	Henry Toshisada Maruyama	<b>13<sup>th</sup> (2013)</b> April 18	Shigeru Oshiro
March 7	Beatrice Michiko Fukuoka	April 26	Miyuki Puckett
March 18	Sadami Ige	April 30	Kameko Nitta
<b>17<sup>th</sup> (2009)</b> March 14	Ricky Hiroshi Ogata	<b>17<sup>th</sup> (2009)</b> April 1	Kimiko Matsuda
March 15	Hideo Yamamoto	April 16	Elaine Sumie Yoshimura
March 15	Tokuichi Miura	April 23	Michiko Adachi
<b>25<sup>th</sup> (2001)</b> March 9	Horace Heiji Nouchi	<b>25<sup>th</sup> (2001)</b> April 5	Willian Tsugio Koga
March 19	Mitsue Kawakami	April 19	Amy Emiko Umetsu
March 27	Charlotte Umiko Nishimura	April 23	Takeshi Kimura
<b>33<sup>rd</sup> (1993)</b> March 16	Fred Masaru Yokota	<b>33<sup>rd</sup> (1993)</b> April 16	Tadao Shimaoka
March 29	Yutaka Kimura		
March 31	James Shigeru Furumoto	<b>50<sup>th</sup> (1976)</b> April 3	Torayo Yoshihiro
<b>50<sup>th</sup> (1976)</b> March 27	Tachi Nakanishi	April 8	Takashi Takushi
		April 18	Suma Torikawa

### Please "Kokua"

Although, the Waipahu Hongwanji Mission was established in 1902, the current temple building and its supporting infrastructure was constructed in 1952. As you can imagine, being over 70 years old, upkeep of the temple is a constant and never-ending endeavor.

To help accomplish this monumental task, a small group of volunteers, referred to as the "Kokua Gang", meet almost every Thursday to perform maintenance and repairs on whatever needs fixing at the time. Although, this group of volunteers have been able to perform these tasks up to now, the lack of younger, abled bodied members are rare, if not non-existent. This may soon require us to contract out some of the work, which will also require a lot of money. Therefore, we would prefer to avoid having to get to that point.

Therefore, we would like to ask anyone that is willing and able to join our Kokua Gang, to come out and lend a helping hand. As mentioned earlier, the Kokua Gang meets on Thursday mornings, usually around 8:30 - 9:00 a.m. and works until around noon, at which time, we normally enjoy a small lunch and talk story.

So, if you are sitting at home and have some free time or just want to lend a helping hand to maintain our wonderful temple, feel free to come by and join our Kokua Gang. Mahalo!

## SPECIAL DONATION

Kevin Agena ... \$100  
Special

Fujiwara Family ... \$100  
In memory of Tomiyo Fujiwara

Wesley Imaoka ... \$50  
In memory of Ross Yoshimura

Lawrence Kanemoto ... \$100  
In memory of Elaine Kanemoto

Calvin & Fumiko Nii ... \$200  
In memory of Stephen Nii

Kirana Soga ... \$500  
Special

Tsunako Sakata ... \$50  
Use of conference room

June Takiguchi ... \$100  
In memory of Elaine Kanemoto

Wendy Tolention ... \$1,000  
In memory of Fumie Kihara

Harvey Asato ... \$275  
In memory of Yoshio Asato

Tracey Carvalho ... \$500  
In memory of Neil Hashimoto

Hidenori Kamii ... \$100  
Special

Shirley Kon ... \$100  
In memory of Elaine Kanemoto

NMF Foundation ... \$100  
Special

Koshin Soga ... \$200  
Special

Nobuyuki Takaba ... \$200  
Special

Lynn Tam ... \$100  
Special

Sharon Toma ... \$1,000  
Special

**SOCIAL CONCERNS:** Jasmine & Daniel Morrison

**BWA HOONKO:** Gary Maeda, Janet Yoshida

**ETAIKYO:** Jasmine & Daniel Morrison, Janet Yoshida

**SPRING OHIGAN:** Janet Yoshida

**AUTUMN OHIGAN:** Janet Yoshida

**GOTANE:** Janet Yoshida

**OBON:** Janet Yoshida

**HOONKO:** Adrienne & Ellen Ayakawa, Richard & Sueko Kodama, Gary Maeda, Jasmine & Daniel Morrison, Stephen & Fumiko Nii, Lisa Okada, Janet Yoshida

### 2025 Dues:

Harvey Asato, Adrienne and Ellen Ayakawa, Pearl and Wendal Bayes, Milton Fujioka, Lonne Iwai, Janet Kaya, Lois and Daniel Hanaoka, Esther and Calvin Hashimoto, Robin and Mariko Hirata, Jane Kamikawa, Lawrence and Elaine Kanemoto, Francis Matsumoto, Mae and Makoto Matsushige, Carol and Tadao Nezu, Helen Nitani, Jenny Nomura, Melanie Okazaki, Daryl Serikaku, George Serikaku, Jonathan Serikaku, Terence Serikaku, Kay and Raymond Shigeta, Bobby and Reiko Toguchi, Janet Yoshida

### Reminder—Membership Dues

For those of you who have already submitted your membership dues for 2025, “Thank you very much for your support.

If you have not yet done so, please help us by submitting your dues at your earliest convenience. As a reminder, the membership dues are collected at the beginning of each year and remains unchanged at \$300 per year.

Thank you very much for your help and continued support!

## Shirlie's corner

Has anyone tried the Red Velvet Brownies from February's Golden Chain newsletter? I'm hoping most of our readers have not – a key ingredient was inadvertently omitted from the recipe. Please include ¾ cup all-purpose flour to the red velvet brownie. Many thanks to Sheryl Shimada for bringing it to my attention.

Growing up in Hawaii, we are very familiar with potluck gatherings. How did this tradition begin?

This tradition can be traced back to plantation days in Hawaii, where workers of different ethnicities would bring their lunches in “kau kau tins” containing rice and a main dish. They would sit in a circle out in the fields and place the “kau kau tin” of a main dish in the middle. Everyone would pick what they wanted from the choices of main dishes with their own rice.

Today, many of our family get-togethers are planned as potluck events. We gather at each other's homes, or at our favorite beach park, and everyone would bring a dish to share. One of our family's favorite potluck dishes is Sheryl's Pan Sushi.

She has graciously offered to share her recipe with us.

### PAN SUSHI

4 cups cooked rice (plain or sushi flavored)

½ bottle (1.9 oz) aji nori furikake

1 cup mayonnaise                      1 cup sour cream

2 pkg imitation crab, shredded

10 shiitake mushrooms, soaked and thinly sliced                      Korean style seasoned nori



Spread cooked rice into 9 x 13 inch pan. Sprinkle furikake over rice.

In a bowl, combine mayonnaise and sour cream together. Add crab and mushrooms and mix well.

Spread mixture over furikake rice. Broil in the oven until brown.

Scoop rice mixture on a sheet of Korean style seasoned nori and ENJOY!

## Project Dana Caregiver Support Program

**Saturday, March 8, 2025, 10:00 am to 11:30 am**

- Topic: Senior Medicare Patrol updates on Medicare Fraud & Scamming
- Speaker: Susan Labow, SMP Hawaii volunteer  
Location: Zoom and Waipahu Hongwanji Buddhist Temple  
(94-821 Kuhaulua Street, Waipahu, HI 96797)



**Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 10:00 am to 11:30 am**

Topic: Caring for the Caregiver: Supporting Those Who Support Others

Speaker: Cecilia Fong, Griswold Home Care for Oahu

Location: Zoom and Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin  
(1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, HI 96813)

浄土真宗の教え 2025年3月  
「阿弥陀様の願いその32（第十一願） 必至滅度の願（その一）」  
駐在開教使 曾我大円

お彼岸の月となります、いかがお過ごしでしょうか。先月まで「不貸計心の願」（執着の心を起こすことのない世界）があるのだと願われて下さっている阿弥陀様のことを書きました。その願いを思いながら日暮して下さいましたか。執着なしでは生きていけない、この私の姿に気がついて下さいましたか。本当にやるせないですね。そんな時には口にお念仏「なもあみだぶつ」と称えて下さい。今月は次の願い「第十一願、必至滅度の願」を紹介させて頂きます。

先ず御文を頂きます。

たとひわれ仏を得たらんに、國中の人天、定聚に住し、かならず滅度に至らずは、正覚を取らじ  
(浄土真宗聖典17ページ)

(私の意識)もし私(阿弥陀様)が佛としての悟りを得る時に、私の国のすべての人々が、正定聚の位に住し、生老病死などの大きなわずらいが滅び、その苦しみから解放されることとなくなる境地に至らなければ、私は聖覚の佛となることは出来ません。

この願の御文は短いですが、とても大切なことが書いてあります。言葉の解釈をしてみたいと思います。

「國中の人天」とは、阿弥陀様の願われてあるお浄土に往生する人ということです。それはまたお浄土に往生したい、という人生の目標が定まる人のことです。朝起きたついでに一日を生き、周りの人に愚痴を言い、欲の心を持ち、ご飯を食べて寝るということを繰り返す人ではないということです。

「定聚に住す」とは、「定聚」とはまさしく仏となることが定まって、再び後もどりしないこと、浄土に生まれることが決定していること、故に何事が起ころうともそれに振り回されることのない境地に住すること。

「滅度に至る」とは、「滅」とは滅びること、消えてなくなること。「度」とは渡ること。無常と苦の世界から、常住であり、楽である世界に渡ること。迷いの「此岸」からさどりの「彼岸」へ渡る(救われる)こと、導かれること。

「正覚」とは、さどりのこと。この場合は阿弥陀様が到達しようとしてされている境地。

この紙面だけでは満足はいく説明は出来ませんが、まあ大体文字の意味を拾ってみると、こういうことです。朝起きる時、おつと腰が痛い、足が痛い、目が見えない、頭がふらふらする、年をとってきたなあ、死ぬんじゃないかな、と言う不安な世界から、あー今日も新しい1日を頂いた、命を頂いた、と喜びの世界を生きることのできる、苦しみを飛び越した世界です。

皆さんは今グラグラと地面が揺れて、地震が来たらどうですか？恐ろしい、と不安になりませんか。そうなんです、皆さんが立っておられる所はとても不安定で、グラグラしてる所なんです。

続く

**Waipahu Hongwanji Mission**

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Resident Minister: Reverend Jeffrey D. Soga

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**MARCH 2025**

**Address Correction Requested**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Every Sunday: 9 a.m.** Family Service  
All are welcome.

**Every Thursday: 9 a.m.** Kokua Day

**Every Saturday, 8:30 a.m.** Hosha Day

**1st and 3rd Thursday: 12:30 p.m.**  
Karaoke Club Everyone welcome

**2nd Saturday: 9:30 a.m.**  
Project Dana, Caregiver Support Program.

**Every Sunday 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.**  
Ewa Fukushima Taiko Practice

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**OHIGAN (Spring Equinox) Service**  
**Sunday, March 16, 2025**

**ADULT DHARMA CLASS**  
**Discussion Session**

March 23, Sunday, 2025  
Please attend and bring all your questions  
about Buddhism and your life.

**Project Dana Caregiver Support Program**  
Saturday, March 8, 2025, 10 a.m.  
Social Hall

**BWA (Fujinkai) Meeting**  
**Sunday, March 16, 2025, 10:30 a.m.**