



WAIPAHU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

## GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

**MAY 2026**

Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude



### **JODO SHINSHJU, Teaching of Pure Land Amida Buddha's Vow #45, (14<sup>th</sup> Vow) 05/2026 Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister**

How have you been? The sun has been traveling higher in the sky, and the trade winds have returned, bringing back Hawaii's familiar and pleasant weather. However, we should not let our guard down—summer is approaching. Please remember to stay well hydrated and take things at a comfortable, steady pace.

Continuing from last month, I would like to reflect on Amida Buddha's Fourteenth Vow, "The Vow of Innumerable Śrāvakas."

*"If, when I attain Buddhahood, the number of śrāvakas in my land could be counted and known, even if all the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas in the triple-thousand great thousand worlds should spend at least a hundred thousand kalpas counting them, may I not attain the perfect enlightenment."*

(Jodo Shinshu Seiten, p. 17)

(My interpretation)

If, when I (Amida Buddha) attain enlightenment, the number of śrāvakas in my land is countable, and if the number of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas throughout many worlds could be calculated, then I would not attain perfect enlightenment as a Buddha.

As I mentioned in last month's issue, "śrāvakas" and "pratyekabuddhas" are those who practice in order to attain awakening. Śrāvakas are those who seek enlightenment by listening to the teachings, while pratyekabuddhas are those who seek awakening through causes and conditions—through meaningful encounters. Both are people who are deeply moved by wonderful encounters, who think, "I want to become like that person," and who cherish each day of their lives.

Now, to all of you reading this—do you have a hero? Is there someone you admire and think, "That person is wonderful—I want to be like them"? When I think of a modern-day hero, the first person who comes to mind is Shohei Ohtani. Not only is he an extraordinary baseball player, but he is also very humble—whether he is picking up trash or bowing respectfully to everyone, he treats all people equally. Watching him, I am deeply moved and feel that he is truly a remarkable person.

On platforms like YouTube, we can learn about his parents and his former baseball coach during his school days. It seems clear that he was raised by wonderful parents and guided by an outstanding coach, and through his sincere efforts, he has become who he is today.

(Continued to Page 2)

## Memorial Service for May and June 2026

### 1<sup>st</sup> (2025)

May 6 Tomika Ueki Penn

### 3<sup>rd</sup> (2024) none

### 7<sup>th</sup> (2020)

May 9 Gary Toshiyuki Toguchi

May 13 James Satoru Sakata

May 18 May Yoshiko Oba

May 27 Clyde Hatsuji Tsukayama

### 13<sup>th</sup> (2014)

May 10 Thomas Katsuto Yoshimura

### 17<sup>th</sup> (2010)

May 6 Stanley Teruo Kimura

### 25<sup>th</sup> (2002)

May 21 Robert Hidezo Ikei

May 28 Misue Fujikawa

### 33<sup>th</sup> (1994)

May 6 Sekiyo Nakano

May 29 Fukuichi Aoki

### 50<sup>th</sup> (1977)

May 28 Ethel Fumiko Okada

May 28 Leslie Isamu Kawamoto

### 1<sup>st</sup> (2025)

June 12 Terumi Muraoka

June 22 Jean Ichiko Miyahara

June 23 Kimi Koizumi

### 3<sup>rd</sup> (2024)

June 15 Tadashi Ayabe

June 24 Milton Yoshiaki Doi

June 24 Stanley Hideo Hashiro

June 27 Kirk Isao Saiki

### 7<sup>th</sup> (2020)

June 25 Masako Kawamoto

### 13<sup>th</sup> (2014)

June 4 Barbara Kiyoko Sasaki

June 18 Kyoko Katahira

### 17<sup>th</sup> (2010)

June 19 Harriet Yaeko Asato

June 22 Betsy Takayo Kochi

### 25<sup>th</sup> (2002)

June 18 Seiichi Oshiro

### 33<sup>rd</sup> (1994)

June 2 Muta Nakamura

June 5 Tayo Matsuyama

June 6 Asako Hirasuna

June 10 Yayoi Yamada

June 20 Amy Kamato Gibo

June 27 Kamato Oshiro

### 50<sup>th</sup> (1977)

June 3 Mune Maeda

June 5 Tomiichi Nanba

June 17 Miyokichi Fujiwara

(Jodo Shinshu, from Page 1)

How about you? Have you encountered someone in your life who made you think, “I want to become like that person”? And if so, are you living in such a way that you, too, can become a model for the next generation?

May 21 is observed as the birthday of Shinran Shonin. For all followers of the Hongwanji tradition, Shinran Shonin is our hero—a truly remarkable person. If there are those who are not yet familiar with him, I sincerely hope you will take this opportunity to learn about his life and teachings. At Waipahu Hongwanji, we will hold a Gotan-e (Shinran Shonin’s Birthday Service) during our Sunday service on May 24, with Reverend Hashimoto as our guest speaker. We warmly invite you to join us and encounter Shinran Shonin through this special service. In gassho,

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



Dear Waipahu Sangha,

On March 28 and 29th the Sogas and I attended the statewide BWA conference at the Ala Moana Hotel. I was impressed by how well it was organized and the workshop speakers covered many topics such as music & gathas, growing membership and fundraising, and history and archives. And despite the name Buddhist Women's Association, there were many male members and attendees. Scheduled for September 2027, the BWA World Conference will be in Waikiki so the expectation is high for a big turnout.

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, we held our Hanamatsuri service and I want to thank all the volunteers who came that weekend to decorate the hanamido and who donated beautiful flowers.

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, the BWA hosted our Eshinni / Kakushini service with Chad Okawa as guest speaker. Chad is a talented and hard-working young adult. Not only did he organize and perform the entertainment for the BWA conference he always accepts opportunities to help temples in any way he can. It lifts my spirits to see such inspirational and active young members in our Hongwanji sangha.

Coming up this month is Mother's Day on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Please join us for service if you can. The men will be cooking breakfast. And if you're a male, we could use some volunteer assistance in the kitchen that morning to show appreciation to all our mothers and grandmothers.

We will be recognizing our graduates with a Baccalaureate Service on June 14. If you have any high school graduates in your family that should be recognized, please contact Rev. Soga so we can extend an invitation.

And finally, our Bon Dance is coming soon. This year it will be on Saturday July 4th. We're hoping for a big crowd since it's a long weekend and we are one of only two bon dances on Oahu that week.

Hatsubon service will be at 4pm. The bon dance starts at 6:30pm to 10pm. We will be asking for donations of rice, spam, and bottled water. And we are also in need volunteers for kitchen help, spam musubi making, concession tent help, set-up of chairs and lanterns, take-down at closing, and temple clean up the following day.

More details will be coming soon including volunteer times and duties. You may contact the temple via phone or email at [waipahuhongwanji@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:waipahuhongwanji@hawaii.rr.com).

In Gassho,

## SPECIAL DONATION

Dianne Funai ... \$500  
In memory of Meuki Amarall

Tony & Maitri Marzi ... \$100  
Special

Charles & Shirley Kon ... \$100  
Building Fund

Edna Otsuka ... \$100  
Special

Tammy Silva ... \$100  
Special

Judi Tatsuyama ... \$150  
Funeral for Florence Palmeira

Ujimori Family ... \$400  
Funeral for Ellen Ujimori

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**SPRING OHIGAN:** Roy & Dorothy Hirata, Gary Maeda, Frances Matsumoto, Wilfred & Mae Matsushige, Flora Minemoto, Fumiko Nii, Lori Noborikawa, Jenny Nomura, Lisa Okada, Emiko Onaga, Edna Otsuka, Jan Ro, Tsunako Sakata, George Sawa, Thomas & Fay Shimizu, Beatrice Sonoda, Wilma & Calvin Sumida, Lilly Tokuhara, Robert Tsumoto, Guy & Cindy Ujimori, Craig & Megumi Uyeno, Evan Watarida

**MEMBERSHIP:** Wendy & Randal Coelho, Shirly Ishitani, Charles & Shirley Kon, Jenny Nomura, Thomas & Fay Shimizu, Evan Watarida

## 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!

# WAIPAHU HONGWANJI NEWS

**GOTAN E (Shinran Shonin's Birthday) Service**  
Sunday, May 24, 2026, 9 a.m.  
Guest Speaker: Reverend Kojun Hashimoto



Top: Hanamatsuri preparation  
April 4, 2026  
Left: Bazaar March 21, 2026



Japan Trip 3/31—4/9: Mt. Fuji, 13 members at Matsumoto Castle, Nagano, Sakura all over Japan



# WAIPAHU HONGWANJI FUJINKAI BWA NEWS

Hello members

The 15th HHMH state conference was held last month. Rev.Soga and 2 members attended the conference. Oahu United Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association was in charge. It was a truly wonderful conference. Next year, the World BWA Convention will be held at Hilton Hawaiian Village, in Honolulu. Naturally, we will be serving as the hosts. Let us join forces with members from other temples and work together to ensure it becomes a magnificent convention.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for **May 24, at 10:30 AM** (after the Gotan-e Service). Please mark your calendars.  
Kumika Soga, Waipahu Hongwanji BWA President



### Photos at the State Conference

From left: Theme of BWA State Conference

Waipahu Hongwanji participants: Jeffrey Soga, Evan Watarida, and Kumika Soga

Entertainers at the banquet: PBA Taiko group and Yuma Kamuro

Panel Presentation "The Role of Women in Society 2026":

(From left) Sabrina McKenna (Acting Chief Justice, Hawaii Supreme Court), Caroline Otani (Moderator),

Sylvia Luke (Lt. Governor of the State of Hawaii), Kehaulani Lum, and Lori Teranishi (Chief Executive Officer & Founder, iQ 360)

## FUNAKOSHI KARATE CLASS



Aloha Hongwanji Ohana!

I am Ruben Liboy, the head instructor of Funakoshi Karate Dojo. Thank you for having us here since April. My family has been a member of Waianae Hongwanji since my grandparents' time. However, through a special karmic connection following my uncle's funeral, I met Sensei-Soga and decided to join the Waipahu Hongwanji family.

Our dojo is open to all ages, from children to adults. Through Traditional Okinawan Karate, we emphasize discipline and etiquette, while fostering dignity and wholesome character development as martial artists.

Everyone is welcome to visit or try a free lesson!

- Days: Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday
- Location: Waipahu Hongwanji Social Hall

Time: 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Contact: Reuben Liboy 808-782-2492

Reuben Liboy,  
Head Instructor



Aloha Hongwanji Members!

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for providing the space for our dojo to train and build its community. We truly appreciate the welcoming environment you have cultivated, and we're honored by this generous opportunity. As a competitor preparing for the upcoming National Karate Tournament, I'm eager to refine my skills for my final performance. In the meantime, I look forward to creating more memories with my teammates and further supporting the Hongwanji Temple. Overall, while we're still adjusting to this new setting, I look forward to the continued growth of what I consider to be my second home.

Senpai Caylee Luzon

浄土真宗の教え 2026年5月  
「阿弥陀様の願いその45（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？太陽が随分空の高いところを通るようになってきました。貿易風も戻ってきて、ハワイらしい気候となりました。でも油断してはいけませんよ、これから暑い夏がやってきます、しっかり水分をとって、ボツボツやって下さい。先月に続いて阿弥陀様の十四番目の願い「声聞無量の顔」を考えさせていただきます。

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。

先月号でも紹介させて頂きましたが、「声聞」「縁覚」とは仏の覚りを得ようと、修行する方々のことです。「声聞」とは声に導かれて覚りを得ようとする人、「縁覚」とは出会い(ご縁)によって同じような仏になっていこうと修行する人です。どちらも素晴らしい出会いに感動し「あなたのような人になりたい」と出会えたことを喜び、日々を大切に生きる人たちのことです。

さて、これを読んで下さっている皆さん、皆さんにはヒーローはいますか？あの人はずばらしい人だ、私もあんな人になりたい、と心に抱く人はいますか？私が思うに現代のヒーローはと聞かれると「大谷翔平」さんが頭に浮かびます。彼の野球のうまさだけではなく、ゴミを拾う姿、全ての人に同じように頭を下げられる姿などを見る時に、とても素晴らしい人だと、私も感動しながら見えています。YouTubeなどで彼のご両親のことや学生時代の野球部の監督のことが紹介されています。彼は素晴らしい親に育てられ、素晴らしい監督の導きによって、一生懸命努力され今があるのでしょ。さて、皆さんはどうでしょうか？人生の中で「私はこんな素晴らしい人に出会えた、私もこんな人になりたい。」と思うようなヒーローを心に留めて生きておられますか？もしおられたならば、今度はあなたがそんな人になって次に続く若者のお手本にならなければ、と生きておられますか？

5月21日は親鸞聖人のお誕生日として定めています。本願寺門徒全ての人にとって、親鸞聖人はヒーローなのです。素晴らしい人なのです。もし、まだ知らないと言う人がおられたら、どうぞ親鸞聖人を学んで、どんな人だったか知って欲しいものです。ワイパフ本願寺では5月24日の日曜礼拝で「降誕会」の法要を橋本先生をご講師にお招きし、お勤めいたします。是非この機会に親鸞聖人に出会って頂きたいものです。

合 掌

**Waipahu Hongwanji Mission**

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Resident Minister: Reverend Jeffrey D. Soga

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**MAY 2026**

**Address Correction Requested**

**Condolence**

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

Ellen Ujimori  
Jane Fukunaga

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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.** Hoshia Day  
Help wanted

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GOTAN E  
Shinran Shonin's Birthday  
Service**

**Sunday, May 24, 2026, 9 a.m.**

**Guest Speaker:  
Reverend Kojun Hashimoto**  
Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission

**Project Dana Caregiver Support Program**

Saturday, May 9, 2026 at 10 a.m.  
Social Hall & Zoom

**Baccalaureate Service**

Sunday, June 14, 2026, 9 a.m.  
Please let Waipahu Hongwanji know if your  
children or grandchildren graduate high  
school.