

Kalyana Mitra

“Good Friend”

*A Monthly Publication
Volume 53 Issue 1*



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

January 2021

Kailua Hongwanji Mission is doing business as Windward Buddhist Temple

Reflections for the New Year



Happy New Year!

We welcome the year 2021 with renewed hope for better times. We have made it through a very difficult year due to the world-wide pandemic brought on by Covid-19. It has been a difficult year trying to maintain social distancing from each other, as well as wearing masks that are not exactly comfortable. In the past I found it odd whenever I saw Japanese visitors to our islands wearing masks. It was uncommon here in the U.S., but now, mask wearing has become second nature.

The end of the pandemic is in sight with the coming of COVID-19 vaccines. (By the time you read this newsletter, some of the healthcare workers and first responders would have already been vaccinated and the rest of the population will have access to it in due time.)

We have just celebrated Bodhi Day, when we honor and remember the Great Awakening of Siddhartha and when he became the Shakyamuni Buddha. The Buddha through his enlightenment taught us the truth of interdependence and that of impermanence. Through his teaching we realize that everything in this universe is impermanent - that everything changes. As we celebrate the coming of a New Year, this Great Compassion helps us cope with the problems in our political world and the pandemic that has “plagued” us this past year. We must then, respond to the call of the Buddha, with deep gratitude for his benevolence.

In years past temples have held late evening New Years’ Eve services where the attendees would take turns in striking the temple bell at midnight or close to it. The bell was struck 108 times, symbolically relieving ourselves of the 108 evil passions of human nature. In Jodo Shinshu, the temple bell is struck on New Year’s Eve, to express our true appreciation and gratitude to Amida Buddha for the Great Wisdom and Compassion bestowed on us, and the guidance provided through Infinite Light and Infinite Life.

During the waning days of the Holiday Season, let us think of all the gifts that we received this year and are continuing to receive, especially the gift of life itself. Let us realize the true nature of the interdependence we have with one another, with our pets and with nature itself, even with those we dislike, for we learn valuable life’s lesson from all. May we have peace in our hearts not only at this time of the year, but throughout our lives as well.

Namu Amida Butsu.

Rev. Bert Sumikawa



January 2021



Although there are NO in-person services being held at Windward Buddhist Temple, we invite everyone to Sunday Services that begin at 9:00 a.m. and are accessible via:

- 1) Windward Buddhist Temple website: www.windwardbuddhisttemple.org
(or Google Windward Buddhist Temple)
- 2) YouTube: tinyurl.com/watchWBT
- 3) FaceBook: facebook.com/windwardbuddhisttemple

Date	Service/Speaker
3	Intergenerational Sunday - Rev. Bert Sumikawa
10	Family Service - Neil Yamamoto
17	Ho'onko (Shinran's Memorial Service) – Rev. David Nakamoto
24	Monthly Remembrance Service - Rev. Bert Sumikawa If you'd like to remember a loved one who passed away in the <u>month of January (of any year)</u> , you will be given the opportunity to do so during this service. Please email the person's name and photo, if available, to Rev. Sumikawa at bertsumi@gmail.com OR mail the information and photo (optional) to Rev. Sumikawa at Windward Buddhist Temple 268-A Kuulei Rd. Kailua, HI 96734 by Sunday, January 17, 2021)
31	Family Service – Dennis Tashiro

President's Message

It is a new year! We enter 2021 with hope that we will soon see the end of the pandemic as the people in the United States and other countries begin to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Many have worked tirelessly to develop the vaccine in such a short time should receive as much thanks as those on the front line of treatment. As was mentioned many times, we are at war with the virus and it seems that support and true relief are in sight for those affected by the virus and for those fighting the battle. I am so grateful! Namo Amida Butsu.

We will continue to follow the government guidance until such time when we are given the green light to reopen our temple. I am sure that many of you want to be assured that the situation is truly moving in the right direction before gathering in large groups. Therefore, we will continue to provide Sunday services online as well as Buddhist education using Zoom and share information of education provided by other Buddhist organizations.

Rev. Sumikawa is available for religious services by contacting him at (808) 492-7254. He will provide these services while following the current government guidance.

Let us continue to keep ourselves safe and be patient as we move toward reopening the temple in 2021. Happy New Year!

--- Prudence Kusano, WBT President



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

1727 Pali Highway, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 522-9200 Fax: (808) 522-9209

Web: www.hongwanjihawaii.com Email: hqs@honpahi.org



DECEMBER 2020

Let's Persevere!

Bishop Eric Matsumoto



In "The Teaching of Buddha," published by BDK, it states "*Endurance (perseverance) is one of the most difficult disciplines, but it is to him (her) who endures that the final victory comes.*" As I think about it, the word or virtue for December might be "perseverance."

First and foremost, in light of our situation with the COVID-19 Pandemic with possibility of two vaccines being administered, we must continue to be diligent and persevere a little while longer. Let us not let our guard down now because vaccines have been approved. It will take time for the vaccines to take effect around the world. In a way, this might be one of the most difficult periods in that because we have such hope and the probability of improving the situation is so high and close, we relax and let our guard down too soon and that could prove to be disastrous. It would be a disaster on top of a disaster. We must persevere to the very end! Only then, can we say we have truly persevered.

As we gratefully celebrate Bodhi Day (December 8th), if the former Prince Siddhartha Gautama had not persevered to the very end to overcome anger, greed and ignorance, we would not be observing Bodhi Day every December and there would be no Buddhism in tangible form in our world. Also, if our Jodo Shinshu predecessors of 800 years ago did not persevere in pursuing the Nembutsu Teachings from Shinran Shonin, as we find in the Tannisho, "*Each of you has come to see me, crossing the borders of more than ten provinces at the risk of your life, solely with the intent of asking about the path to birth in the land of bliss,*" we, today, might not have been able to hear these wonderful teachings too. Even right here in Hawaii, we have people like the late Chiyono Sasaki of Kona who persevered and did not give up and thus experienced a joyous awakening of untold joy and gratitude. In the words of Rev. Muneto (taken from "Dharma Treasures, Spiritual Insights from Hawaii's Shin Buddhist Pioneers") "*When the conscious effort of a nembutsu practitioner to grasp shinjin is dropped by appreciating the work of true compassion (Amida Buddha), the person begins to walk on the path of unobstructed freedom.*"

However, what is interesting to note is that whether it be Sakyamuni Buddha or the countless Jodo Shinshu followers, they all give credit to others and not to themselves. Similarly, in our perseverance to keep practicing good hygiene and safety measures into 2021, let us do so in gratitude to medical experts and healthcare professionals, and essential workers who at the risk of their own lives with incredible strength and fortitude are caring for and trying to protect us. If we don't do it for ourselves, let's do it to honor them out of gratitude. As you know this is the theme of the "Mahalo Video Series" found on the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii YouTube Channel. Our healthcare professionals are doing so much, but it is unrealistic for us to assume that they can continue at this pace forever. As a community, as a nation, as the world, we must all come together and in unity persevere by listening to and following the recommendations of our medical experts and healthcare professionals in order to stop the spread and bring the virus under control. Also, let's see how we can support local businesses especially smaller businesses which are also struggling to survive. We can do this, but only if we act together! This year and next, the most important holiday gift to each other and our personal new year resolution in 2021 may be perseverance by each and all of us in continuing to follow safety measures and procedures. Let's persevere by letting wisdom guide as we are inspired by compassion and respond in gratitude!

Thank you.

Windward Buddhist Temple
268-A Kuulei Road
Kailua, HI 96734
Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U. S. Postage Paid
Kailua, HI 96734
Permit No. 118

 ***Mahalo*** 
for your kind monetary donations

Dennis & Carrie Kawamoto

David Kagawa for Eitaikyo

Gary & Annette Tashiro – in memory of Taeko Tashiro

Dennis & Merle Tashiro – in memory of Taeko Tashiro

Allen & Prudence Kusano – In memory of Alden Kusano

Mitsue Miyamoto for Bodhi Day

Roy & Cynthia Miyamoto for Bodhi Day

Stephen & Geraldine Ochikubo – in memory of: Kazutomo Ochikubo & Miyako Ochikubo

Clara Uechi

4 donations to social concerns