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HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

December 2016
12

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

BODHI DAY: A TIME TO REFLECT

Bodhi Day is the commemoration of Sakyamuni Buddha’s awakening, or enlightenment, celebrated in Japan each year on the 8th day of the 12th lunar month (December 8 since the adoption of the western calendar during the Meiji era). In our Jodo Shinshu tradition, Bodhi Day is an occasion to reflect on how we may be able to follow his example.

History of Bodhi Day

There are various versions of exactly how this enlightenment occurred. According to one account, some 2,500 years ago, Siddhartha Gautama, a young Indian prince, left his palace to seek peace of mind, which was impossible with his luxurious life. He spent six years trying to transcend all human sufferings.

One day he sat beneath a bodhi tree intent on finding enlightenment. He said that even though his flesh would fall from his bones and his bones crack, he would not get up until he had achieved perfect enlightenment.

Then he began an inner journey that led him to face his demons, taming temptations and distractions of restlessness, anger, doubt and greed.

It is said that he achieved a state of calm awareness and his mind was like a clear and still pool reflecting his inner thoughts and feelings. He started to reflect on his past, thoughts, words and actions. In the middle of the night he was reflecting on all living animals and humans, life and death.

As dawn approached, he understood cause and effect, that everything and everyone are connected and that our individual actions create our own destinies. He understood how ignorance of truth is the cause of greed and selfishness, and ultimately suffering.

As a morning star appeared in sky, Siddhartha then contemplated the Wonderful Dharma and he became the Buddha, The Awakened One. From this point he could discover the teaching of the truth—Dharma—and a new life.

Thus, Bodhi Day is a celebration of Siddhartha’s efforts to attain enlightenment, and the Buddha’s generosity and compassion to all as he shared the gift he received under the bodhi tree 2,500 years ago.

During Bodhi Day and throughout the busy holiday season, let us make a special effort to pause to listen to the Dharma and reflect on our individual lives. Only by knowing our own selves, can we respect others with whom we share our lives.



Upon becoming The Awakened One at age 35, Sakyamuni taught the Dharma for 45 years.

LOCAL BODHI DAY OBSERVANCES

Sunday, Dec. 4: Hawaii Buddhist Council Joint Bodhi Day service
9:30 am Jodo Mission of Hawaii

1538 Kewalo St. in Makiki (makai of H-1 freeway)

Sunday, Dec. 11: Betsuin Bodhi Day service
10:00 am Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

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

DISTRICT OBSERVES SHINRAN SHONIN'S 750TH GOENKI WHILE BETSUIN CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL

There's an old Japanese proverb that describes it well: *Bon to shōgatsu ga issho ni kita yō* (盆と正月が一緒に来たよう), or "As busy as busy can be...as if obon and New Year's came at the same time."

The months and weeks and days leading up to the combined Betsuin centennial celebration and Hawaii District observance of the 750th Goenki anniversary of Shinran Shonin's passing were indeed hectic, with all kinds of arrangements to be made, from top-to-bottom temple cleaning, rehearsals, various vendor contacts and countless planning meetings, often several scheduled for the same day.

Each Hawaii District temple minister headed a major committee to ensure everything was approached with pomp and circumstance, and run with the precision of a *shinkansen* schedule. We are happy to report that all events were accorded the proper respect they deserved and all trains departed on time.

The English service on Saturday morning, Nov. 5, at the Betsuin hondo started the commemoration weekend, with Bishop Ken Kawawata providing the welcome address. The service was conducted entirely in English, including gathas, chanting of *Shoshinsan* and selected reading. *Shinshu Shuka*, *Mihotoke Wa* and *Ondokusan* were sung in English to the accompaniment of Lena Hamakawa on the keyboard. The English service format



Panelists gather following their presentations on Saturday morning.

Roberta Kehaulani Fontes then described her personal difficulties with drug addiction, struggles in prison and family problems, and talked about the turning point that led to studying, escaping an abusive relationship, staying drug-free and now helping other women in similar unfortunate circumstances. Wendy Akau followed with her trying experiences that led to assisting Fontes at Women Supporting Women.

Glen Kila described the value of aloha that helped Hawaiians survive with the barest of resources while traveling in canoes and living in the islands. He also spoke on compassion for the homeless families and building lives through *koa mana*, or creating sanctuaries. Kila's disciple, Christophor Oliveira, also talked about overcoming his initial hardships to his current role with Koa Ike, supporting Hawaiian education, culture and religion.

After an assorted sandwich selection for lunch, Dr. Michael Conway of Otani University, Shin Buddhist Studies, acting as panel moderator, summarized the presentations as they related to the Goenki theme of Hongan.

More than 150 people gathered at Ala Moana Hotei for the evening commemorative banquet in the Garden Lanai Room. Before the program began, shoppers picked up *omiyage* and holiday gifts at the "Taste of Dana" \$5 marketplace, similar to Japanese one-coin (¥500) markets. Proceeds went to support the Hawaii District's Fukushima children's project. Meanwhile others mingled, renewing old friendships and making new friends with

(cont'd on next page)



Ministers and other attendees use our new English service book at the Saturday morning service conducted entirely in English.

perhaps can serve as a template to make our services more inclusive among non-Japanese speaking people.

Following the service, attendees adjourned to Otani Center for the panel discussion program. The Goenki theme was "*Hongan: Awakening to Your Deepest Wish*," and each of the speakers was asked to talk about how they overcame their challenges. The speakers didn't disappoint, starting with Masago Asai and her nuclear-free, world peace message, which she says is achievable when we attain inner peace. Her talk was accompanied by a powerful video she put together, incorporating striking images of the effects of nuclear detonations.



Banquet entertainment included (left) hula by Maya, Masago and Mika Asai and (right) ukulele jamming by the Honoka and Azita duo.



Souvenir photo of officiants, members and guests at the Hawaii District Goenki service held on Sunday, Nov. 6, at the Betsuin.

people from other Oahu temples, neighbor islands, U. S. mainland, South America and Japan.

Bishop Kawawata greeted attendees with a welcome message, followed by remarks by Chief Administrator of Shinshu Otani-ha Bishop Koi Sato'o. Then it was time for "Itadakimasu!" and a sparkling apple cider *kanpai* before dinner. Attendees had pre-selected their menu choice of misoyaki salmon, beef or vegetarian, or for children, chicken.

For after-dinner entertainment, Honoka & Azita electrified the audience with their ukulele styling while Masago, Mika and Maya Asai entranced all with their graceful hula movements. A beautiful original hula rendition of Shinshu Shuka was the perfect cap to the evening's festivities.

Sunday's ceremonies began with Hawaii District's formal Shinran Shonin 750th memorial service, complete with chanting of Amidakyo and Shoshinge, and gagaku music performed by the Hawaii Gagaku Society, in the Betsuin hondo. Overseas District Abbot Choyu Otani delivered his welcome message, followed by Dr.



Chanting the Amida-kyo sutra during Goenki.

Conway's dharma talk and Bishop Kawawata's words of appreciation. After a group photo, everyone returned to the hondo for the *kikyoshiki*, or confirmation ceremony, when six people—Ivan Lui, Dennis Kajjura, Stanlely Sato, Paul Briggs, Jay Fischer and Leina Ise—received their Buddhist names.

Moving to Otani Center, the Hawaii Gagaku Society performed a ceremonial dance to gagaku music before an authentic Hawaiian food aloha lunch. Betsuin president Faye Shigemura welcomed the guests to the luncheon and Bishop Noriaki Ito of Los Angeles presented a congratulatory message.

Just prior to officially closing the Goenki and centennial weekend, the Betsuin's Dharma Hawaiians ukulele band led a sing-along, ending with the traditional "Hawaii Aloha."

We expressed our gratitude to all, bade our farewells and felt confident that we had observed the Goenki with appropriate reverence and successfully celebrated the Betsuin's 100th anniversary, remembering the contributions of the generations before us. As the last folding chairs and tables in Otani Center were put away, one could almost hear the collective sigh of relief that the busy commemorative weekend was complete.

Fortunately, our next centennial is a hundred years away.

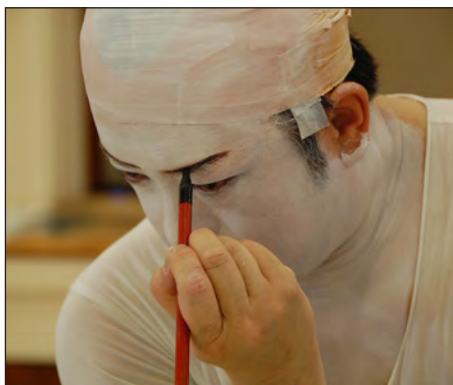
Many hands helped in putting the combined Goenki observance and centennial together. We will list names of those we'd like to acknowledge in a subsequent issue of Wa and also in our planned centennial publication.

Japan and Hawaii linked with traditional art of Japanese dance

Fujima Takamasa performed with members of his world-renowned Institute of Japanese Dance and Culture at a special public show at Higashi Hongwanji on Nov. 19.

The final public appearance at Otani Center for an appreciative audience followed shows in Kona, at Orvis Auditorium at UH-Manoa and the Consul General of Japan's official residence in Honolulu.

Besides performing Japanese dances *Usagi* and *Sarutori*, Fujima



Besides dance performances, Takamasa Fujima and troupe members demonstrated kabuki makeup and kimono dressing.

also fascinated attendees with his skill at the time-consuming art of kabuki makeup. Eyebrows are a key part of kabuki acting and he spent almost half the time adjusting the size, shape and coloring of his brows.

Missed seeing one of the exciting performances sponsored by the Japan Foundation? Watch for his return to Hawaii in the next year or two.

Hawaii District 2017 calendars available at the Betsuin office

The Higashi Hongwanji Hawaii District calendars for 2017 have been distributed. The *Awakening to our Deepest Wish* basic theme continues, challenging us to seek and learn each day throughout the year, helping to enrich our single one community.

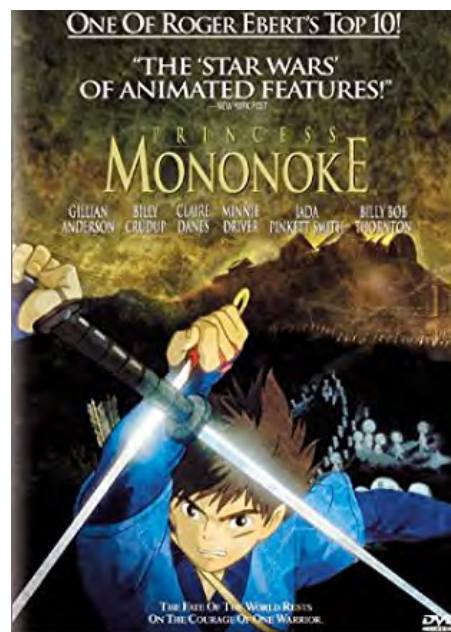
As in the past, we appreciate any donations to help defray the costs of printing and mailing the calendars. Additional copies are available, while supplies last, at the Betsuin office as well as other Higashi Hongwanji temples.

Princess Mononoke a visual treat for movie lovers of all ages

Princess Mononoke is a fantasy animation, but if you think it's a "cartoon" meant only for children, you're in for a big surprise. In fact, its PG-13 rating (due to intense action) makes it obvious this is more than a kids' movie. This intriguing tale about the relationship between nature and human beings, filled with mystical spirits and visual artistry, can be enjoyed at different levels by viewers of all ages. This epic anime by Hayao Miyazaki broke all box office records in Japan when it was released in 1997.

Ashitaka, a young man living in mountain village, is cursed by an anger- and hatred-filled demon. While on a journey westward to find a way to remove the curse, he reaches the village of Tatara, where the inhabitants destroy the forests while producing iron. Ashitaka finds San, who was raised by wolves and called Princess Mononoke, to challenge the destructive humans...

The film won Best Picture at the 52nd Mainichi Film Awards and 21st



Japan Academy Awards. Movie critic Roger Ebert gave it four stars when it was released in the U.S., describing it as one of the best movies of the year and most visually inventive films he had ever seen.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., Dec. 27, 135 min. Color. Japanese audio, English subtitles. Free admission. Light refreshments, or bring to share!

もののけ姫 (もののけひめ)

自然と人間の関係をテーマとし続けてきた宮崎駿の集大成的作品で、それまでの日本映画の歴代興行記録を塗り替える大ヒットとなった。山里に住む若者アシタカは、怒りと憎しみにより“タタリ神”と化した猪神から呪いをかけられてしまう。呪いを解く術を求めて旅に出るアシタカはやがて、西方の地で“タタラ”の村にたどり着く。エボシ御前が率いるその村では、鉄を造り続けていたが、同時にそれは神々の住む森を破壊することでもあった。そして、そんなタタラ達に戦いを挑むサンが存在をアシタカは知る。人の子でありながら山犬に育てられた彼女は“もののけ姫”と呼ばれていた...

賞歴：第52回毎日映画コンクール日本映画大賞、日本映画ファン賞、アニメーション映画賞。第21回日本アカデミー賞最優秀作品賞、その他。

監督：是枝裕和、公開：1997年、カラー、言語：日本語、字幕：英語、映時間：135分、12月27日(火)午後6:30時、入場無料。



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TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

DECEMBER

12/4	Sun	9:30 am	HBC Bodhi Day service at Jodo Mission (No Sunday service at Betsuin)
12/8	Thu	7 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English
12/11	Sun	10 am	Bodhi Day & Shotsuki memorial service Sunday school
12/11	Sun	12 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese
12/13	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
12/18	Sun	10 am	Sunday service/Sunday school
12/18	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting Fukuhara conference room
12/18	Sun	12 pm	Art of Paper Folding class Otani Center
12/20	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Betsuin
12/24	Sat	9 am	Mochi pounding
12/25	Sun		No Sunday service at Betsuin
12/27	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
12/27	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Princess Mononoke</i> (1997)
12/28	Wed	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service
12/30	Sat	9 am	Oosōji year-end temple cleaning
12/30	Sat	~11 am	Ehime Maru Memorial cleaning/lunch
12/31	Sun	5:30 pm	Year-end service - <i>Joya-e</i> <i>Toshikoshi</i> soba after service

JANUARY

1/1	Mon	10 am	New Year's Day service - <i>Shūshō-e</i> <i>Ozōni</i> after service
1/8	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service/ Sunday school
1/8	Sun	12 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Fukuhara conference room
1/10	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice Fukuhara conference room
1/12	Thu	7 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English Fukuhara conference room
1/15	Sun	10 am	New Year's family service
1/15	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting Fukuhara conference room
1/17	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Kaneohe
1/22	Sun	10 am	Sunday service/Sunday school
1/24	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice Fukuhara conference room
1/24	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Azuki</i> (2015) Fukuhara conference room
1/28	Sat	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service
1/29	Sun	10 am	Sunday service/Sunday school

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