



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

## GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

APRIL 2026

Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude



### JODO SHINSHJU, Teaching of Pure Land Amida Buddha's Vow #44, (14<sup>th</sup> Vow) 04/2026 Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister

How are you doing? April has arrived. This month, we celebrate **Hanamatsuri**, the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha. As we rejoice in the Buddha's birth, we are reminded that, through his teaching, we are able to overcome our suffering and walk together toward Amida Buddha's Pure Land. Let us spend this time gently humming, "*Happy Birthday, Buddha.*"

This month, I would like to introduce the **Fourteenth Vow: the Vow of Innumerable Śrāvakas**. Let us first receive the words from the sutra:

"If, when I attain Buddhahood, the number of śrāvakas in my land can be known or calculated—even if all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas in countless worlds were to gather and try to measure them over hundreds of thousands of kalpas—then may I not attain perfect enlightenment."

(Jodo Shinshu Seiten, p.17)

#### (My interpretation)

If I (Amida Buddha) attain enlightenment, and if the number of śrāvakas in my land is limited and can be counted, then I will not realize perfect enlightenment. The number of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas throughout many worlds should be immeasurable; if they could be counted, I could not become a fully awakened Buddha.

Before speaking further about this vow, let me explain the terms **śrāvaka** and **pratyekabuddha**.

A *śrāvaka* literally means "one who hears the voice." It refers to those who listen to the Buddha's teachings and awaken—namely, the disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha.

A *pratyekabuddha* can be understood as "one who awakens independently." It may also refer to one who attains awakening through deeply observing causes and conditions.

In both cases, these are people who hear the Buddha's voice, encounter meaningful conditions, become disciples, and aspire toward enlightenment. In Amida Buddha's land, it is vowed that the number of such disciples is beyond counting.

In my own understanding, a *pratyekabuddha* can also be seen as someone who, through encountering wonderful people, reflects deeply on life, establishes a firm way of living, and moves forward toward a meaningful goal.

(Continued to Page 4)

## MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR 2026

<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> (2025)</b> None</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> (2024)</b>            April 8 Wallace Minoru Takushi            April 29 Vivian Tomoe Takenaka</p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> (2020)</b>            April 15 Manabu Koga            April 16 Katherine Kazuko Namba            April 23 Miharuru Koga</p> <p><b>13<sup>th</sup> (2014)</b>            April 13 Kenneth Kenichi Tsumoto            April 22 Harue Kanechika</p> <p><b>17<sup>th</sup> (2010)</b>            April 2 Jane Tetsuko Matsunaga            April 19 Fumiko Oshiro            April 11 Kenji Sakata            April 24 William Yoshinori Uyeno</p> <p><b>25<sup>th</sup> (2002)</b>            April 1 Atsushi Yoshida            April 28 Yoshiko Mikami            April 29 Bob Seiji Kaneshiro</p> <p><b>33<sup>rd</sup> (1994)</b>            April 6 Katsumi Honda</p> <p><b>50<sup>th</sup> (1977)</b> None</p>	<p><b>1<sup>st</sup> (2025)</b>            May 6 Tomika Ueki Penn</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> (2024)</b> none</p> <p><b>7<sup>th</sup> (2020)</b>            May 9 Gary Toshiyuki Toguchi            May 13 James Satoru Sakata            May 18 May Yoshiko Oba            May 27 Clyde Hatsuji Tsukayama</p> <p><b>13<sup>th</sup> (2014)</b>            May 10 Thomas Katsuto Yoshimura</p> <p><b>17<sup>th</sup> (2010)</b>            May 6 Stanley Teruo Kimura</p> <p><b>25<sup>th</sup> (2002)</b>            May 21 Robert Hidezo Ikei            May 28 Misue Fujikawa</p> <p><b>33<sup>th</sup> (1994)</b>            May 6 Sekiyo Nakano            May 29 Fukuichi Aoki</p> <p><b>50<sup>th</sup> (1977)</b>            May 28 Ethel Fumiko Okada            May 28 Leslie Isamu Kawamoto</p>
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### WAIPAHU HONGWANJI MISSION ADULT DAY CARE CENTER

**Waipahu Hongwanji Adult 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)**

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



Dear Waipahu Sangha,

Recently, I watched a lot of the winter Olympics. I don't normally watch ice skating, snowboarding, or curling events on TV, but there's something about the Olympics competition, when athletes compete for their own country that elevates the stakes and drama.

I was particularly intrigued by Alysa Liu, who was the first American female figure skater to win a gold medal in 20 years. She competed at the 2022 Olympics as the youngest US champion. After that, at the age of 16, seemingly on top of her sport, she retired because she had burned out. The endless hours of training, the pressures from her dad and coaches to win, and people controlling every part of her life had caused her to lose the joy in skating. She had been doing it for others and not herself.

She spent the next several years focusing on herself and finding her own identity. She went to college, discovered confidence and a voice to express her own individuality and find joy in everyday life. After a skiing trip, she realized that she really enjoyed skating and made a return to the sport. But this time on her own terms. She would decide for herself how much to practice, she would have a say in her costumes and routines, and no one would tell her to lose weight or change her looks.

This time, at the Milan Olympics competition, when every skater seemed to stumble under pressure, Alysa skated with freedom, confidence, and performed with pure joy. After her flawless routine, she won the gold medal. She instantly won the hearts of viewers and became a viral sensation and role model to many young people.

When asked how she could skate so effortlessly with so much at stake, she said she didn't feel any pressure to win. She didn't care about winning a medal. She skated because she loves it and wants to share it with others. Then she said something which struck me as so enlightened. She said, "I connect with everything, but I'm not attached to anything so it's easy".

She was fully living in the moment doing what she loved. But she was no longer living to please others or burdened by the desire of others who wanted her to win. She wasn't attached to the idea of winning as the only outcome. She was just enjoying being in the present, with freedom and joy, and the world took notice.

The Buddha's teachings about non-attachment can be difficult to grasp, but the simple way the Alysa said it, perfectly expressed it to a new generation. And this generation embraces the dharma ideas because we all are seeking truth.

In closing, I want to thank our donors and our bazaar volunteers who put in many weeks of work to sort and price all the items. Thank you to those that made handmade items, prepared food, and baked goodies for sale. It was a great success and an event that the surrounding community truly enjoys. We hope to see you at the next event.

In Gassho,

# WAIPAHU HONGWANJI NEWS

## HANAMATSURI

Sunday, April 12, 2026,  
9 a.m.

## Eshin ni and Kakushin ni Service

Sunday, April 26, 2026, 9 a.m.  
Guest Speaker: Mr. Chad Chihiro Okawa

## Congratulations!

Waipahu Hongwanji Member, Mrs. Sheree Tamura was honored as Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, Living Treasurer of Hawaii!



Left photo: Mrs. Sheree Tamura

Center photo: (from left) Dr. Bruce Ka'imiloa Chrisman, Mapuana de Silva, Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, Victoria "Vickie" Reiko Kennedy, Dr. Warren Tamamoto, President, James "Jim" Kennedy, Jr., Sheree Tamura, and Dr. William "Billy" Carthage Bergin

Right photo: (from left) Sheera Tamura (daughter of Sheree), Sheree, and Anju Madoka Shamisen sensei

(Jodo Shinshu, from Page 1)

As I wrote long ago, about 25 years ago I returned to Kyoto for a three-month training program. The teacher who led the course on "Buddhism and the Teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha" began the very first lecture with these words:

"Buddhism is, first, the teaching of the Buddha. It applies to all people—good or evil, men or women, young or old—regardless of what language they speak or what religion they believe in." He also taught that all things are impermanent (*shogyo mujo*), that there is no fixed self (*shohō muga*), and that all people live carrying the suffering of birth, aging, illness, and death. "Second, Buddhism is the teaching that all people can equally become Buddhas." "And third, Buddhism is a teaching for those who wish to become Buddhas."

Both *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* arise from hearing the teaching and from meaningful encounters with others. In this sense, they are people who share the same aspiration—to become Buddhas.

Now, as you read this, how about you? I sincerely hope that you are living each day with the wish to become a Buddha.

## SPECIAL DONATION

Fujimoto Family ... \$300  
In memory of Gilbert Fujimoto

Milton & Sharon Higuchi ... \$300  
Special

Mr. and Mrs. Agena ... \$200  
Special

Kirana Soga ... \$100  
Special

Wakabayashi Co. ... \$100  
Special

Wesley Hama  
In memory of Lorraine Yoshimoto ... \$300  
In memory of Leatrice & Yutaka Hama ... \$300

Naoe Kawamoto ... \$200  
Special

Renee Nagata ... \$700  
Funeral for June Nagata

Sue Ushijima ... \$100  
In memory of Kameko & Kosei Oshiro

June Yokota ... \$300  
In memory of Fred Yokota

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**NEW YEARS PARTY:** Guy & Cindy Ujimori

**HOONKO:** Adrienne & Ellen Ayakawa, Roy & Dorothy Hirata, Jerry & Amy Yoshimura

**SPRING OHIGAN:** Adrienne & Ellen Ayakawa, Milton Fujioka, Marjory & Henry Funasaki, Daniel & Lois Hanaoka, Steven & Jan Honda, Clyde & Lynette Kishimoto, Richard & Sueko Kodama, Masumi Murakami, Thomas Sekine, Kuniomi & Akemi Uehara, Guy & Cindy Ujimori, Masao & Yukiko Uyeda, Francis Uyeno

**MEMBERSHIP:** Harvey Asato, Adrienne & Ellen Ayakawa, Taeko Braden, Patsy Fujii, Milton & Sharon Higuchi, Midori Kawano, Clyde & Lynette Kishimoto, Jasmine & Daniel Morrison, Gerald & Helen Oshiro, Jo Ann Oshiro, Thomas Sekine, Raymond & Kay Shigeta, Sheryl Shimada, Wilma & Calvin Sumida, Edna Takaki, Norman & Laurie Tochiki, Guy & Cindy Ujimori

## 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!

浄土真宗の教え 2026年4月  
「阿弥陀様の願いその44（第十四願） 声聞無量の願」  
駐在開教使 曾我大円

いかがお過ごしでしょうか？四月となります。この月はお釈迦様のお誕生日をお祝いする「花まつり」があります。お釈迦様のお誕生をお祝いし、そして私たちもそのお蔭で苦しみを乗り越え、阿弥陀様のお浄土へ共に歩む人生を送らせていただくことを教えていただきました。一緒に「ハッピーバースデー ブッダー」と口ずさみながら過ごさせていただけます。

今月は「第十四願、声聞無量の願」を紹介させていただきます。お経の言葉をいただきます。

たとひわれ仏を得たらんに、国中の声聞、よく計量ありて、下三千大千世界の声聞、縁覚、百千劫においてことごとくともに計校して、その数を知るに至らば、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、私の国の声聞の数が計算できるほどの数で、そして多くの世界の声聞、縁覚の方達は無数であるべきで、もし数えることができるならば、私は正覚の佛となることはできません。

この願について語る前に「声聞」と「縁覚」という言葉の説明をします。

「声聞」とは声を聴く者という意味です。仏様のお説教の声を聞いてさとる者という意味です。お釈迦様のお弟子を指します。

「縁覚」とは独覚という意味があり、一人でさとりをひらいた者という意味がある。また因縁を見つめて(縁によって)さとりをひらいた者、という意味もある。

どちらも仏様の声を聞き、縁をいただいて、仏様の弟子となり、悟りを目指す者ということですね。この阿弥陀様の国では仏様のお弟子の数は数えきれないのだと、願われているのです。これは私の考えですが、「縁覚」というのは素晴らしい人との出会いによって、人生を見つめ、生き方をしっかりとし目標に向かって進んでいくと理解していると思います。

ずっと昔に書きましたが、私が25年前に京都に帰って三ヶ月間の研修に行った時、「仏教、お釈迦様の教え」の講座を担当して下さった先生が、先ず最初の講義で次のように言われました。

「仏教は、一つには仏様の教え。これは善人や悪人、男や女、老いも若いも、どんな言葉を話そうとも、どんな宗教を信じようとも、全ての人に当てはまる。と教えられてある。そして「諸行無常、諸法無我」そして全ての人が「生老病死」という苦しみを背負って生きている、ということをお話してくださいました。そして二つには、仏教は全ての人々が平等に仏になる教え、であると言われました。そして三つには、仏教は仏になりたい人のためだけの教えである、と説かれました。「声聞」も「縁覚」も声を聞いてのご縁、素晴らしい人との出会いのご縁、どちらも同じように仏になりたいと願う人たちのことであります。

さて、これを読まれている皆さんはいかがでしょう？仏になりたいと思いながら、日暮らしを送られていることと願っております。

**Waipahu Hongwanji Mission**

94-821 Kuhaulua Street  
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Resident Minister: Reverend Jeffrey D. Soga

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**APRIL 2026**

**Address Correction Requested**

**Condolence**

**Waipahu Hongwanji extends deepest  
Sympathy to the family of:**

Irene Nagata  
Leatrice Kiyoko Hama  
Lorraine Hideko Yoshimoto  
Florence Palmeira

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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**

**Hanamatsuri Service**

Sunday, April 12, 2026, 9 a.m.

**Project Dana Caregiver Support Program**

Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 10 a.m.  
Social Hall & Zoom

**Eshin ni and Kakushin ni Service**

Sunday, April 26, 2026, 9 a.m.  
Guest Speaker:  
Mr. Chad Chihiro Okawa