



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2025

Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness



**JODO SHINSHU, Teaching of Pure Land
Amida Buddha's Vow #40, (12th Vow) 11/2025
Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister**

As November arrives, the morning air begins to carry a gentle chill. I hope you are all keeping well at Waipahu and Waianae Hongwanji. This month, let us once again reflect on the 12th Vow of Amida Buddha — the Vow of Infinite Light.

“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.”

Light enables us to see things as they truly are — this has been our reflection in recent months. Now, let us consider another quality of light: when it shines upon us, it not only reveals but also warms and nurtures, helping all things to grow.

After temple activities were suspended in April 2020 due to the pandemic, I began a small garden at home, growing lettuce and Chinese chives. Having grown up in the mountains of Hiroshima, surrounded by rice fields and vegetable gardens, working with the soil brings back memories of my mother's garden and our neighbors' farmlands. I still remember carrying buckets of fertilizer with her to help the vegetables grow. For any plant—whether lettuce, rice, or sugarcane—sunlight is essential. Wherever sunlight reaches, life flourishes.

When friends from Japan visit Hawai'i, they often ask, “Is there anything you would like me to bring?” Depending on the season, I ask for a small taste of home—foods that carry the flavor of that time of year. Around November, persimmons ripen to a golden hue—sweet and beautiful. Although fresh persimmons cannot be brought across the ocean, *hoshigaki*—dried persimmons—can. So when friends come after the New Year, I often ask them to bring some.

Do you know how dried persimmons are made? There are sweet persimmons and naturally bitter ones. The bitter ones are peeled, tied together with twine, and hung in a sunny place where the cool wind can reach them. Over time, the bitterness fades, and the fruit becomes wonderfully sweet. It is the gentle warmth of the sun and the crispness of the wind together that transform the bitterness into sweetness.

(Continued to Page 2)

(From Page 1)

Since long ago, this process of making *hoshigaki* has been used as a metaphor for Amida Buddha's light. The bitterness represents our suffering. All of us experience hardship, sadness, and moments of frustration—like the naturally bitter persimmon. Yet, when we are embraced by Amida's light, that bitterness does not vanish, but it is transformed—just as the persimmon becomes sweet. Within the light of compassion, our struggles soften into gratitude and peace.

When life feels painful and things don't go as planned, please recite the Nembutsu—*Namo Amida Butsu*. Feel the warm, compassionate light of Amida reaching you. The 12th Vow assures us that this light unfailingly reaches every being. And when you encounter someone facing hardship or sorrow, remember that the same light also shines upon them. Be near them kindly, so they too may feel its warmth.

Shinran Shonin expressed this truth beautifully in his hymn:

Through the benefit of the unhindered light,
We realize *Shinjin* of vast, majestic virtues,
And the ice of our blind passions necessarily melts,
Immediately becoming water of enlightenment.

Obstructions of karmic evil turn into virtues;
It is like the relation of ice and water;
The more the ice, the more the water;
The more the obstructions, the more the virtues.

Let us walk together in gratitude, reciting the Nembutsu, and allow Amida's infinite light to gently transform our hearts.

In Gassho,

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WAIPAHU HONGWANJI NEWS

EITAI KYO (Sangha Memorial) Service

Sunday, November 23, 2025, 9 a.m.

**Please attend the service to extend our gratitude and
pay respect to our pioneer members.**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Evan Watarida, President of Waipahu Hongwanji



Dear Waipahu Hongwanji Sangha,

So far in October we have been faring well with Rev. Soga alternating his Sunday service dates between Waipahu and Pearl City. We will continue to have Sunday services weekly at Waipahu, so you don't have to try and remember which Sunday to show up on. Just come in. *E komo mai.*

This past month on October 4, the Jr. YBA members of Oahu District spent all day fulfilling large orders of manju for their fundraiser. Thank you to all those who purchased manju, the teens were appreciative of the use of the Waipahu kitchen and commercial oven. They will use proceeds to donate to non-profit causes of their choosing.

On October 18th, the United Oahu BWA held their conference at Aiea temple. Speakers included AARP Hawaii Director, Kealii Lopez on federal issues affecting seniors and Linda Nagai on her Tokudo journey. Activities included chair yoga to keep everyone active and fit.

November 9 will be the last Sunday service held at Waianae Temple before it permanently closes and the property will be put up for sale. Attendance is by invitation only. We will forever be grateful for the Waianae temple members and the positive memories they made.

Soon we will be entering the holiday season. It's an opportunistic time to practice our gratitude. It does seem to be a little easier when the holidays arrive for most people to be in a pleasant mood and feel goodwill toward their fellow humans. I know when I hear holiday music and see the decorations, it lifts my spirits and I instantly feel nostalgic, happy, and love for others.

But for many, the holidays may not automatically be joyful. And right now, we need any reason to feel positive, especially when it seems there's no shortage of reasons to feel down including uncertainty about income, job security, and societal stress and conflict. But the Buddha taught that we are the ones to create more suffering for ourselves when we try to change things that we have no control over and condition our happiness to only when things go our way. Because no matter what is going on around us, we can feel happy in the moment. No matter what the economy or political climate is like, there are things we can control. And the holidays are a perfect time to share dana (selfless giving without expectation). There are many meaningful actions we can do that don't cost a thing but can make an impact on others and make us feel fulfilled.

Rev. Soga shares with us that these include kind words, a pleasant smile, attentive listening, sharing of your time, and acts of compassion. When we do something nice or give to others, it makes us feel better and it could perhaps totally change the direction of someone else's life who maybe is having a bad day or going through a rough patch. And if we can keep that feeling and momentum going through into the next year, we can be a ripple that catalyzes change to the world around us.

I hope to see you at our upcoming events.
In Gassho,

Buddhist Womens' Association Annual Gathering
Saturday, October 18, 2025 at Aiea Hongwanji



Top left: Waipahu members
Bottom left: service is in progress, center and right: MCs and organist



SPECIAL DONATION

Anonymous ... \$1,000
New ice making machine

Kamimura Family ... \$200
In memory of Shirley Ann Kamimura

Okata Family ... \$200
Funeral for Tetsuo Okata

Kirana Soga ... \$500
Special

Hanaoka Family ... \$200
In memory of David Hanaoka

Calen Miyahara ... \$100
In memory of Jean Miyahara

Otsuka Family ... \$500
In memory of Clarence Otsuka

Peggy Tsukida ... \$300
In memory of Kimi Koizumi, Terumi Muraoka, and Lionel Minemoto

MEMBERSHIP: Marjory & Henry Funasaki, Charlene Ikeda, Kathy Ikeda-Lee, Steven Nakamura, Gerald & Helen Oshiro, Sharon Toguchi, Peggy Tsukida, Masao & Yukiko Uyeda, Glenn Yamauchi

AUTUMN OHIGAN: Milton Fujioka, Roy & Dorothy Hirata, Richard & Sue Kodama, Wilfred & Mae Matsushige, Flora Minemoto, Jasmine & Daniel Morrison, Fumiko & Calvin Nii, Lori Noborikawa, Jenny Nomura, Lisa Okada, Edna Otsuka, Jan Ro, Tsunako Sakata, George Sawa, Wilma & Calvin Sumida, Victor & Helene Tanimoto, Lilly Tokuhara, Robert Tsumoto, Ellen Ujimori, Craig & Megumi Uyeno, Francis Uyeno, Evan Watarida

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR 2025

<p>1 (2024) November 19 Yukiko Nakamura November 24 Lionel Tsuyoshi Minemoto</p> <p>3 (2023) November 29 Shigeo Toma</p> <p>7th (2019) November 6 Sally Toshiko Asato</p> <p>13th (2013) November 6 Deanna Kazue Tenma</p> <p>17th (2009) None 25th (2001) None</p> <p>33th (1993) November 8 Kaichi Sekioka</p> <p>50th (1976) November 14 Tokichi Fujiwara</p>	<p>1st (2024) December 3 Elaine Setsuko Kanemoto</p> <p>3rd (2023) December 1 Clyde Rikio Yoshimi December 25 Yoshito Paul Sasaki December 27 Gilbert Shigemi Mikami</p> <p>7th (2019) December 6 Carol Yuki Matsuda</p> <p>13th (2013) December 14 Toshio Tadaki December 19 Tatsue Takatani</p> <p>17th (2009) December 31 Lottie Yaeko Uyeno</p> <p>25th (2001) December 12 Mitsugu Shimizu December 26 Kimie Sawa December 30 Richard Takaichi Kubo December 31 Thomas Ken Takara</p> <p>33rd (1993) December 4 Dexter Henry Kwok Quon Wong December 8 Walter Nobuyoshi Kato December 17 Richard Masakatsu Takamoto December 18 Ayame Honda</p> <p>50th (1976) December 11 Sadao Shinno December 11 Gunichi Sugita December 23 Neju Takeshita December 28 Mitsuo Takeshita</p>
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WAIPAHU HONGWANJI MISSION ADULT DAY CARE CENTER

Waipahu Hongwanji Senior Day Care Center is open to anyone on the island. Please visit our website at www.adulthoodcarehawaii.org

**Reminder that Waipahu Hongwanji Members get a discounted rate.
94-821 Kuhaulua St. Waipahu, HI 96797**

Phone: 808-678-1770

E-mail: WHMADCC@hawaii.rr.com

浄土真宗の教え 2025年11月
「阿弥陀様の願いその40（第十二願） 光明無量の願 （その6）」
駐在開教使 曾我大円

11月になりました。朝は少し寒さを感じられる季節となってきました。ワイパフ、ワイアナエ本願寺の皆様いかがお過ごしでしょうか。

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、光明よく限量ありて、下百千億那由他の諸仏の国を照らさざるに至らば、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、私の智慧の働きとしての光明に限りがあつて、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。

光には物を照らし、そのものをはっきりと見せてくれる働きがあります。そしてもう一つの働きに温もりをあたえ、育てる働きがあります。私はパンダミックで2020年にお寺の活動ができなくなった4月から、小さな畑を作ってレタスとニラを育てています。私は広島県の山の中で育ったので、周りはお米の田んぼと畑に囲まれて、御門徒さんが農業を営まれているのを見て育ちました。母も小さな畑で大根や白菜、キャベツなどを育てていました。よく肥えたごを一緒に担いで、畑に持って行ったのを覚えています。野菜を育てるのには太陽の光がとても大切です。野菜に限らず、お米も、そしてサトウキビもそうでしょう。日当たりの良い畑では作物の育ちは違います。

それだけではありません。日本からお友達が来られる時、そのお友達が「日本から何か欲しいものがある？」と尋ねてくれます。そんな時、季節季節の美味しい物を持ってきてもらいます。多分、11月は秋の果物、特に柿がおいしく黄色に色づく頃です。果物はそのまま持ってきてはもらえませんが、干し柿だったら大丈夫です。だからお正月が過ぎて来られるお友達には干し柿をお願いします、とお友達に持ってきてもらえます。ところで、皆さんはこの干し柿はどうやって作るか知っていますか？

柿には甘くなる柿と渋い味のままの柿があります。渋い柿は皮を剥き、縄ひもに結んで、冷たい風のあたる日当たりのいいところに吊るしておきます。そうするといつの間にか渋くて苦い味そのまま甘い甘い干し柿に変わります。冷たい風と温かな太陽と一緒にあって、渋味が甘くなるのです。

昔からこの渋柿の話は阿弥陀様の光に喩えて使われます。渋味は私たちの苦しみの姿です。私たちの日暮らしは辛いこと苦しいこと悲しいことがたくさんあります。ちょうど生まれながらにして渋い味の柿のように。でもその私たちの辛いことも、阿弥陀様の暖かな光に包まれた時、その苦しく辛いままで、阿弥陀様に全てをおまかせし、心の安らぎ渋さがそのまま甘い柿に変えられてゆくのです。

皆さんも毎日が思うように行かず、辛く苦しく愚痴が出る時があるでしょう。そんな時はお念仏して下さい。そして阿弥陀様の光に包まれた温かな慈しみの願いが届いていると感じて下さい。この十二願に誓われてるように、必ずあなたの心に届くと願って下さっているのです。また、皆さんの周りに辛く苦しみの中で愚痴を言いながら生活している人がいたら、その人にも阿弥陀様のこの慈しみの光が届いているのだと思いながら、優しく傍にいてあげて下さい。親鸞様が読まれた和讃に次のようながあります。

無碍光の利益より 威徳広大の信をえて かならず煩惱の氷とけ すなはち菩提のみずとなる
罪障功德の体となる 氷と水のごとくにて 氷おおきに水おおし 障りおおきに徳おおし

共にお念仏させて頂きましょう。

合掌、称名

Waipahu Hongwanji Mission

94-821 Kuhaulua Street
Waipahu, HI 96797
Phone: 808 677-4221
E-mail: waipahuhongwanji@hawaii.rr.com
Resident Minister: Reverend Jeffrey D. Soga

Non Profit Organization
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NOVEMBER 2025

Address Correction Requested

Condolence

Waipahu Hongwanji extends deepest
Sympathy to the family of :

Kimi Koizumi
Jean Miyahara
Terumi Muraoka
David Shigeta
Tetsuo Okata

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Every Thursday: 9 a.m. Kokua Day
Help wanted

Every Saturday, 8:30 a.m. Hosha Day
Help wanted

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**EITAIKYO
Sangha Memorial Service**

Sunday, November 23, 2025, 9 a.m.

Please attend the service to extend our grati-
tude and pay respect to our pioneer members.

**ADULT DHARMA CLASS
Discussion Session**

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

Project Dana Caregiver Support Program
Saturday, November 8, 2025, 10 a.m.
Social Hall & Zoom