



Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission

December 2025

The Messenger

Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness

Calendar of Events

December 2025

07 Sun 9:00am Bodhi Day Service
14 Sun 9:00am Temple Clean Up and General membership meeting (no service)
20 Sat 2:00pm - 3:00pm Mochi order pick up
21 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
28 Sun NO Sunday Service
31 Wed 5:00pm-7:00pm Joya-e Service

January 2026

04 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service and Installation of WHM Board
11 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
18 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service
25 Sun 9:00am Sunday Service

Save the Date: WHM Bon Dance June 12 - 13, 2026

Veterans Day Parade - Nov. 11, 2025

Mahalo to everyone who marched with Wahiawa Hongwanji and to all who came out to watch and support us in the Veterans Day Parade!



Minister's Message - Things That Changes and Things That Do Not



In Buddhism, we often speak about impermanence—the truth that everything is constantly changing, and that nothing in this world remains forever. But how about in your daily life? Although it is rare for one's life to completely transform, do you ever feel that each day is somehow a little different from the last?

In my surroundings, the most remarkable changes can be seen in how we use technology. Nowadays, we can contact anyone from anywhere and obtain goods from all over the world. Things that were once unthinkable have now become our everyday reality.

Impermanence, in other words, means that what was once considered “unusual” or “unthinkable” can become the new normal. The world we live in is one in which what used to be unconventional is now accepted as ordinary. However, this also makes it increasingly difficult to discern what is true and what is not.

In the Tannishō, Shinran Shonin said,

“Beings possessed of blind passions, living in this impermanent world of burning house, are all things false and untrue...”

This means that everything in this world is subject to change, and what we once believed to be true may suddenly be revealed as mistaken.

So then, what can we truly rely on in this ever-changing world?

In fact, even in this world of impermanence, there exists something unchanging, something eternal.

In a song by the Japanese singer Masaharu Fukuyama called Himawari (“Sunflower”), there is a line that says,

“I was so happy, so happy, that I called your name again and again.”

These words remind me of the Buddha's compassion—of how Amida Buddha is always calling to each of us by name. Amida Buddha sees each one of us as His beloved child, constantly calling out to us with deep compassion—just as a parent calls the name of their newborn baby repeatedly.

As you know, a newborn baby does not yet understand what its parent is saying, nor does it know its own name. But through hearing the parent's loving voice repeatedly, the baby slowly begins to recognize and respond. The parent, in turn, is moved and filled with joy at every small reaction—and continues to lovingly call the child's name.

Amida Buddha's compassion toward us is just like that.

At the end of Shinran Shonin's words, he says,

“Only the Nembutsu is true and real.”

No matter how the world may change, no matter what age we live in, the Buddha's compassionate calling voice never changes. It continues to reach each one of us.

Let us live today with gratitude for being embraced by this unchanging wish of the Buddha and let us respond to that call by reciting Namo Amida Butsu.

As this year ends to a close and a new one approaches, let us remember with gratitude that Amida Buddha's calling voice never changes, and let us strive to express our thankfulness through the ご恩報謝 (Go On Hosha)—repaying the Buddha's boundless compassion.

Namo Amida Butsu

In Gassho,
Rev. Kojun Hashimoto

Presidents' Corner



In the month of November, we celebrate Thanksgiving and we are grateful to you, our temple community, the Sangha. You continue to support us through our many activities and projects. This month was especially busy with many events.

We began with our Eitaikyo service that honored our members from the past. We had Rev. David Nakamoto as our speaker. He recounted his time at Wahiawa Hongwanji while training to become a minister. He continued with the connections we have with the deceased members of the temple and their contributions to Wahiawa Hongwanji into what it is today.

Venus, Rod and I attended the closing ceremony at Waianae Hongwanji. It was a bittersweet time, and we recounted the times Oahu District worked together and the camaraderie created and producing lifelong friends. It was wonderful to chat with the people from Waianae Hongwanji and we hope though the temple is gone, the friendships will continue, and they will continue to be a part of Oahu District.

Many volunteers on November 15th made the "Taste the Town Wahiawa" a success. Venus' father grew very healthy, large daikon for us to pickle. The ladies came a week early to peel, cut, and immerse the daikon in pickling sauce. Just before the event the takuan and sanbaizuke were packed. The ladies came at 8:30am Saturday morning to stuff, cook, and pack the inari sushi, spam bowl, and nishime. The booth crew arrived around 11:00 am to erect the tent and set up the tables, chairs, and signs. The food was moved from the temple to our booth at the Value-Added Development Center in time for the 1:00pm opening. Thank you to all our workers on November 15th for a successful event.

On Sunday, November 16th, Wahiawa Hongwanji and Hoala School sponsored a blood drive for the Hawaii Blood Bank. I would like to thank the 15 donors which equal to 15 pints of blood that can save 45 lives. There were also 4 first time donors. Let's hope we'll be able to collect more blood next year.

Finally, thank you for your participation in the Foodland "Give Aloha" program. We earned **\$1,248.68**. This year Foodland's matching portion was 35%, therefore besides your donation we received an additional 35%.

We have so much to be grateful for to our SANGHA!!! Your support continues to assist us in our endeavors at Wahiawa Hongwanji.

In Gassho,
Venus and Carolyn
Co-Presidents



Temple Clean-Up Day – Volunteers Needed!



Join us for our Temple Clean-Up Day on **Sunday, December 14, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM!**
Help the sangha refresh and care for our temple. We need volunteers for cleaning and lunch preparation/dessert donation.

Please contact amy.kanemaru@wahiawahongwani.org to sign up or assist with lunch. We hope to see you there!

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

Phone: 808-622-4320

Email: office@wahiawahongwanji.org (allow 48 hours for email response)

www.wahiawashinbuddhists.org

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

Community, Culture & Good Eats: Wahiawa Hongwanji at Market Day



Reflections of my Tokudo Experience

By Rod Moriyama

It's been forty years since we lived in Japan. It's the beginning of a new journey as an ordained Buddhist priest called the "Tokudo process." It took several years of experience as a Certified Minister's Lay Assistant and an intense year-long effort to prepare for an 11-day culmination in Kyoto.

A religion is a reflection of societal values and culture. The Jodo Shinshu sect of Buddhism is one of several sects throughout the country. The country is also very Shinto, a way of life focused on morality and values. It is a country with massive population centers and a mass transit system second to none. Living in such an environment requires discipline, kindness, timeliness, and compassion. The tokudo process takes these principles and creates an artificially stressful environment to reflect the discipline and historical significance of the Jodo Shinshu founder, Shinran Shonin.

Every aspect of the training emphasizes timeliness, consideration, and cooperation with others, and depending on each other to the point of euphoric moments of joy and inspiration. Included are strict ritual training, memorization, accurate chanting of Buddhist sutras, and the stylized presentation of letters and writings of the founder and succeeding leaders of the Jodo Shinshu. Most of what is taught is not readily available to the lay public.

My relatives in Japan were quite surprised that I pursued this experience. They were concerned that something drastically wrong had happened to me. Because many of the principles practiced in Japan are so well integrated into the culture, most of the population sees religion as a formality, bringing family together and participating in rituals. So much of religion is based on quelling superstition. My interest was to better understand how Jodo Shinshu could be well accepted in other cultures, including the United States.

At a time where individual achievement, material gain, and self-centeredness appear to be key focal points in our American culture, Jodo Shinshu offers a way of thinking that is much more fulfilling despite the many ups and downs of living in the modern age. The training, despite the stress, makes these principles come alive. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to my cohorts and teammates, my instructors, and all who supported us through this process. I only hope I am able to contribute in some way, to the betterment of our global society through understanding and acceptance of the reality of life.

Jr. YBA Happenings



Happy Bodhi Day and Happy Holiday Season! We hope you all had a nice Thanksgiving!

We wanted to do a Haunted House again this year so Yuma, Ruby and Aunt Gay went to the Trial of Fears, which is an interactive haunted house that has an escape room feel to it. It was fun but wasn't as spooky as expected. Pretty sure if Aunt Arynn was there she would say otherwise.

Yuma represented the United of Oahu at Waianae Hongwanji's final service. It was a beautiful service and we are sad to see this temple close. Waianae Hongwanji has so much history to share and we hope that their members will continue to participate in activities that the other temples do throughout the year. We know many of our Jr. YBA alumni have so many good memories from this temple.

We also participated in this year's Wahiawa Veterans Day Parade which was on Tuesday, November 11. Thank you to all the service members, especially our veterans for your service and dedication to maintaining the safety and freedom of our country. We appreciate all that you have done and are doing.

Thank you all very much for your generous donations in November toward our emergency Food Drive and Toys for Tots collection! We really appreciate the generosity of our members and are happy that we can give back to those who need it.

Upcoming Important Dates: Next Meeting: Sunday, December 7, at Pearl City Hongwanji at 1:00pm

With Gratitude: Waianae Hongwanji Final Service and Retired Ministers and Spouses Appreciation



November 12, 2025 – Retired Ministers and Spouses Appreciation Gathering