

# 和

‘WA’  
harmony

## HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

11  
November 2019

### HIGASHI HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

At Higashi Hongwanji, we remain true to our origins as an open Sangha, welcoming anyone who wishes to learn more about the Jodo Shinshu tradition of Buddhism.


A registered 501(c)3 organization

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 Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Wa is published monthly by Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for its members and friends. Comments, articles and other items for publication consideration are welcomed.

Editor: Ken Saiki

## A-HŪM: FROM BEGINNING TO ENDING

Rinban Kenjun Kawawata

No itinerary for a Japan trip would be complete with a visit to a Buddhist temple or Shinto shrine somewhere. Visitors to old temples and shrines will often notice a pair of statues at the entrances, one with its mouth open and the other with its mouth closed. It's said these statues symbolize truth, wisdom and compassion. The one on the right has its mouth open, as if it is uttering an "a" sound, while the other one with the closed mouth is saying, "un."

Sometimes you'll see them as menacing wrestler-like Niō guardian gods such as the ones at famous Hōryūji in Nara. Or they may be fierce-looking *komainu* lion-dogs, as is commonly found at entrances to shrines. In Okinawa you'll see similar pairs of open- and closed-mouth *shisa* flanking house gates or on the rooftops, placed there to protect homes.

Together these statues represent the beginning and the ending, initially described by the sacred Sanskrit word "a-hūm" and incorporated into images of open- and closed-mouth Indian deities at temple entrances.



This pair of komainu lion-dogs guard a shrine.

and movies we've seen—whether they concern home, work, politics, sports, money, age or sickness, there is a beginning and there is an end.

It's interesting and fun to hear other people's stories, mainly because those stories are not our own realities. We listen intently to conversations about people developing new relationships while others may talk about theirs falling apart. We empathize with those sharing updates on new aches and pains while others face major illnesses. Some folks will talk about their luck with slot machines while others may not be so lucky and can only lament leaving their money in Vegas. We often find it quite entertaining to listen to other people's petty arguments.

Why are these stories so interesting? That's mostly because they're not our own stories. They're about the lives of others. But we can see ourselves in their stories.



Rinban Ken Kawawata

In Japanese, it's 阿吽, or "a-un," meaning the beginning and ending. The Japanese *a-i-u-e-o* alphabet also begins with あ, or "a" and ends with う, or "n." From beginning to end, it's a symbol of the universal truth of impermanence, the birth and death of all things, as we are living in this world of impermanence.

Everything in our lives as human beings—our stories, experiences, books we've read

(cont'd on p. 2)

## FROM BEGINNING TO ENDING (cont'd from p. 1)

When we see ourselves in the stories of others and incidents in the world, these stories become the Dharma, the teaching. As seekers of our true selves., Buddhism is the way to know oneself.

"I am Bombu, an ordinary person." Shinran Shonin defined himself as an ordinary person, full of blind passions while he practiced Buddhism.

He quotes from Shan-tao, the fifth patriarch of Pure Land Buddhism. In *The Notes on Once Calling and Many Calling*, Shan-tao said:

*"Foolish being, we are full of ignorance and blind passion. Our desires are countless, and anger, wrath, jealousy and envy are overwhelming, arising without pause; to the last moment of life they do not cease or disappear, or exhaust themselves."*

The cause of our difficulties is our own blind passions. In Buddhism it's described as the Three Poisons: Desire, Anger and Ignorance. This is our ego self that makes difficulties and hardships in one's life and creates trouble between us. We are driven by this big ego self and bump into each other. From his realization of his own self, Shinran Shōnin called himself, "Stupid Bald-headed Shinran."

This realization was the core of his self-understanding that one's own self was the evil one who was the aim of Amida's compassion, dependent only on the power of the Dharma.

The power of the Dharma liberates us from human difficulties and shines a beacon of light for the darkness of our lives.


*"As I humbly reflect, Amida's Prayer for universal deliverance is beyond my understanding. It is the great boat that cross the ocean of impassability. Amida's Light knows no hindrance. Its is the sun of transcendental wisdom which illumines the ignorance."*

From the preface of *Kyōgyōshinshō*,  
by Shinran Shōnin

Shinran is reminding us that life has many difficulties, just like the rough seas in a storm. While Shinran tells us that it is even beyond his own comprehension, Amida's innermost aspiration, the Dharma, is the boat that allows us to navigate the rough ocean of impassability.

The Dharma is the light of transcendental wisdom that illuminates our ignorance and shows us the direction in our daily lives.

In gassho,  
Rinban Kenjun Kawawata



# 阿吽

河和田賢淳

私どもの生きる世界では、何事にも初めと終わりがあります。この阿吽（あうん）遠い言葉はインドから来た言葉でサンスクリット語ではオームと言います。インドではこの言葉は神聖な言葉です。この阿吽、オームは始まりと終わりを表す言葉であり、真理や悟りを表す言葉として使われてきたようです。

日本語のアイウエオは“あ”で始まり“ん”で終わります。“あ”口をあけ発音します。“ん”は口を閉じます。私どものいのちは“あ”で始まり“ん”と口を閉じて終わると言われます。この言葉はまた無常、世界は常に変わる、発生と消滅、誕生と死滅の繰り返しを表した言葉でもあります。

時々観光で古い寺院を訪れますと、仁王像が二体山門におり、右側は口を開け、左側は口を閉じています。神社では狛犬が置かれ、それもまた右側が口を開け、左側の狛犬は口を閉じています。沖縄のシーサーも同じです。また私どものお寺のお飾りにも同様な様子が見られます。これらは彫刻を見る時すでに普遍的な教えに出会っているのです。“あうん”“オーム”は、

この世の中は何事も生と死、出現と消滅を繰り返して動いているのだ、無常世界に生きているのだよという事を教えているのでしょうか。世間では毎日色々なことが起こります。人ごととして聞いているときは可笑しくも思えることがたくさんあるのです。しかし一つ一つの出来事を我が内に投影する時、それらの事件から自分の本来の姿が見えてくるのです。

曾我暲深という先学は「真宗聖典と新聞の間を生きられたかた。」であつと言われます。お念仏の教えを今生きる世界に聞き続けられ、本当の事、本当の自己を見つめるご人生だったのです。

私どもの仏法聴聞の意味が問われる事です。

合掌  
河和田賢淳

## WA NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE BY EMAIL

Here's a reminder that the monthly Higashi Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin newsletter *Wa* is available by Earth-friendlier email instead of on paper by regular mail. As a bonus, the electronic version is in color!

To get your newsletter delivered to you in your email mailbox monthly, call us at 531-9088 or send an email, subject line "Email Wa," with your name and address to [betsuin@hhbt-hi.org](mailto:betsuin@hhbt-hi.org).



Betsuin members help Kazue Uechi, Laura Doi & Bill Doi (seated) celebrate at a UJSH luncheon at JCCH honoring those reaching 80 years of age this year. Photo courtesy of Carolyn Kimura

### 80th milestone celebrated at UJSH Nenchosha Ian Engei Taikai lunch

Betsuin affiliates Kazue Uechi and Bill & Laura Doi were recognized and received 80th-year birthday gifts at the United Japanese Society of Hawaii Nenchosha Ian Engei Taikai luncheon gala at the JCCH Manoa Grand Ballroom Sept. 28.

Several Betsuin members also attended to offer their congratulations; some were even part of the formal program. Rinban Kenjun Kawawata did the *itadakimasu* invocation, Ken Saiki led a rousing banzai cheer to wish prosperity and longevity to all the honorees, while Atsuko Nonaka and Marion Kanemori performed in the variety entertainment program.

If you're celebrating your 80th birthday next year, please let us know. We'll nominate you for an invitation to the luncheon in September 2020.



**Office makeover:** Kupuna Aikido and member volunteers conducted some major KonMari-style clearing of fixtures and items no longer needed in the Betsuin office, and a donated sofa adds a welcoming touch.

### November movie selection wins 6 Japan Academy Awards in 2018

Director Hirokazu Koreeda's megahit, *Shoplifters*, earned him worldwide recognition earlier this year, but he had another blockbuster film last year, *The Third Murder*, a gripping courtroom drama.

The trial was supposed to be an open-and-shut case. Misumi (Koji Yakusho), a convicted murderer, confessed to the killing of his boss for money and burning his body. His defense attorney, Shigemori (Masaharu Fukuyama) was tasked simply to help his client avoid the death penalty. While investigating, somehow things don't seem to add up. Misumi's statements change each time they meet. A weekly magazine interview of the victim's wife, Mitsue (Yuki Saito) suggests other motives, and then there's the connection with the victim's daughter, Sakie (Suzu Hirose). As Shigemori explores the relationship, he uncovers a secret...

Winner of six Japan Academy Awards in 2018, including Best Film, Best Director/Screenplay/Editor (Koreeda), Best Supporting Actor (Yakusho) and Best Supporting Actress (Hirose), plus another 21 prestigious Japan film awards and nominations.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., Nov. 26, 124 min. Color, Japanese audio, English subtitles. Admission free. Light refreshments provided, or bring something to share!

### 三度目の殺人 (さんどめのさつじん)

それは、ありふれた裁判のはずだった。殺人の前科がある三隅(役所広司)が、解雇された工場の社長を殺し、火をつけた容疑で起訴された。犯行も自供し死刑はほぼ確実。しかし、弁護を担当することになった重盛(福山雅治)は、なんとか無期懲役に持ちこむため調査を始める。何かが、おかしい。調査を進めるにつれ、重盛の中で違和感が生まれていく。三隅の供述が、会うたびに変わるのだ。金目当ての私欲な殺人のはずが、週刊誌の取材では被害者の妻・美津江(斉藤由貴)に頼まれたと答え、動機さえも二転三転していく。さらには、被害者の娘・咲江(広瀬すず)と三隅の接点が浮かび上がる。重盛がふたりの関係を探っていくうちに、ある秘密に辿り着く...



受賞歴：第41回日本アカデミー賞：最優秀作品賞、最優秀監督賞、最優秀脚本賞、最優秀編集賞(是枝裕和)、最優秀助演男優賞(役所広司)、最優秀助演女優賞(広瀬すず)。第30回日刊スポーツ映画大賞、第42回報知映画賞、第72回毎日映画コンクール：助演男優賞(役所広司)、その他。

公開：2017年、カラー、言語：日本語、字幕：英語、映時間：124分、10月26日(火)午後6:30時、入場無料。

Hawaii Buddhist Council

# Bodhi Day Service

Sunday, December 8, 2019 • 9:30 am

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii • 1727 Pali Hwy., Honolulu



## “Ho'oulu: This Time of Transformation”

**Guest speaker: Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer**  
*Associate Professor, UH - West Oahu*

Manu Meyer is the fifth daughter of Emma Aluli and Harry Meyer. She lived beside many cousins on the shores of Mokapu and Kailua and earned her doctorate from Harvard University in 1998. The Aluli-Meyer family is dedicated to the advancement of justice, education, health, law, transformative economics, arts education, Aloha 'Āina, food security, philosophy and Hawaiian music.

Dr. Meyer will be speaking on the Dharma of sustainability, Hawaiian culture and the radical potential of the Kapu Aloha, called forth from within the Aloha 'Āina movement on Maunakea.

### SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT TO FOLLOW DURING REFRESHMENTS

**Tinkerbell** - popular Japanese handbell and tone chime ensemble  
**Tatsuya Oikawa and Shoju Aratani** - Tsugaru shamisen duo

*Sponsored by Marine Village Creation Fund  
Supported by Studio Bell Fantasy*

## What is Bodhi Day?

We celebrate Bodhi Day, when Shakyamuni Buddha attained perfect awakening. In Mahayana Buddhist tradition, it is said that he attained awakening under a Bodhi tree on December 8 at the age of 35.

The attainment of his awakening took place about 2,500 years ago, and his teachings continue to lead us to the life of true peace and happiness.

This Bodhi Day service is sponsored by the Hawaii Buddhist Council (HBC), which represents seven different Japanese Buddhist denominations in Hawaii. We are very pleased to celebrate with you one of the happiest occasions for all human beings.

*For more information, please call:  
Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (808) 531-9088  
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (808) 522-9200*



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## TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

- 11/3 Sun 10 am **Shōtsuki memorial service**  
Dharma message: Rinban Kawawata
- 11/3 Sun 12pm **Basic Buddhism** discussion in Japanese  
**仏教入門 (お話と座談会)**  
Fukuhara conference room
- 11/4 Mon 10 am **Meditation Sutra study class**
- 11/6 Wed 6 pm **Karaoke night** at the Betsuin
- 11/10 Sun 10 am **Sunday service**  
Dharma message: Rev. Toyoshima
- 11/11 Mon 12 pm **Lunch Bunch** at Moanalua 99 Food Court
- 11/12 Tue 3 pm **Ukulele class/band practice**
- 11/12 Tue 6 pm **The Larger Sutra** study class  
led by Rinban Kawawata in English
- 11/17 Sun 10 am **Hōonko service** at Palolo Hongwanji  
**(No service at Betsuin)**
- 11/18 Mon 10 am **Meditation Sutra study class**
- 11/21 Thu 6 pm **Teatime Okō** discussion group
- 11/24 Sun 10 am **Sunday service**  
Dharma message: Rev. Toyoshima
- 11/24 Sun 12 pm **Betsuin board meeting**
- 11/24 Sun 12 pm **Art of Paper Folding** class
- 11/26 Tue 3 pm **Ukulele class/band practice**
- 11/26 Tue 6:30 pm **Movie night: *The Third Murder*** 三度目の殺人
- 11/28 Thu 10 am **Shinran Shōnin memorial service**

### DECEMBER

- 12/1 Sun 10 am **Shōtsuki memorial service**  
Dharma message: Rinban Kawawata
- 12/1 Sun 12pm **Basic Buddhism** discussion in Japanese  
**仏教入門 (お話と座談会)**  
Fukuhara conference room
- 12/4 Wed 6 pm **Karaoke night** at the Betsuin
- 12/8 Sun 9:30 am **HBC Bodhi Day service**  
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii  
1727 Pali Hwy., enter from Lusitana St.  
(No service at Higashi Hongwanji Betsuin)
- 12/15 Sun 10 am **Betsuin Bodhi Day service**
- 12/15 Sun 12 pm **Betsuin board meeting**
- 12/15 Sun 12 pm **Art of Paper Folding** class
- 12/22 Sun 10 am **Oosōji year-end temple cleanup**
- 12/22 Sun 11:30am **Ehime Maru Memorial cleaning**  
Kakaako Waterfront Park  
followed by short service & potluck lunch
- 12/28 Sat 10 am **Shinran Shōnin memorial service**
- 12/29 Sun 10 am **Mochi pounding at Otani Center**  
Fukuhara conference room  
(no service at Betsuin)
- 12/31 Tue 5:30 pm **Jōya-e New Year's Eve service**  
Bell-tolling 108 times & toshikoshi soba
- 1/1 Wed 10 am **Shūsō-e New Year Day service**  
Ozōni served after service

Everyone is welcome to join the morning chanting held at 7 am daily (except on Sundays & the 28th day of the month) in the Betsuin main hall.