



# The Messenger

***Building Healthy Sanghas: Embracing Generosity & Openness***

## Calendar of Events

<p><b><u>August 2023</u></b>  06 Sun 9:00 am Obon Service with Rev. Jeffrey Soga  13 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service  20 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service  27 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service</p>	<p><b><u>September 2023</u></b>  03 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service  10 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service  10 Sun following service Ko Discussion - Basics of Buddhism led by Rod Moriyama and Glenn Hamamura  17 Sun 9:00 am Fall Ohigan with Rev. Irene Nakamoto  24 Sun 9:00 am Sunday Service</p>
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## Did You Pay Your Gojikai Dues?

For 2023, the Gojikai Dues remain the same at \$175. It can be paid in installments monthly or all at once. WHM’s annual assessment due to Honpa Hongwanji headquarters typically amounts to \$200 per member. ***Thank you for your continued support to maintain and sustain the programs and the maintenance of the temple. If you have not paid your Gojikai dues for 2023, we ask you to please renew now.***

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- Be an integral part of our “extended family.”
- Learn about the Buddha’s teachings and ways to use them daily
- Have access to online services throughout the state and the country.
- Receive the monthly Wahiawa Hongwanji newsletter
- Receive the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Statewide newsletter
- Receive Dharma messages from Rev. Hashimoto
- Able to use the facilities for weddings, ceremonies, and memorials
- Receive discounted hall rental rates for private parties
- Able to receive 24/7 on-call emergency ministerial services



If you are not sure if you paid your dues, please email [amy.kanemaru@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:amy.kanemaru@wahiawahongwanji.org) or call 808-621-8893. Please leave a message that includes your name and a phone number. Please allow 48 hours for a return call.

If you no longer wish to continue your membership, please contact the WHM office at 808-622-4320 or email [amy.kanemaru@wahiawahongwanji.org](mailto:amy.kanemaru@wahiawahongwanji.org)



# Minister's Message - Pictures

I sometimes review my family photos and videos. When I see these photos and videos, they make me laugh with good memories.

We have heard people say that a picture is worth a thousand words. How many pictures and picture albums do you have? We always take many photos on special occasions.



We have many pictures in our life. When we do a funeral or memorial service, we put the picture of the deceased in front of the Buddha.

We feel sadness or joy when we see the picture. So, pictures are useful in reminding us of and in telling other people of our experiences. That is why we take pictures of many occasions. It is not only to record the occasion but also to understand the situation later.

By the way, have you thought about why we feel an emotion when we see the pictures? I think pictures have the feeling of the people who took them. So, when we see a picture, we too may have the same feelings as the person who took the picture, or it may bring forth other emotions.

I think of sutra chanting in the same way. Some people feel sadness or relief when they hear the sutra chanting, because they can feel the people who have heard or a listening to the sutra. The Shoshinge's first line says,

*"Ki myo mu ryo ju nyo rai"* or

*"I take refuge in the Tathagata of immeasurable life."*

We hear the life that immeasurable people tell of the teachings of the Buddha to the next generation. Therefore, we hear the wish that immeasurable people have left for us. That is why we can feel joy when we hear the sutra.

I would like to share this poem written by Mr. Shosaku Asada.:

*Let us hear the wish*

*We were born in immeasurable wishes*

*We were growing up in immeasurable wishes*

*Let us hear that wishes*

Jodo Shinshu teaching does not require a hard training as does other Buddhist sects. But hearing the sutra that our ancestors left to us is our practice. Hearing and feeling when we say the Nembustu is Jodo Shinshu. This is like seeing a picture of our experiences.



Namo Amida Butsu

In Gassho,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Kojun Hashimoto".

Reverend Kojun Hashimoto



**Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission Office Hours: By appointment 808-622-4320**

**[www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org](http://www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org)**

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

# President's Report



Our Bon Dance feedback from our volunteers has been very positive. They welcomed the opportunity to help out at our live Bon Dance experience! Here is an example of a response:

*As a volunteer, I assess the performance of an event in the following areas: 1) Organization, 2) Communication, and 3) Care of the Volunteers.*

*1) Organization (5 out of 5): The Bon Dance staff were very well organized. They had a clear start time, a designated place for parking, and an assigned job for all of their volunteers. It was also very clear who volunteers needed to talk to if they needed to address an issue. I read all the emails and it was clear a lot of thought and care had been put into almost every detail.*

*2) Communication (5 out of 5): I loved the weekly emails that became more frequent closer to the date of the Bon Dance. The summary emails with instructions for the volunteers were very helpful. I've worked with professionals who were less communicative, so I can't tell you how much this was appreciated by me. I knew where I needed to be and when, and what was expected of me in the food booth.*

*3) Care of the Volunteers (5 out of 5): This was simply excellent. Food and water were made abundantly available to the volunteers. Breaks were also frequently encouraged, even in the busiest of booths. The Wahiawa Bon Dance regulars were very generous and kind. Although there was a lot of work to do and we were short-handed at times, the staff and organizers were very understanding and helped as best they could.*

*Overall, I was very impressed. I've volunteered at many events for other organizations and have sometimes encountered the attitude that the volunteers were second or third-class. I didn't get that feeling at all at Wahiawa Bon Dance. Instead, I felt like I was a valued member of the team. I will look forward to volunteering again.*

There were also some challenges noted which we'll be addressing:

- The need for more variety in food choices. This begins the discussion about inviting food vendors to participate with us in this community event. Other temples have already started to do this.
- Having the ChemiToi (portable toilets) wasn't warmly accepted although everyone understood why. Our toilets have not been able to handle the volume at Bon Dances. Replacing our sewage lines to connect to the external sewer system will be very expensive. We will have to get bids to see what fundraising efforts will be needed.

**Thank you to all the volunteers who participated and for the leadership in making this event so successful!!**

The farewell luncheon for the Rev. Eric Matsumoto at the Ala Moana Hotel was a wonderful experience! The food was well presented, tasted good, and the entertainment featuring the singing by Ohana Arts players from "Peace on your Wings" was fabulous! It was great to see so many friends from all over the state show their appreciation for 12 years of service as the Bishop. Rev. Eric has been assigned as the Resident Minister for Aiea Hongwanji.

Saturday, August 5 will be the New Bishop's Investiture for Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani at 8:00 AM at Honpa Hongwanji. It will be followed by a Welcome Luncheon at the Waikiki Sheraton Hotel at 11:00.

Our Obon Service is scheduled for August 6 at 9:00 am. Rev. Jeffrey Soga of Waipahu Hongwanji will be the guest speaker.

In gassho (gratitude),



Rodney S. Moriyama, President







Photo Credits: Takako Hashimoto, Rod Moriyama, Aaron Miyamoto/Rolo Tomasi



# Hatsubon, Bon Dance and Obon Service

You might be thinking, isn't Wahiawa Hongwanji finished with Obon? Why are they sending the Obon donation envelope now? Yes, we've had our Hatsubon service and our bon dance in June, but not our Obon Service. Below is an article reprinted from the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple website which explains these Obon traditions.

## Obon Tradition

By Rinban Katsuya Kusunoki

The long awaited Obon season has come! This week, I would like to introduce some Obon traditions and their meanings.

Most temples in Japan conduct Obon Service in August. It is a long-standing tradition in Japan that people visit their ancestor's gravesites during the Obon season. They deep clean the gravesites and offer flowers or fruits, and they put their palms together in gassho. People fondly recall their loved ones at the gravesites. Afterwards, they visit their temple and attend the Obon Service.

The concept of Obon in general is that the deceased loved one returns to this world during Obon Season. There are varying customs and traditions for Obon in Japan.

Each city or region in Japan has a different tradition. Let me share some examples of Obon customs and traditions. One custom is where a family offers a cucumber and an eggplant to Buddha, or for the deceased. Inserting four toothpicks (representing legs) in each, a cucumber symbolizes a horse. An eggplant symbolizes a cow. The deceased rides on the cucumber horse to come to this world because a horse runs fast. The family can see the deceased quickly. On the other hand, on the way back, the deceased rides on the eggplant cow to go back. A cow walks slowly, so the family can have more time with the deceased longer.

Another custom is to put a decorative paper lantern outside of their house, their gravesite and the Obutsudan. Often you can see a family crest (MON) on the lantern. The family lights the lanterns for their loved one to return to the right place without losing their way. A third custom is where the family floats a lantern in a river or the ocean as a send-off for the deceased. The family wishes for the deceased to go back safely.

In my hometown of Nagasaki, there is a custom that a Hatsubon family (those who lost their family member from the time of last year's Obon to this Obon) floats a small boat into the ocean, and people in Nagasaki send the deceased off with fireworks. When I think about the Obon tradition, each tradition has meaning. The family expresses their thoughts through each tradition.

To non-Buddhists, Obon could be seen as mixing together the "religious" and "fun/light-hearted" aspects. Even though the Obon Dance has a religious aspect, it also has its MATSURI or festival side as well. Similarly, the Obon Service is not purely a somber, religious occasion. In Jodo Shinshu, it is also referred to as "KANGI-E" or "Joyful Gathering". Of course, it is important to recognize the sadness of loss, especially for the Hatsubon families who have lost some one in the past year. However, we also rejoice that our loved ones were born into the Amida Buddha's Pure Land and have become a Buddha. There is also joy in the realization of the causes and conditions that have brought us together here and now, enabling us to hear the Buddha Dharma.

My father used to give the same Dharma talk of Obon at every year. Let me summarize the Obon story. The origin of OBON is that Moggallana (MOKUREN), a disciple of the Sakyamuni Buddha recalled his mother who passed away. "How is my mom doing?" Sadly, he saw that she was in a realm of hungry ghosts. Therefore, Mokuren asked Sakyamuni Buddha how to save his mother. He followed Sakyamuni Buddha's advice. He offered and served food & drinks to Buddhist ascetics. His mother was eventually able to leave the realm of hungry ghost. Moggallana, his family, his friends, and ascetics were so overjoyed that they danced spontaneously to express their joy and show their gratitude to Buddha. This is the origin of OBON Dancing, BON ODORI.

My father always focused on one point of this story. This point is that Sakyamuni Buddha's disciple, Moggallana, by chance, thought seriously about the afterlife of his mother. "How is my mother doing?" Moggallana wondered and worried about her. To me, this is the origin of Obon, thinking about our loved ones even after they are no longer living. I think the Obon service is the occasion to reflect fondly and respectfully upon our loved ones. Please remember your loved ones through Obon service and Obon Dancing.

Namo Amida Butsu.



# Wahiawa Hongwanji T-shirt Order Form

Have you seen our new t-shirt with a design that represents Wahiawa Hongwanji!? Our new design incorporates sakura, wisteria, pineapples and a sagarifuji. You may have seen a similar design on our new WHM happi coats and WHM tenugui (bon dance towel) or saw people wearing the our new shirt design at our bon dance in June. Many people, after seeing our new shirt design at our bon dance, inquired about ordering. If you weren't able to purchase a shirt at our bon dance, now is your chance!

The shirts are black and the front left of the shirt will have a small sagarifuji and the words Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission. The drawing shows what the back of the shirt will look like.



Illustration of back of shirt

Deadline for orders is **August 19, 2023**. You will be notified when your order is ready for pick up at the Temple.

Thank you for your support

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Contact Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate quantity ordering of each size in the boxes below												
Style	Youth XS	Youth S	Youth M	Youth L	Adult S	Adult M	Adult L	Adult XL	Adult 2XL	Adult 3XL	Price	Total
T-shirt											x\$20	
											x\$22	
Ladies V-neck											x\$20	
											x\$22	
Please make checks payable to: Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission <b>Orders due: August 19, 2023</b> Please submit orders to: Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission - Shirts 1067 California Avenue, Wahiawa, HI 96786										Temple Donation		
										TOTAL		

Office Use Only

Date received \_\_\_\_\_ Cash/Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Check \_\_\_\_\_ Received by \_\_\_\_\_