

Kaneohe Higashi's Hanamatsuri Service this Sunday April 3

This year's Kaneohe Higashi's Hanamatsuri Buddha Day Service will be held Sunday, April 3, at 9 a.m. We will also enjoy our Cinema @ Temple movie after the service. We apologize for this unforeseen change from the annual Higashi calendar. Please attend!

inside your Jushin

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45-520 Keaahala Road
Kaneohe, HI 96744
Tel (808) 247-2661

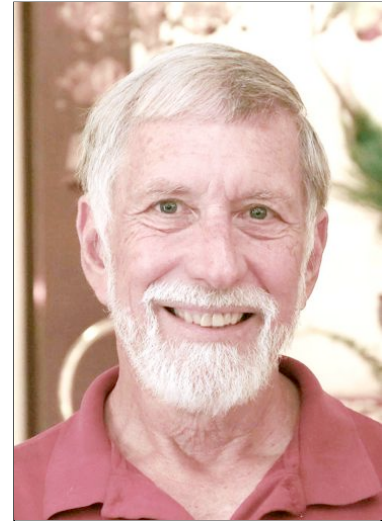
Resident Minister
Rev. Hiroko Maeda
Board Chairperson: Walt Herring
Editor: Jim Dote

Temple email:
kaneohe@hhbt-hi.org

Temple website:
www.kaneohe.hhbt-hi.org

Welcome Message

Chairperson Walt Herring



Aloha Gojikai Members,
Temple 'Ohana and Friends!

It's an honor and privilege to serve as our temple's Board Chairperson this year. This is my second year as a member of your Board but many of you have probably seen me over the course of a decade incognito mixing concrete, behind a welder's face mask, or with tools in my belt.

My first introduction to Buddhism was in my junior year of high school. I was attending a weekend seminar on the Christian ministry in Salem, Oregon. There, in my hotel night stand drawer, was a copy of the "Teachings of Buddha." The appeal of the teachings seemed to provide answers to questions I was facing.

However, I didn't consider myself a Buddhist until quite recently. The teachings were more than I could absorb at that early stage of my life. I was born in 1945 in Eugene, Oregon, which, at that time, was a modest lumber town. It was fortunate that the University of Oregon was located there. The presence of the University made Eugene a fairly progressive place, but to my knowledge there were no Buddhists.

Buddhism remained a vague promise for most of my life. I knew that I was not a Christian, and yet I considered myself a spiritual seeker. It wasn't until I became associated with the Kaneohe Higashi temple that I really studied the teachings.

My life began to make sense when I realized that the Dharma unfolds within us as we live our lives. If we remain open to

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Welcome Message: Continue our Journey Forward Together

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life's lessons, we work our way toward enlightenment. We certainly can't claim to live the Dharma, but the Dharma can become apparent to us during the course of our lives.

If this is true, I believe that it provides reassurance to those members of the Sangha concerned about maintaining membership levels. It took me almost 60 years to realize that I was a Buddhist, and then it came about only after I had access to a Sangha. I have often heard that the most important of the three treasures is the Sangha.


How can this be? We temple members are more important than the Buddha, or the Dharma?

The only way I can explain this to myself is that the Dharma comes to us through the course of our lives, and as we approach enlightenment, we come to recognize those around us who are approaching Buddhahood. The process is inevitable, and is humanity's greatest hope.

As members of the Sangha, we have a duty to make the temple and ourselves available to the larger community to spread the teachings.

To do this, I believe that we need to become more visible. You may say that hundreds of community members attend our annual Bon Dance, but this is only a small part of the community. It should be our aspiration to make Buddha's message of hope available to all. Those most receptive to the Dharma are likely to be those who have acquired some life experience and need to be included in the Sangha to complete their journey toward enlightenment.

Let's continue to journey forward together. Please explore with me ways to extend Buddha's message in our community.

Gassho,

Walt Herring
Board Chairperson

Taste of Dana on November 5

By: Goenki Banquet Committee

We are excited to announce "A Taste of Dana." If you haven't already marked your calendar on Saturday, November 5th, to attend the Hawaii District Goenki Banquet, you won't want to miss this rare occasion of sharing and networking with other sangha friends.

The banquet committee is also planning "A Taste of Dana" type of bazaar event that will showcase donated items from each temple to be sold for \$5.00 at the banquet.

Members of all temples are encouraged to participate by creating any type of non-perishable items such as: note cards, hand crafts, jams, cookies, salt seasoning, etc.

All proceeds will be donated to the Hawaii District project, "Helping Fukushima Children to Recover." Please contact CharlAnn Nakamoto for more details: 808-247-5089 or, charlann.nakamoto@gmail.com.

Important note: We cannot accept items like chocolates or mochi, and items that would not stand up to heat or that need to be refrigerated.





Honolulu Rainbow Ekiden Fun

By Susan Ng

We had so much fun watching the Honolulu Rainbow Ekiden at Kapiolani Park on March 13, 2016. It was a sunny, breezy day - perfect for the race. With spirited enthusiasm, Rev. Hiroko Maeda was able to entice more runners this year to establish two Higashi relay teams! (Well, counting that our new recruit from Palolo Hongwanji, Ivan Lui, ran in two segments, we had two teams.) It was exciting to cheer on our runners.

The Higashi Hongwanji set up a canopy next to the friendly people from Wahiawa Hongwanji. There

was entertainment on the Ekiden stage during the event, too. We also spent a lot of time eating before, during and after the race. We brought snacks and other food from home and also bought some food and drinks being sold by the vendors at the race like bentos, takoyaki, lemonade and shave ice; all perfect for a fun race on a beautiful Hawaiian day.

Making up the two relay teams were: Paul Briggs, Patrick Ng and Rev. Hiroko Maeda from Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji, Kevin Kawawata, Rev. Koen Kikuchi, and Margaret Hamachi from Betsuin,

and Takuto Nakajima, Nami Yamanaka and Ivan Lui from Palolo. For our Higashi group, Patrick Ng performed some breakdancing and also taught people how to juggle tennis balls.

Our 3.1 mile Ekiden relay was certainly not competitive except maybe for the eating part. We also enjoyed good fellowship with other temples' 'ohana. The annual Ekiden event is part of the much larger Honolulu Festival and held on the last morning of the three-day gathering. Please plan on joining us at next year's Rainbow Ekiden! Get your track shoes ready.

At the finish line -- left to right: Paul Briggs, Margaret Hamachi, Rev. Hiroko Maeda, Nami Yamanaka, Ivan Lui, Patrick Ng, Rev. Koen Kikuchi, Kevin Kawawata, and Takuto Nakajima.

Our Annual Plant Sale April 30 on Earth Day!

*Celebrate the greening of Oahu
and Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji!*

Plant Drop Off/Set-Up

Friday, April 29, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Plant Sale Day!!!

Saturday, April 30, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Clean Up

Saturday, April 30, 1 – 2 p.m.

*Many thanks to all of our
donors and volunteers who
make this event possible.*

Prep for 2016 Bon Odori Begun

Volunteers are urgently needed on Saturday, June 25, to help set up the yagura and lighting for the Bon Odori, and on the morning of our Bon Dance, July 2. Tasks like carrying, lifting and climbing ladders, are demanding and have to be done in a certain sequence. We also would appreciate volunteers



Volunteers "practice" assembling a tent in March!

on Sunday, July 3, to dismantle and put everything away. Please kokua, sign up by emailing us : kaneohe@hhbt-hi.org.

Our 2016 Bon Odori festival -- Saturday, July 2!

Free Bon Dance Parking from 4 p.m. at Benjamin Parker Elementary School - see Next Issue of Jushin!
Practice Night -- Tuesday, June 28, 7 - 9 p.m.

My little thoughts on Shinran Minister's Message

In April and May, Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji will be having two annual celebrations. One is the Buddha's Day service or Hanamatsuri on April 3, and the other is Shinran Shonin's birthday service, or Gotane, on May 22.

Traditionally, at the Buddha's Day service, we set up a small altar, place a statue of baby Buddha in the center of the altar, and decorate the altar with colorful flowers. This altar indicates how he was born according to legend. The legend described the moment of his birth in the Lumbini garden; the garden became filled with flowers in bloom, and a heavenly dragon made sweet rain fall on him to celebrate his birth. Therefore, now during the Hanamatsuri service, we pour sweet tea on the statue of the baby Buddha, and the small altar is decorated with lovely flowers.



Susan Ng (left) and Tokie Yoneshige decorate the Hanamatsuri altar for the baby Buddha. (2014)

In contrast to the birth of the Buddha, I could find nothing remarkable or unique about Shinran's birth. Neither an elephant or a stork was involved in the birth of baby Shinran. The legend of Shinran only tells that he was born as the first boy in the Hino family circa 1173. As I compare these two births, it seems that Shakyamuni was made "superhuman-like" in character by his followers throughout the long history of Buddhism, and Shinran was not.

However, speaking for myself, there was a time while I was completing my ministerial coursework at Dobo University, that I deified Shinran, and looked upon him as a "Saint."

One day, while talking so excitedly about Shinran Shonin to Mrs. Tanimoto, a long-time member of my home temple in Chiba, I was very surprised by her observation of my enthusiasm. "Hiroko-chan, you must not just idolize Shinran to the skies. Pull him down and face him." Her words impacted me very deeply and remain with me even today.

At that time, I had spent one year studying only about Buddhism with people who had the same goal to become a minister. I was so focused on the academics of Buddhism. Even when I spoke with people who were not interested in Jodo Shin Shu, my conversation ended up talking about Shinran.

However, Mrs. Tanimoto's words stuck in my mind, and got me wondering why she had said that. Now, as I reflect upon that time I was just talking about Shinran Shonin's life according to what I learned through books. But I didn't see myself through the teachings. Shinran's teachings and I were completely apart. Mrs. Tanimoto noticed that my way of listening to the



Shinran Shonin

My little thoughts on Shinran

Continued from page 4

teachings was wrong and she said to me, “Hiroko-chan, you must not just idolize Shinran to the skies. Pull him down and face him.”

What she said was true. As long as I thought of Shinran as a special superhuman, or a “Saint” in the skies, I was going to stray from the true teachings that Shinran clarified in his life. It’s like the famous metaphor of looking at the finger that is pointing at the moon, instead of looking at the moon itself. In other words, I only worshipped him but I didn’t understand what he sought. Shinran might have said, “Don’t look at me! There’s not much to see. See the brightness that comes to embrace our existence!”

I understand better now Shinran’s journey to grasp the essence of Buddhism. Shinran trained at Mt. Hiei for 20 years. He and other ministers confined themselves at Mt. Hiei, and must have studied enormous sutras together. But after 20 years of training Shinran felt it was in vain. He gave up the practices and left the mountain. Thus, began a period of reflection and self-examination. He encountered his teacher, Honen, and the teachings of the Nembutsu. Under the guidance of Honen, Shinran finally looked through Honen and saw the brightness of the Nembutsu teachings that encompassed all human beings. I believe what made Shinran really deepen his understanding of the Nembutsu teachings was his severe experience living with people at the place of exile, Echigo.

Separated from family, temple and Honen, I believe Shinran was forced to apply the teachings in his daily life and interactions with people in the village. In the process, he finally faced Shakyamuni Buddha and all the teachers, not in the skies but in his daily life.

Soon, we will be observing the service for Shinran’s birth. On the occasion, we are here not only to celebrate Shinran’s birth; but we, each of us, with our face to the teachers, listen to the Buddha-dharma, learn about ourselves together as a Sangha, and respond to the deep wish of Life.

Gassho

Update

Nokotsudo News Column

Mary Matsuda
Nokotsudo Committee

With Jodo Shinshu Buddhist respect and care, the Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji offers interim care of cremains in its Nokotsudo for the families of its Gojikai members and also to non-Gojikai families, who, at the time of funeral services and shortly thereafter, may not be prepared to or have not determined the final interment of their loved one’s cremains.

Placing a loved one’s cremains in the temporary care of our Nokotsudo will provide the family time to make permanent arrangements. It is understandable that every family’s needs and wishes vary to determine final interment. Thus, we have established our Nokotsudo Guidelines to provide a compassionate pathway and support at a most difficult time. Your loved ones in our Nokotsudo will receive the care of not only our minister but also that of our Sangha.

A new benefit for active Gojikai members, is the ability to place up to two sets of cremains in our Nokotsudo if space is available. Gojikai membership is renewed annually in December.

The nicely renovated Nokotsudo is now protected by cabinets and has space to accommodate urns for temporary holding. Please call Reverend Maeda for information and arrangements if you are interested.

The Nokotsudo Committee members are Mary Matsuda, Rev. Hiroko Maeda and Jim Dote.

Doomo arigatou gozaimasu.

Hawaii Buddhist Council Buddha Day Service

in commemoration of the Buddha's Birth

Date: Sunday April 10, 2016

Time: 9:00 am

**Place: Higashi Hongwanji
Mission of Hawaii**

1685 Alaneo St. Honolulu, HI 96817

Speaker: Mrs. Chizuko Endo

Co-Founder of Taiko Center of the Pacific

Entertainments:

Japanese Court Music and Dance

Children's songs and performances

HBC Buddha Day Food Drive 2016

Let's help the Homeless/Houseless be able to say,
"Itadakimasu" and "Gochisosama deshita."

Please bring your donation to the Buddha Day Service. Recommended are non-perishable food items like canned goods, rice, spaghetti ingredients, pasta, corn-starch, cooking ingredient and so forth. Thank you for your dana.

***Light refreshments will be served.**

***Please call 522-9200 or 531-9088
for more information**

Hawaii Buddhist Council

1727 Pali Hwy, Honolulu, HI 96813

**Kaneohe Higashi members, please contact our temple
@ 247-2661 for a carpool ride.**



**Kaneohe Higashi
Hongwanji Mission**
45-520 Kealahala Road
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744
Phone: (808) 247-2661

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***Words** - Words are like little boxes packed with our own interpretations, prejudices, likes, views, experiences, etc. We assign meaning or value to words whether we know it. If words are little boxes, the spaces between these boxes are perhaps more important.*

Jonathan Tani

Temple Service & Activities Calendar

April 2016

- 2 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 3 Sun 9am Kaneohe Hanamatsuri Buddha Day Service, and Cinema @ Temple
- 6 Wed 10:30a "The Reading Circle" – (1 hour)
- 9 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 10 Sun 9am Hawaii Buddhist Council's Joint Hanamatsuri Service to be held at the Higashi Hongwanji Betsuin
- 16 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
10am Fukushima Meeting
- 17 Sun 9am Sunday Service Speaker Bishop Kawawata
10am Sangha Talk
- 19 Tue 7-8:30p Oko: Discussion Group @ Betsuin
- 20 Wed 10:30a "The Reading Circle" – (1 hour)
- 23 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 24 Sun 9am Sunday Service
- 29 Fri 9a – 4p Plant sale set-up
- 30 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
9a – 1p Plant sale

May 2016

- 1 Sun 9am Sunday Service
- 4 Wed 10:30a "The Reading Circle" – (1 hour)
- 7 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 8 Sun 9am Sunday Service
- 14 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 15 Sun 9am Sunday Service
- 17 Tue 7-8:30p Oko: Discussion Group @ Kaneohe
- 18 Wed 10:30a "The Reading Circle" – (1 hour)
- 21 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 22 Sun 9am Shinran Shonin's Birthday Service
Local Gathering, Rev. Fujimori guest spkr.
- 28 Sat 8:30am Flower Arrangement
- 29 Sun 9am Sunday Service Speaker Bishop Kawawata
10am Sangha Talk

Editor's note about our calendar: Because the Jushin is printed every 2 months, events and dates appearing on our calendar may change or might not be ready in time for our printing deadline. Please check our website for current information, or telephone our temple at 247-2661. Mahalo