

## Our life

*is filled with warmth in sharing life with others. It is a simple truth to learn, but a difficult practice to fully realize. In personal life, it means to act by placing ourselves in the position of another, and in community life, it means to give service with joy and gratitude for the betterment of all.*

SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA,  
Parinirvana Sutra

## Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji's Music Festival Success Helps Homeless Families with Children

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**Really Smooth Sounds** – (Top photo) Rev. Hideaki Nishihori presents a check to a grateful Holomua Na 'Ohana director Holly Holowach as her staff assistant Irobela Wreagh looks on. The check represents all the cash donations received the night of the August 20 Music Festival. (Lower photo) The temple's band, the Four Treasures play their “gig” in the elaborate stage and sound setup. Left is keyboardist Rev. Nishihori, vocalist Amy Yamashiro, guitarist Dominic Carlos, and violinist Pamela Verrey.



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Cloudy skies and passing rain showers did not dampen the high spirits and musical beats of four powerful bands and one soloist at the Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji's benefit Music Festival on August 18. Beach chairs, beach mats, and picnic blankets were spread out over the parking lot and the audience enjoyed three and a half hours of contemporary music. Once in a while, colorful umbrellas had to be popped open.

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## Music Festival

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The surprise was that the Music Festival attracted many young couples and young families to raise public awareness of homeless families with children. Another goal was to introduce our 94-year-old Buddhist temple to a much younger generation and varied demographic not usually aware of Buddhist temples.

The Holomua Na 'Ohana - Weinberg Village Waimanalo, a successful Windward transitional housing program for families with minor children, was the sole recipient of the proceeds from audience at the Music Festival.

Despite the occasional passing rains, the audience generously poured their support after hearing how the program changes lives from Holly Holowach, director of Holomua Na 'Ohana.

Holowach said about \$1,100 was

raised during the one-evening Festival, a truly awesome response to help families with children who have made a firm commitment to transition back into "homefulness."

*"It is so appreciated, and the music festival was so much fun."* **Holly Holowach, Holomua Na 'Ohana**

The Festival featured popular local reggae, blues and jazz groups and the temple's own four-musician band. All musicians graciously donated their talents to play their sets without remuneration to benefit deserving families with children at Honomua's transitional housing.

"It is so appreciated, and the music festival was so much fun. The musicians were great, the guests were great, and your volunteers worked hard. We and the people (audience) had a lot of fun!" exclaimed Holly Holowach.

"We have never had a fundraising concert or music festival event held just for us like you did. And your volunteers worked hard, so appreciated!" she added.

The dynamic master of ceremony, Jeff Kino, was assisted by temple member Paul Briggs. While bands were playing, Kino walked through the crowd and took to his social media sites inviting followers to come to the festival, giving live audio and video feeds in real-time!

Adding to the night's excitement, generous donated giveaways such as gift cards, children's gift bags, and a virtual reality headset, were called by MC Keno. The lively music of the

*Article continued on page 7  
Festival photos on page 6*

## Please Attend Our Special Kaneohe Higashi Ho-on-ko on October 28

You and your families are cordially invited to attend our Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji's Ho-on-ko Service on Sunday, October 28.

Our special guest speaker will be Rev. Joshin Kamuro of the Honolulu Honpa Hongwanji Betsuin. There will also be a live concert by the Dharma Hawaiians ukulele troupe during the service as well. This fantastic troupe is none other than players from Higashi's Betsuin and Kaneohe temples and recently played with Peter Hata formerly of the Los Angeles rock group, Hiroshima. The service will start at 10AM and please join us in fellowship after the service.

Rev. Joshin Kamuro is from Kumamoto, Japan. He graduated from Ryukoku University with a Bachelor's Degree in Shin Buddhist Studies in 2001, then worked at the EKO-House of Japanese Culture, a division of Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism) in Düsseldorf, Germany from 2001 to 2006. He returned to Japan in 2007 and completed his Doctoral Program in Shin Buddhist Studies in 2014 from Ryukoku University. He and his wife, Minako, have a young son. He was assigned to the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin since December 16, 2015.



*Photo courtesy of Rev. Kamuro*  
**Rev. Joshin Kamuro**

## Why Do We Observe Hoonko?

Ho-on-ko is the memorial service of Shinran Shonin observed by the Higashi Hongwanji (Shinshu Otani-Ha) denomination, of which, the Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji is a part of.

Shin Buddhists gather on this observance to express our appreciation to Shinran for showing us the teaching of Nembutsu. Traditionally and currently in Japan, Otani-Ha temples observe the date of Shinran's passing, November 28. In Hawaii, the five Higashi temples - Waimea, Betsuin (Honolulu), Palolo, Hilo and Kaneohe - spread out their Ho-on-ko services to reflect community scheduling.

Shinran is viewed as the founder of our denomination. He entered a Tendai monastery at the age of nine but left after 20 years. He joined the Sangha established by Honen Shonin who became his teacher of the Nembutsu or Pure Land path of Buddhism.

Kaneohe Higashi Study Series

## Everything is Suffering

By Rev. Hideaki Nishihori

*How's it going, folks??*

*Today's theme is "Everything is suffering. Everything doesn't go as we desire."*

You may think, "I don't think so, not everything is suffering. I sometimes have a happy feeling." Yes, you are right. We sometimes have happy times, and not everything seems to be suffering. "Everything is suffering" means that things cannot happen as you desire. I would say "Everything could be the cause of sufferings."

You know, a happy feeling does not continue, right? I sometimes feel happy, but it doesn't last. It becomes ordinary because we take it for granted. If we cling too much to happiness in general, then it will be our suffering. We are suffering, trying to be happy.

The good thing is that a sad feeling doesn't continue, too. When you have trouble or a shocking event, you might feel "Oh no, it's the end of the world!" I think everyone has this kind of experience where we feel this sad and painful emotion will last forever.

But this is not truth, as you know. These emotions which seem to continue forever do not actually last. It's a good thing for us, but remember that a happy feeling also doesn't continue. We cannot control our emotions. We can't handle feelings as we might

*"...to know that we cannot control things as we desire actually makes us feel relieved, in a true Shin Buddhist way"*

desire. If I could control my feelings, I would keep my emotion happy all the time. But it's impossible, right? I always say, if we try to get rid of unhappy feelings, then we suffer more.

Our own body, too. We cannot avoid becoming old and sick. And we will die someday. It is a good thing that civilization has been developing and medical treatment is so advanced that many people recover from sickness or injuries. But as you know, there are still many problems and life-and-death decisions to weigh in the medical field. I wonder if longevity is a really a good thing or not because longevity isn't necessarily related to a person's true happiness. Anyway, we all age, become sick, and die. Since the first form of life appeared on the earth, the death rate of all living things has been 100%. We die when we die. I'm not saying, "Don't go to a doctor! Or, don't do anything to be happy!" Please go to see a doctor when you need. Please do whatever you feel (within reason) makes you happy.

However, we have a finite time in life and we should be aware that in reality we cannot control anything. To know that we cannot control things as we desire actually makes us feel relieved, in a true Shin Buddhist way. Including unhappy feelings or events, I guess we can live our life fully.

*See ya!*

## Wassup? (What's Up?)

### New Monthly Temple Yard Clean-Up October 14, Nov. 11

The temple board has decided to have monthly clean-ups of our many yard areas. If you've seen the makai-side of the temple from the street you'll agree that cleaning is needed! There will be regular Sunday service at 9am. But come dressed to do gardening. Bring your gloves, hat, sunscreen and gardening tools.



### Omigaki Polishing October 21, No Sunday Service

Sensei Nishihori has set October 21 for fall Omigaki cleaning of altar ornaments. This omigaki is important because it comes just before our Ho-on-ko honoring Shinran, and before the New Year. We are using a dipping method so no gritty polishing with toothbrushes!!! Yay!

## A Discourse on the Tannisho's Prelude



### What is the Tannisho?

*It is a serious work of 18 sections written by one of Shinran's close disciples 30 years after his master's passing. It was written to cease differing interpretations of that time concerning Shinran's true words. Today it is a much referred-to work. If you are interested in learning further, please feel free to attend our Sunday services!*

Recently at Sunday services I have been talking about "Tannisho." Have you ever read the Tannisho? I think this scripture is the easiest to read of all the scriptures in our denomination. Knowledge of this scripture is quite common in Japan, and is so well-known that it used to be printed in school text books. Many people have been influenced by this scripture, and there are works, such as novels and dramas, that were based upon this.

This scripture was not written by our founder Shinran Shonin. It is believed that one of Shinran's disciples, Yuien, wrote this scripture presumably around 1300, approximately 30 years after Shinran died, remembering what Shinran had taught him.

In Japanese, Tannisho is written like this, 歎異抄. Translated into English, its title is "A Record in Lament of Divergences." Tannisho was relatively unknown to the population for around 200 years. However, the eighth abbot Rennyō Shōnin (1415-1499) added his notes to the text, as translated: "This sacred writing is an important scripture in our tradition. It should not be indiscriminately shown to any who lack past karmic good."

Probably, Rennyō Shōnin thought that this scripture could cause misunderstandings if people who read it were not prepared to understand it. As I always say, words or language can cause miscomprehension, depending on the person, situation, or time. Tannisho was not in Shinran's handwriting, was written decades after his death in a language style of 1300s Japan, and retranslated into modern English which may have affected its original meaning.

What's more, I interpreted this scripture (in 2018) in order to compose this Dharma discourse. So, my interpretation includes my point of view. Please take all these into account and let's try reading it. I used the English translation by Honpa Hongwanji. This scripture has 18 chapters plus the preface and epilogue. For this issue, we are going to examine only the preface.

### Tannisho Preface (as translated):

*"As I humbly reflect on the past [when the late master was alive] and the present in my foolish mind, I cannot but lament the divergences from the true shinjin that he conveyed by speaking to us directly, and I fear there are doubts and confusions in the way followers receive and transmit the teaching. For how is entrance into the single gate of easy practice possible unless we happily come to rely on a true teacher whom conditions bring us to encounter? Let there be not the slightest distortion of the teaching of Other Power with words of an understanding based on personal views.*

*Here, then, I set down in small part the words spoken by the late Shinran Shōnin that remain deep in my mind, solely to disperse the doubts of fellow practitioners."*

**Discussion:** After Shinran Shōnin died, his disciples interpreted and spread Shinran's teaching differently. It was much the same situation as after Shakyamuni Buddha's death. So, Yuien lamented about this and

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# Tannisho's Prelude

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authored this scripture for the next generations. Even while Shinran was alive, his son, Zenran, interpreted Shinran's teaching incorrectly and was disowned by Shinran.

Still now, we find some groups which claim that they are the true successors of Shin Buddhism. However, Yuien's true purpose to write the Tannisho possibly was not for condemning others, but rather for us who would otherwise naturally claim ourselves to be right and judge others to be wrong. So, Yuien supposedly wrote this for himself, too. Buddhism always teaches us about ourselves.

**Preface:** "For how is entrance into the single gate of easy practice possible unless we happily come to rely on a true teacher whom conditions bring us to encounter?"

**Discussion:** Yuien encountered Shinran. Thus, Yuien was able to understand the teaching and was liberated. Much earlier, Shinran encountered Honen. Much like Yuien and Shinran did, I guess we need our teachers to be guided. Although I didn't have encounters like they had, I can think of some reverends who actually did guide me. I didn't realize that they were my teachers when I had talks with them, but when I look back, I am convinced that they really are my teachers. The former minister of our temple, Rev. Kenshin Ise, is one of them. However, I maintain that anyone can be our teacher. Our teacher could even be someone whom we don't like the most.

**Preface:** "Let there be not the slightest distortion of the teaching of Other Power with words of an understanding based on personal views."

**Discussion:** We have our own views and measures. If I assume that my measurement is right, then it could mean others' measurements are wrong. This is the basic cause of conflicts. Buddha's truth surpasses the duality of "right and wrong" or "good and bad" in our understanding of things on a daily basis. Buddhism teaches us that if we always take any life events as "good or bad," we will suffer.

For example, this year, 2018, I have had many troubles and sufferings. Perhaps, you or loved ones have, too. Of course, I don't want any sufferings anymore. But through these troubles and sufferings, I learned many things. There is no 100% good or 100% bad thing in life. Further, if we view or apply the teaching with our selfish understanding, then that will cause sufferings to others and ourselves. That's why we need to listen to the Dharma continuously. If one thinks that he or she understands the Dharma completely, then that's already a misunderstanding.

**Preface:** "Here, then, I set down in small part the words spoken by the late Shinran Shonin that remain deep in my mind, solely to disperse the doubts of fellow practitioners."

**Discussion:** At this point, I want to instead introduce you to a translation from the Buddhist Study Center in Honolulu. "*Thus I have committed to writing some words of the late Shinran which still ring clearly in my ears.*"

I think this translation is closer to the original passage in the prelude because it mentions the word "ears" for listening. Our denomination puts emphasis on listening because listening is the easiest thing for us to do. (However, at the same time, listening truly is the most difficult thing.) Even if we cannot concentrate on what teachers say, important things will remain in our minds. Even if we fall asleep, actually our ears and minds are still listening. In Japan, I often fell asleep while I was listening to a Dharma talk, but somehow, some words echoed in my ear, and I woke up to write them down, and then fell asleep again.

Today, I just introduced the preface of Tannisho. If you are interested, let's read this scripture together at our Sunday Services.



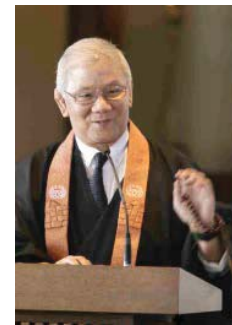
**Rev. Yul Otani and Mrs. Ayako Otani Visit Kaneohe Temple** – On Friday September 13, Rev and Mrs. Otani paid a courtesy visit. In the group photo above, left to right are: Bishop Ken Kawawata, Rev. Nishihori, Rev. Yul Otani, Mrs. Ayako Otani, Dennis Kajiura, Rev. Takanaru Suwa, Karen Hayashida, Stan Sato and Gladys Sakata. The Otanis listened to Rev. Nishihori play a jazzy piano rendition of Ondokusen. They were amazed and delighted at the colorful, tropical flowers on the dais and altar. Most of the flowers used over the past 18 months were grown by “green thumbs” board member Stan Sato. Our beautiful flower arrangements have been artfully done by Gladys Sakata, Harriet Yamada, Susan Ng and Rev. Nishihori.

## An Introspective Ho-on-ko at Betsuin With Rev. Peter Hata

By Jim Dote

The Higashi Hongwanji Hawaii District held its 2018 Ho-on-ko Gathering and Service on September 15 and 16 at the main temple on Alaneo Street. The guest speaker and lecturer was Rev. Peter Hata, minister at the Los Angeles Betsuin Higashi Hongwanji.

Rev. Hata led the all-afternoon discussion on the 15th, and gave the Dharma Talk at the service on the 16th. The Hawaii District was indeed honored to have Associate Abbot Yul Otani from Honzan as this year’s Ho-on-ko officiant.



**Rev. Peter Hata**

Rev. Hata began the lecture with “when I think of joy, I think about TV commercials trying to ‘sell us’ shiny new things. However, Shinran described the deepest joy as hongan. Ji means a temple. Thus, our temple’s name, honganji, means temple of innermost aspiration.”

Rev. Hata, who was born and raised in the United States and who is a Sansei (third generation) said, “Shin Buddhists in the West have a particular challenge to understand and express the Nembutsu in a modern way, in modern thought and language. Buddhism has migrated so far, so long, over many countries, cultures and time from its origins in India. Only 100 years ago did it come to Hawaii and the US. As Dr. Nobuo Haneda warns us, we can’t leave Buddhism in that ‘Japanese container.’ Fortunately, today many works, authors and musicians publish (Buddhist thoughts) in a modern language.” Hata’s comment was thought-provoking because so often we are accustomed to be listening to a “Japan point of view.” By this I mean Hawaii today may be seen by some as stuck in a time warp of a Japan in the late 1800s when the first immigrants came to Hawaii.

Rev. Hata easily guided the participants through 160 minutes of discussion on impermanence, interdependencies, duality, shinjin, dukkha (suffering) and much more.

### Music Festival Mini Album



**Good Vibrations** – The Music Festival transformed our parking lot into a concert venue complete with elevated stage, canopy, professional sound, and lighting - all for a worthy cause. All musicians donated their talent to help the children of homeless families in the Holomua Na’Ohana Weinberg Village Waimanalo.



**Service With Smiles** – The “army” in red T-shirts represents the energetic and tireless food concession volunteers of the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce. We are very grateful for their help. This is the eighth year they have volunteered for our Bon Dance and first for our Music Festival. Candidates and festival volunteers Scot Matayoshi and Lisa Akagi-Kitagawa, both representing Windward Oahu for State Representative districts, stand among the junior chamber volunteers in the dark happi coats.

## Temple Service & Activities Calendar

October				November			
7	Sun	9am	Perpetual Memorial Service	4	Sun	9am	Sunday Service
14	Sun	9am	Sunday Service Yard Cleaning Day	7	Wed		Ann Pearl Care Facility Visitation
16	Tue	3pm	Okō at Betsuin	11	Sun	9am	Sunday Service Yard Cleaning Day
17	Wed		Ann Pearl Care Facility Visitation	18	Sun		No Kaneohe Service – Palolo Hoonko <i>Let's carpool and attend Hoonko service at Palolo Hongwanji</i> <i>RSVP in advance is appreciated.</i>
21	Sun	9am	No Sunday Service, Omigaki and Board Meeting to Follow	20	Tue	3pm	Okō at Kaneohe
28	Sun	10am	<b>Hoonko Service at Kaneohe</b> Guest Speaker, Rev. Joshin Kamuro Concert by Dharma Hawaiians	21	Wed		Ann Pearl Care Facility Visitation
30	Tue		Hale Nani Care Facility Visitation	25	Sun	9am	Sunday Service
				27	Tue		Hale Nani Care Facility Visitation

## Music Festival

*Continued from page 2*

band Ten Feet spontaneously made several children, then joined by other children, stand up to dance to their music. Adults began singing and clapping their hands as well.

The concept of a Buddhist temple

hosting a music festival of contemporary “rock/reggae/jazz music” for another nonprofit, was a new concept. Local media too liked the novel concept when a board member pitched it to them for publicity. We got media placements on KIKU TV, days of free public service announcements on KSSK and other iHeart Radio

stations, a MidWeek magazine article, about 20 minutes on KZOO radio, and print + online photo coverage on the Honolulu StarAdvertiser.

The temple transmitted all donations to Holomua Na 'Ohana and did not offset any operational and equipment expenses from the donations.

## Music Festival Acknowledgments

**Editor's Note:** *The Kaneohe Higashi Hongwanji gratefully acknowledges the tremendous talents and dana of the many persons listed below to produce and perform at the benefit Music Festival. Without their untiring help and support the benefit festival could not have been successful.*

**Musicians (all performing at no charge):** Philip Strauss; Two Shades of Blue-Melody Heidel, Dale Machado; Ten Feet-Josiah Kekoa, Andres Delos Santos, Ericson Carnate, Nathan Martin, Joel Irei; City Boys-Ulima “Brandon” Luamanu, Puka Tatupu, Salesi Fitia-Atkins; Four Treasures- Rev. Aki Nishihori, Amy Yamashiro, Dominic Carlos, Pamela Verrey.

**Media Contributors (media coverage at no charge):** Phyllis Kihara-KIKU TV, Faye Shigemura-United Japanese Society and KZOO Radio, Brandon Miyagi-StarAdvertiser print and on-line photo essay coverage, Paige Takeya-Windward Oahu VOICE print news coverage, Rachel Nagata iHeart Media-radio public service announcements, Leah Kihara-Akamine-videographer.

**Music Festival Volunteers and Door Prize Donors:** Stan Sato, Josiah Kekoa, Susan and Julian Ng, Karen Hayashida, Wendy Tachikawa, Cheryl and Terry Tyler, June Takeno, Gladys Sakata, Harriet Yamada, Dennis Kajiura, Leighton Sakamoto, Thomas Fujimoto, Liane and Paul Briggs, CharlAnn Nakamoto, Rev. Hideaki Nishihori, Rev. Hidesato Kita, Michael Kimura, Jane Sasabuchi, Craig Kagawa, Light Ruth, Jeanne Kawawata, Margaret Hamachi, Carl Okuda, Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce volunteers, JoAnn Miyashiro, Patricia Torres, Bart Kihara Makule Club, Scot Matayoshi and Friends of Scot Matayoshi, Lisa Akagi-Kitagawa and Friends of Lisa Kitagawa volunteers, Sandra Kawate, Holly Holowach, Irobela Wreagh, Jim Dote.