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HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

March 2015

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

THE WORLD OF INNERMOST ASPIRATION

Rinban Kenjun Kawawata

This year I became 63 years of age. If I were living 500 years ago, when the average lifespan was about 50 years, I would have been approaching the end of my life. But today, the average human lifespan is more than 80 years, and you have a chance to live more than 90 or 100 years. However, I cannot predict what will happen in the next moment. I might die in the next moment, or tomorrow.

Shakyamuni Buddha once said, "To live a single day and hear the teachings of truth is better than to live a hundred years without knowing such teaching." Your life may last 100 years, but if you don't encounter the teachings of the truth, you will have wasted your 100 years of life.

One of the Seven Patriarchs of Shin Buddhism, Vasubandhu (4th century CE) said, "When contemplating the power of the Buddha's original Vow, those who encounter it will never pass in vain; quickly will they be filled with the great Treasure Ocean of virtue."

Shakyamuni Buddha said, "**To live a single day and hear the teachings of truth is better than to live a hundred years without knowing such teaching.**" I think "hearing the teaching of the truth," means to have the true view, which is realization, and encountering the power of the Buddha's original vow that Vasubandhu mentioned in his writing.

The power of the Buddha's Original vow (*Hongan-riki*) is the other power (*Ta-riki*), which is the power beyond self.

Shin Buddhist Minister Rev. Shigeshi Wada once said in a lecture, "When we listen to and share the teaching of Buddha with others, the working of the Pure Land comes to us. Then that place turns to the Pure Land."

The Pure Land in Shin Buddhism is not like the Christian heaven. The Pure Land not a physical place, but symbolizes Buddha's state of mind, which is a peaceful, spiritual world. The Pure Land is the working of the Dharma that makes us realize truth and our true self.

So the working of the Pure Land is that "power beyond self" (*Hongan-riki* or *Ta-riki*) which comes to us, embraces us, and teaches us the true self and true life that we were meant to enjoy. "Other Power" is that power beyond self which is from the innermost aspiration of Amida Buddha.

We are living in the world of oneness. The circle of life and world of life are called the "world of oneness" (compassion). In addition, we have one more world that's called the "world of teaching," also known as Dharma (wisdom). In ancient India, they called these worlds "Amida."

Rev. Wada also mentioned in his lecture, "The true nature of life is a wish." I think that every living thing has a wish to live free and liberated, and to live in peace. We have a same wish in the bottom of our mind. So we have to ask ourselves, "What is my deepest wish?" "What kind of life do I really want?"

People usually wish for money or other materialistic things. But is that what we really want for our life? We know that money and materialistic things don't last forever. Of course, we need money. We need certain materialistic things in order to live. However, it's sad if we only chase materialistic things for our whole lives. We have to think, "What is my life really about?" "Why was I born?" "What am I?"

We should think about our true wish for our lives. Thinking about our own true wish and own life is practicing Buddhism. This is the life of Buddhist. I feel that in order to find our true wish and true settled mind, we must listen to the Dharma diligently in our everyday lives.

Thank you in gassho.
Kenjun Kawawata



Rinban Kawawata

March Musings

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MARZO

You may recall from high school World History class that the month of March was named after Mars, the Roman god of war. We learned that in ancient Rome, March was the first month of the year, a time to resume farming and empire expansion, otherwise known as “war.”

In case you don’t recall these tidbits like I do, you don’t have to feel bad. You may have had cafeteria duty that day or might have even been absent from school and don’t happen to have the excuse slip from the doctor any more.

Another recollection about March from small-kid-time: My 5th-grade teacher, Miss Loehr, who was from the mainland, told us that people from where she was from would say, “March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.” She had to explain the meaning of the proverb to us local kids since to us, the weather at the beginning of March was exactly the same as the end of March. This was, of course, before youngsters had television, the Internet or even family trips to the mainland to show us what it was like outside the confines of our own neighborhood.

And one would hear, “Beware the Ides of March,” a line from Shakespeare’s “Julius Caesar” at this time of year. In those days, March 15, the date when Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BCE, was also the date Federal income tax returns were due. Since Tax Day was moved to April 15, you don’t hear the quote any more, unless, of course, you’re still in high school and are forced to read Shakespeare.

Instead, nowadays at this time of year, chatter is more likely to be about stuff that really matters, such as who’s going to be in the NCAA Division I basketball Final Four and, of course, the related office pool. Betting goes big time during March Madness, and it’s hard to believe FBI reports



Ume blossoms are welcomed as among the first signs of Spring.

that some \$2.5 billion in illegal wagers are made during the tournament. It’s almost as unbelievable as thinking that no office pools are going on in the J. Edgar Hoover Building in Washington, D.C. during March Madness.

Did you know that Hawaii is one of only six states with a holiday in March? Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana’ole Day is observed on March 26, a Thursday this year. It’s one of only two holidays in the U.S. to honor royalty, the other being King Kamehameha I Day.

In Japan, March is eagerly anticipated for when the signs of Spring appear, including fragrant white and pink blossoms on the *ume*, or “Japanese plum” trees (which are actually more closely related to apricot than plum). Then later in March, Japan’s iconic *sakura*, or cherry blossoms, start to make their magical appearance in the warmer areas, then gradually into the higher and cooler regions. The school year ends in March and domestic travel begins to pick up during the month.

The Japanese name for the third month is, no surprise, *sangatsu* (三月). The traditional name for the month from ancient times is *Yayoi* (弥生, or “New Life”). *Yayoi* is also a Japanese female given name. So if you meet a girl named *Yayoi*, you might be able to impress her with your brilliance with a pickup line like, “Aha! I’ll bet your birthday is in March!”



Hawaii’s favorite Girls Day candy.

We’re all familiar with March 3, *Hinamatsuri* (Doll Festival), or “Girls Day,” when families with girls will display a set of dolls representing the Emperor, Empress, attendants and musicians on a stepped platform. There are special foods and sweet treats to celebrate the holiday.

In Hawaii not all girls were lucky enough to have an elaborate doll set for Girls Day. But most were just as content to receive gifts of *Tomoe Ame* in the little red and blue box. The most fun part was the rice candy inside, wrapped in the “paper” you could actually eat! How cool is that!

An only-in-Japan kind of national holiday, dedicated to the love of living things and admiration of nature, is celebrated on March 21, Vernal Equinox Day, or *Shunbun no Hi*. It also marks the observance of *Ohigan*, a Buddhist tradition during the mild weather at both the Spring and Fall equinoxes. It is said that in ancient days, people who normally worked in the fields had more leisure time during the equinoxes to make a renewed effort to follow their Buddhist practices.

Let’s all make a renewed effort to do likewise and make it a point to come to the *Betsuin Ohigan* service on March 15. As a special bonus after the service, there’ll be the traditional *ohagi* (sweet azuki-covered rice balls) for everyone!

— Ken Saiki



The black and white-garbed Pupule Papayas captivated the attention of attendees with their imprecision dance routines for their first—and possibly last—live appearance.

General membership meeting & New Year party draws a crowd

Nearly 100 members, friends and guests packed Otani Center on Sunday, Feb. 22, for the Betsuin's annual general membership meeting and *shinnenkai*, or New Year party.

Held immediately following the Sunday service, the short meeting included revision of the bylaws to reduce board members from 11 to nine and election of new directors Margaret Hamachi and John Ishikawa. Officers were unanimously re-elected into their current positions.

Tasty favorites from Mui Kwai Chop Suey, supplemented by Chinese chicken salad and chow funn by Joyce Masaki, filled the banquet buffet and proved quite popular with attendees going for seconds and thirds



Besides food, there was fun and fellowship.

Entertainment included *minyō* folk song performances by Harada Nao Azusa Kai led by Atsuko Nonaka-sensei, group singing with the Dharma Hawaiians ukulele group and a hilarious dance routine by the Pupule Papayas, some of whom were rumored to have tried out for the Rockettes and Takarazuka Revue.

New this year was Lucky Me!, which allowed people to choose the drawings to enter, for dozens of items including kitchen tools, clothing, accessories, crafts, jewelry and children's games.

Then there was a ton of door prizes, enough that every single person was a winner, from donated items, including a rice cooker, Long's gift cards and body care items, to 20-lb. bags of rice, various household paper products and drinks.

Mahalo to all donors, helpers and attendees for making this year's event fun and fulfilling.

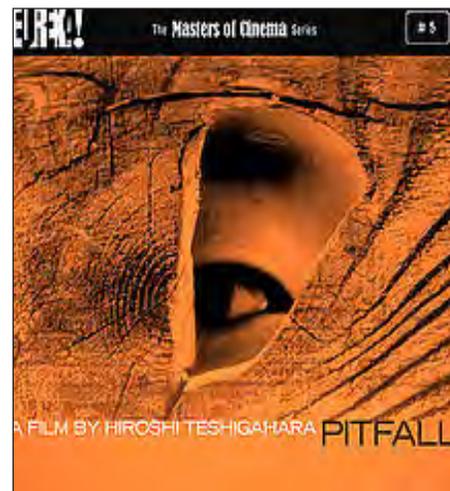


Kei Tsuji performs a hula for the audience.

Teshigahara ghost story *Pitfall* featured as movie of the month

1962 film debut of Hiroshi Teshigahara (*Woman of the Dunes*), set in coal mines of Kitakyushu. A man in white murders an unemployed miner who resembles the union leader at one pit and bribes the only witness to frame the union leader of the rival pit. The two union leaders go to the murder scene to investigate only to come across the body of the witness, who was killed by the man in white. They blame one another and begin a fight which ends in both their deaths, as the ghosts of the victims look on, powerless to intervene and bring the truth to light.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., March 24, 97 min. monochrome, Japanese audio with English subtitles. Free admission.



おとし穴 (おとしあな)

勅使河原宏監督の長編劇映画デビュー作である。不況の風が吹き荒れる北九州の炭鉱地帯。そのボタ山で殺人事件が発生した。事件の目撃者である女によれば、加害者は労組の第一組合幹部にそっくりであり、被害者は第二組合の幹部によく似ていたという。彼女は真犯人に脅されて偽証したのだったが、その犯人に襲われ殺されてしまう。第一組合と第二組合の幹部は、現場で激論の末にお互いを殺し合ってしまった。

公開：1962、言語：日本語、字幕：英語、映時間：97分 (モノクロ)、3月24日(火)午後6:30時、入場無料。



Bishop Kenjun Kawawata
President Faye Shigemura
and the Board of Directors of
Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
cordially invite you to attend
Spring Ohigan Service

Sunday, March 15, 2015
10:00 a.m.

1685 Alaneo Street
Honolulu, Hawaii

Dharma message by
Rev. Hosen Fukuhara
Former Bishop & Rinban
Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Otoki lunch immediately following the service.



心地よい天候が続く中、皆様にはお元気でお過ごし
の事と存じます。さて春のお彼岸法要を下記の
如くお勤め致しますのでご案内申し上げます。お
彼岸は古く聖徳太子の時代より行われてきた伝統
ある法要です。私ども先達はこの機会を仏様の教
えを聞く良き機会としてまいりました。ご家族でご
一緒にお参り下さい。

記

春のお彼岸法要

日時 2015年3月15日 午前10時
場所 東本願寺ハワイ別院
1685アラネオ ストリート
法話 福原 法仙前監督・輪番

*法要後お齋がございます。ご家族お揃いでお参りください。

合掌

輪番 河和田 賢

教団理事長 重村 フェイ

SIX PARAMITAS

The practice of the Six Paramitas is often emphasized during Spring and Fall Higan, as observance of the precepts allows us to cross over from this shore of suffering, anger and depression to The Other Shore, or Higan.

The Sanskrit word "paramita" means "going to the furthest, going towards perfection."

Jodo Shinshu tradition, however, tells us that our self-centeredness gets in the way of working towards our own perfection, or enlightenment. We are encouraged to practice as well as we can, but the teaching is more importantly a reminder of the egocentric nature of our lives.

Exactly what are the Six Paramitas?

The Los Angeles Betsuin website gives the following Sanskrit definitions:

1. **Dana**, or *giving, offering, generosity*. It is the practice of an open heart, giving freely what is needed by others.
2. **Sila**, or *discipline, observing the precepts*. Develop good behavior, obey the rules of parents, teachers and society. Buddhism encourages the development of the disciplined behavior of body, speech and mind.
3. **Ksanti**, or *patience, inclusiveness*. A patient person can overcome many difficulties. With patience, we can develop an open heart, and frustration and anger will diminish.
4. **Viryai**, or *endeavor, diligence,*

perseverance. It is to strive with one's whole heart, not for short periods of concentrated effort but continuously over long periods. This spiritual strength allows one to continue on without giving up in face of difficulties.

5. **Dhyana**, or *meditation, contemplation*. The practice of meditation helps the person to develop other paramitas and concentrate upon the mind, to learn to understand it.

6. **Prajña**, or *wisdom, insight, understanding*. See things as they are, without the prejudices and perspectives from within. Let go of opinions and concepts, relinquish the self that brings this wisdom that leads directly to enlightenment.



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In this issue of WA...

- **The World of Innermost Aspiration** p. 1
- **March Musings** p. 2
- **News on the Betsuin Wireless** p. 3
- **Membership meeting highlights** p. 3
- **March movie** p. 3
- **Spring Ohigan service invitation** p. 4
- **Six Paramitas** p. 4
- **Acknowledgments** p. 5
- **Shotsuki listing for March** p. 5
- **Temple activities calendar** p. 6

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

MARCH 2015

3/1	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service & Sunday school
3/1	Sun	12 pm	Jimmy's Auto Basics led by Jimmy Hirakawa Fukuhara Conference Room
3/1	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Otani Center
3/8	Sun	10 am	Sunday service
3/8	Sun	12 pm	Omigaki (polishing of altar items)
3/10	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
3/12	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English
3/14	Sat	10 am	Hawaii District meeting Fukuhara Conference Room
3/15	Sun	10 am	Spring Ohigan service
3/15	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
3/17	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Kaneohe
3/22	Sun	10 am	Rennyō Shōnin memorial service
3/24	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
3/24	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: Pitfall (おとし穴)
3/28	Sat	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service
3/29	Sun	10 am	Sunday service

APRIL 2015

4/5	Sun	10 am	HBC Buddha Day service Soto Mission of Hawaii, 1708 Nuuanu Ave (no Sunday service at Betsuin)
4/9	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English
4/11	Sat	10 am	What on Earth Is Namuamidabutsu? led by Rev. Frank Childs
4/12	Sun	10 am	Betsuin Buddha Day service
4/12	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese
4/14	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
4/19	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service & Sunday school
4/19	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
4/21	Tue	7 pm	Dharma Study Center lecture series Dr. Jay Sakashita of UH-Manoa Lecture 1: The Story of Buddha
4/23	Thu	7 pm	Lecture 2: The Dharma Spreads
4/26	Sun	10 am	Sunday service
4/28	Tue	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service
4/28	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
4/28	Tue	7 pm	Lecture 3: The Dharma Changes
4/30	Thu	7 pm	Lecture 4: Japanese Buddhism

Everyone is welcome to join in on our sutra chanting at 7 am daily (except Sundays & 28th day of the month) in the Betsuin Main Hall.