



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

DECEMBER 2025

Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness



**JODO SHINSHU, Teaching of Pure Land
Amida Buddha's Vow #41, (12th Vow) 12/2025
Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister**

As we enter the final month of the year, I hope you are all doing well. With the rainy days and colder weather, please take good care of your health. This month, we will once again reflect together on the **Twelfth Vow — 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.”

Last month, I wrote about how the working of Amida's Light brings warmth and nurtures all beings. This teaching comes from the writings of Master Donran (Tan-Luan). In the same way, water has three forms. The first is liquid water — the gentle, flowing form that is essential for our lives. Water embraces all things softly and sustains them. When water falls below freezing, it becomes ice. Ice is extremely cold, and when it breaks, its edges become as sharp as blades. If we handle it carelessly, it can cut our fingers and draw blood. The third form is steam. When water boils, it instantly turns into vapor. Steam holds tremendous power; when used correctly, it can even move massive machines such as locomotives. But if we are careless, that same heat can cause severe burns.

When I conduct counseling sessions before a wedding ceremony, after listening to the couple, I usually ask this question: “You will be living together from now on, but life is not always filled with joy and happiness. There may be times when you get upset or argue with one another. How will you resolve such moments?” When I say this, the couple—still very much in love before the wedding—often look at me as if to say, “We would never fight.” Then the conversation stops for a moment. If you were in their place, how would you answer? People search for various words as they try to respond.

At that point, I speak to them about the three forms of water. Human beings, when overtaken by desire, can become cold like ice, hurting others with sharp words that cut like a blade. And when we become angry, our hearts boil like steam—releasing words so hot they can burn others. Husbands and wives alike, depending on conditions and circumstances, may turn into ice or steam toward the very people they care about most. So how do we resolve such moments? I continue by saying:

(Continued to Page 2)

(From Page 1)

“When your husband’s heart becomes sharp like ice, or when your wife becomes angry and uses words that burn like steam, that is the moment for you to become warm water. If you gently wrap that icy heart, or cool that burning heart with the warmth of your own, before you know it, the ice and steam will naturally return to water and become one again.”

As I wrote last month, Shinran Shonin beautifully expressed this transformation of the heart in his hymns. I quote them again:

*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.*

As we come to the end of another year, I sincerely thank you for your continued support. May you have a peaceful and gentle New Year’s season.

In Gassho,

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WAIPAHO HONGWANJI NEWS

Buddhist Women’s Association Visitation

Saturday, December 6, 2025, Please call temple if you can.

BODHI DAY Service

Sunday, December 7, 2025, 9 a.m.

Project Dana Caregiver Support Program

Saturday, December 13, 2025, 10 a.m. Social Hall & Zoom

Year End General Clean up

Sunday, December 14, 2025, 8:30a.m.

MOCHITSUKI

Sunday, December 28, 2025

NEW YEAR’S EVE SERVICE

December 31, 2025, 10 a.m.

NEW YEAR’S DAY SERVICE

January 1, 2026, 11 a.m.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Evan Watarida, President of Waipahu Hongwanji



Dear Waipahu Hongwanji Sangha,

It's nearing the end of 2025. Over these past few months, as I have been preparing the altar at Waipahu on the weeks that Rev. Soga is at Pearl City, I thought I would be more tired and overwhelmed. I need to arrive at the temple early to make the flower arrangements, to prepare the rice offerings and incense, and to set up for each week's dharma talk. However, my experience has been quite the opposite. My mind and spirit are calmer and more peaceful as I perform these tasks. The tranquil time alone as I prepare the altar allows me to reflect upon myself in a meditative way.

The stillness allows me to be mindful and deliberate in my actions and thoughts. I feel gratitude wash over me as I think of those that built this beautiful temple and passed along the dharma to each successive generation. And I feel fortunate to be able to receive the Buddha's teachings. This was an important revelation to me and refreshing to be able to snap out of my entire week of self-absorbed thoughts and routine.

Last month on November 9, Waianae Hongwanji held their final Sunday service which was attended by Bishop Umitani, Rev. Soga, and temple leaders from Oahu District. It's a sad moment to think that this is the final service and gathering, but at the same time, Buddhism teaches us that change is inevitable and that it is not necessarily a negative emotion. On the back of Waianae's printed service program, there was a phrase attributed to the Buddha that caught my attention. It said, "with every end there is a beginning". I thought that short message was very fitting and timely. Not just because of Waianae's closure, but even the transitioning from the end of 2025 calendar into the new year 2026.

In this endless karmic cycle of birth and rebirth, I'm reminded that there is no end or finale. We are all connected and interdependent on one another. It's easy to get lost in the hustle and bustle of daily life and all the things that demand our attention. Then we lose connection with what is truly important in life. We do not exist in a vacuum. Everything I do has effects on the universe, and everything that I receive, reciprocally is returned, as the result of others. At this time of year, let's be mindful of our actions, our words, and our relationship to others.

On Dec. 14th, we will have our year-end temple clean-up so there will be no service. And on the last Sunday the 28th, we will be making mochi tsuki in lieu of normal service. A sign-up sheet will be in the social hall so we know how many people will be prepping mochi. The Junior YBA's Toys for Tots collection drive is ongoing until first week in December. Let's take time to reflect on the people in our lives and to pay them a friendly call or visit. And, also, to be mindful of those less fortunate so we may offer our assistance, empathy, and kindness.

Happy Holidays and In Gassho,

SPECIAL DONATION

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

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

Betty Namba
Thanksgiving ... \$100
Eitaikyo ... \$100

Sakai Family ... \$300
In memory of Ryozo Sakai

Kirana Soga ... \$500
Special

Gary & Lynn Fujikawa ... \$200
Special

Chiyono Kinoshita ... \$1000
Special

Irma Nakayama ... \$100
In memory of Bert Nakayama

Reverend Jay Okamoto ... \$100
Visitation

Richard Okita ... \$300
Special

June Takiguchi ... \$200
In memory of Elaine Kanemoto

Janet Kaya ... \$250
Adult Day Care

Marjory & Henry Funasaki ... \$300
Social Concern

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MEMBERSHIP: Gary & Lynn Fujikawa, Margaret Itagaki, Chiyono Kinoshita, Emiko Onaga, Barbara Toguchi

AUTUMN OHIGAN: Guy and Cindy Ujimori

ETAIKYO: Milton Fujioka, Marjory & Henry Funasaki, Daniel & Lois Hanaoka, Roy & Dorothy Hirata, Steven & Jan Honda, Richard & Sueko Kodama., Adrian & Gale Koizumi, Frances Matsumoto, Wilfred & Mae Matsushige, Masumi Murakami, Betty Namba, Edna Otsuka, Jan Ro, Thomas Sekine, Wilma & Calvin Sumida, Victor & Helene Tanimoto, Robert Tsumoto, Kuniomi & Akemi Uehara, Guy & Cindy Ujimori, Masao & Yukiko Uyeda, Craig & Megumi Uyeno

SOCIAL CONCERNS: Daniel & Lois Hanaoka, Roy & Dorothy Hirata, Steven & Jan Honda, Richard & Sueko Kodama, Frances Matsumoto, Wilfred & Mae Matsushige, Masumi Murakami, Edna Otsuka, Jan Ro, Thomas Sekine, Wilma & Calvin Sumida, Victor & Helene Tanimoto, Robert Tsumoto, Guy & Cindy Ujimori, Masao & Yukiko Uyeda, Craig & Megumi Uyeno, Helen Yonashiro

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR 2025 - 2026

<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>	<p>1st (2025) none</p> <p>3rd (2024) January 7 Daryl Hatsuo Valdez January 7 Jane Yasuko Tanaka January 9 Nancy Natsue Miyashita January 27 Pamela Mari Umemoto</p> <p>7th (2020) January 13 Setsuko "Susie" Yamakita</p> <p>13th (2014) January 18 Gladys Yoshino Oshiro</p> <p>17th (2010) none</p> <p>25th (2002) January 2 Kishiye Orita January 15 Mitsuo Kimura January 24 Toshio Oshiro</p> <p>33rd (1994) January 2 Florence Fusae Ichiyama January 2 Itsuo Imaoka January 4 Seiichi Toguchi January 17 Jason Takeo Matsushige January 25 Hisa Shigeta</p> <p>50th (1977) January 4 Michisuke Hiraoka January 18 Shoichi Sanada</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12月
「阿弥陀様の願いその41(第十二願) 光明無量の願 (その7)」
駐在開教使 曾我大円

いよいよ今年も最後の月となりました。いかがお過ごしでしょうか？雨が降りつつ、寒くなってきています。体調管理には気をつけて下さい。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って、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。

先月は光の働きには温もりを与え、ものを育てる働きがあることを書きました。此は曇鸞大師が書かれたものですが、水には三つの形があります。一つには水、柔らかな液体のことですね。この水は私たちには欠かせないものです。物を優しくつつみこんでくれる働きがあります。この水が氷点下を過ぎると氷になります。氷はとても冷たくて、時々その氷が砕けると、その端がとても鋭い刃物のようになります。そしてそれを上手に扱わないとその氷で指を切って血が出たりします。そしてもう一つは気体です。水が沸騰すると蒸気になります。この蒸気は大きな力を持って、その力をうまく利用すると大きな鉄の塊のような機関車でも動かす働きをします。でも、此も気をつけて使わないと、この熱で大火傷をすることもあります。

私が結婚式のカウンセリングをする時、大体お話を聞かせてもらった後、私は次のように質問します。「これからお二人はずっと一緒に生きて行かれるのですが、人生は嬉しいこと楽しいことばかりではありません。時に腹を立てて喧嘩したりすることがあるかもしれません。そんな時はどうやって解決していきますか？」すると、結婚前のラブラブのお二人ですから、会話はスッと止まります。まるで、喧嘩なんかするはずがない、というような目で私を見られます。皆さんだったら、どんな答えをされますか？色々と言葉を探してお話しくたします。その時に私はこの水の三つの形の話を書きます。

人間は欲が出てくると氷のように冷たく、時に人の指を傷つけてしまうように、人の心を傷つけてしまうことがあります。また腹を立ててしまうと、蒸気が人の体が火傷するような、恐ろしく熱い言葉を発することがあります。ご主人はご主人、奥様は奥様、縁によって大切な人も氷になったり、蒸気になったりするのです。そんな時はどうしたら解決するでしょう。そこで私は話を続けます。「そんな時、ご主人が氷のように鋭い刃物のような心を持った時、また奥さんが腹を立てて人に火傷をさせるような言葉を使う時、そんな時はあなたは温かな水となり、氷になった心、火傷するような熱い心を優しく包んであげれば、いつの間にかその温かな水に包まれた氷も蒸気も、その水と一つになるんですよ」と。

先月も書きましたが、親鸞聖人がその心持ちを和讃という詩に書かれました。もう一度引用します。

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.

今年も一年お世話になりました。どうぞ穏やかな年末年始をお過ごし下さい。

合掌

Waipahu Hongwanji Mission

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

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Waipahu, Hawaii

DECEMBER 2025

Address Correction Requested

**Buddhist Women’s Association
Member’s Visitation**

Please come to Waipahu Temple Parking
Lot at 8:30 a.m.

If you can go to visit members,
please call temple before,
so we can provide transportation.

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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

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