



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

## GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

**JANUARY 2026**

Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude



### 2026 New Year's Greetings From His Eminence Gomonshu Kojun Ohtani

As we welcome the arrival of the New Year, I extend my sincere greetings.

In recent years, natural disasters—including typhoons, torrential rains, earthquakes, and large-scale wildfires—have occurred with increasing frequency both in Japan and around the world, causing devastating damage and casualties. I offer my heartfelt condolences for those who lost their lives, and I express my deepest sympathy to all who have been affected. I fervently hope that you may all regain normalcy in your daily lives as soon as possible.

Last year marked a significant milestone, the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. In July, I had the honor of attending memorial services in Okinawa, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki—places that suffered destruction beyond words—and had the precious opportunity to listen to the accounts of those who lived through the war. I once again engraved in my heart the words of Sokunyo Monshu who said at the 1995 “50th Anniversary of the End of World War II Memorial Service for All the War Dead”:

*“We cannot help but feel deep remorse before the Buddhas and Spiritual Leaders for the fact that we were unfaithful to the teachings of our Founder and actively cooperated with the war in the name of Buddhism.”*

With renewed recognition of our organization’s wartime responsibility, I reaffirmed my resolve as we continue forward on this path.

In the postwar years, our organization began its journey by refusing to avert its eyes from the fact of its active cooperation and involvement in the war, and by striving to build a peaceful society in which all people may live in spiritual fulfillment. We must continue to confront these truths with sincerity and ensure that such errors are never repeated. Even now, around the world, wars and conflicts persist, and countless precious lives remain at risk. In such times, let us hold close to our hearts Shinran Shonin’s aspiration

—*“May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha’s teaching spread!”*—

and walk each day in harmony with this wish. January 1, 2026

OHTANI Kojun, Monshu  
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

*This translation is prepared by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.*



## New Year's Greeting

Happy New Year!

As we welcome another year, let us once again be mindful that we are all embraced by Amida Buddha's boundless Compassion. With deep gratitude, I look forward to walking the path of the Nembutsu together with all of you in the coming year. I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation for your continued understanding and support of the various activities of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

In October of last year, I had an opportunity to visit Ryukoku University in Kyoto. While there, a framed calligraphy on the wall caught my eye. It read, “共結来縁” ( “Let us together form the karmic bond to come”). This particular work was written by Rev. Shunkai Matsuura, the former Chief Priest of Mibu Temple in Kyoto and a graduate of Ryukoku University. With his calligraphy, he expressed the wish that “people from various backgrounds come together, cherish the bond they share, and move forward toward a common goal.”

I found these words truly inspiring. Upon returning to Hawaii, I learned that this phrase originally comes from an ancient Chinese poem: “Mountains and rivers may divide us, but the wind and moon share the same sky. Sending this robe to my fellow disciples (of the Buddha), may we together form a karmic bond.” Over 1,300 years ago, Prince Nagaya of Japan had these words embroidered on a thousand robes sent to the Tang dynasty, wishing that, even though we are different, our shared goal is to spread the teachings of Buddha. It is said that the great Chinese master Ganjin was deeply moved by this message, which inspired him to cross the sea to Japan to transmit the Buddhist precepts.



## Hawaii Kyodan President's New Year's Letter for 2026

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

Aloha kākou! I hope that you and your loved ones are in good spirits as we enter the New Year – 2026!

Yes, another year has gone by quickly. I can look back at the past year and I'm happy that the year has gone well for my family. At the same time, I am aware that we are all a year older. I am sure that each one of us can recall losing a dear friend, colleague or family member this past year. Let us take a moment to be grateful for the connection that we enjoyed and still do enjoy with that person or persons.

It has occurred to me more than once in the past year that I won't be here forever. This realization often happens when I first get up in the morning. I think to myself, “Hey, I'm over 70!” Maybe it is because I must stretch out the stiffness in my fingers in the morning (“welcome to the land of osteoarthritis” says my friend the rheumatologist). I stretch muscles in my low back and legs before I can “bounce” out of bed. Realizing the truth of the impermanence of life makes me try to make the most of every day.

Our theme and slogan for 2026 is, “**Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude**”. Shinran Shonin taught that the Nembutsu, the name of Amida Buddha, verbalized as *Namo Amida Butsu* is an expression of gratitude. The Nembutsu, *Namo Amida Butsu*, is our grateful response to Amida Buddha’s Calling Voice. *Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude* reminds us that every moment of our lives, Amida Buddha embraces us with immeasurable Wisdom and Compassion. We respond to Amida’s compassionate calling voice with profound gratitude.

This is my last New Year’s Greeting to you as President of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Our Hawaii Kyodan Bylaws specifies term limits for the office of President and the last of my three terms will end with the close of our Legislative Assembly in February 2026. I plan to remain active on the HK Board of Directors as Immediate Past President and I look forward to seeing many of you in the future via Zoom or in person at various activities.

Serving as your president has been a wonderful life experience for me. I have made Dharma friends across our state, nationally and internationally. I have experienced many “Nembutsu Moments” learning about and living Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. I would like to express my deep appreciation to all of you for assisting in our mission to “share the living teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism so that all people can have lives of harmony, peace and gratitude”. Your dedication, creativity and determination in sharing the Nembutsu teachings makes a difference in our world.

I hope that you will enjoy peace and happiness in the New Year!

*“As one little candle lights another, so the light of Buddha’s compassion will pass from one mind to another mind endlessly”.*  
(The Teaching of Buddha)

With Gassho,

Warren Tamamoto  
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

In our Hongwanji Sangha, too, people of many backgrounds come together. Each of us carries our own karmic conditions—unique and irreplaceable by others. There are moments when we may wish that someone could take our place, or when we long to carry another’s burden, but ultimately, we each must walk our own path. At times, this journey makes you feel lonely or uncertain.

Yet, Amida Buddha never abandons us. Out of immeasurable Compassion, Amida Buddha fulfilled the Vow to bring every being to the Pure Land. That compassionate calling—“Namo Amida Butsu”—reaches each one of us, here and now. Through the Nembutsu, we come to realize that the path we once thought we walked alone is in fact illuminated by Amida’s Light and is shared with many fellow travelers. From that awareness arises a heart of gratitude and joy.

Let us make this year another opportunity to listen deeply to Amida Buddha’s compassionate calling. In keeping with our 2026 theme, “**Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude,**” may we live each day with appreciation and share the joy of a life of gratitude with others.

May this year be filled with the warmth of Amida’s Compassionate Light, peace of mind, and the joy of the Nembutsu for you and your loved ones.

In Gassho,

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani  
Bishop  
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

(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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## **WAIPAHU 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. 14<sup>th</sup>, we will have our year-end temple clean-up so there will be no service. And on the last Sunday the 28<sup>th</sup>, 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 Ryoza 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><b>1<sup>st</sup> (2024)</b> December 3 Elaine Setsuko Kanemoto</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> (2023)</b> December 1 Clyde Rikio Yoshimi December 25 Yoshito Paul Sasaki December 27 Gilbert Shigemi Mikami</p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> (2019)</b> December 6 Carol Yuki Matsuda</p> <p><b>13<sup>th</sup> (2013)</b> December 14 Toshio Tadaki December 19 Tatsue Takatani</p> <p><b>17<sup>th</sup> (2009)</b> December 31 Lottie Yaeko Uyeno</p> <p><b>25<sup>th</sup> (2001)</b> December 12 Mitsugu Shimizu December 26 Kimie Sawa December 30 Richard Takaichi Kubo December 31 Thomas Ken Takara</p> <p><b>33<sup>rd</sup> (1993)</b> December 4 Dexter Henry Kwok Quon Wong December 8 Walter Nobuyoshi Kato December 17 Richard Masakatsu Takamoto December 18 Ayame Honda</p> <p><b>50<sup>th</sup> (1976)</b> December 11 Sadao Shinno December 11 Gunichi Sugita December 23 Neju Takeshita December 28 Mitsuo Takeshita</p>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> (2025)</b> none</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> (2024)</b> January 7 Daryl Hatsuo Valdez January 7 Jane Yasuko Tanaka January 9 Nancy Natsue Miyashita January 27 Pamela Mari Umemoto</p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> (2020)</b> January 13 Setsuko "Susie" Yamakita</p> <p><b>13<sup>th</sup> (2014)</b> January 18 Gladys Yoshino Oshiro</p> <p><b>17<sup>th</sup> (2010)</b> none</p> <p><b>25<sup>th</sup> (2002)</b> January 2 Kishiye Orita January 15 Mitsuo Kimura January 24 Toshio Oshiro</p> <p><b>33<sup>rd</sup> (1994)</b> January 2 Florence Fusae Ichiyama January 2 Itsuo Imaoka January 4 Seiichi Toguchi January 17 Jason Takeo Matsushige January 25 Hisa Shigeta</p> <p><b>50<sup>th</sup> (1977)</b> 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](http://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](mailto: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  
Phone: 808 677-4221  
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**

**BODHI DAY Service**

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Social Hall & Zoom

**Year End General Clean up**

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