



WAIPAHAU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
(A Shin Buddhist Temple)

GOLDEN CHAIN

Monthly Newsletter

JULY & AUGUST 2026

Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude



**JODO SHINSHU, Teaching of Pure Land
Amida Buddha's Vow #47, (14th Vow) 07/2026
Jeffrey Soga, Resident Minister**

The sun is shining high above us, and the warmth of summer is upon us. I hope each of you is doing well and enjoying good health. It is now the Obon season. Every weekend, we see many people gathering with smiles on their faces, joining hands in fellowship, and dancing together in circles. When we witness these joyful scenes, we are reminded of the remarkable journey of the “Ullambana Sutra”, which was first taught in India and later brought to Japan. There, our Jodo Shinshu predecessors came to call Obon a *Kangie*—a gathering of rejoicing—and developed the tradition of Bon Dance.

This tradition was then carried across the ocean to Hawai‘i, where it has continued to flourish. Today, not only Japanese Americans but people from many different backgrounds throughout Hawai‘i come together to share in this special time. It is truly a wonderful expression of gratitude, joy, and community.

The “Ullambana Sutra” begins with a son's longing to see his deceased mother. As the story unfolds, however, it reveals something even deeper—the boundless love and compassion of a mother who, even after falling into the realm of hungry spirits, continues to think only of her child.

Through this touching story, we are reminded of a love that transcends suffering and self-concern, reaching beyond oneself and into the future. It is a love that wishes happiness, peace, and well-being for those who come after us. In this way, the sutra teaches us not only to remember those who have passed away, but also to cherish the compassionate wishes that connect one generation to the next.

As we learn from this sutra, we are encouraged to look back with gratitude and respect for those who came before us, while at the same time looking ahead with care and concern for our children and grandchildren. By treasuring the present moment and finding opportunities to rejoice together, we honor both the past and the future.

In this spirit, Bon Dance becomes much more than a cultural tradition. It is a wonderful opportunity for people to gather in joy, transcending differences of religion, beliefs, age, gender, language, and background. It is a precious occasion where we can share smiles, friendship, and gratitude with one another. In this sense, Bon Dance is truly

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(From Page 1, Jodo Shinshu)

a wonderful gift of connection, bringing people together in gratitude, remembrance, and joy.

In this spirit, let us take a moment to reflect on Amida Buddha's Fourteenth Vow, The Vow of Infinite Sravakas (Disciples),

"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."

(The Three Pure Land Sutras, Page 22)

In this vow, Amida Buddha expresses the wish that countless people may hear the Buddha's teachings and aspire to become Buddhas themselves. These are known as *shomon* (hearers of the Dharma). Through encounters with those who rejoice in and live by the Buddha's teachings, others are inspired to walk the path of great compassion. These are called *engaku* (those awakened through causes and conditions). Amida Buddha's wish is that this living tradition of listening, rejoicing, and sharing the Dharma will continue without end—from the past, through the present, and into the future—reaching immeasurable numbers of people throughout the generations.

To appreciate the meaning of this vow more deeply, let us listen to the words of Shinran Shonin. In the concluding afterword of his *Kyogyoshinsho*, Passages on the Land of Happiness states:

I have collected true words to aid others in their practice for attaining birth into the Pure Land, in order that the process be made continuous, without end and without interruption, by which those who have been born first guide those who come later, and those who are born later join those who were born before. This is so that the boundless ocean of birth-and-death be exhausted.

Furthermore, in a letter to his disciple Shoshin-bo, Shinran Shonin wrote, "*May there be peace in the world, and may the Buddha's teaching spread!*" These simple yet profound words express his deep wish that people, both in his time and in generations to come, may live in peace and encounter the Buddha's teaching.

I invite all of you to take part in the Bon Dance. Let us honor the past with gratitude, pray for a peaceful future, and cherish the present moment that has been entrusted to us. May we spend this time together with smiles on our faces and joy in our hearts.

In gassho,

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Evan Watarida, President of Waipahu Hongwanji



Dear Waipahu Sangha,

In the month of June, we proudly recognized our high school graduates, Elizabeth Murakami and Shayna Watarida with a Baccalaureate Service. We were honored to have Hilo Hongwanji member and former associate dean of the UH College of Tropical Agriculture, Calvin Sewake give an inspiring message and grace us with a music tribute to the students.

On Father's Day, our female members provided our dads to a wonderful brunch after Sunday service which was a treat. We will be combining our July and August newsletters so this is the last message for the summer, but I've uploaded our monthly calendar and archives of our Golden Chain newsletters on our website so you can view information on <https://waipahuhongwanji.org>.

Please join us at our Bon Dance on Saturday July 4th. It's a long weekend so we hope to have a large crowd. Thank you to those that donated rice, spam, and bottled water. We have enough for the event.

Hatsubon service will be at 4pm. **The bon dance** starts at 6:30pm and ends at 10pm.

In gassho,

CHOCHIN LANTERN MEMORIAL MESSAGES – Contact Lori Noborikawa
For New Lantern Messages - \$20 Renewal of Lantern Messages - \$10

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

email the office at waipahuhongwanji@hawaii.rr.com

Sunday June 28 – General Cleanup @ 9am. No Sunday Service

Friday July 3 – Chopping veggies and preparing food @ 9am to 1pm.

Saturday July 4 – Tents, Chairs Setup, hang lanterns @ 9am

Kitchen Volunteers @ 10am

Concession Volunteers @ 4pm

Event Takedown @ 10pm

Sunday July 5 – Next Day Cleanup @ 9am. No Sunday Service

WAIPAHU HONGWANJI NEWS

Buddhist Study Center (B. S. C.) Summer Session — Oahu District Session

August 4, 2026, Tuesday, 6:30 - 8 p.m. Waipahu Hongwanji Temple

“Rethinking Buddhist Education” with Reverend Dr. Aaron Proffitt

Buddhist Study Center Summer Session July 26 - 29, 2026

Please check the B. S. C. website

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Baccalaureate Service 2026

June 14, Sunday, 2026

Congratulations upon graduation from High School to:
Shayna Watarida and Elizabeth Murakami!



Mr. Kelvin Sewake, Guest Speaker Elizabeth Murakami Shayna Watarida



Elizabeth and her family



Watarida family

OBON 2026 is coming soon!

We will have a streaming service , show the Bon Dance over our website, check for details.

Also if you would like to contribute to the expense of the Bon Dance to support it for many years to come, check the website, We hope to see you here on Saturday, July 4th!



Kick off Bon Dance at Plantation Village on June 6.

Memorial Service for July, August and September 2026

JULY

1st (2025) None

3rd (2024)
July 13 Edward Katsumi Edamatsu

7th (2020)
July 4 Faye Yasuko Sakihara
July 13 Helen Mitsue Sasaki
July 25 Masaaki Nii

13th (2014)
July 2 Hatsue Okata
July 14 Masami Ohara

17th (2010)
July 29 Molly Kiyono Yamaguchi
July 31 Ronald Hidemi Shimabukuro

25th (2002)
July 4 Kiyogi Inouye
July 7 Tonose Hirata
July 22 Sumiko Hashiro
July 27 Keiko Tanaka

33rd (1994)
July 27 Kazuso Matsushima

50th (1977) None

AUGUST

1st (2025)
August 3 David Nobuyuki Shigeta

3rd (2024)
August 2 Yoshio Yoshimoto

7th (2020) none
13th (2014) none
17th (2010) none

25th (2002)
August 31 Richard Kisei Oshiro

33th (1994)
August 8 Ugaku Nakamura

50th (1977)
August 10 Hatsu Hiraoka
August 15 Koei Nohara

SEPTEMBER

1st (2025)
September 7 George Shigeto Serikaku

3rd (2024)
September 26 Donald Tsuneo Mizokawa

7th (2020) none
September 22 Ronald Hitoshi Nagata
September 27 Osamu "Guava" Fukeda

13th (2014) none
17th (2010) none

25th (2002)
September 8 Toru Namba
September 17 Eric Kiyoto Mitsui
September 29 Lilian Ayako Hikichi

33rd (1994)
September 22 Hiroshi Sekine

50th (1977) none

SPECIAL DONATION

Hidekazu & Audrey Kamii ... \$100
Special

Sandy Muroda ... \$100
In memory of Colleen Hanabusa

Sewake Family ... \$650
Funeral for Colleen Hanabusa

Calvin & Wilma Sumida ... \$100
In memory of Masato Uyeno

Francis Uyeno ... \$500
In memory of Jean Uyeno

A & D Hisanaga ... \$500 (columbarium)
In memory of Kanichi & Akiyo Hisanaga

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GOTANE: Janet Kaya, Adrian & Gale Koizumi, Wilfred & Mae Matsushige, Flora Minemoto, Lori Noborikawa, Jenny Nomura, Lisa Okada, Emiko Onaga, Edna Otsuka, George Sawa, Calvin & Wilma Sumida, Francis Uyeno

OBON: Carol Nezu, Joyce & Robert Oshita

Baccalaureate Service: Evan Watarida

MEMBERSHIP: Charmine Miyaji, Peggy Tsukida

WELCOME NEW MEMBER: Andy Fox

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 7月
「阿弥陀様の願いその47(第十四願) 声聞無量の願」
駐在開教使 曾我大円

太陽が真上にやってきました。日中は暑くなりますが、皆様はお変わりございませんか？お盆の季節です。毎週週末には多くの人たちが笑顔で集い、輪になって踊っておられる姿を見る時、インドで説かれた盂蘭盆経が日本に伝わり、それを浄土真宗の先人が歓喜会(かんぎえ、喜びの集い)と呼び、盆踊りの風習を始め、それがハワイに伝えられ、日系人のみならず、多くのハワイの方達が一緒に時間を過ごす、素晴らしいことであります。盂蘭盆経は亡くなった方を思うことから始まります。そしてその物語は、母が自らを餓鬼道に落としても我が子のことを思う、そうやって未来に思いを馳せていくことを伝えてくださるお経です。

私たちもこのお経から学び、過去に感謝し祖先を敬い、そして未来の子供や孫のことを思い、今を大切に過ごさせていただき、一緒に喜ぶ時を見つけることが大切です。この意味においても、宗教や思想、老若男女、そして言葉の違いなどを超えて、一緒に笑顔で過ごすことができる、盆踊りとはそんな素晴らしいご縁です。

ここで阿弥陀様の十四番目の願い「声聞無量の願」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。

仏様の教えを聞き仏になろうとする「声聞」、そしてその教えを喜ぶ人たちとの出会いを通して大慈悲の道を歩む「縁覚」、その人たちが過去、現在、未来へ、数限り無い人たちへと続いていくことを阿弥陀様は願われたのです。

これを親鸞聖人のお言葉を頂いて味わってみたいと思います。聖人のご著述「教行信証」の最後、後書きに次のように書いてあります。

「『安楽集』にいはいく、「真言を取り集めて、往益を助修せしむ。いかんとなれば、前に生まれんものは後を導き、後に生れんひとは前を訪へ、連続無窮にして、願はくは休止せざらしめんと欲す。無辺の生死海を尽くさんがための故なり」と。

私の意識「道綽様書かれた「安楽集」にこうおっしゃっています。

「真実の言葉を集めて、往生し成仏のご利益を頂きます。何故ならば、前に生まれた人は後に続く人を導き、後に生まれた人は前を進む人を訪ねてゆきなさい。それが休み途切れること無く続いていくことを願っています。全ての人が生死の間の苦しみから離れてゆくために。」

そして、親鸞聖人が性信坊に送られたお手紙には「世の中安穩なれ、仏法ひろまれ」とお書きになられて、未来に続く人たちの安穩な世界を願われておられます。皆様も、どうぞ盆踊りにご参加いただき、過去を敬い、安らかな未来を願い、今この時を笑顔で過ごさせていただきましょう。

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

Non Profit Organization

U. S. POSTAGE

P A I D

Permit No. 5

Waipahu, Hawaii

July & AUGUST 2026**Address Correction Requested****Condolence****Waipahu Hongwanji extends deepest
Sympathy to the family of:**

Mark Tateyama

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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****O BON 2026**

Saturday, July 4, 2026

4 p.m. Hatsubon Service

5 p.m. Food sale begins

6:30 p.m. Bon Dance Starts

Project Dana Caregiver Support Program

Saturday, July 11, 2026 at 10 a.m.

Saturday, August 15, 2026 at 10 a.m.

Social Hall & Zoom

**Buddhist Study Center
Summer Session 2026 (Oahu District)**

August 4, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Waipahu Hongwanji Temple

“Rethinking Buddhist Education”

Reverend Dr. Aaron Proffitt