



*Namo Amida Butsu -
With Gratitude and
Kindness Beyond Words*

FRIEND OF THE DHARMA



WAILUKU HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
A JODO SHINSHU COMMUNITY TEMPLE



Volume 63

February 2026

<https://wailukuhongwanji.org>



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Service**

**Kyodan Leadership
Transitions**

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whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

TEACHINGS OF THE NEMBUTSU

What are the Teachings of Jodo Shinshu?

Reverend Shinkai Murakami

Namu Amida Butsu --

As many of you know, Jodo Shinshu is the name of our Buddhist tradition. Recently, both members and non-members have asked me a familiar question: "What exactly are the teachings of Jodo Shinshu?" This often leads to follow-up questions such as, "How is Jodo Shinshu different from other Buddhist traditions like Zen, Shingon, or Jodo, even though they are all Buddhism?"

I hear these questions often, during morning coffee hour, casual conversations in the office, or while chatting with temple friends. Some people are not especially interested, but others are very sincere and keep asking, "Why?" These conversations are always lively, and I sense that many people genuinely want to understand what makes Jodo Shinshu unique among the Buddhist traditions around them. For us as Jodo Shinshu followers, this is an important and meaningful question.

One area where this difference becomes clear is in our relationship to superstition. Superstitions have long been part of human life, and believing in them can often lead to anxiety or fear. In many cultures, superstitions function as warnings, teaching that bad behavior will bring punishment from gods or Buddhas. You may have heard sayings like, "If you do bad things, you will be punished."

Let me share a story to illustrate this way of thinking. In one village, a Jizo statue was enshrined at the entrance. The villagers believed deeply that Jizo protected them from disasters, so they made offerings every day and prayed for blessings. The offerings were never taken away, yet the villagers continued to give thanks faithfully. One very hot day, the offerings suddenly disappeared. This caused great alarm. The villagers could not imagine that anyone among them would steal offerings meant for Jizo. That evening, they discovered a traveler on the temple grounds, pale and suffering from severe stomach pain and diarrhea. He explained that he had not eaten for days and, out of desperation, ate the offerings he found at the village entrance. The villagers immediately concluded, "You



were punished by Jizo-sama for stealing the offerings." This belief, that wrongdoing brings divine punishment was passed down as a moral lesson to future generations.

But was this truly punishment from the gods or Buddhas? I believe the traveler simply suffered from food poisoning, having eaten food left in the hot sun too long. This is a natural cause-and-effect relationship. In Jodo Shinshu, we do not interpret such events as divine punishment. We understand causes and conditions as they are, without adding fear or superstition.

This way of thinking also appears around death and memorial services. In Jodo Shinshu, we perform pillow sutras, funerals, cremation services, and memorial observances such as the seventh-day and forty-ninth-day services. However, these rituals are not performed to guarantee rebirth in the Pure Land, nor to prevent punishment. Yet some people believe that if these rituals are not done, misfortune will follow. If punishment truly worked this way, we would all be punished every day.

Do such beliefs not bring unnecessary anxiety and fear into our lives? Of course, when we face suffering or uncertainty, it is natural to want something to rely on. But what matters is what we rely on. Jodo Shinshu teaches us to step away from fear-based beliefs and to live this precious life fully, without being burdened by superstition. For this reason, in Jodo Shinshu we do not use amulets or ofuda, and we do not engage in fortune-telling or rituals meant to frighten people into obedience. Instead, we listen deeply to the Dharma. To listen to the Dharma is to realize that the wisdom and compassion of Amida Buddha have already reached us, just as we are.

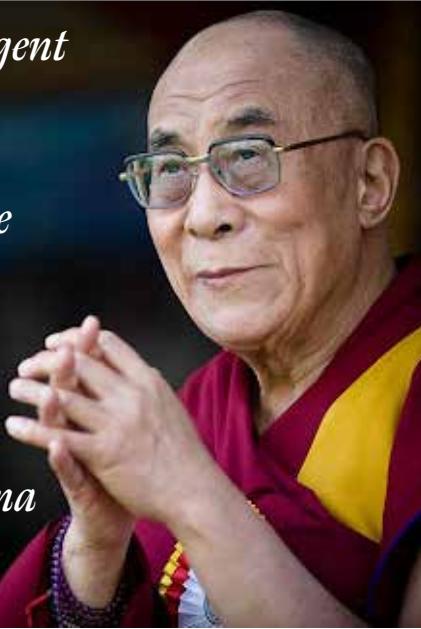
When we recite Namu Amida Butsu, we are not calling out in fear or asking for protection. We are listening to Amida Buddha's calling voice. In that moment, we awaken to the realization that we are embraced by infinite wisdom and compassion, walking the path without doubt, anxiety, or fear.

-- Namu Amida Butsu



The intelligent way to be selfish is to work for the welfare of others.

- The Dalai Lama



With gratitude, we acknowledge the many acts of dana offered by our members and friends. Through generosity of time, care, and resources, our temple continues to thrive as a place of learning, practice, and connection.

--Namo Amida Butsu

DONATIONS & VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Sharon Higa

Campus Maintenance: Richard & Amy Blue, Cub Scouts, FT, Eric Ikeuchi, Mike Nishimoto, Ed & Joan Tamori

Office Help: Margaret Honda, Sylvia Ishikawa, Machiko Moriyasu, Celeste Rabang, Nancy Shimoda, Toshiko Sugiki, Mary Tokumaru, Linda Ann Unemori

Sunday Service Music: Dharma Strummers, Minae Murakami, Dale Sugiki

Tech Support: Julie Petro, Danny Topp

Temple Maintenance: Jeral & Karllynn Fukuda, Margaret Honda, HOSHA Gang, Calvin & Teri Kaneda, Carol Mae Kurisu, Machiko Moriyasu, Nancy Shimoda, Ed & Joan Tamori

Temple Wish List Items: Anonymous Donors, Milton & Lisa Matsuoka, Alan & Joan Oura, Gail Tagashira, Linda Ann Unemori

EXPRESSIONS OF DANA

WITH GRATITUDE

BOY SCOUTS (TRP 40)
Lloyd & Linda Yonemura

HO'ONKO SERVICE
Anonymous
Ethel Fujii
Ronald Hamai & Gail Iwamoto-Hamai
Sandra Hirata
Margaret Honda
Eric & Cathy Ikeuchi
Janet Kubota
Carol Mae Kurisu
Ellen Matsui
Machido Moriyasu
Gary & Jacqueline Murai
Toshiko Oki
Richard Ouchi
Dale Sugiki
Toshiko Sugiki
Florence Tanaka
Raymond & Betty Toyama
Carol Yamamura

KYODAN

Charles & Lori Davis - *In memory of Kay Tanaka*
Troy Hashimoto - *In memory of Janet Inamasu*

Richard & Anne Ibara - *In memory of Hakaru & Hanayo Ibara*

Murata Charitable Fund - *In memory of Tadao & Misayo Murata*

Glenn Okuda
Paul & Julie Petro
Leo Polo
Wayne & Arleen Shinozuka

OFUSE

Wendell Inamasu - *In memory of Janet Inamasu*

Terri Kaneda - *In memory of Calvin Kaneda*

Katherine Marushige - *In memory of Ralph Marushige*

NEW YEAR'S SOKAI
Jean Akana & Nagasako Family

Ethel Fujii
Lydia Furomoto
Brian & Robyn Garner
Franklin & Guy Hamasaki
Brian Hashiro
Molly Imoto
Amy Izutsu - *In memory of Tsukio & Tomiko Yamagata, Elaine Yamagata, and Minoru & Mitsu Yamagata*

Brent Izutsu
Ricky Komatsu
Gail Kushiyama
Layne Kushiyama
Patricia Miyashiro
Gary & Jacqueline Murai
Kenneth Ogawa

Toshiko Oki
Noreen Saiki
Sharon Sueda
Toshiko Sugiki
Colleen Takamura - *In memory of Gilbert Takamura*

Leonard & Patricia Tomita
Alan & Janet Watanabe
Shinyei Yogi

NOKOTSUDO

Audree Hashibe - *In memory of Hotta & Honda Families*
Mari Ann Kato
Reiko Kondo - *In memory of Takeyuki & Ochiyo Yoshizu*

Milton & Lisa Matsuoka
Cheryl Tanaka
Willie & Sachi Tokishi - *In memory of Chitoshi & Tsuruo Matsui*

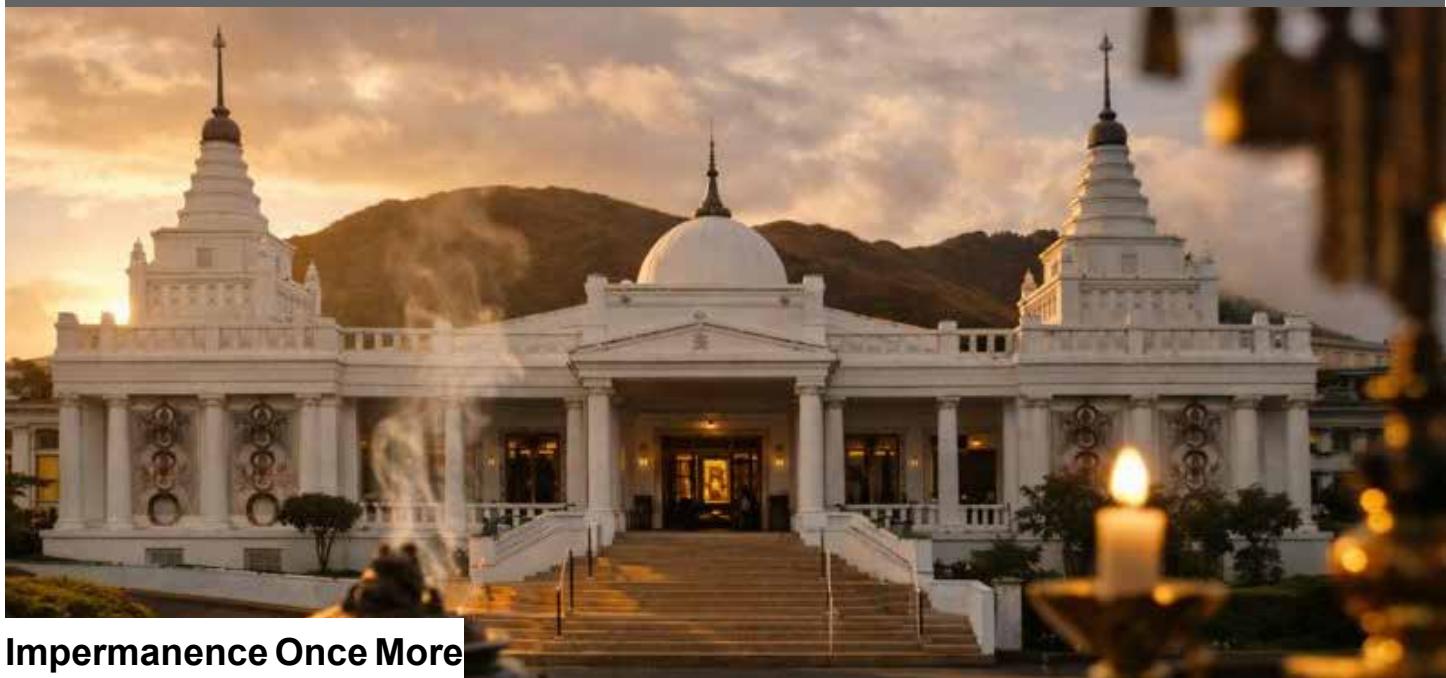
Helene Yoshizawa

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Ethel Fujii

Entrusting the Path Forward

Continuity, Change, and Gratitude



Impermanence Once More

Michael Munekiyo

Having served as Chair of the Wailuku Hongwanji Board of Directors from 1992-1993, from 1999-2000, and most recently, from 2013 to present, one could conclude that I am “environmentally friendly”; been recycled, then re-recycled. Indeed, it has been an invaluable and irreplaceable experience, having had the opportunity to work with and learn from the likes of Meiji Hirose, Kazuichi Hamasaki, Stanley Okamoto, Kazu Sugiki, Wesley Wong, Jr., George Okamoto and so many others. Moments spent with those who I believe were the wisest of our leaders from their generation. Their spirited actions have helped to make Wailuku Hongwanji the wonderful organization that it is today.

Thatsaid, it is now time for another encounter with impermanence. Over

the past several months, leadership of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) asked that I consider the need for organizational and governance succession now that Dr. Warren Tamamoto’s term as President of HMMH is ending in February of 2026. While not an easy decision, I have agreed to be nominated to succeed Dr. Tamamoto. The formal process for confirming the next President of HMMH will take place at the upcoming Giseikai in February 2026.

As a result, I will retire as Board Chair of Wailuku Hongwanji on January 31, 2026. Current Vice-Chair, Gary Murai, has graciously agreed to lead the Board as Chair. Luly Unemori has also graciously agreed to serve as Vice-Chair. I am grateful to both Gary and Luly for their commitment to our temple

organization. I will remain on the Board as Director of Activities and continue to lead the multi-purpose building project and succession planning work the Board has been undertaking.

Importantly, I thank Reverend Murakami, our office staff, our current Board members and our entire Sangha for providing me the opportunity to help in our collective efforts to advance Wailuku Hongwanji’s presence in our community. There may have been times where issues generated dialogue with diverging points of view. Nonetheless, you embraced civil discourse and we addressed differences with respect and dignity.

For this, and the many other valuable lessons you all have taught me over the years, I am eternally grateful.

Entrusting the Path Forward Cont.

Continuity, Change, and Gratitude



With Gratitude, We Continue

Gary Murai

Whenever I travel to Honolulu for Hawaii Betsuin business, I am often reminded by other temple leaders how fortunate we are at Wailuku Hongwanji to have Mike Munekiyo as our Kyodan President. And I say yes, we are very lucky to have Mike leading us.

Mike has served as a skilled, innovative, and dedicated Chairman of our Board of Directors. His remarkable abilities and unwavering commitment have not gone unnoticed. In recognition of his leadership, the Hawaii Kyodan leaders began to actively recruit Mike to serve as Chair of the Hawaii Kyodan Board and as Hawaii Kyodan President. I understand Mike was reluctant to accept this new position, partly due to his responsibilities here at Wailuku Hongwanji. However, the Hawaii Kyodan leaders were persistent in their efforts. They even asked me

to take on a larger role at Wailuku Hongwanji so that Mike could accept the Honpa role.

Initially, my reaction was a selfish one—I said “NO! You cannot have Mike. We need him here on Maui.” Nevertheless, after considerable persuasion, Mike’s strong sense of duty ultimately prevailed, and he accepted. We expect that Mike will be formally elected to serve as Honpa Kyodan President at the 2026 Giseikai.

Although Mike will be taking on even greater responsibility, he is not leaving us behind. He will continue to guide important initiatives such as the recovery of Lahaina Hongwanji and our own capital campaign, among other things. We can still rely on his wise counsel and guidance. We just have to share him with everyone else.

Mike asked if I would assume the role of Chair for the Wailuku Hongwanji Board. I hesitated at first. Very few people can do what Mike

does. However, when someone as dedicated as Mike asks for your help, how can you say no? In addition, Mike asked Luly Unemori to serve as the Board’s Vice-Chair, the position I previously held. I am grateful that Luly agreed to take on this responsibility.

Mike leaves behind a significant legacy. He has been a generational leader whose service and dedication have greatly benefited our Sangha. While I cannot promise to lead as well as Mike did, I can promise to do my best.

I begin my new role on February 1, 2026, and I sincerely ask for your continued kokua and support. With the help of Reverend Murakami, our members, temple staff, affiliate organizations, volunteers, and the Board of Directors, we will continue working together to grow our Sangha, maintain our campus, and ensure that Wailuku Hongwanji remains our spiritual home for generations to come.

CALLS TO CARE

Invitations to Practice Compassion in Action

Dana * Compassion * Service

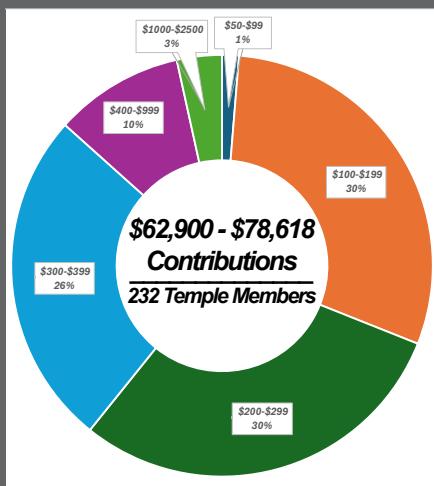
2026 Gojikai Membership Support

Through gojikai, members help care for the temple grounds, support Dharma services and education, and maintain our connection to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i, which strengthens Shin Buddhism statewide.

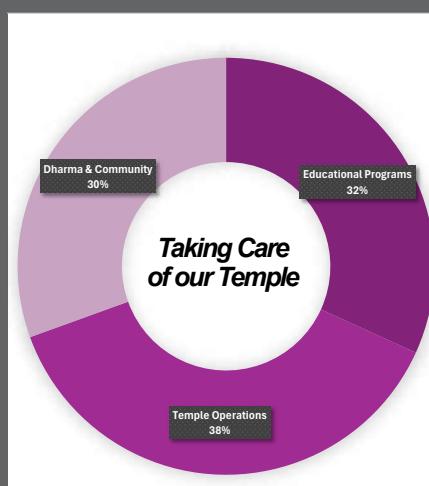
Suggested guidelines are \$20–\$30 per month for households and \$12–\$15 per month for individuals, though any amount offered according to one's ability is sincerely welcomed. Gojikai reflects a wish to stay connected to the Sangha and to support the Dharma as it is shared with present and future generations.

Membership includes the opportunity to vote at Sokai, serve on the Board, participate in affiliate organizations, receive temple communications, and enjoy member discounts on Social Hall rentals, Preschool, and Gakuen (Japanese Language School). New members are always welcome, and membership applications and payment information are available through the temple office.

With gratitude, we thank you for helping sustain our temple and Sangha in the year ahead.



Gojikai is offered monthly, quarterly, or annually by members according to their ability.



Each gift, whether small or large, helps care for the temple and share the Dharma.

Temple Wish List

We kindly request your support in contributing to our temple's wish list, which includes essential items to enhance our space and activities. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

- Forever postage stamps
- 33 Gal. Trash Bags
- 18 Gal. Kitchen Trash bag w/ draw string
- Paper Towels
- Wooden Hashi (chopsticks)
- 7" Dessert Plates
- Napkins
- 9" Lunch plates
- Blue Painters tape
- Antibacterial hand soap (refill size)
- Spoons
- Exam gloves (all sizes)

Temple Fundraiser: Krispy Kreme Cards

Krispy Kreme cards are available at the temple office for \$25. Each card lets you buy one dozen donuts and get one dozen Original Glazed free, up to 10 free dozens total (limit 3 free dozens per visit).

Help Wanted: Student Volunteer

Help keep the temple clean by taking out 5–10 bags of trash each week (10–35 lbs). It takes about one hour and is perfect for Fridays after school. Great for middle & high school students earning community service hours while giving back to the temple. Interested? Call the office at (808) 244-0406. Mahalo!

CALLS TO CARE Cont.

Invitations to Practice Compassion in Action

Dana * Compassion * Service



Dana Matching Grant

To encourage the practice of Dana and to amplify the power of giving, the Committee on Social Concerns has established the “Dana Matching Grant” program to enable temples and organizations affiliated with the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii the ability to double the impact of their charitable giving in the community. We encourage all temples and affiliated organizations to share our Buddhist values by actively supporting non-profit organizations and programs serving your community. The Dana Matching Grant will match your temple or affiliated organization’s donation amount—dollar-for-dollar up to \$1,500 per grant—to double the impact your practice of Dana in the greater community. Grant information can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ShOjYLZYUyD64LAKDY4mGvDAIpgITInA/view>

Emergency Donations

The Committee on Social Concerns made emergency donations from our Social Welfare Fund to help address food insecurity in our community. The recent federal government shutdown and the disruption of SNAP benefits have negatively impacted many local families in need.

- \$2,000 Hawaii Foodbank
- \$2,000 Maui Food Bank
- \$2,000 Hawaii Foodbank Kauai
- \$2,000 Kauai Independent Food Bank
- \$2,000 The Food Basket, Hawaii Island’s Food Bank

Please consider your own contribution to these or other worthy organizations that make a difference in our community. Nonprofits are a vital part of our social safety net, helping to keep our community strong during these challenging times. Mahalo for your ongoing support of our mission to share the living Dharma through compassionate action.

Golden Chain Grant

The Golden Chain Grant is a micro-grant program designed to encourage compassionate action by making the teachings real in everyday life through the practical application of the Dharma.

Criteria:

- Any person or group part of the Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Ohana can apply.
- A maximum amount of the grant must not exceed \$1,000.
- The project should have a beneficial impact to others and the community at large.
- Employ an innovative approach to a defined problem or need.
- Have clear, logical, and realistic plans.
- Creatively applies the Dharma to a social concern.

The application form can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/15Pc-wDTWBRfzb9zDebVboOnH3PcWwML6/view>.

Propagation Program Grant

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai‘i Propagation Program Grant is now accepting applications to support new and creative efforts that share the Nembutsu and Buddhist teachings within our communities.

Grant guidelines include:

- Priority given to innovative Dharma education or propagation projects
- Projects may be funded once within a five-year period
- Maximum grant amount: \$10,000
- Projects should demonstrate statewide impact or potential

For application details or additional information, please contact your resident minister or Honpa Hongwanji Headquarters.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Keeping Our Community Informed

*Mindfulness * Responsibility * Gratitude*

Calling All Graduates!

Shelly Quipotla

Calling all Class of 2026 graduating high school seniors! Each year, Wailuku Hongwanji takes special pride in celebrating and recognizing the graduating class of students who have been actively involved with the church in some way. The following is a list of Class of 2026 students who we currently have in our records. If there are any others that you may be aware of, please email Joyce Chun at jchun.maui@gmail.com or Shelley Quipotla at shellquips@gmail.com or call 808-250-0726 and leave a message.

Class of 2026 Graduates are:

Namaka Andaya
Aeva Gomes
Madelein Milliet
Dominic Rabang

Noa Fong
Naia Kaulukukui
Aaron Omuro

Tate Fukunaga
Aileen Kava
Rylee Ota

Find Your Voice in the Choir

Music is a beautiful way to express gratitude, joy, and connection — and the Maui Hongwanji Choir warmly invites new voices to join us. Whether you love to sing, want to explore your voice, or are simply curious, there is a place for you in the choir. No prior experience is needed. The choir offers a welcoming space to build musical skills, confidence, and friendships while participating meaningfully in temple life. Singing together nurtures mindfulness, creativity, and a sense of belonging, values at the heart of our Buddhist practice.

Members are invited to join the Maui Hongwanji Choir, which brings together singers from Wailuku, Kahului, and Lahaina Hongwanji, with hopes of welcoming participants from Makawao Hongwanji and other Maui temples. This island-wide choir is a wonderful way to connect across generations and communities through music. All ages and voices are welcome—from longtime singers to those discovering their voice for the first time. Come sing, connect, and help shape the future of our Sangha, one note at a time. For more information, please contact Joan Tamori.

Property for Sale Near Temple Grounds

The properties located at 79 - 89 Kaniela Street, on the corner of Vineyard St. and Kaniela St., are being prepared for sale. This notice is shared for general awareness only. Members with questions or who would like additional information may contact the listing agent, Daniel Jarrett, at (808) 441-0533.

2026 HHMH's Theme/Slogan Poster Contest Winners

The CBE sponsored a poster contest which visually expresses the coming year's theme/slogan. "Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude." Rev. Shawn Yagi and Debbie Kubota chaired this contest.

The winners of this contest are as follows:

- 1st Place - Linda Nagai, Kona Hongwanji
- 2nd Place - Aiko Nakashima, Hongwanji Mission School
- 3rd Place - Madelyn Masutomi, Hongwanji Mission School
- 4th Place - Rick Tabor, Hawaii Betsuin
- 5th Place - Isla Ige, Hongwanji Mission School.



*Nourished in the Nembutsu
Blossoming in Gratitude*

COMMUNITY NOTICES Cont.

Keeping Our Community Informed

*Mindfulness * Responsibility * Gratitude*

Farewell to Manzanar Panel Discussion Posted

In the September Headquarters Update, we announced an October screening of Farewell to Manzanar at Hawaii Betsuin, organized and funded in part by the HHHM Committee on Social Concerns. The film is a feature-length dramatization of Jeanne Wakatsuki's experiences as a Japanese American child imprisoned with her family at Manzanar during World War II. The film helps us better understand the past and provides a valuable lens through which to view related events today. Attendance was 150-200 people.

A video recording of the panel discussion that followed the screening is now available on the HHHM YouTube channel. Panelists were Josh Houston, son of the author and filmmaker; Tina Sablan, an immigrant advocate; Carole Hayashino, President Emerita, JCCH; Ken Inouye, 442nd Legacy Center; and Logan Narikawa, moderator. To access the panel video, visit <https://honpahi.link/ftmpanel>.

Our Deepest Sympathies

Janet Midori Inamasu (HO-RAKU – Rejoice in the Dharma) age 97, of Kahului, passed on December 18, 2025.

Namo Amida Butsu

ICE Activity Awareness

Kerry Kiyohara

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents were observed at the LDS Church in Kihei during worship services. At this time, there are no indications that ICE is targeting Japanese immigrants, visa holders, lawful permanent residents, or Buddhist temples. However, members are encouraged to be informed of their rights under the law. Resources such as "Know Your Rights" trainings are available through community and interfaith organizations. Members interested in learning more or exploring training opportunities may contact Maui Buddhist Council President Kerry Kiyohara for additional information. Mahalo for caring for one another and staying informed as a Sangha.

February Hoji Memorial Services

1st Year - 2025

- 23rd - Thomas Tory Fujii (KU KUN)

3rd Year - 2024

- 17th - Eleanor Yonamine (CHI MYO)
- 26th - Stephen Shigeru Tsuzaki (JO SHIN)

7th Year - 2020

- 12th - Lloyd Hakaru Inaba (HO SHO)
- 24th - Sayako Murai (MYO HO)

13th Year - 2014

- 3rd - Yuriko "Lillian" Nishida (HO NEN)
- 14th - Nancy Otomo Oishi (MYO RI)
- 15th - George Kamimura (SEO DO)

17th Year - 2010

- 24th - Kenneth Nobuo Kato (KYO SHIN)

25th Year - 2002

- 2nd - Nobio Miyamoto (JYO SHIN)
- 9th - Kenneth Tonai (JYO HEI)
- 15th - Alice Ageno (MYO SHA)
- 18th - Masaru Inouye (JYO SHO)

33rd Year - 1994

- 12th - Namio Frank Makimoto (JO GAKU)
- 26th - Sadao Ralph Tamura (SEI JAKU)

50th Year - 1977

- 21st - Sadako Watanabe (TEI YUU)

To schedule a memorial service, please contact the main office at (808) 244-0406, M-F between 8am to 12pm/noon.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Join Us for These Special Events

*Sangha * Dharma * Connection*

Scout Sunday, February 1st: Honoring Service & Spiritual Growth

Scout Sunday will be observed on Sunday, February 1, beginning at 8:00 a.m. as members of Troop 40 and Cub Pack 40 join the temple community in service at Wailuku Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. Scout Sunday commemorates the founding of Scouting in America and highlights the shared values of service, character, and spiritual development embraced by faith communities nationwide. Supporting Scout Sunday strengthens our connection to youth and affirms the temple's role in nurturing future generations through both Dharma and community life.

Parents, grandparents, family members, and friends are warmly invited to attend. Refreshments will be served following the service.

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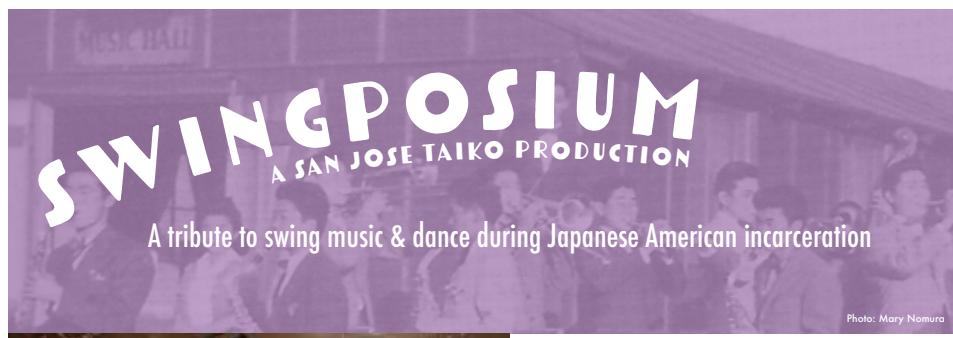


Special Spring Eitaikyo Service, February 14th: Remembering Those Who Came Before Us

Wailuku Hongwanji Buddhist Temple will hold a Special Spring Eitaikyo Service on Saturday, February 14, at 6:00 p.m. Rev. Murakami warmly invites members and friends to attend this meaningful evening of remembrance, reflection, and quiet connection.

Eitaikyo is an opportunity to pause together, remember those who supported our lives, and feel the gratitude that arises when we reflect on where we come from. As we gather as a Sangha, we are reminded that we do not walk this life alone, and that the bonds between past, present, and future continue through the Dharma. Attending this service allows us to honor those who have passed, while also reflecting on our own lives in this moment. In a busy world, Eitaikyo offers a quiet space to breathe, listen, and reconnect with the teachings that sustain us.

Eitaikyo, meaning "perpetual sutra," reflects the wish that the Buddha's teachings continue to flow through generations. We invite you to be part of that living tradition by joining us for this special service.



Sunday, February 15
TWO SHOWS - 3:30PM and 7:00PM

Mayor Hannibal Tavares Community Center, Pukalani, Maui

Tickets and more information:



<https://taiko.org/swingposium-maui>



Swingposium: Maui is offered free of charge due to support from the County of Maui Office of Economic Development, Maui Taiko, and generous donors. Space is limited - reserve your spot today!



UPCOMING EVENTS Cont.

Join Us for These Special Events

Sangha * Dharma * Connection

**BSC Spring Festival:
April 18, 2026**

The Buddhist Study Center will be having a Spring Festival on April 18, 2026, from 9:30 am to 2:00 pm. The theme is "Appreciating Our Ohana," with intergenerational workshops, local favorite snacks, appreciation activities, "old school" games, and much more. Please save the date and bring your whole family!

**YESS Camp 42:
April 3-5, 2026**

The 42nd Young Enthusiastic Shinshu Seekers (YESSION) Camp, themed "The Dharma Awakens," is coming soon to a galaxy not-too-far away. YESSION Camp is a three-day, two-night experience open to youth ages 13–23, welcoming anyone interested in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism — no prior experience needed.

The goal of YESSION Camp is to create a safe, welcoming space where campers can laugh, learn, and build lifelong friendships while exploring the Dharma together.

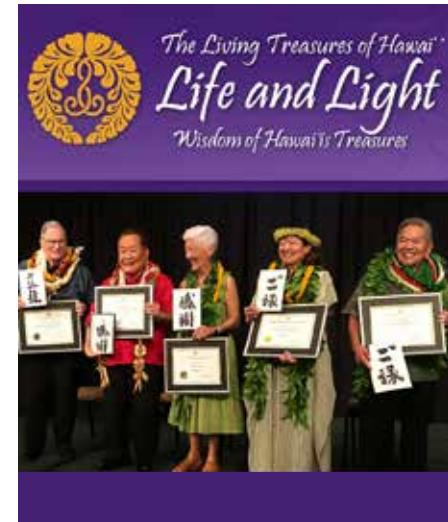
YESSION Camp 42 will be held April 3–5, 2026, at Kona Hongwanji on the Big Island. Registration is now open at tinyurl.com/yesscamp42:

- \$60 Early Bird (half price) by February 1
- \$90 Regular by March 10
- \$120 Last Call by March 25

Camp activities include field games, mixers (including a lightsaber duel!), community service, and Dharma learning — all inspired by this year's Star Wars theme. Our guest speaker, Rev. Blayne Higa, will explore how we can find our voice and respond with compassion during challenging times.

We are deeply grateful for the continued support of the Hongwanji community. Fundraising this year helps support neighbor island campers' airfare, and temples or organizations are invited to participate by purchasing a YESSION Camp 42 booklet advertisement.

For questions or more information, please contact yesscamp@honpahi.org. We look forward to welcoming new and returning campers!



**2026 Living Treasures of Hawai'i Celebration:
February 21, 2026**

Now celebrating its 51st year, the Living Treasures of Hawai'i™ program continues a cherished tradition of honoring those whose lives reflect the very best of our islands — excellence, compassion, and a deep commitment to uplifting others. Founded in 1976 by Bishop Yoshiaki Fujitani and inspired by Japan's Living National Treasures (Ningen Kokuhō), the program recognizes individuals who, through mastery and service, enrich Hawai'i's cultural, artistic, and humanitarian landscape.

This year's 2026 honorees:

- Dr. Billy Bergin
- Kumu Hula Māpuana de Silva
- Jim and Vickie Kennedy
- Sheree Tamura, and
- Dr. Ka'imiloa Chrisman

will be celebrated at the 51st Living Treasures of Hawai'i luncheon on February 21, 2026, at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Coral Ballroom.

TEMPLE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Paths of Learning

January Highlights from Dharma School, Gakuen, and Preschool

**Daryl & Aaron: Chanting****Cara: Kansho Ringer****Ziva: Offertory Collector****Kora: Metta Reader****Cooper & Ziva: Offertory Collector****Cooper: Offertory Collector****Kaden: Emcee**

Dharma School Students Taking Charge

Joan Tamori

Throughout the school year, Dharma School students serve in meaningful roles during Sunday services. Assigned by grade level on a rotating basis, students assist as greeters, kansho ringers, emcees, chanting helpers, offertory collectors, and metta readers, learning responsibility through service.

Students report early to receive their montoshikisho, and at the start of the year participate in a training session to learn temple etiquette, oshoko, kansho ringing, and microphone use. We are deeply grateful to these students for their willingness to serve. As they grow, they take on greater responsibilities and develop confidence, humility, dana, and a strong sense of care for the temple. It is especially heartening to see former Dharma School students carry these lessons into leadership and service beyond the temple. Keep up the wonderful work!



Gakuen Kakizome

Eri Nomura

Our Japanese Language School welcomed the New Year with 書初め (Kakizome), the traditional first calligraphy practice of the year. Rooted in centuries of Japanese custom, Kakizome is a time to reflect, set intentions, and express hopes for the year ahead through mindful writing. It encourages focus, perseverance, and respect for language and tradition, values central to Japanese culture and learning.

Students began their first class by carefully choosing a kanji that reflected their wishes for the year. The characters they learned to write were: 山 (mountain) for strength, 川 (river) for ease, 和 (harmony), 光 (light), and 道 (path), each carry heartfelt meaning and aspiration, and truly showcase their thoughtful effort.

Families are invited to view the students' Kakizome 作品 at 学芸会 (Gakugeikai) on February 27, an evening of performances, play, and a shared potluck. We look forward to celebrating this meaningful tradition together with our Gakuen community.



A Busy & Bright Start to the New Year

Jody Vinoray

Wailuku Hongwanji Preschool welcomed 2026 with a strong start, beginning with Registration Day on January 5, when 17 families arrived bright and early at 6:00 a.m. Our students also received free vision screenings, thanks to the Lions Club of Maui!

Looking ahead, preschoolers will enjoy several enriching experiences, including a visit from Storybook Theatre's Capt. N Mark and his "Tiger Shark," the introduction of Nihongo (Japanese language) classes, and a special temple visit with Rev. Murakami.

This month's focus is helping children learn about their community and the many roles within it. Parents are warmly encouraged to connect with the preschool director to explore ways to participate and support these activities.

YOUTH PROGRAMS SPOTLIGHT

Growing Together

*December Activities from
4-H, Boy Scouts, and Cub Scouts*



Welcome, Scoutmaster Yeh!

Celeste Rabang

I would like to introduce you to Troop 40 Boy Scouts new Scoutmaster, Carl Yeh! Carl joined the boy scouts in September 2023 as an Assistant Scoutmaster. He is also a member of the Order of the Arrow, the National Honor Society of Scouting. He has been to every meeting, every campout, and every service project willing to help out where he can. Carl is an easy-going, hardworking sushi chef at Restaurant Matsu and a proud dad to two energetic boys. Ethan, who is a First Class

Scout, and Mason, who is a Webelos II scout. Though he's from Harrisburg, PA, you'd swear he's a local. When he's not rolling sushi, he's soaking up the beach, cooking something delicious (no surprise there), hanging with his family, or lending a hand with Scouts, always with a smile and a laid-back vibe. We are so happy to have him in Troop 40 where there is no doubt he will continue to shape the boys' lives on their paths to Eagle! (Celeste Rabang will continue to help the troop as the new Committee Chair and Assistant Scoutmaster.)

Sharing Cheer & Building Skills

Paul Petro

In December, Pack 40 Cub Scouts brought holiday cheer to the residents of Roselani Place by singing and sharing smiles with our kūpuna. The cubs also enjoyed their annual holiday party, filled with festive games and a fun gift exchange. In January, Pack 40 focused on personal safety, learning important skills such as the Heimlich maneuver, basic first aid for bug bites, emergency preparedness, and strategies for personal and stranger safety. These activities helped build confidence while teaching the cubs how to care for themselves and others.



Sakura 4-H Clubs' Clover Report

Sammy Takamura

あけましておめでとう!

Since our last update, the Aloha Girls have been busy with the 4-H County Christmas event hosted by the Maui Girls, Osoji at Wailuku Hongwanji Mission, and a fun educational outing to the Maui Tropical Plantation. Aunty Krystle led a 40-minute tour aboard the Maui Tropical Express, where the girls learned about native Hawaiian plants and participated in coconut husking. The adventure continued with a lively word-guessing game, followed by time feeding ducks and turtles, fun and learning for both girls and parents alike.

In December, the Shining Stars and Friends Forever clubs supported the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign at Maui Lani Safeway during its 130th anniversary. Friends Forever also joined the General Cleanup in the Social Hall and are preparing for an upcoming service project at Waihe'e Coastal Refuge, where they will help weed and plant native species. The Sakura clubs look forward to a bright and meaningful year ahead with everyone.



ADULT ORGANIZATIONS SPOTLIGHT

Walking the Path

Reflections and Activities from the BWA and Temple Affiliate Groups



Moments Shared as a Sangha

Gwen Hiraga

BWA members remained actively engaged throughout the season, joining together for the December general temple clean-up and the semiannual care and polishing of the altar ornaments. Members also gathered for the New Year's Eve Service, welcoming 2026 as a community while enjoying fireworks and refreshments afterward. In January, members came together once again for the Annual Meeting and Shinnenkai, sharing a delicious dinner and desserts in a warm spirit of fellowship and gratitude.

BWA Reminders

Gwen Hiraga

BWA Annual Meeting & Sokai

February 15 — Lunch will be provided.

Please notify Elaine Akashi if planning to attend.

2026 BWA Membership Dues

Membership dues are now being collected. Payments may be mailed to the temple office, sent to Sandy Matsuda, or submitted at the February meeting. New members are always welcome.



Continuing a Legacy of Dana

Gwen Hiraga

The second printing of the BWA 120th Anniversary Cookbook (2025–2026) is now available for \$15, with a limited number of copies remaining. Proceeds support temple activities and preserve the shared traditions of our Sangha. Those wishing to purchase a cookbook may contact the temple office or Gwen Hiraga. The BWA extends heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed recipes and to those who have shared their encouragement and support and helping with the December temple cleanup.

Celebrating Our Members!

Gwen Hiraga

Warm birthday wishes to our members celebrating in February:
Stella Kuwae
Akie Sakumoto
Yuki Lei Sugimura



Find Your Place in the Sangha

Ways to Learn, Serve, and Practice Together

Interested in joining an affiliate organization, club, or association, or looking to volunteer or donate to a project? Below is a list of sponsored organizations and ongoing or upcoming projects at Wailuku Hongwanji, along with contact information. We look forward to welcoming you and your family, and thank you in advance for any monetary donations made to support our efforts.

DHARMA & LEARNING

Buddha Reads Book Club

Danny Topp | (719) 200-7300
Buddha.reads@gmail.com

Maui Hongwanji Choir

Looking for New Members
 Joan Tamori | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Dharma School

Joan Tamori | (719) 200-7300
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Dharma Strummers

Danny Topp | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Gakuen

Rev. Murakami | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Preschool

Jody Vinoray | (808) 244-9545
whpreschool808@gmail.com

Sunday Announcements

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

SA ngha & COMMUNITY

4-H

SammyTakamura | (808) 244-0406
WHMSakura4H@gmail.com

Boy Scouts

Carl Yeh | (808) 250-1891
msdel17@hotmail.com

BWA

Gwen Hiraga | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Cub Scouts

Paul Petro | (808) 757-0476
cubpack40@gmail.com

Judo Club

RonaldHiyakumoto | (808) 244-9094
rhiyakumoto@hawaii.rr.com

Jr. YBA

Donna Ikeuchi | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Karate

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Kendo

Michael Sone | (808) 244-2650
michael.sone@gmail.com

DANA & SERVICE

Acknowledgements/Donations

Farron Cabral | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Facility Rentals

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Hosha Day Clean-up (1st Thur)

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Office Support & Publishers

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Website & Facebook

Help Wanted | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Yard & Facility Maintenance

Main Office | (808) 244-0406
whm@wailukuhongwanji.org

Each temple program is supported by dedicated volunteers who share updates, photos, and stories for the newsletter. *The Friend of the Dharma* is published monthly. Opinions expressed by individual contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of Wailuku Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. We are deeply grateful to all contributors for helping tell the story of our Sangha.

Editorial Team: Robyn Garner, Frank Hamasaki, Sharon Higa, Michael Munekiyo, Gary Murai, Rev. Murakami, Celeste Rabang, Joan Tamori, Eri Nomura, Jody Vinoray

Submission deadline: the 15th of each month (prior to publication).

Submit to: robynmgarner@gmail.com

February / March 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
8:00am Scout Sunday Srvc 1	Central Maui Hanamatsuri Assn Mtng @ Site TBA 2 5:15pm Dharma Strummers		3		4 BWA Hosha Day 7pm Troop Mtg.	5
8:00am Sunday Service 8 DS Gratitude Project	9 5:15pm Dharma Strummers	10	11 5:30pm Obon Pract.	12 7pm Troop Mtg.	13	14 6pm Nirvana Day Spring Eitaikyo Service
8:00am Nirvana Day (Minister's Appreciation Day) 10:15am BWA Sokai & Mtng 11am Cubs Conf. Room 1-3pm 4-H Aloha Girls Conf. Room 15	16 President's Day Office Closed	17	18 Social Hall Rental 5pm Kyodan Board Meeting via Zoom	19 Honpa Board of Directors & State Minister's Assn Mtng BWA ACCW Delv. 7pm Troop Mtg.	20	21 114th Gisekai Legislation Assembly (Saturday + Aloha Luncheon)
8:00am Family Service. Youth Choir 10:30am - 12:30pm 4-H Social Hall 22	23 5:15pm Dharma Strummers	24 6:30pm Cubs Meeting		25 7pm Troop Mtg.	26	27 Gakugei Kai in Social Hall 28
8:00am Sunday Service 1 5:15pm Dharma Strummers	2	3	4	5 BWA Hosha Day 7pm Troop Mtg.	6	7
8:00am Sunday Service Youth Choir 9:30am BWA mtng. 8	9 5:15pm Dharma Strummers	10	11 5:30pm Obon Pract.	12 7pm Troop Mtg.	13	14
9:00am Ohigan Service 15		16	17 5pm Kyodan Board Meeting via Zoom	18 BWA ACCW Delv. 7pm Troop Mtg.	19	20 21
8:00am Family Service 11am Cubs Conf. Room 1-3pm 4-H Conf. Room 22	23 5:15pm Dharma Strummers	24 6:30pm Cubs Meeting		25 7pm Troop Mtg.	26	27 Social Hall Rental 28
8:00am Family Service Youth Choir 10:30am 4-H Social Hall 29	30 9:00am Hanamatsuri Mayor's Proclamation WHM Temple 5:15pm Dharma Strummers	31 6:30pm Cubs Meeting				