



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

JULY 2025

Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness



JODO SHINSHU, Teaching of Pure Land Amida Buddha's Vow #36, (12th Vow) 7/2025 Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister

Soon, Obon is approaching. This year, it will be held a week earlier, on the first Saturday of July—July 5th. We hope many people will gather and enjoy the event. To make that happen, all of us at Waipahu Hongwanji members must work together to warmly welcome everyone who attends. Please participate physically and monetarily to make the Obon success.

This month as well, I will continue to reflect together on the Twelfth Vow—the Vow of Immeasurable Light. I'd like to quote the Vow:

"If when I attain Buddhahood, my light should be finite, not illuminating even a hundred thousand Kotis of nayutas of Buddha-lands, may I not attain the perfect enlightenment."

(My Interpretation)

If, at the time I (Amida Buddha) attain enlightenment as a Buddha, the light of my wisdom – the radiance that is its working – has limits and is unable to illuminate the countless lands of Buddhas, then I shall not attain perfect enlightenment.

Amida Buddha vowed to shine light upon all worlds. Looking at this from the opposite perspective, it means eliminating darkness. This darkness is the source of our suffering. The Buddha taught us about this using the word "ignorance" (mu-myō). "Ignorance" means the absence of light. Because there is no light, we are unable to rejoice in what we should be able to rejoice in—it becomes the cause of suffering. I first heard this teaching by a professor, and later, something happened that made me reflect on it again.

I came from the mountains of Hiroshima to attend Ryukoku University in Kyoto. At first, I lived in an apartment in Fushimi, Kyoto. When I later moved to a place near Hongwanji Temple, I did so with the help of a friend I had met in the choir. We rented a mini truck together and helped each other move our belongings. First, we brought my things to the new place, had lunch, and then moved my friend's belongings to his apartment. By the time we finished, it was already evening.

After returning the rental car and having dinner together, I parted ways with my friend and headed back to my new room. The room was filled with boxes scattered everywhere. Although I thought, "Well, I guess I should start unpacking little by little," I was too tired to feel like opening each box and putting things away. So, I quickly took a shower, moved some boxes around, found a bit of space, pulled out my futon blanket and laid it out. Then I found my alarm clock and set it on a nearby box. At least I managed to create a spot where I could lie down for the night.

(Continued to Page 2)

(JODO SHINSHU, From Page 1)

The alarm clock wasn't battery-operated—it had a power cord. So I plugged it into the outlet near my head, set the time, set the alarm, turned off the lights, and went straight to sleep. However, perhaps because it was my first night in an unfamiliar room, I woke up in the middle of the night. I think this happens to everyone, but the first thing you usually do when you wake up in the middle of the night is go to the bathroom. Still half-asleep and in complete darkness, I got up, fumbling around, trying to remember where I was. But at that moment, I tripped over the cord of the clock I had placed near my head. As I stumbled forward, I stepped on the hard keychain attached to my room key, and with an “Ouch, ouch!” I lost my balance and crashed into one of the stacked boxes, falling down along with it. Partly because I was so tired, I became frustrated and irritated, and ended up taking it out on a nearby box by hitting it. After that, I got up again, fumbled around in the dark to find the light switch and turned it on.

Then I went to the bathroom to cool my head, came back, and sat cross-legged on the futon I had laid out. I was overwhelmed with frustration and irritation, but then I suddenly remembered something one of my university professors had once said: “In the darkness, everything becomes a source of suffering. But when light reaches that darkness and illuminates it, and we are able to see things as they truly are, those very things—without changing shape—transform into something precious. This is the teaching of Buddhism, the teaching of awakening.” That lesson came back to me in that moment.

When I calmed myself and looked carefully around the room, I realized that even the futon and the alarm clock were important to me. Everything in the box was something I needed, which is why I had carefully packed and brought them. There wasn't a single thing that wasn't necessary. But because it was dark and I couldn't see, even the clock and the box I almost tripped over became obstacles. Yet neither the clock nor the box had changed their form—they were just as important to me, simply illuminated by the light.

Please take a good look at yourself as well. Sometimes, we find ourselves complaining and getting irritated. We criticize our spouses, children, or parents; we struggle with relationships at work, speak badly of friends, and complain when it's hot on sunny days, or grumble when it rains or the wind blows—even while living here in Hawaii. Many people around the world wish they could come to Hawaii, and yet, when things don't go our way, we can't help but complain. I, too, try to avoid complaining, but often my mouth moves before my thoughts can catch up.

But all of this stems from the stress we feel when things don't go the way we want them to, and that's when complaints arise. However, when we take a closer look, illuminated by the light, we realize that everything is truly important. So if, at any point today—a day that will never come again—you find yourself complaining, recite the *nembutsu* and gently shine the light upon it. I believe you'll find that even the things that made you angry will begin to sparkle and shine.

(To be continued)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Evan Watarida, President of Waipahu Hongwanji



Dear Waipahu Hongwanji Sangha,

BON DANCE WEEKEND IS HERE

Hatsubon Service will be from 5pm to 6:30pm. The concession booth will open at 5pm. Bon Dance will begin at 7pm to 10pm.

Parking is limited as usual. Attendants will direct people to park in the fire exit lane. People will be directed to street parking off Lauko St. in the industrial area behind Warabeya or Wholesale Unlimited (map below). Volunteers will be given an assigned parking pass in Jack Hall.

GENEROUS DONATIONS

Thank you to our generous Sangha members who donated rice, spam, and bottled water. We reached our goal and have enough for bon dance. Thank you also to our monetary donors who keep our temple thriving.

We will be unveiling our new memorial message board this year. Thank you to Adrian Koizumi for creating this work of art. Attendees will be able to create their own personal memorial message tag and post it on the board. We hope this will become an annual tradition for our temple as a way for the community to actively participate in the spirit of Obon.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

As one of only two bon dances on Oahu for July 5, we are anticipating a large crowd. We still are in need of more volunteer help including concessions, parking, and kitchen help. If you are able to help at Bon Dance, please sign up on the link below, or contact myself, the temple, or Rev. Soga.

<https://bit.ly/44TZYSA>

No Sunday Service will be held on June 29th. Instead, we will be using that day for temple clean-up and Obon preparation. Come out if you can we hope to see all of you. In Gassho,

Waipahu Hongwanji News

Father's Day Sunday, June 15 —Thank you ladies for gorgeous brunch.



Top left: Mrs. Soga shared her thought on father's day.

Many Sunday attendees enjoyed the father's day gathering.

(Visitors)
Bottom left: Tomiko Jones from Madison and her mother, Florence Jones from Seattle,



Bottom center: Masachiyo Ushijima and Yoshikatsu Uchikawa, Japan

Bottom right: Sogas grandchildren



SPECIAL DONATION

Thomas Kaneshiro... \$1,000
Special & Obon

Anthony & Maitri Marzi Special ... \$200
Obon ... \$100

Kirana Soga ... \$500
Special

Shirlie Umebasami ... \$200
Special

Lynn Yoshimura ... \$500
In memory of Walter & Keith

George Serikaku ... \$200
Obon

Anonymous (Special) ... \$1,000

HOONKO: Jan Ro

GOTAN-E: Adrienne & Ellen Ayakawa, Calvin & Wilma Sumida, Guy & Cindy Ujimori

OBON: Carol Nezu, Fumiko Nii, Edna Otsuka, Jan Ro, Russell Tsutsui

2025 Membership Dues: Thomas & Sachie Kaneshiro, Midori Kawano & Amy Mikasa, Craig & Christi Tadaki



Come and join our wonderful Ohana at the...

Waipahu Hongwanji Mission
ADULT DAY CARE CENTER

"Caring for our Elders with Love and Compassion"

** Music & Singing * Entertainment * Socializations & more*
** Games & Memory Joggers * Exercise * Arts & Crafts*

Full and Part-time Programs available with lunch and snacks

94-821 Kuhaulua Street, Waipahu * Phone: 808-678-1770
Email: whmadcc@hawaii.rr.com * Website: aduldaycarehawaii.org

Shirlie's corner

Happy Father's Day to all Dads!

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!

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR 2025

1st (2024)
July 13 Edward Katsumi Edamatsu

3rd (2023) None
7th (2019) None

13th (2013)
July 25 Yoshie Sugawara
July 27 George Yoshikazu Murakami
July 30 Lillian Yuriko Nagaji

17th (2009)
July 2 Haruye Nakamura Shinno
July 2 Agnes Tsuyako Matsuo
July 9 Hideko Hashimoto
July 22 Shizuye Tsumoto

25th (2001)
July 15 Ayae Kobayashi

33rd (1993)
July 9 Ronald Shigemi Takushi

50th (1976)
July 3 Kamesa Tamashiro

1st (2024)
August 2 Yoshio Yoshimoto

3rd (2023)
August 17 Satsue Yamaguchi

7th (2019)
August 11 Natsuno Matsuo
August 14 Rikio Fukunaga

13th (2013)
August 1 Tamie Ikemoto
August 7 Masako Kataoka
August 23 Mildred Tsuneko Sasaki

17th (2009)
August 1 Noboru Kanda
August 15 Kameji Shimabukuro

25th (2001) None

33th (1993)
August 11 Harry Masao Murakami
August 28 Chiyoko Monte
August 30 Shizuo "Joe" Onaga

50th (1976) None

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!

じょうどしんしゅう おし
浄土真宗の教え 2025年7月

あみださま ねがい とうみょうむりょう ねがい
「阿弥陀様の願いその36 (第十二願) 光明無量の願 (その二)」
ちゅうざいかいきょうし そがだいえん
駐在開教使 曾我大円

いよいよお盆ぼんがやってきます。今年は一週間早めて七月最初の土曜日、七月五日に催もよおされることになりました。多くの方が集まって、楽しんでいただければと思うことです。そのためには私たちワイパフ本願寺の皆さんも力を合わせて、来て下さる方のおもてなしをしなければなりません。どうぞ皆様のご協力きょうりょくをお願い致します。

今月も「第十二願、光明無量の願」を皆さんと考えさせて頂きます。

たとひわれ仏を得たらんに、光明こうみょうよく限量げんりょうありて、下百千億那由他の諸仏しもひやくせんおくなゆたの国しよぶつを照らさざるに至らば、正覚しょうかくを取らじ。(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、私の智慧の働きとしての光明に限りむすうがあつて、無数の仏様の国を照らすことが出来ないならば、私は正覚の佛となることはできません。

阿弥陀様は全ての世界を照らす、と願われました。これを反対から見ると、暗いところを無くすということです。この暗い所というのが私たちの苦しみの因(たね)となる所です。お釈迦様はこのことを「無明」という言葉をもって私たちにお示し下さいました。「無明」ということは、明かりがないということです。明かりが無いから喜ぶべきことを、喜べなくなる、苦しみの「因(たね)」となると教えてあります。このことを学生時代に聞いたのですが、そのことを考えさせることができました。

私は広島ひろしまの山奥から京都きょうとにある龍谷大学へ行きました。京都では最初に伏見区という所の下宿へ住すみました。伏見区から本願寺の近くへ引越しをした時のことでした。その時は合唱団で出会った友達と一緒にレンタカーを借りて、協力して荷物を運びました。先ず私の荷物を引っ越し先へ持って行き、お昼ご飯を食べて、それから友達の引越しをしました。それが終わった時は夕方でした。レンタカーを返して、二人で晩御飯をすませて、友達と別れて私の新しい部屋へ帰って行きました。部屋には沢山の箱が無造作むぞうさにおいてあって、「さーて、ぼつぼつ片付けられないといけないなあ」という思いはあったのですが、疲れたこともあって箱を一つ一つ開けて片付けようという気が起こりませんでした。それで、とっととシャワーをして、先ず箱を動かして、隙間を見つけて布団を引っ張り出してひいて、それから目覚まし時計を探し出して近くの箱の上に置き、一応体いちおうからだを横たえる場所はどうかできました。その目覚まし時計は電池式ではなくコードのついていたものだったので、それを近くの頭の所にあるコンセントに差し込んで、時間を合わせて、目覚ましの時間もセットして、明かりを消して、とっとと寝ました。(次のページへつづく)

(前のページより)

しかし、やはり初めての慣れない部屋だったからでしょうか、夜中に目が覚めました。皆さんもそうだと思うのですが、夜中に目が覚めて先ずすることはトイレに行くことでしょうか。ここはどこだったかなど、寝ぼけ眼で真っ暗な中を手探りで立ち上がったのです。が、その時頭の近くに置いておいた時計のコードに足を取られて、おとととと前に進んだ時、部屋の鍵につけておいたキーホルダーの硬いのを踏んでしまって、「あいたたたー」とつまずいた拍子に積んであった箱に引っかかって、その箱と一緒にこけてしまいました。疲れていたこともあって、イライラと腹がたって、近くの箱をたたいて八つ当たりをしてしまいました。しかし、その後、もう一度立ち上がり、暗い中を電気のスイッチを探して明るくして、そしてトイレに行って頭を冷して部屋にもどり、ひいてある布団の上にあぐらをかいて座りました。腹がたってイライラして仕方がなかったのですが、ふと大学の先生から聞いたお話を思い出したのです。「暗闇の中では、全てのものが苦しみのたねとなる、そこに光が届いて、照らし出され、そのものを見ることが出来る時、それらは形を変えることもなく、そのままの姿で、すべてが大切なものになっていく、これが仏教の教え、覚りの教えなのだよ」とお話されていたことを思い出したのです。

心を落ち着けてよく部屋を見渡してみると、布団も目覚まし時計も私には大切なものです。また、箱の中にあるものは私に必要だから、きちっと詰めて持ってきたのです。何一つとして必要では無いものはなかったのです。でも、暗くて見えなかったから、つまずいてこけそうになった時計も箱も、全て邪魔になっていたのです。時計も箱たちも形を変えたわけではありません、光に照らし出されるそのままで私には大切なものだったのです。

皆さんも自分自身をよくみて下さい。時々、色々と思痴を言い、イライラとすることがあると思います。奥さんやご主人の悪口、子供や親の悪口、仕事場での人間関係の大変なこと、お友達の悪口、また晴れば暑いと思痴を言い、雨が降ったり風が吹いたりしてもブツブツと、このハワイに住んでいて文句を言っておられます。世界中の多くの方達がハワイに来たいのに、やっぱり思い通りにならないと思痴となって出てしまいます。私もなるべく言わないように心がけるのですが、思いよりも先に口が動いてしまいます。

でも、これは全て自分の思い通りにならない所にストレスを感じて、思痴が出るのです。光に照らされてよくよく見てみると、全ては大切なものなのです。もし、皆さんの今日一日、繰返すことのできない時間の中で、思痴がでてきたら、お念仏してじっくりと光を当てよく見て下さい。その腹を立てていたものが全て、キラキラと輝き始めることと思います。(つづく)

Waipahu Hongwanji Mission

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Resident Minister: Reverend Jeffrey D. Soga

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JULY 2025

Address Correction Requested

WAIANAE HONGWANJI OBON

Hatsubon Service
Sunday, July 13, 2025, 10:30 a.m.

Bon Dance
Saturday, July 19, 2025
7 p.m.—10 p.m.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Every Sunday: 9 a.m. Family Service
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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WAIPAHU HONGWANJI
OBON SERVICE/DANCE**

July 5, 2025, Saturday
5 p.m. Hatsubon Service
7 p.m.—10 p.m. Dance

ADULT DHARMA CLASS

Discussion Session
July 20, Sunday, 2025
Please attend and bring all your questions
about Buddhism and your life.

Project Dana Caregiver Support Program
Saturday, July 12, 2025, 10 a.m.
Social Hall & Zoom