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HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

April 2014
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HIGASHI HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

At Higashi Hongwanji, we remain true to our origins as an open Sangha, welcoming anyone who wishes to learn more about the Jodo Shinshu tradition of Buddhism.

A registered 501(c)3 organization

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Editor: Ken Saiki

CELEBRATION OF THE BUDDHA’S BIRTHDAY

Rinban Ken Kawawata

We are celebrating Buddha’s birth this April. At this occasion, let’s think about how Shinran Shonin, who was the founder of Shin Buddhism, viewed the meaning of the Buddha’s birth. At the same time, let’s explore the meaning of our own birth.

In the Larger Sutra, one of the three important sutras for Pure Land Buddhism, Buddha said,

“As the Tathagata, I regard beings of the three worlds with boundless great compassion. The reason for my appearance in the world is to reveal teachings of the Way and save multitudes of beings by endowing them with true benefits.”

Sakyamuni became a Buddha, the Awakened One, at the age of 35 years and started to share his teaching after his awakening with his compassion. He became a Buddha Tathagata who shared and taught dharma. Tathagata means a person who comes from “Tatha” — as is, or *sonomama*, as we say in Japanese.

Why did he become and appear as a Tathagata in this world? Buddha said because of he wanted to reveal teachings and save human beings from an existence of anxieties and sufferings. This is the reason for Buddha’s appearance and birth in this world.

Shinran Shonin read and understood the larger Sutra more deeply. He wrote in the Shoshinge:

“Sakyamuni Tathagata appeared in this world solely to teach the ocean-like Primal Vow of Amida; we, an ocean of beings in an evil age of five defilements, should entrust ourselves to the Tathagata’s words of truth. He said that Buddha’s appearance in this world was to teach the ocean of the Amida Buddha’s primal vow. As you know that Amida’s primal vow is a symbol of Buddha’s compassion.”

Shinran Shonin also said,

“When I ponder the compassionate Vow of Amida, established through five kalpas of profound thought, it was for myself, Shinran, alone. Because I am a being burdened so heavily with karma, I feel even more deeply grateful to the Primal Vow which is made to decisively save me.”

He really accepts Buddha’s compassion sincerely and feels grateful to Amida’s primal vow, which was established for all human beings. Amida’s primal vow is his true compassion to us, as we will always be burdened with our own greediness, anger and ignorance.

We — each of us as individuals — have a different, unique living and life. When we stand in front of the Buddha dharma, however, we become a person who listens to the Buddha’s wish and his teaching. Simply by bowing our head and listening to the dharma, we can start a humble and dynamic life. Thus, you can see the meaning of our own birth is to encounter the dharma and to have a humble, vivid and dynamic life.

May all of us who share living and life in this world have a meaningful and peaceful life together.

Namu Amida Butsu



Rinban Ken Kawawata

Hawaii Buddhist Council Hanamatsuri Buddha Day Service

Jodo Mission of Hawaii, 1429 Makiki Street
Sunday, April 6, 2014, 10:00 am

Betsuin Hanamatsuri Buddha Day Service

Sunday, April 13, 2014, 10:00 am

News on the Betsuin Wireless



Kokua Day at the Betsuin

Members and friends who can spare some time to help beautify our temple are invited to join us on Saturday, Apr. 19. We're starting early at 8:00 am, but we welcome any help we can get at any time in the morning. We'll break for lunch at noon.

Help needed includes sweeping, weed-whacking, raking, hedge-trimming, weeding and other general yard duties.

Hate yard work?

Don't worry, we have other tasks waiting for your special touch in the temple, such as kitchen chores, spiffing up our bulletin boards, tidying shelves and even design help, whether by hand or using Illustrator or Photoshop.

It's not just work, as we'll also be having fun and fellowship at the same time. Plus, don't forget... there's lunch after we're done! We appreciate your time and kokua.



"Ballad of Narayama" classic featured for April movie night

The story is set in a rural village in 19th-century Japan. Upon reaching the age of 70, tradition calls for Orin (Kinuyo Tanaka) to make the trip to Obasute-yama to die.

This 1958 kabuki-style film, the first in Fujicolor, is one of Japan's top-rated movies. In 2013, just before his death, Roger Ebert placed the film in his exclusive collection of "Great Movies." English subtitles. 98 min.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., Apr. 22. Free admission, open to all. Ample seating in Fukuhara Conference Room.

檜山節考 (ならやまぶしこう)

70歳になると檜山まいり(姥捨)を行わなければならない山奥の村に住む、69歳になる「おりん」とその息子が軸となるストーリー。作品の評価は高く、1958年度のキネマ旬報ベストテン第1位になったほか、毎日映画コンクール日本映画大賞などを受賞した。

出演者: おりん: 田中絹代 言語: 日本語、字幕: 英語 上映時間: 98分 カラー 入場無料 4月22日(火)午後6:30時



About 15 members gathered at Otani Center for the Betsuin local retreat.

Rev. Sawada leads local retreat

Guest lecturer and Hilo Higashi Hongwanji Mission resident minister Rev. Marcos Sawada conducted the Betsuin's March 9 local retreat. He expanded on the recent District retreat's *Hongan - Aspiration* topic, discussing how we're connected and dependent upon each other. But how completely do we really help each other?

He told a story of a man who assisted someone in a wheelchair by reaching up to hand him a payphone handset, felt good about it and left. But was it enough? What about dialing the number? Or replacing the receiver?

Temple Etiquette 101

In Buddhist tradition, *oshōko*, or incense offering, is the expression of gratitude and respect, and our devotion to the Three Treasures: the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

The offering of incense at religious services was practiced more than 3,000 years ago in the Indus civilization, long before Christianity came on the scene. Burning incense helps to create a place of worship that smells nice, that surrounds us with a calming, relaxing, and pleasant environment so we can be comfortable and ready to listen to and learn from the dharma.

Followers of different Buddhist denominations may offer incense in various ways. For example, you may observe some people bringing pinches of incense to their foreheads before offering. At our temple, that isn't necessary, as the practice isn't part of our Jodo Shinshu tradition.

So here we will describe incense offering in our Higashi Hongwanji Jodo Shinshu tradition:

1. **Walk up to the incense table and look at the Amida Buddha's statue.**
2. **Place your left hand on the incense table and take a pinch of incense with your right hand and place it in the incense burner. Repeat with a 2nd pinch.**
3. **Put your palms together in *gassho* at your chest level and recite the *Nembutsu*, "Namu Amida Butsu."**
4. **Release your hands, bow and return to your seat.**

While this shows the basic steps for *oshōko* in the Higashi Hongwanji tradition, bear in mind that *how* you offer incense is not nearly

as important as your respectful reverence while doing it. The offering of incense should not be rushed, but should be done thoughtfully.

With these simple steps in mind, the next time you find yourself going up to the incense table, you'll find yourself offering incense with greater confidence. You may even be setting an example to follow, teaching others the way to offer incense in our Jodo Shinshu tradition. Start with your children or grandchildren. The younger children will start to do it on their own, and you will be surprised how quickly they learn.

It should be added that whenever entering or leaving the temple *hondo* (main hall), we show our humility, respect and gratitude with a short bow.

— Faye Shigemura



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Insert: Dr. Tanabe lecture series

Insert: Buddha Day Service

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

APRIL 2014

4/6	Sun	10 am	HBC Buddha Day service at Jodo Mission (No Sunday service at Betsuin)
4/8	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
4/8	Tue	7 pm	Lecture - Part 1 - Dr. George Tanabe
4/10	Thu	7 pm	Lecture - Part 2 - Dr. George Tanabe
4/12	Sat	7 pm	What on Earth Is Namuamidabutsu? led by Rev. Frank Childs
4/13	Sun	10 am	Hanamatsuri service
4/13	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese
4/15	Tue	7 pm	Lecture series #3 - Dr. George Tanabe
4/17	Thu	7 pm	Lecture series #4 - Dr. George Tanabe
4/19	Sat	8 am	Volunteer kokua day at Betsuin
4/20	Sun	10 am	Shotsuki memorial service & Sunday school
4/20	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
4/22	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
4/22	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Ballad of Narayama</i>
4/27	Sun	10 am	Sunday service
4/28	Mon	10 am	Shinran Shonin memorial service
4/28	Mon	11 am	Recitation circle

MAY 2014

5/4	Sun	10 am	Shotsuki memorial service & Sunday school
5/4	Sun	12 pm	Mothers Day picnic at Nuuanu Valley Park (Queen Emma Summer Palace)
5/8	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English
5/10	Sat	10 am	What on Earth Is Namuamidabutsu? led by Rev. Frank Childs
5/11	Sun	10 am	Mothers Day family service & Sunday school
5/11	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class 現代語で仏教を聞こう led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese
5/18	Sun	10 am	Shinran Shonin birthday service
5/18	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
5/20	Tue	7 pm	O-ko: Dharma discussion at Betsuin Fukuhara Conference Room
5/25	Sun	10 am	All Wars memorial service
5/27	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
5/27	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Harp of Burma</i>
5/28	Mon	10 am	Shinran Shonin memorial service
5/28	Mon	11 am	Recitation circle

Everyone is welcome to join in on our sutra chanting at 7 am daily (except Sundays) in the Betsuin Main Hall.