



The Messenger

Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude

Calendar of Events

June 2026

- 06 Sat 8:00am Bon Dance Tent and Booth Set Up
- 06 Sat 6:00pm Hatsubon Service
- 07 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service - Project Dana speaker Madisyn Sim
- 08 Mon 7:00pm -8:30pm Public Bon Dance Practice around yagura
- 11 Thurs 8:00am Booth Table and Equipment Set Up
- 12 Fri 7:00pm-10:00 pm Bon Dance
- 13 Sun 7:00pm-10:00 pm Bon Dance
- 14 Sun 8:00am Bon Dance Clean Up
- 21 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
- 28 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service

July 2026

- 05 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
- 12 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
- 19 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
- 26 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service - Dharma Speaker Denise Okouchi



Bon Dance Yagura decorations needed June 11th

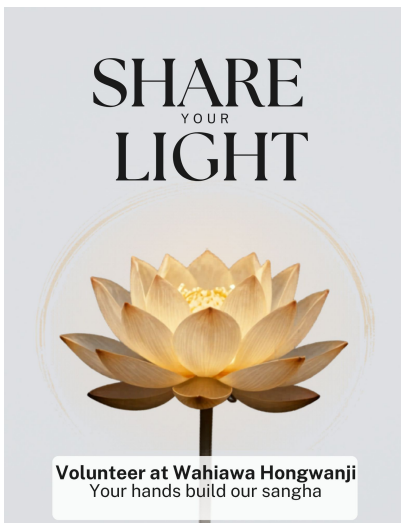
We are in need of monstera leaves (various sizes) and heliconia (hanging ginger) to decorate our yagura on the morning of Thursday, June 11th. If you are able to donate, please email Amy at amy.kanemaru@wahiawahongwanji.org or leave a message at 808-622-4320. Thank you!



Bon Dance Volunteers Needed

Planning is underway for Obon 2026! We'll need everyone's help to make this year's bon dance a success. Please volunteer to help!

If you are interested in volunteering to help set up or on our break down day, please email office@wahiawahongwanji.org



Minister's Message - Dancing into the Great Joy of Bon Dance



The season of Obon (Urabon-e) is just around the corner next month. In the Jodo Shinshu tradition, Obon is also affectionately called "Kangi-e" (The Gathering of Great Joy)—a precious opportunity where we are guided by the memory of our departed loved ones to encounter Amida Buddha's boundless compassion. Through the story of Mogallana, one of the Buddha's primary disciples, let us reflect on the profound meaning of the "Bon Dance" scheduled for next month.

Among the disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha, Mogallana was renowned as the foremost in transcendental abilities, and he possessed a deeply filial heart. One day, wondering about the whereabouts of his late mother, he used his advanced spiritual vision to look across the realms. To his profound shock, he found her trapped in the Realm of Hungry Ghosts (Gakido), suffering intensely from agonizing hunger and thirst.

Distraught, Mogallana immediately used his powers to offer her a bowl filled with food. However, the moment his mother tried to bring the food to her mouth, it burst into fierce flames, transforming into fire and causing her even greater agony. Facing a reality that could not be saved by his own power alone, he wept in deep sorrow and helplessness.

Why was this gentle mother, who had loved her son so deeply, suffering in the Realm of Hungry Ghosts? Shakyamuni Buddha gently explained the truth to him. While she was a loving mother to him, her affection was driven by an intense, exclusive attachment. Her mindset was, "As long as my child is well, I do not care what happens to other children," and "As long as our family is happy, others do not matter." She had lived a life defined by this exclusive, blind attachment and self-centeredness.

"The comfortable life you enjoyed and the love you received were deeply intertwined with human foolishness that sacrificed or ignored others," the Buddha revealed. Mogallana was struck with realization. The one who truly needed saving was not just his mother, but himself—the very person who had lived comfortably, completely shielded by her exclusive love. Through his mother's suffering, he was brought up to confront the deep spiritual darkness within his own existence.

Shakyamuni Buddha advised him: "Offer a feast to the collective monastic community and listen to the Dharma together. True wisdom is found when we release the mind of hoarding and nurture a heart of sharing." Following this guidance, when Mogallana listened to the Dharma with his fellow seekers and entrusted himself to the truth, the uncalculating light of Amida Buddha's great compassion embraced his mother. She was instantly liberated from the bonds of her self-centered suffering and was welcomed into the radiant Pure Land.

Witnessing her salvation, Mogallana and the people around him were filled with an inexpressible sense of gratitude and overwhelming joy. Realizing that even foolish beings like themselves were completely embraced and saved just as they were, they spontaneously took each other's hands and began to leap and dance with ecstasy. This earth-shaking "Dance of Great Joy" is the historical root of the traditional Bon Dance we celebrate today.

From Shinran Shonin's Hymns

"Saying the Name of Amida Buddha (Nembutsu),
When shinjin (entrusting heart) becomes true and real,
Immediately we become those who are bound
To attain the supreme Nirvana."

This month, our temple will host its annual Bon Dance in the property. There are three core Jodo Shinshu aspirations behind why we cherish this event and warmly invite everyone to participate:

1. Expressing Gratitude (Ho-on): It is a wonderful occasion to express our heartfelt "thank you" through our whole bodies to our ancestors and loved ones who have guided us to the path of the Dharma.

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Minister's Message (continued from previous page)

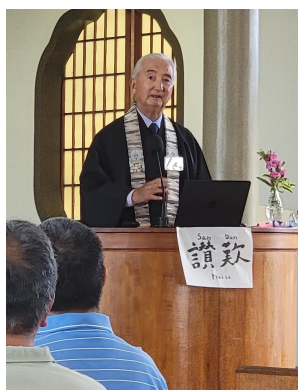
2. The World of Ondobo-Ondogyo (Fellow Travelers/Equals): In the Bon Dance circle, age, social status, and dancing skills do not matter at all. Dancing together as one inclusive circle perfectly reflects Amida Buddha's world of absolute equality, where no single being is left behind.

3. Rejoicing in the Echo of the Nembutsu: Moving to the rhythm of the taiko drums and temple songs, we express the joy of the Nembutsu and share the vital energy to live our lives day by day.

Obon is not merely a time to mourn the deceased; it is a wondrous occasion for each of us to encounter "Namo Amida Butsu." This month, please invite your family and friends to join our temple's Bon Dance. We look forward to seeing your bright smiles in the circle!

Namo Amida Butsu


In Gassho,
Rev. Kojun Hashimoto




🏮 Bon Dance Donations Needed!


A huge Mahalo for the generous donations of kinako, turbinado sugar, and shoyu! We are still in need of the following items:

- Mochi Booth: White Sugar (at least 10 lbs) and Tsubushian / Sweet Red Bean Paste (20 cans, 18 oz size).
- Food Booth: Cases of bottled water (16.9 oz), white rice, and Spam (we still need 30 more!)
- Country Store: Handmade crafts, kitchen linens, used happi coats/kimonos, produce, jams, and flowers.
- Baked Goods: Must include an ingredient list (ordered by weight/amount, greatest to least).

 July 17 Drop-Off Dates (9:00 am – Noon) Please label all donations with your name, phone number, and target booth

- May 31 (Sun): Yagura Setup
- June 6 (Sat) Booth Set Up
- June 11,12,13: Baked Goods only

 No thanks: General clothing or miscellaneous household goods.

 Questions? Email Jan at janfukada@gmail.com (Country Store) or office@wahiawahongwanji.org (Food/Mochi).

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

President's Corner



What keeps you healthy? One powerful answer is volunteerism. Giving your time and energy not only supports others—it also nurtures your own well-being. When you volunteer, your focus shifts outward, and that sense of purpose can strengthen both your mind and body. Being around others encourages connection and conversation, keeping your mind engaged, and along the way, you might even learn something new.

Let me share a recent example from Wahiawa Hongwanji. On May 9, 2026, Barry Chun brought together a group of volunteers to prepare mochi for the upcoming Wahiawa Obon on June 12–13, 2026. With 100 pounds of rice to transform into mochi—served two pieces per person at the booth—many helping hands were needed.

The process began the day before, when the rice was washed and soaked overnight. Early the next morning, it was cooked, and by 8:15 a.m., volunteers arrived ready to work. Once the rice was ready, it was placed into a machine that pounded it into a smooth paste. That paste was then fed into a cutter to form uniform pieces. From there, volunteers shaped each piece by hand into round, flat mochi, using potato starch to keep it from sticking. The mochi was then transferred to another table, where a second group brushed off excess starch and allowed it to cool before packaging it into bags for the freezer.

You might think that only experienced mochi makers take on this kind of task—but that's not the case. Volunteers of all backgrounds came together, including those who had never made mochi before. Ages ranged from people in their 50s to those in their 80s. Everyone was welcome, and everyone contributed.

A heartfelt mahalo goes out to the dedicated volunteers: Barry Chun, Lori Chun, Henry Kitagawa, Roy Higa, Barbara Higa, Richard Fujimoto, Joyce Fujimoto, Joan Sugahara, Mary Kawane, Herb Lum, May Yoshida, Jan Matsuura, Carl Matsuura, Vivian Maruyama, Amy Kanemaru, Judith Kakazu, and Carolyn Uchiyama.

Mochi making is no small task—it's physically demanding and time-intensive. But as the saying goes, "Many hands make light work." With teamwork and dedication, the group completed the job in record time.

So the next time there's a call for volunteers, consider joining in. You'll experience the joy of working together, sharing stories, and building connections—and of course, you might even get to enjoy some delicious food along the way.



In Gassho,
Venus and Carolyn
Co-Presidents



Barry Chun and Henry Kitagawa, two of our long time mochi volunteers. Please consider volunteering and joining them at our next mochi making project.

Guest Dharma Speaker Madisyn Sim: Sunday, June 7

We are delighted to welcome Madisyn Sim as our guest Dharma speaker on Sunday, June 7, at 10:00 AM.

Madisyn is the Community Outreach and Recruitment Coordinator for Project Dana (pronounced Dah-na), an organization beautifully rooted in the Buddhist concept of selfless giving. In her presentation, Madisyn will introduce us to Project Dana's vital mission, share the support services they provide to kūpuna (elders) and caregivers across Hawai'i, and explain how you can get involved as a volunteer.

With over eight years of experience in Internal Medicine and Physical Therapy, alongside her leadership role with the Hawai'i Jaycees, Madisyn brings a deep passion for civic engagement and compassionate elder care. Come learn how we can put compassion into action right here in our community.



15th Buddhist Women's Association State Membership Conference

March 28 – 29, 2026

Ala Moana Hotel by Mantra

“Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude”

By Claire Tamamoto, BWA Federation President

Abridged by Carolyn Uchiyama

Members of the Buddhist Women's Association and guests were welcomed with friendly faces, a souvenir convention bag of goodies and hope that the conference would be a meaningful time together. Everyone was greeted by an impressive altar with the recently remounted Amida Scroll in Japan that stood 7 feet tall and a flower arrangement that was 6 feet tall.

The keynote speaker, Michiko Miyaji Inanaga from the Buddhist Churches of America shared her experiences as a parent and connecting it to growing the Hongwanji. Just as she cares for her 3 children, she would like to care for the teachings and see it grow and flourish. Michiko's perspective was: “The nembutsu is not fragile, surprisingly, it doesn't need our protection . . . you are held, you are not alone, come as you are. What Nembutsu needs right now is our presence. How do I nurture Nembutsu? By letting it nurture me.”

The participants had a selection of six workshops and could attend three of them.

- Workshop A: “Brave, Willing, and Awesome: A Throughline in the Hongwanji Archives” by Dave Atcheson provided a new approach to archiving temple documents and photos.
- Workshop B: “Healing Through Gratitude: Living with Appreciation” by Edna Matsuoka made us aware of our lives and appreciate our own bodies.
- Workshop C: “Sounding Joy Therapy” by Nina Guerrero and Kazumi Yamamura shared hands-on knowledge of music therapy and how it's used to help people with Parkinson's and other neuromotor conditions.
- Workshop D: “Healthy Benefits of a Positive Lifestyle” by Pieper Toyama and Mavis Niino. They worked together to share the benefits of gratitude and creating a card with a gratitude message that will be written and mailed to the appreciated person.
- Workshop E: “Capital Campaigns: Dharma Forward and Living Gratitude” with Michiko Inanaga and Irene Nakamoto shared the ways to sustain our organizations and the benefits of the endowment programs.
- Workshop F: “Me Kealoha Nui” by Hanakia Tui. This hula was taught to the participants performing at the 18th BWA World Convention in 2027 in Honolulu.

The Saturday evening entertainment was coordinated by 2025 Hawaii BWA Exchange student Chad Okawa. He gathered several entertainers of Oahu District who played the taiko, violin, the shinobue (Japanese flute), and sang various songs.

Sunday featured a panel presentation with these accomplished women, Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke, Supreme Court Justice Sabrina McKenna, Hawaiian cultural practitioner Kehaulani Lum, and Lori Teranishi, CEO/Founder of iQ360. The women shared their life experiences and women's roles in 2026 and don't be afraid of the future and embrace changes in relationships, careers, and technology.

The conference ended with smiling faces and energized feelings to move forward with gratitude to create positive outcomes.

May 24 - Temple Clean Up

We want to thank our members, friends, and Navy volunteers whose hard work and spirit of Dana left our temple buildings and grounds looking beautiful and refreshed.



Jr. YBA Happenings

CONGRATULATIONS YUMA!

We cannot believe how fast time flies and it seems like only yesterday we were welcoming Yuma to Mililani Hongwanji and the United of Oahu. We are so grateful for Yuma's dedication to this organization and we are happy to be able to celebrate his achievements. On Sunday, May 17, we honored Yuma at the Mililani Hongwanji Baccalaureate where he and another young man, Yuya Fukutomi, were recognized. On May 24, they received their diplomas at Mililani High School's Graduation ceremony at Stan Sheriff Center at UH Manoa. Yuma's Senior Celebration is yet to be decided but we will be sure to do something this summer before he goes off to attend college on the mainland.

As you know, back in March, the Spring Fling was cancelled due to weather. It was rescheduled to Saturday, May 30, 9am-1pm. The Jr. YBA is doing a Fish Pond for children of all ages. So we hope to see you all there!

Our Juniors and Advisors are headed to the **69th Jr. YBA State Convention** in Hilo, June 19-21, hosted by the United of Hawaii. We are looking forward to a fun weekend as we know how much work the Juniors on the island of Hawaii have been doing to prepare for convention. Stay tuned for the recap in our next couple newsletters!

Upcoming Important Dates:

Next Meeting: Sunday, June 7, 1:00pm at Mililani Hongwanji

Jr. YBA State Convention: Friday, June 19 – Sunday, June 21

