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harmony

HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

10
October 2021

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 Jōdo Shinshū tradition of Buddhism.


A registered 501(c)(3) organization

Head Minister: Kenjun Kawawata
Resident Minister: Steven Toyoshima
Minister: Akiko Okada

President: Kenneth Saiki
Secretary: Marian Tsuji
Treasurer: Shigeru Numano

1685 Alaneo Street
Honolulu, HI 96817
Tel: (808) 531-9088
Fax: (808) 531-3265

Email: betsuin@hhbt-hi.org
Website: betsuin.hhbt-hi.org

 Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

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Editor: Ken Saiki



ABOUT LIFE

Rinban Kenjun Kawawata

It's been nine weeks since I planted the radish seeds. The daikon are now big enough to harvest.

Before planting the seeds, I watched a YouTube video on how to grow radishes and used it as a reference. First, I made rows. Then I made holes about the size of a beer bottle and about 1 inch deep at intervals of 50-60 cm. The video said to sprinkle 5-6 seeds in the holes and cover them lightly with soil. After a while, when they sprout, thin out the five seedlings to three, then the three to one, grow the remaining one and finally, harvest the radish.

My wife, Jeanne, asked me what should be done with the thinned out sprouts. I replied that I would leave the best ones to grow, but would move the thinned out ones to another place since they seemed to be still sturdy and growing.

Now, nine weeks after planting the seeds, the daikon radishes that I thinned out and replanted are growing well. I was reminded once again that life is lived and sustained by forces far beyond our imagination.

Throughout history, there have been many instances when humans have been selective about other human lives. By the Edo period (1603-1868) in Japan, poor villages openly thinned out their population in order to maintain their families and villages. This practice was necessary because at that time, agricultural production was not sufficient to provide for everyone, and it was the only way to survive.

When we select life for reasons of our own or for the good of our country, it becomes a source of discrimination and we forget about the dignity of life. Each individual's life is different, and each of us tries our best to live the life we've been given to its fullest.

Although different, that life is far beyond our thoughts and imagination. Here's an English translation of a famous passage from the Amida Sutra:



Rinban Ken Kawawata



*In the ponds of the Pure Land,
lotuses are as large as chariot
wheels—the blue ones radiating
a blue light, the yellow a
yellow light, the red a red
light, and the white a white
light. They are marvelous and
beautiful, fragrant and pure.*

(cont'd on p. 2)

ABOUT LIFE (cont'd from p. 1)

This passage tells us that in the Pure Land, lotus flowers of various colors are in full bloom, each emitting its own color of light. It means that although each flower is of a different color, they exist in mutual recognition and respect. It is the same with all life. We must not forget that we are kept alive by the interrelationship of many lives.

From the plants and the radishes, it made me think about all life, human egoism, my ego, and the uniqueness of lives and the dignity of life.

These radishes are used to make miso soup, grated daikon, namasu and pickles to garnish the dining table. And then I say, "Itadakimasu" and begin my meal by expressing my gratitude. The life of the daikon sustains my life. The radish becomes me.

It is a Japanese custom to say, "Itadakimasu" before eating. It means to humbly accept the food. The original

meaning of *itadakimasu* is to express gratitude and respect by receiving something above your head.

When Japanese have something they want, they say, "chōdai," or "give me," another way of saying "kudasai," or "please." *Chōdai*, however, actually means to hold something up above your head. When we eat something, we say, "itadakimasu," which means we hold meals up above our head and express our respect, humility and gratitude for receiving another's life.

When we eat something, we are taking another life. Animals, fish and plants sacrifice their lives for us. We live by taking other lives. *Namu* means to bow down. The true essence within *namu* is apology and gratitude. We *namu* and become humble. With this humble spirit we live and listen to the Dharma in our daily lives.

In Gassho,
Namu Amida Butsu



大根の種を植えもう9週間経ちました。もう収穫できる大きさになりました。

種を植える前にYouTubeで大根の育て方を見て参考にしました。まず畝を作ります。そしてビール瓶大で1インチぐらいの深さの穴を50-60センチ間隔で作ります。その穴の中に5-6粒の種を撒き、土を軽くかけると言っていました。

そしてしばらくして芽が出たら、5本のを3本に、3本のを1本に間引きして、最後のものを育ててゆき大根を収穫するのです。

そこでジニーが真引きした芽はどうするかと質問してきました。私は一番良いものを残して育てるのだと答えました。しかしせっかく芽をだして育てているので、間引きしたものを他のところに移して育てることにしました。

種を植えて9週間たった今、間引きし植え替えた大根も大きく育っています。いのちとは人間の思いを遥かに超えた力で生き、生かされている事に改めて気づかされました。

歴史の中で人間が人間のいのちを選別してしまった事が多々見られるのです。日本の江戸時代までには、貧しい村において、家族や村の維持のため公然と間引きが行われていました。な

げならその頃は多くの人を賄えるほどの農業生産力がなく、生き残るにはその方法しかなかったのです。

自分や国の都合により命を選別し、差別の元となり、いのちの尊厳性を忘れてしまいます。

いのちは一つ一つ異なり、いただきたいのちを一所懸命生きようとしています。

異なりはありますがそのいのちは人間の思いや考えを遥かに超えたいのちなのです。

『仏説阿彌陀經』の「青色青光、黄色黄光、赤色赤光、白色白光」という一節があります。これは浄土の池にはさまざまな色の蓮華が咲いていて、その各々の色の光を放っていると説かれています。それはそれぞれが違うユニークな華ですが、互いに認め合い尊敬し合って存在しているという事なのです。それはあらゆるいのちも同じなのです。多くのいのちの相互関係の中で

生かされていることを忘れてはならないのです。

また植物より、大根より、人間の自我、私の自我の大きさと、いのちの独自性、尊厳よりすべてのいのちについて考えさせられる事でした。

そしてこの大根達は味噌汁、大根おろし、膾（なます）やお漬物になって食卓を飾ります。そしていただきますと南無していただきます。大根のいのちが私のいのちを支えてくれるのです。大根が私になるのです。

日本の習慣として、食前に「いただきます」と申します。「いただきます」とは謙虚に頂戴いたしますと言う意味です。「いただく」の本来の意味は、物を頭上に頂いて感謝と尊敬を表す事なのです。

最近では、何か欲しいものがあると「ちょうだい」と言いますが、これは「ください」という意味です。しかし、「ちょうだい」は頭上に物を掲げるという意味です。頂くと頂戴は尊敬と謙虚さを表しています。

私たちが何かを食べるとき、私たちは他のいのちをいただくのです。動物や魚や植物は、私たちのためにそのいのちを犠牲にしています。私たちは他のいのちをいただくことで、生きているのです。南無とは頭を下げる事です。その内容は感謝と謝罪です。ごめんなさい、すみません、そしてありがとうございます事です。そしてその謙虚な精神をもって聴聞し生活してゆく事です。

合掌
南無阿彌陀仏





Fall Ohigan guest speaker for the Betsuin was none other than Rev. Okada of the Higashi Honganji Hawaii District Office.

Dharma message by Rev. Okada at Sept. 19 Betsuin Ohigan service

Usually Ohigan dharma messages are delivered by ministers from another temple. Our Sept. 19 guest speaker, however, was Hawaii District minister Rev. Akiko Okada.

She shared personal anecdotes of Ohigan in her hometown Ōsaka, such as discovering that *ohagi* (sweet azuki-covered rice balls) may be called *botamochi* in other parts of Japan during Spring Ohigan, when *botan* are blooming.

The Autumn Equinox has brought to mind her aging father's reduced Ohigan temple service schedule this year, and the sun setting due west, the direction associated with The Other Shore and Amida's Light.

We keep learning new things all our lives but we must realize that our new knowledge and accomplishments are not done just by ourselves using our own capabilities but due to the presence of others.

Ohigan is an ideal time for us to bask in the comforting glow and warmth of the setting sun and come to the realization and appreciate the fact that we are always being guided by the light of Amida Buddha.

Rev. Dr. Michael Conway headlines District Hōonkō Gathering Nov. 13

Members of the Higashi Hongwanji ohana will be happy to learn that Rev. Dr. Michael Conway is scheduled to be our guest lecturer for this year's virtual Hōonkō Gathering. So be sure to set aside the afternoon on your calendar app for Sat., Nov. 13 from 1:00 pm. You won't want to miss out on this opportunity to hear from Dr. Conway, livestreaming from Kyōto, Japan, as he taps into the vast treasure trove of Jōdō Shinshū teachings.

Watch for more information in your next Wa newsletter on how you can sign up for this Zoom gathering.

As you may know, Dr. Conway, a Chicago native and Northwestern University alumnus, received his PhD. in Shin Buddhist Studies at Ōtani University in Kyōto in 2011 and served as managing editor of *The Eastern Buddhist* academic journal. He has been a full-time lecturer at Ōtani University since 2015. He is also an ordained Higashi minister.

On Sun., Nov. 14, he is also scheduled to deliver the dharma message for the District Hōonkō service, which will be broadcast on Facebook Live starting at 10 am.

Temple looking forward to return to suspended and stalled activities

As a more optimistic outlook is being projected for our community during the coming months, the temple is looking positively at our plans for the months ahead.

For example, if you look at our activities calendar for November on the back page, we've penciled in *The Art of Paper Folding* craft workshop led by Jeanne Kawawata and Movie Night in our lineup. For our film, we've picked *Tora-san's Grand Scheme*, in which our hapless but lovable hero plans a Hawaii trip for his Uncle Tatsuzo and Aunt Tsune.

We would also like to return to in-person Karaoke Night at the Betsuin and ukulele band practices.

We're also looking ahead to schedule our long-delayed *Nomi no Ichiba* collectibles and rummage sale in early December and popular mochi-pounding event on Dec. 26.

Rest assured that even if we have an official green light from public authorities, we'll continue to proceed with extreme caution for the safety of our temple ohana.

Meanwhile, let's all get our shots and keep masking up!

PayPal offers a safe & easy way to make payments/donations

Making payments and donations to Higashi Hongwanji online is now faster than ever before with PayPal. Once you set up your personal PayPal account, you can use it for transactions from your favorite credit or debit card or directly from a bank account.

Scanning the QR code shown here with your smartphone will take you directly to PayPal's Higashi Hongwanji payment screen. Enter the amount you want to enter and add a note to us in the memo section, such as "Shotsuki service in memory of (name)" or "Gojikai dues for (name)." PayPal will deposit the amount in our bank account and we'll then send you a receipt for your records.



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If you don't have a PayPal account yet, consider joining the more than 300 million other users worldwide who enjoy the convenience of a free PayPal account.

Modified Betsuin activities for October

With the new Safe Oahu Response Plan extended through most of October, the Betsuin will continue to conduct most of our regular temple activities as virtual events for the rest of the month out of an abundance of caution.

As more folks are vaccinated and case numbers drop, we are hopeful that restrictions can be lifted soon and allow return to in-person activities in November. Watch for the latest updates in our Wa newsletter.

Since most of our activities feature convenient virtual options, we'd like to encourage our members to participate remotely for now when possible.

Please call us at (808) 531-9088 or email betsuin@hhbt-hi.org if you have any questions.

Weekly Sunday services

Shotsuki memorial services
Funeral/anniversary services

Ukulele band practice
Karaoke Night at the Betsuin
Basic Buddhism discussion group
Larger/Amida Sutra study classes
Oku/Tea Time discussion group

Movie night
Art of Paper Folding class

Columbarium (Nōkotsudō)

While in-person attendance can be accommodated with social distanced seating and other safety precautions, remote viewing strongly encouraged

Social distanced seating up to 24; remote viewing also available

Zoom only

Temporarily suspended

Open 9 am - 5 pm daily for visitation and floral offerings.

The Teaching of Buddha: The Four Noble Truths

For those who seek Enlightenment, there are three ways of practice that must be understood and followed: first, disciplines for practical behavior; second, right concentration of mind; and third, wisdom.

Disciplines for practical behavior

Everyone, whether a person is a common person or a way-seeker, should follow the precepts for good behavior. One should control both the mind and body, and guard the gates of one's five senses. One should be afraid of even a trifling evil and, from moment to moment, should endeavor to practice only good deeds.

Right concentration of mind

Concentration of mind means to quickly get away from greedy and evil desires as they arise and to hold the mind pure and tranquil.

Wisdom

Wisdom is the ability to perfectly understand the Fourfold Noble Truths, to know the fact of suffering and its nature; to know the source of suffering, to know what constitutes the end of suffering, and to know the Noble Path that leads to the end of suffering.

Those who earnestly follow these

three ways of practice may rightly be called the disciples of Buddha.

The Four Noble Truths

The world is full of suffering. Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness and death are sufferings. To meet a person whom one hates is suffering, to be separated from a beloved one is suffering, to be vainly struggling to satisfy one's needs



苦 Suffering

is suffering. In fact, life that is not free from desire and passion is always involved with distress. This is called *the Truth of Suffering*.

The cause of human suffering is undoubtedly found in the thirsts of the physical body and in the illusions of worldly passion. If these thirsts and illusions are traced to their source, they are found to be rooted in the intense desires of physical instincts. Thus, desire, having a strong will to live as its basis, seeks



集 The Cause of Suffering

that which feels desirable, even if it is sometimes death. This is called *the Truth of the Cause of Suffering*.

If desire, which lies at the root of all human passion, can be removed, then passion will die out and all human suffering will be ended. This is called *the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering*.



滅 The Extinction of Suffering

In order to enter into a state where there is no desire and no suffering, one must follow a certain Path.

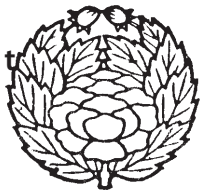
This is called *the Truth of the Noble Path to the Cessation of the Cause of Suffering*.

People should keep these Four Noble Truths clearly in mind.



道 The Path to Nirvana

—Excerpted and edited from "Messages from the Buddha," published by Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai
Booklet available for free download at bdkamerica.org



HIGASHI HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII
1685 ALANEO STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

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In this issue of WA...

- **About Life** p. 1
- **いのちについて** p. 2
- **News on the Betsuin Wireless** p. 3
- **Betsuin Ohigan service held** p. 3
- **Save the date for Hōonkō observance** p. 3
- **Looking forward to activities return** p. 3
- **PayPal makes it easy** p. 3
- **Modified Betsuin activities** p. 4
- **The Four Noble Truths** p. 4
- **Acknowledgments** p. 5
- **October shōtsuki memorial service** p. 5
- **Temple activities calendar** p. 6

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

OCTOBER

- 10/3 Sun 10 am **Shōtsuki memorial service** - Facebook/In-person
Dharma message: Rinban Kenjun Kawawata
- 10/3 Sun 11:30am **Basic Buddhism** discussion - Zoom
仏教入門 (お話と座談会) - Zoom ミーティング
led by Rinban Kenjun Kawawata in Japanese
- 10/4 Mon 10 am **Amida Sutra** study class (English) - Zoom
- 10/6 Wed 5:30pm **Karaoke Night at the Betsuin** - Zoom
- 10/10 Sun 10 am **Sunday service** - Facebook Live/In-person
- 10/12 Tue 3 pm **Ukulele band practice** - Zoom
- 10/12 Tue 6 pm **The Larger Sutra** study class (English) - Zoom
- 10/17 Sun 10 am **Sunday service** - Facebook Live/In-person
- 10/17 Sun 12 pm **Betsuin board meeting** - Zoom
- 10/21 Thu 6 pm **Okō/Tea time gathering** - Zoom
- 10/24 Sun 10 am **Sunday service** - Facebook Live/In-person
- 10/26 Tue 3 pm **Ukulele band practice** - Zoom
- 10/28 Thu 10 am **Shinran Shōnin memorial service** - FB Live

WEEKLY SUNDAY SERVICES: While viewing our Sunday services virtually on Facebook Live is strongly recommended, in-person attendance at Sunday services temperature is available, up to social-distanced seating capacity of 26. Weekly Sunday services are livestreamed and archived on our public Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/HigashiHongwanjiMission>

NOVEMBER

- 11/1 Mon 10 am **Amida Sutra** study class (English) - Zoom
- 11/3 Wed 5:30pm **Karaoke Night at the Betsuin** - Zoom/In-person
- 11/7 Sun 10 am **Shōtsuki memorial service** - Facebook/In-person
Dharma message: Rinban Kenjun Kawawata
- 11/7 Sun 11:30am **Basic Buddhism** discussion - Zoom
仏教入門 (お話と座談会) - Zoom ミーティング
led by Rinban Kenjun Kawawata in Japanese
- 11/9 Tue 3 pm **Ukulele band practice** - Zoom/In-person
- 11/9 Tue 6 pm **The Larger Sutra** study class (English) - Zoom
- 11/13 Sat 1 pm **Hawaii District Hōonkō Gathering** - Zoom
Guest lecturer: Rev. Dr. Michael Conway
- 11/14 Sun 10 am **Hawaii District Hōonkō service** - FB Live only
Guest speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Conway
- 11/18 Thu 6 pm **Okō/Tea time gathering** - Zoom
- 11/21 Sun 10 am **Sunday service** - Facebook Live/In-person
- 11/21 Sun 12 pm **Betsuin board meeting** - Zoom
- 11/21 Sun 12 pm **The Art of Paper Folding** class - Ōtani Center
- 11/23 Tue 3 pm **Ukulele band practice** - Zoom/In-person
- 11/23 Tue 6:30pm **Movie night: Tora-san's Grand Scheme (1970)**
- 11/28 Sun 10 am **Shinran Shōnin memorial service**
FB Live/In-person

COLUMBARIUM OPEN DAILY: The columbarium is open for visitation and floral offerings daily from 9 am to 5 pm. Morning services are conducted in the columbarium daily at 7 am.