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HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

February 2016
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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

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

Bishop Kōi Sato'o, Chief Administrator, Shinshū Ōtani-ha

I wish to extend my warmest New Year's greetings to all of you, the members and friends of the Higashi Hongwanji overseas district temples.

Throughout the past year, many parts of the world continued to be ravaged by wars and conflicts such as the coordinated terrorist attacks that occurred in Paris last November. Those incidents clearly illustrate that our world is assuming an even more serious aspect of the Latter Dharma Age (mappō), as pointed out in deep lament by Shinran Shōnin. Being beset by the complex historical circumstances, there seems to be no end to the endless cycle of retaliation.

When faced with those realities, I cannot help but think of the darkness of the limitations of human wisdom from which no one can escape. Just like the traveler in the parable of the "Two Rivers and White Path," we are standing dazed and confused at the sight of the River of Water and the River of Fire, which signify our greed and anger respectively. Shinran Shōnin has shown us that there is always the White Path leading to the Pure Land in the midst of the raging water and scorching fire of the river. Even though we have been given this teaching, we are helplessly wandering about losing sight of the path that always lies ahead of us and are unaware of the light that constantly illuminates us.

At our mother temple, we have been able to complete the twelve-year renovation project of the Founder's Hall and Amida Hall last December thanks to the wholehearted support given by our members and friends from across Japan and overseas districts. I express my sincerest appreciation for your support. At the same time, I humbly accept the completion of the renovation project of the two halls, which serve as the link between the Buddha and us, as well as the responsibility of maintaining the place where we can encounter the Buddha's teaching and establish a true foundation in life.

As I welcome the new year and sit in front of Shinran Shōnin's image in the newly renovated Founder's Hall, I renew my commitment to share with all of you the significance of the fact that all of us, beyond the boundaries of nationality and language, are fellow travelers who walk the broad path of the Nenbutsu together, guided by Amida Buddha's voice from the other shore and encouraged by Shakamuni's voice from this shore.

In closing, I wish to ask for your continued support and cooperation.

Overseas District Abbot Chōyū Ōtani, Shinshū Ōtani-ha

I take this opportunity to wish all of you in the overseas districts a Happy New Year. It is with great pleasure that I can share the joy of welcoming the new year together with all of our fellow followers of the teaching of the Buddha.

Last year, I officially moved to Japan. For me, having grown up in Brazil, life



*Overseas District Abbot
Chōyū Ōtani*

in Japan is full of opportunities to reflect upon myself since the culture and customs are totally different from those I am accustomed to. On the other hand, I also realize that the differences in nationality or language are of no significance from the perspective of the Nenbutsu teaching which directs us to the truth in life.

When looking outside at the world, we cannot avoid seeing the escalation of the conflicts in the Middle East and the acts of inhumanity that occur all over the world. In this modern age, the darkness of human wisdom has created international and ethnic conflicts in which so many precious lives are being lost. The Buddha has told us, "We must not kill, and must prevent others from killing." It is up to us as Shinshū followers to confirm whether the Buddhist teaching has significance in this modern society in which the preciousness of human life can be easily neglected.

This year, at the 12th World Dōbō Gathering that will be held in Los Angeles in August, I hope to realize the importance of living as a Shinshū follower in today's world through sharing the joy of having encountered the teaching of the Nenbutsu.

I conclude my message by expressing my wish that each of us will be awakened to the vow of the Tathāgata. Thank you.



Bishop Kōi Sato'o



Updating Your System

Rev. Koen Kikuchi

The following is a transcript of the dharma message presented by Betsuin minister Rev. Koen Kikuchi on January 3, 2016.

Today is the New Year's Family service. At first, I didn't know about this service. So I asked Kawawata sensei about it and he said originally in the U.S., there were various services held. Sometimes, the *fujinkai*, or the women's association, or another group would organize a service, and anyone could attend those services.



Rev. Koen Kikuchi

I can imagine that in the past there were lots of people involved in temple events. Especially, they attended the services with their whole family, from babies to grandparents, so the Hondo was crowded.

Nowadays, all the services have been integrated into one, and there is just a single service held

each Sunday at the Hawaii Betsuin. One could name a lot of factors why fewer people come to the temple. It is not only the situation here at the Betsuin, but elsewhere, too.

In the old days, entertainment was not everywhere and people didn't have easy transportation. So, the temple was the one place to gather and have a good time with a lot of people. People helped and supported each other, and that was also fun for the members.

At my home temple in Japan, there used to be a lot of people helping with services and preparing refreshments like *shojin ryori*, *nishime*, and soup. These are strong memories in my mind. At that time I was very young, so my memory is not clear, but many of them worked with a smile. I used to run around and disturb them. But now in my home temple, we don't have such events where everyone gathers to make something. Ministers prepare all things for the services, and ministers order bento instead of members providing home cooking.

Times have changed. People today have more ways of being entertained than before. Young people have their own cars, so they can go to more places than before, even if the places are a bit far. They don't have to go to the temple to find fun and fellowship. It's the same situation at my home temple in Japan.

Integrating the various services into one results in having more people together more often. We can see and talk with each other easily. We are like a family, or *ohana*. I like this. The more we know each other, the more we can be comfortable with each other.

A Buddhist sensei told me that the family includes not

only happy, pleasurable and comfortable things, but also unpleasant things that we don't want to accept. And he said to marry somebody means to spend your life with him or her, including the things that we don't want.

This is not only true for family affairs, but for all situations. In our work, in school, in the activities we join, community in which we participate, this holds true for any situation. There are always both good and bad things. But we don't want to see the bad things and sweep the trouble under the carpet. In Japanese, 臭いものには蓋をさる or "We always want to see good and clean things."

Sometimes a problem can come between people in the temple who don't want to see a particular somebody. It's already said in Buddha's teaching that we have an inevitable suffering when we encounter a person we dislike. This is one of the Buddha's famous teachings of "suffering." This is a common situation all over the world unless someone is a Buddha. We have to be patient. We have to accept the reality. We have to get our minds to be open to and receive situations that we cannot accept.

"We are humans after all." This simple, but profound, quotation by a famous poet in Japan, Mitsuo Aida, is an expression of positively admitting human weaknesses by encountering the teaching of Buddhism. Buddha is giving us the eyes to look from the opposite side. We usually see the things where "I" can be the main character in our own life story. We can become a hero when "I" did some great thing, or we can become a heroine of tragedy. We can become a hero or victim every time. "I" am the main character of the story titled, "My Life." But Buddha is giving us the eyes for the story from the reader's viewpoint. This is the Buddha's eye.

As for lower attendance at temple activities, we usually think this is a problem in terms of declining finances or decreasing membership. The number of people coming is very important to keep the temple active, so we think that fewer people may be a problem. We always compare something with the past. "It was really good before," or "I could do it much better in my younger days." This world is the world of comparing. I can say it in another way. We compare our current existence

"Buddha doesn't care how many people attend. Only we care about that."

with our past lives. We also really like to compare ourselves with others. Then our minds constantly vacillate. Our minds are not calm and stable. "The grass is always greener on the other side." We never stop comparing ourselves with others.

But from the Buddha's eye, there is no problem because we are gathering here. Probably, Buddha doesn't care about how many people attend. Only we care about that. My teacher taught me to think about this. Sakyamuni Buddha started to teach more than 2,000

(cont'd on next page)



Updating Your System *(cont'd from p. 2)*

years ago. And the teaching has kept flowing to us. For more than 2,000 years, it's beyond your thought. You should know about *yourself*. The Buddha's teachings are not so small as you think.

From this, I have realized that I had too much confidence in myself. Unconsciously, I thought I could do all things by myself, and I could change situations by myself. But my thinking has changed. Things will go as they are, even if I do something or I don't do anything. Everything in this world is constantly changing.

What we have to think about now is one's own self. Our eyes are always looking outside of ourselves. We always look at things like numbers of people, what is good for the temple or how we have to do things in a particular way. But the important thing is how "I" relate with the temple. How "I" relate with Buddha's teaching. That is the question from the Buddha. Otherwise, what we do for the problem may simply end up as an "armchair theory."

We have to look at the situation with Buddha's eye, and put ourselves into the problem. Amida Buddha always looks at only me, and always asks, "Is it really OK?" for all things that I do. Shinran Shonin described his encountering with Amida's compassion in "Tannisho": 「弥陀の五劫思惟の願をよくよく案ずれば、親鸞一人がためなり。」 "When I ponder on the compassionate Vow of Amida, established through five kalpas of profound thought, it was for myself, Shinran, alone." He felt and realized that there is a relationship only between Amida and himself.

Buddha does not show us the answer. Buddha always gives us questions. Socrates said, "Personal happiness is to think and to keep seeking what is to live well." We have to have a question first. Then, when we get the answer, that is not a goal. That answer can be a new question. So the cycle of question and answer keeps going.



You're Invited!



New Year Party & General Membership Meeting

Sunday, February 28

Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

1685 Alaneo St. (corner N. Kuakini St.)

10:00 Sunday service in Main Hall

11:00 General membership meeting

11:30 Year of the Monkey shinnenkai

Catered buffet, entertainment, games and exciting door prizes! Good old-fashioned fun for the whole family! \$10 lunch fee payable at the door.

**Don't miss out on the fun & fellowship!
Call the Betsuin at 531-9088 and let us know you're coming! See you there!**



This is the way that Jodo Shinshu Buddhists walk through life. We have to keep updating ourselves. The world of computers is also constantly changing. I am not sure whether it is appropriate or not to use the word "improving" because it is not always true that modern technology makes our life better. If we don't use a cell phone in our daily life, for example, it might be considered "old-fashioned."

It can annoy somebody when we want to change the time of an appointment. In the past, once we

"This is the way that Jodo Shinshu Buddhists walk through life. We have to keep updating ourselves."

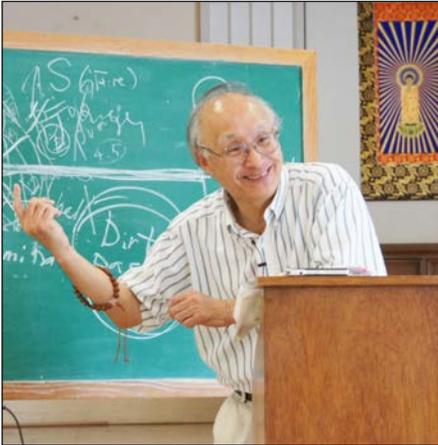
decided a time to meet, we had the responsibility to be there unless there was an accident or similar circumstance. So the development of technology has introduced some different kinds of problems, I think. With cell phones a meeting time

can be changed instantly with a simple text message. The more our life becomes convenient, the more problems increase. As technology is changing all the time, we have to change ourselves to adjust to the world in which we live.

All of you attending this service are called "sangha." It is a group of Buddhist people who walk in the same direction. We are dharma friends. The person sitting next to you might be a "Windows" person or maybe a "Mac" person. While a friend may help you install a new update to your operating system, we have to keep updating ourselves by using the system from the "mother computer," the teachings of Buddha.

Don't forget that we are the ones who decide whether to update or not. As a minister, I am simply the pop-up that helps you notice that it's time to update. It's up to you to decide to click on it or not. Bear in mind, however, that sooner or later, the old operating system will surely not be supported any longer.

Let's keep updating together!



Dr. Haneda entertainingly makes full use of the chalkboard during his presentations.

District Dharma Gathering set for February 6 at the Betsuin

Noted scholar and enthusiastic lecturer Dr. Nobuo Haneda, Director, Maida Center of Buddhism in Berkeley, will lead the discussion at the 2016 Dobo Retreat Program's District Dharma Gathering themed "Awakening to Your Deepest Wish."

The Hawaii District event will be held at the Betsuin's Otani Center on Sat., Feb. 6, from 10 am to 4 pm.

The District Dharma Gathering is part of the themed local and district retreats and other events we've been holding during the past year and continuing this year, leading up to the Betsuin centennial celebration and observance of Shinran Shonin's 750th memorial in November.

If you haven't registered to attend the retreat yet, you're still in luck, as you can register at the door. There's a \$10 fee, which includes lunch.

Mahalo for your member dues

Thank you to families who have already taken care of renewing their annual gojikai membership dues.

Timely submission of annual dues supports our temple activities such as our weekly Sunday services, study classes, community outreach programs and other services, and helps sustain them into the future.

For those who have not sent their \$75 annual membership dues yet,

we would appreciate your continued support at your earliest convenience. Payment of annual gojikai dues also allows you to maintain a niche in our columbarium.

If you're not a member yet, please consider joining. Your membership will help us continue our mission to serve the local community as we have for the past 100 years!

Rev. Childs resigns position

Rev. Frank Childs has announced his resignation from his Associate Minister position at Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Frank has been a familiar sight at the Betsuin, facilitating the monthly "What on Earth is Namuamidabutsu?" group discussions and giving dharma talks at Sunday services. His unique approach and style have helped many temple members and others seeking a deeper understanding of the truth and self.

Frank cites "personal reasons" for resigning. We will miss his ministerial presence and wish him well as he continues his own journey along the Buddhist path.

Charming February movie, *I Wish*, stars comedy duo Maeda Maeda

Twelve-year-old Koichi lives with his mother and retired grandparents in Kagoshima. His younger brother Ryunosuke lives with their father in Fukuoka. The brothers have been separated by their parents divorce, and Koichi's only wish is for his family to be reunited. When he learns that a new shinkansen will soon open linking the two cities, he starts to believe that a miracle will take place the moment the new trains first pass each other at top speed. With help from the adults around him, Koichi sets out on a journey with a group of friends, each hoping to witness a miracle.

I Wish has been an audience favorite and won awards at film festivals around the world.

Directed by Hirokazu Koreeda

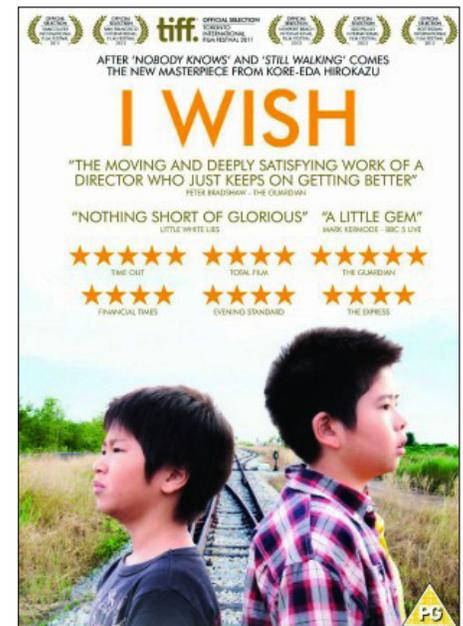
and starring the chuld comedy duo, Maeda Maeda (Koki Maeda & Oshiro Maeda), Joe Odagiri, Hiroshi Abe, Yui Natsukawa, Kirin Kiki.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., Feb. 23. 128 min. Color. Japanese audio, English subtitles. Rated PG (due to a smoking scene). Free admission. Everyone welcome to attend. Light refreshments provided but feel free to bring your own snacks.

奇跡 (きせき)

両親の離婚により鹿児島県と福岡県で離ればなれに暮らす小学校6年生の兄、航一と4年生の弟、龍之介。いつかまた家族4人で暮らしたいと願う2人の兄弟は、九州新幹線が全線開業する日の朝、鹿児島から福岡に向かう新幹線「つばめ」と福岡から鹿児島に向かう「さくら」が初めてすれ違ったときに願い事が叶うという噂を耳にする。そして、2人は周りの大人を巻き込んで計画を立て始める。

なお、MPAAのレイティングは喫煙シーンがあることなどを理由にPG指定となっている。



受賞：第3回TAMA映画賞、大阪シネマフェスティバル2012、第26回高崎映画祭、第55回アジア太平洋映画祭、その他。

監督：是枝裕和、出演者：少年漫才コンビ・まえだまえだの前田航基と前田旺志郎、オダギリジョー、阿部寛、夏川結衣、樹木希林。

公開：2011、カラー、言語：日本語、字幕：英語、映時間：128分、2月23日(火)午後6:30時、入場無料。



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TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

2/6	Sat	10 am	Hawaii District Dharma Gathering Speaker: Dr. Nobuo Haneda of Maida Center of Buddhism, Berkeley Hondo/Otani Center
2/7	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service & Sunday school
2/7	Sun	12 pm	Art of Paper Crafting class Fukuhara Conference Room
2/9	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
2/11	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English Fukuhara Conference Room
2/14	Sun	10 am	Sunday service & Sunday school
2/14	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class 現代語で仏教を聞こう led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Fukuhara Conference Room
2/16	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Betsuin
2/21	Sun	10 am	Sunday service & Sunday school
2/21	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
2/23	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
2/23	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>I Wish</i> - 奇跡 (2011)
2/28	Sun	10 am	Shinran Shonin memorial service
2/28	Sun	11 am	General membership meeting & Shinnenkai (New Year's party) Otani Center

MARCH

3/6	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service & Sunday school
3/8	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice Fukuhara Conference Room
3/10	Thu	7 pm	ABCs of Buddhism study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English Fukuhara Conference Room
3/13	Sun	10 am	Ohigan service & Sunday school
3/13	Sun	12 pm	Basic Buddhism study class 現代語で仏教を聞こう led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Fukuhara Conference Room
3/15	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Kaneohe
3/20	Sun	10 am	Ohigan service
3/20	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting Fukuhara Conference Room
3/22	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice Fukuhara Conference Room
3/22	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Like Father, Like Son</i> (2013) Fukuhara Conference Room
3/27	Sun	10 am	Rennyō Shonin memorial service & Sunday school
3/27	Sun	12 pm	Art of Paper Crafting class Fukuhara Conference Room
3/28	Mon	10 am	Shinran Shonin memorial service

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.