



Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission

August 2026

The Messenger

Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude

Calendar of Events

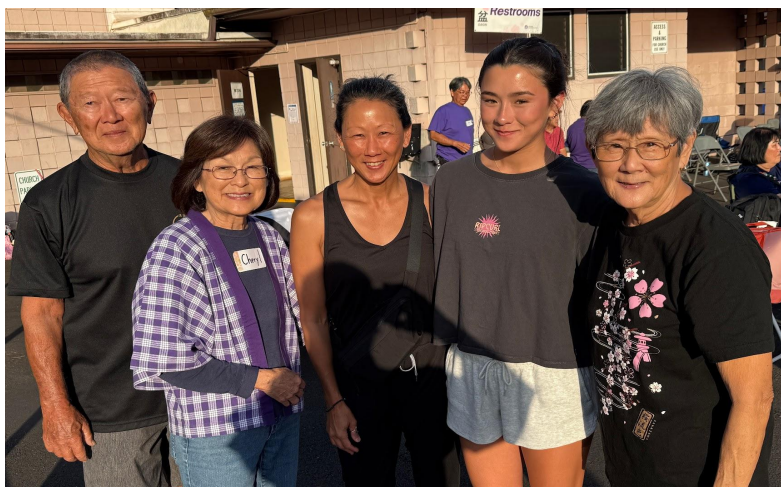
August 2026

02 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
09 Sun 9:00am Obon Service with Rev. Jeffrey
Soga as Dharma Speaker
16 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
23 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
30 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service

September 2026

06 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
13 Sun 9:00am Aki No Higan (Fall Equinox) Service
20 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service with Tokudo Minister's
Assistant Rod Moriyama
27 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service

WHM Bon Dance 2026!



We hope to see you all again next year!
Wahiawa Hongwanji Bon Dance June 11-12, 2027

Minister's Message - Let's Look Up at the Stars



Have you ever looked up at the night sky when you were feeling down, lonely, or just a little lost?

In Japan, there is a very famous, beautiful old song called “Miagete Goran Yoru no Hoshi wo”, which means "Look Up at the Stars in the Night". It was famously song in the

1960s by Mr. Kyu Sakamoto who was the wonderful singer whom many in the West known for his massive hit song "Sukiyaki." The lyrics of this song talk about looking up at the tiny stars, whose small lights are praying for our small, humble happiness. When we listen to it, it feels like a warm hug for our hearts.

When I was a little child, whenever someone I loved passed away, the adults would softly tell me: "Don't cry. When people die, they travel to the sky and become beautiful stars, watching over us forever. "Did anyone ever tell you that when you were small? I would look up at the night sky, trying to find my loved ones among the thousands of twinkling lights. It brought me so much comfort to think they were still there, shining upon me.

As I grew up and became a Buddhist minister in the Jodo Shinshu, I realized something beautiful. The man who wrote the lyrics to that song, Mr. Rokusuke Ei, grew up as a Jodo Shinshu temple member in Tokyo. The "Buddhist spirit" he absorbed as a child is quietly breathing inside this song. In our teachings, we don't literally become physical stars when we pass away. Instead, we are welcomed into a beautiful, peaceful place called the Pure Land (O-Jodo).

Just imagine, from the Pure Land, those who went before us and the Buddha of Infinite Light and Compassion, Amida Buddha becomes just like those stars. They are constantly looking down at us with a warm, gentle smile, whispering: "We are always right here by your side. You are going to be okay."

Sometimes, life can feel very dark. We all experience different kinds of "darkness" in our hearts: The darkness of loneliness, when we feel completely by ourselves. The darkness of sadness, when things don't go our way or when we have to say painful goodbyes. The darkness of worry, when we just don't know what to do next. But here is the secret of the night sky: Stars cannot show their beautiful light during the bright daytime. It is only because the night is pitch black that the stars can truly shine.

Shinran Shonin wrote:

“The unhindered Light is the sun of wisdom which dissipates the darkness of ignorance.”

When we are at the very bottom of a dark time, that is exactly when the Buddha's unconditional love and compassion soak deepest into our heart.

The best part about starlight is that it doesn't choose who it shines on. It doesn't look down and say, "Oh, that person was mean today, so I won't shine on them," or "That person is perfect, so I will give them extra light."

It shines on everyone completely equally. Amida Buddha's compassion—which we call Sesshu-Fusha (摂取不捨), meaning "the light that embraces us and never, ever throws us away"—is exactly like that. It is a 100% guarantee: 100% Anytime: It never takes a day off. 100% Anywhere: No matter how lost or hidden we feel. 100% Anyone: No matter what our mistakes, our flaws, or our worries. Even on a cloudy or stormy night when we cannot see a single star, does that mean the stars have vanished? No! They are always shining 100% brightly right behind the clouds, waiting for us. Even when our minds are clouded with angry or sad thoughts, the Buddha's light is still wrapping us in warmth.

So, whenever we feel ourselves looking down at the ground today because we are tired or sad, remember this song. Let's gently change our posture: Look up from the heavy days. Hear the calling voice of the universe saying, "Look up at the stars, you are loved." Realize the warm light that has always been hugging us. Let's say "Thank You" from the bottom of our heart. In our tradition, we say thank you by

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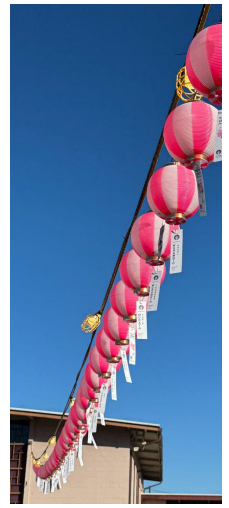
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saying "Namo Amida Butsu". It simply means: "Thank you, Buddha of Infinite Light, for always watching over me and holding me close, no matter what." May we all have a day filled with the warmth of starlight in our hearts.

If you don't know this song, please search with YouTube, "Miyagetegoran Yoruno Hoshiwo"

Namo Amidabutsu.

In Gassho,
Rev. Kojun Hashimoto



A Sunday of Gratitude and Fellowship: Honoring Our Volunteers & Welcoming Bishop and Mrs. Umitani July 12, 2026



President's Corner

The summer months in Hawai'i mark the Obon season; a special time to honor and remember our ancestors. In June, we observed Hatsubon, the first Obon for families who lost a loved one in late 2025 or early 2026. Memorial services provide an opportunity not only to remember those who have passed but also to gather with family and reconnect with relatives and friends whom we may not see often.

We would like to share a meaningful event that took place in July. Our member, Edna Saifuku, commemorated her father's 50th memorial service at the temple. What began as a small family gathering grew into a much larger reunion as news of the service spread. In addition to local family members, cousins from the mainland traveled to Hawai'i to attend, bringing the total attendance to 45 people. The gathering became so large that the reception following the service was held in the Social Hall.

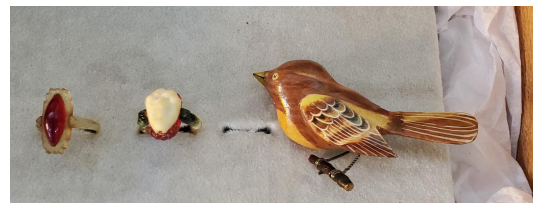
The family's patriarch, Sam Nishimura of Hale'iwa, was incarcerated at Honouliuli during World War II. During the reception, family members displayed artifacts he had crafted while imprisoned, including toothbrush rings, a bird pin, shell necklaces, and model airplanes. These treasured keepsakes sparked conversations and stories that allowed younger generations to learn more about his life, resilience, and experiences. The family reflected on the sacrifices he made and recognized that without him, their family would not be what it is today. It was a touching occasion filled with gratitude, remembrance, and a deeper appreciation for their shared history.

On Sunday, August 9, Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission will hold its annual Obon Service at 9:00 a.m. We warmly invite you to join us as we honor the memories of our ancestors and express our gratitude for the lives they lived and the legacy they left behind.

If your family will be observing a memorial service this year, we encourage you to contact the temple office to schedule one. We hope these services will provide not only a time for remembrance but also an opportunity to gather with loved ones, strengthen family bonds, and create new memories together while honoring those who came before us.



In Gassho,
Venus and Carolyn
Co-Presidents



Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission Office Hours: Tuesday, Friday & Saturday 9:00am - noon
(Appointments are highly recommended)

Phone: 808-622-4320

Email: office@wahiawahongwanji.org

To ensure clarity and accuracy, email is the preferred contact method. This avoids the potential for spelling mistakes or misunderstandings that can arise from unclear answering machine messages

www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org

Columbarium Hours: Daily 10:00am - 3:00pm

Jr YBA Happenings

With summer underway and state convention over, there were a couple more awards we wanted to report! **RUBY COLBERT** was awarded Outstanding Jr. YBA for O'ahu. This award is chosen by the advisors and given to the junior who went above and beyond throughout the year. Ruby only joined Jr. YBA after last year's obon and has been involved and present in many activities and meetings. Also, the United of O'ahu tied for **Model United** with the United of Hawaii. The Model United award is voted on by all the Uniteds and showcases events that each United has participated in throughout the year. We love seeing what everyone else is doing and the service that we are doing in the community.

We had Yuma's Senior Celebration at Ala Moana on July 17 and had dinner at Jade Dynasty. It was a fun evening and we enjoyed a lot of yummy dishes! We tried the Imitation Shark Fin and Crab Soup, Live Crab with a curry sauce, Duck in a bao bun, among other favorites. After dinner we had to get dessert and went to Jejubing Dessert Café. We tried the Korean-style bingsu, a milk snow shave ice with various toppings. The choice toppings were fruit but the advisors got the oreo cookie. If you go to try it, we recommend sharing!

We planned our first activity for the upcoming year which will be on Saturday, August 1. We'll be going to Wai Kai to enjoy the water obstacle course and have fun with one another. This is one of our membership activities so if you are of Jr. YBA age (6th grade to 2 years after graduation) and would like to join Jr. YBA, we would love for you to come! Contact us ASAP! Please contact a Jr. YBA member or Auntie Arynn Ishikawa (advisor) at arynn.m.ishikawa@gmail.com or jrybaofahu@gmail.com if you have questions or for more information.

Buddhist Study Center 2026 - O'ahu Hongwanji Council

SUMMER SESSION 2026

Tuesday, Aug.4,2026

Registration: Free!

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Waipahu Hongwanji Mission
94-821 Kuhaulua St,
Waipahu, HI 96797



Rev. Dr. Aaron Proffitt

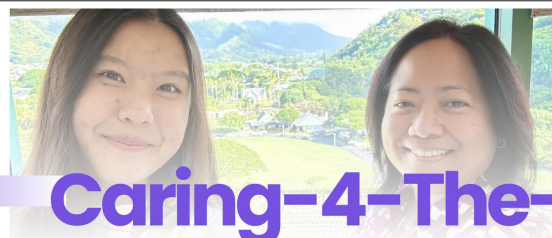
According to legend, during Shinran Shonin's time, he noticed the farmers were preoccupied with planting rice and could not come to listen to the Dharma. So Shinran Shonin went among the farmers and planted rice with them. In the shared conversations, Shinran created songs about planting rice and skillfully wove Buddhist teachings into them to share the Buddha Dharma.

Today, Professor Aaron Proffitt shares his family practices. He believes that family practices will remain within your family and expand to other people they encounter in the same way Shinran practiced with the farmers.

Rev. Dr. Aaron Proffitt is an Associate Professor of Japanese Studies in the East Asian Studies Department and an ordained Buddhist Priest (tokudo) in the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha lineage. Originally, from Lynchburg, Tennessee. Rev. Dr. Proffitt received his BA and MA in religious studies from the University of Colorado, and his PhD in Buddhist studies from the University of Michigan. He studied Japanese at the Inter-University Center in Yokohama from 2009-2010 and conducted research as a Fulbright Fellow at Otani University, Koyasan University and Ryukoku University from 2014-2015. Rev. Dr. Proffitt serves the UAlbany Interfaith Center and Buddhist Student Association as a Buddhist chaplain. He also co-founded the Albany Buddhist Sangha (albanybuddhist.org) and regularly teaches mindfulness and meditation for community organizations of the Albany area.

For further information, please contact:

Wahiawa Hongwanji at 808.622.4320 Mililani Hongwanji at 808.625.0925



Caring-4-The- » Caregiver

Strengthening Caregiver Support through
Connection and Innovation

Saturday, August 1, 2026
10:00 - 11:30 A.M.

Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission
Social Hall
1067 California Ave.
Wahiawa, HI 96786



Introduction
for
caregivers to
Project Dana

Services that
strengthen
connection
and
coordination
of care for
kūpuna.

Learn how
the new Mon
Ami software
streamlines
for
volunteers.



Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission



Visit our website to sign-up



Our Website
www.wahawahiawa.org

Discover Something New: Classes & Community at WHM

Looking to learn a new skill, stay active, or connect with traditional arts? Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission is proud to host a variety of cultural, martial arts, and fellowship classes. Whether you are looking to sharpen your mind, body, or language skills, we have a spot for you.

Check out our current offerings below and find the perfect fit!

New Class: Sashiko and Sangha

Whether you're picking up a needle for the very first time or you're an experienced stitching enthusiast, we invite you to join our temple community. Come for the quiet, meditative art of Japanese Sashiko, and stay for the warm fellowship and connection. Let's gather, share stories, and discover the beauty of the running stitch together.

- **Schedule:** Join us at our **9:00 AM Sunday service**, followed by Sashiko in the **Social Hall from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM**.
- **Class Dates:** Attend any or all 3 classes!
 - *Aug 16:* Sashiko basics
 - *Sept 13:* Sashiko projects
 - *Oct 4:* Sashiko projects
- **Cost:** A supply fee will be collected at each class:
 - \$10 for WHM Members
 - \$20 for Non-WHM Members
- **How to Register:** Sign up using the Google Form at bit.ly/WHMSashiko. For any questions, please email office@wahiawahongwanji.org. Class will be led by Jennifer Okuma



Chanting Meditation Class

Experience the grounding and restorative practice of vocal meditation and chanting.

- **Led By:** Rev. Hashimoto and Takako Hashimoto
- **Class Date & Time:** Sept. 11, Oct. 16, Nov. 13 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM (dates subject to change)
- **Cost (3 sessions total):**
 - \$20 for WHM Members
 - \$30 for Non-Members
- **How to Register:** To sign up or ask questions, please email Rev. Hashimoto at hashimoto@wahiawahongwanji.org.



Martial Arts

Aikido

Discover the peaceful martial art of harmony, balance, and self-defense.

- **Status:** Now accepting new students!
- **Schedule:** Thursdays from 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM (*Note: Class takes a summer break in June, and a winter break from mid-December to early January.*)
- **Age Requirement:** Open to ages 7 and up (dependent on maturity).
- Interested families are welcome to come watch a class so instructors can assess readiness.
- **Contact:** Reid Moriyama at (808) 783-4411 or reid.moriyama@gmail.com.



Kendo

Experience the traditional Japanese martial art of swordsmanship, focusing on discipline, spirit, and respect.

- **Status:** Always accepting new students!
- **Schedule:** Mondays and Wednesdays from 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM.
- **Age Requirement:** No strict age limit, but young students must be old enough to understand and follow verbal commands.
- **Contact:** (Text message preferred, followed by email or phone call)
 - *Iwao Sato (President):* (808) 349-1287 | isato@hawaii.rr.com
 - *Tusha Buntin (Chief Instructor):* (808) 372-0757 | tushabuntin@gmail.com



Language & Cultural Arts

All cultural classes below are held in the BWA Room taught by Takako Hashimoto. If you are interested in joining any of these language or calligraphy sessions, please email the temple office at office@wahiawahongwanji.org.

- **Japanese for Beginners:** Mondays from 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
- **Japanese Class:** Tuesdays from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- **Calligraphy Class:** Sundays from 8:00 AM – 8:45 AM



Ho'āla School

We are also pleased to share our campus footprint with Ho'āla School, which provides education for children from Kindergarten through Grade 8. For more information go to <https://hoalaschool.org/>

Please Note: While we are happy to have them as part of our campus community, Ho'āla School operates entirely independently. The school is not connected to or endorsed by the Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission.