

Kalyana Mitra

“Good Friend”

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*Windward Buddhist Temple
268-A Kuulei Road
Kailua, HI 96734
Phone: 262-4560*

April 2020

Kailua Hongwanji Mission is doing business as Windward Buddhist Temple

Hanamatsuri

*We show our deepest respect to Shakyamuni Buddha,
the founder of Buddhism, on this day of his glorious birth.
May we all realize the meaning and purpose of his appearance
in this world, so that we may understand and believe
in what he has taught.
Namo Amida Butsu*

Hanamatsuri, or Flower Festival, is generally celebrated on April 8, commemorating the birth of Siddhartha Gautama. Siddhartha became enlightened as Shakyamuni Buddha, marking the release of sentient beings from suffering and sorrow.

It is the season to reflect on what Buddha and Buddhism mean in our modern world. The stories of the birth of the Buddha are fantastic, but as Al Bloom once said, “Are no more fantastic than the virgin birth story.” Every religious tradition is replete with myths, legends and stories that will “blow your mind.” An important teaching of the Buddha is that of interdependency of all things, that our birth is the result of many causes and conditions. When we realize this, that our birth is truly a rare and wonderful gift, and when we understand our own transient nature, we will then live our life in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha. Hanamatsuri is a time for us to show our gratitude to the precious Pure Land teachings bequeathed to us and re-dedicate ourselves as we contemplate the birth of our spiritual guide and teacher, Shakyamuni Buddha.

As we pour sweet tea over the statue of the baby Buddha symbolizing the sweet rains that is said to have come down from the heavens when the Buddha was born, it serves as an expression of our gratitude to the Dharma that we are able to encounter by this birth, giving us the opportunity to receive the Buddha’s Wisdom and Compassion.

By journeying out of ego-centricity Siddhartha was eventually able to achieve enlightenment and become Shakyamuni Buddha. This is the reality that Amida is trying to get us to realize by reaching out to us as the Nembutsu. If you look closely at the statue of Amida in the Gokuden, it is not standing merely straight up, but is leaning forward, constantly reaching out to us, to come, come as you are, just as you are, *sono mama*. Let us together through the Nembutsu teachings continue to pursue that same truth to true peace and harmony to make this Hanamatsuri year a truly meaningful one.

Shinran Shonin, who read and understood the Larger Sutra wrote in his *Shoshinge*:

*“Shakyamuni Tathagata appeared in this world
solely to teach the oceanlike Primal Vow of Amida;
We, an ocean of beings in an evil age of five defilements,
should entrust ourselves to the Tathagata’s words of truth.”*

Namo Amida Butsu

Rev. Bert Sumikawa



April 2020

**NO Services, Meetings or Activities at Windward Buddhist Temple until May 15, 2020.
Please see related article on the back cover of this newsletter.**

LIVE STREAMING INVITATION FROM HEADQUARTERS

Dear Family and Friends of the Hongwanji Sangha,

We received the memo from Bishop regarding COVID-19, directing that all temples to operate on a very limited basis providing only essential religious services until May 15, 2020. Especially during this time of uncertainty, we must not forget that we are all connected to each other and moving forward together. Receiving this request from Bishop Matsumoto, the State Ministers' Association endeavors to find new ways to keep sharing the Dharma. As a result, we would like to introduce **Live Streaming of Sunday Services through the Hongwanji YouTube channel and HHMH website.** (Videos will be available live as well as later on demand.) Please access the link below:

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDuOZdicW9mWq-DNlf19Pyg>

Or the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii website
<https://hongwanjihawaii.com/>



The schedule of speakers is as follows:

3/22	10AM	Bishop Eric Matsumoto (HQ)
3/29	10AM	Rev. Kazunori Takahashi (HQ)
4/5	10AM	Rev. Jeffrey Soga (Waipahu Hongwanji & Waianae Hongwanji)
4/12	10AM	Rev. David Fujimoto (Mililani Hongwanji & Ewa Hongwanji)
4/19	10AM	Rev. Shawn Yagi (Aiea Hongwanji)
4/26	10AM	Rev. Kojun Hashimoto (Wahiawa Hongwanji & Waialua Hongwanji)
5/3	10AM	Rev. Sol Kalu (Hawaii Betsuin)
5/10	10AM	Rimban Toyokazu Hagio (Hawaii Betsuin)

(Speakers are subject to change)

Please visit our YouTube channel and subscribe to it to continue receiving updates and notifications of new videos!

As the light of a small candle will spread from one to another in succession, so the light of Buddha's compassion will pass on from one mind to another endlessly. (The Teaching of Buddha) In this time of difficulty, let's try to help each other and not forget that we are all embraced by the Great Compassion.

Special Appreciation to Bishop Matsumoto, Rev. Takahashi, Rev. Kiyohara, Rev. Hironaka, and Mr. Atcheson
And to All Speakers: Bishop Matsumoto, Rev. Takahashi, Rev. Soga, Rev. Fujimoto, Rev. Yagi, Rev. Hashimoto, Rev. Kalu, and Rimban Hagio

In Gassho,
Yuika Hasebe

Living in a Troubled World

*Although I too am within Amida's grasp,
Passions obstruct my eyes and I cannot see him;
Nevertheless, great compassion is untiring and illuminates me always.
---Shinran Shonin*

We are in the midst of a health crisis, that of the COVID-19 virus affecting our population that has been declared a pandemic by the president of the United States of America. This pandemic has caused much anxiety, and really teaches us the true human condition we share with one another. People are lined up in the big box stores buying as much toilet paper as they can, often reminding us of a “feeding frenzy” exhibited by sharks and other animals. People are hoarding many items that sustain their lives, even to the extent of skirmishes over products, taking items out of someone’s shopping baskets and placing them in their own carts. It has been reported that “entrepreneurs” are buying hand sanitizers and re-selling them at higher prices.

It is a sad state that we are all going through, but it gives us an opportunity nevertheless to learn from all of this, to learn the Buddhist teachings. For all of us trapped in anger, fear, or hopelessness, let us remember the reality of the Buddha’s First Noble Truth: Life is suffering, and through that we can become aware that our experience is the first step in coming to peace and understanding.

I read somewhere that we are all prisoners of life and death. But the question is, what kind of prisoners do we want to be? We have an opportunity here to access the human spirit, that of loving kindness to all beings. When the happiness of others is our happiness, and their sadness our sadness, it is called the heart of compassion. We should all try to live a life of *metta* each day of our lives as we encounter this pandemic. We realize from the teachings of Buddhism that we are all surrounded by the mythical Indra’s Net, that each is as valuable as the next, and that each of us are surrounded by Amida Buddha’s Boundless and Infinite Compassion.

Shinran Shonin teaches us that we are always within the Buddha’s grasp, no matter where we may be or what condition we are living in. Though we now live in this world of uncertainty, we understand that that the Teachings makes us realize that we are in the constant grasp of the Oneness of life. As Rennyō Shonin wrote in the Letter on White Ashes, “Impermanence in this world creates a condition of uncertainty for all. So, we should all take heart the true nature of this world and live a life of deep reflection guided by All-inclusive Wisdom and All-embracing Compassion.”

Let us therefore continue to live our lives exhibiting loving kindness and compassion to others, while taking the time to being careful with our own health and well-being. It is a time to continue following the guidance of the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and the government for the benefit of all of us. May we all live in safety and well-being.

Namo Amida Butsu

Rev. Bert Sumikawa



Project Dana provides many services to our kupuna from transportation, home visits, shopping and fall prevention assessments. Our services vary and many times a volunteer’s services provides time away from the kupuna for the caregiver to do their “own” thing. A caregiver who gives so much of their time and energy oftentimes is overlooked and could end up becoming depressed or even ill. To help prevent this from happening, Project Dana has a monthly “Caring for the Caregiver Support Group” (CGSG). The group sessions provide education, training and counseling to help alleviate the stress that comes with their caregiving

responsibilities. For more information on either of the two support group locations please contact Maria Morales, the CGSG coordinator at the Project Dana office, 945-3736. ----- Jean Fukumoto

Activities Cor

Inter-Generational Activity will resume when temple operations begin.

Butterflies



March

Activity:

Spring



☸ *Mahalo* ☸

for your kind monetary donations

Bob & Joyce Nishita in memory of Aiko Nishita

Keiji & Janet Kukino in memory of Matsuzaemon Kukino

Keith, Lisa, Wyatt & Emma, Margaret & Carl Fujikawa in memory of Herbert & Betty Imai

Family of Jean Hatsue Higa – Funeral and Inurnment Service

Leslie & Joanne Yamamoto in memory of Takuichi Hiramoto

Rhea Alexander McWilliams III

Gary & Susan Morita

Naomi Kaneko for Grandma Mitsue's birthday
In memory of Akiko Sumikawa
14 donations for Spring Ohigan



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE



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March 2020



Do not be overwhelmed by fear and isolation! Go to the Buddha-Dharma for Guidance and Assurance!

As we, as individuals, our families, our local communities, our Nation, and the World grapple with COVID-19, let us, affirmatively and positively, do what we can to help curb its spread and the suffering caused by it. Please keep yourselves updated on the recommendations and advisories that are being issued by governmental and health care agencies which are trying their very best in battling the Coronavirus, but they need our help too.

In this respect, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii has directed all its temples and affiliated organizations connected with HHMH to, for the time being as much as possible, curtail temple services and activities which require people to gather, out of consideration for the health and well-being of one and all, but especially our elderly who comprise a large portion of our membership for the greater cause of stopping the spread of the Coronavirus. May we avail ourselves to the Wisdom of the Dharma and keep in mind the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of all people and all things. What we each do matters for all of us!

However, the battle being fought is not only external. There is also an internal battle or struggle that we should be aware of that is also taking place. This battle/struggle is also complex. For any living being, self-preservation is a basic instinct, but being a human being, we also have the ability to live not only by instinct, but also by reason and learned and/or nurtured behaviors. As we think of our own health, let us also consider the well-being of others. Though it may be challenging for me as a (bonbu) "spiritually, foolish being" let us think of how we might be able to mutually benefit and help each other especially in these difficult times. Let us be motivated by our gratitude for the Unconditional Compassion of Amida Buddha. Please remember that Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light, no matter where we are is always with us! Thus, it is said that, this is why this Buddha's name is "Amida," who "embraces never to forsake." So, please do not feel and think you are all alone. The Buddha, as Namo Amida Butsu [The-Buddha's-Name-Which-Calls-Us (to entrust)], is always with us at every moment!

As I offer my well-wishes to you and offer my condolences to those who have lost dear family members and friends, may I finally share that Wisdom guides Compassion and Compassion fulfills Wisdom. In these challenging times, may we go to the Wisdom and Compassion of Enlightenment for guidance and assurance. Namo Amida Buddha/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion [The-Buddha's-Name-Which-I-Call (in gratitude.)]

In gassho,

Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

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Permit No. 118

Windward Buddhist Temple Suspends Activities

Effective March 16 through May 15, 2020, the use of the temple for religious services, activities and meetings is suspended as a way to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Updates on when temple use will resume will be available on:

- temple website: www.windwardbuddhisttemple.org.
- facebook.com/windwardbuddhisttemple
- Instagram: windwardbuddhisttemple
- telephone: (808)262-4560

During this time Sunday services, Monday meditation, tai-chi, ikebana and Japanese classes are cancelled. Adult Dharma Class will be cancelled until further notice.

Please use this opportunity to check out the WBT websites and the websites of our various Hongwanji temples to hear recorded Dharma talks, read Dharma messages and read books on Shin Buddhism. This event provides us many opportunities to realize the Buddha's teaching of impermanence, interdependency, and compassion as we all help each other through this global pandemic. Please follow the CDC guidelines and keep each other safe.

NOTE: Rev. Sumikawa is available by cell phone (492-7254) for religious questions or bedside services or consultations.