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‘WA’
harmony

HIGASHI HONGWANJI HAWAII BETSUIN BULLETIN

3
March 2017

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 501(c)(3) exempt organization

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Wa is published monthly by Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for its members and friends. Comments, articles and other items for publication consideration are welcomed.

Editor: Ken Saiki

A transcript of the dharma message
presented by Rev. Koen Kikuchi at
Sunday service on Jan. 29, 2017



nenju

What is *onenju*?
What is it for?
Why should I have *onenju*?

The other day, at the end of a service, a woman came to me and asked about my *onenju*, or prayer beads. *Onenju* are also called *juzu* or *ojuzu*. The woman stated that Catholics use a rosary when they pray. How about Buddhist beads? Why do you have such beads? I explained a little bit about *onenju*. So, I would like to share the meaning of *onenju* in today's dharma talk.

Does everyone have an *onenju*? It is generally understood that one should bring an *onenju* when attending a Buddhist service. Or, one is told that bringing an *onenju* is a rule of a temple, denomination, or this religion.

In the past, when adults and ministers were strict, I heard that they used to say, "You don't have to think about the reason, just bring it. That is the correct way." But now, I have a contrary mind, and I am not such an obedient person, so I always ask why I have to do something in a certain way. Or, I don't like to be forced by someone, so I don't want to just follow what someone tells me. I think we always need to think about why we do something. Questioning is very important.

The origin of prayer beads comes from old India, or old Hinduism. Later, Shakyamuni Buddha also used prayer beads. In a Buddhism sutra, there is a story about Shakyamuni Buddha and a king. The king asked Shakyamuni Buddha how he could govern his country peacefully. Then, Shakyamuni Buddha taught the king to make prayer beads to meditate about, think about, and recite *The Three Treasures*, which are the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Then, he could attain calmness and relief in his mind without any blind passions, or *bonno*, so that he would be able to govern a country peacefully. Holding prayer beads was suggested in this sutra, and that was for counting the number of times one completes the cycle to meditate about, think about, and recite *The Three Treasures*. Meditating, thinking and reciting is one bead.

The prayer beads spread to China and Japan, where they are traditionally used to count the number of times a mantra is recited, breaths are taken while meditating, prostrations are made, or repetitions are made of a Buddha's name. Because they are used for counting something, in Japan the string of beads are called *juzu* (数珠), which means "beads for counting."

But earlier I called this an *onenju*. So, why do we call prayer beads *onenju*?

Onenju (お念珠) means "beads for meditating about Buddha or reciting Buddha's name," not for counting something. This is because our denomination, Jodo Shin Buddhism, doesn't require a specific number of Nembutsu. The teaching doesn't say how many times we have to recite, but it emphasizes more about how and why we do Nembutsu. So, we don't call prayer beads *juzu*, but rather we call them as *onenju*.

(cont'd on p. 2)



Rev. Koen Kikuchi

ONENJU (cont'd from p. 1)

Then, even though we don't have to count Nembutsu, why do we hold *onenju* when we attend a Buddhist service? I think there are two reasons. One is "proper attire" and the other is "attitude."

As an example for "proper attire," when we attend a formal reception or formal party, we wear formal attire. To hold prayer beads is the same as this. When we attend a Buddhist service, we have prayer beads. Rennyō Shōnin said that without carrying the prayer beads, it is as if they grasped the Buddha with bare hands. The master certainly never said that we should venerate the Buddha by discarding the beads.

In considering "attitude," Rennyō Shōnin mentioned that to hold the beads is to show respect for the Buddha. This is the correct "attitude" to hold the beads. We always hold the beads with Gasshō. We put the beads on our hands in Gasshō. This is for expressing respect for others.

Let me give you an example. When we do Gasshō, or put our hands together, it means "I respect you and I don't want to offend you." When we fight with others, our hands are not together in the style of boxing, judo or karate. So, to hold the prayer beads means to show respect for the Buddha and others.

When we show our respect, we do something respectfully. When I was in Japan, my teacher taught me that our human nature is like this: 「両手ですることを片手でするようになり、片手ですることを足でするようになる」 or when we first enter a room, we open the sliding door with using both hands. But, as we get used to it, we open the door with one hand. Finally, we open the door with using a foot. This is what my teacher taught me of human nature again and again.

By the way, what does the string of prayer beads mean? As you know, each bead shows our blind passion or deluded mind such as our three poisons. So, the meaning of holding the beads is to

INVITATION

The Board
of Directors of
Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
cordially invite you to attend
Spring Ohigan Service
Sunday, March 19, 2017
10:00 a.m.
1685 Alaneo Street
Honolulu, Hawaii
Dharma message by Rev. Dr. Michael Conway
Lecturer, Otani University, Kyoto
Otoki lunch immediately following the service.

ご招待状

心地よい天候が続く中、皆様にはお元気で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。ご家族で一緒にお参り下さい。

春のお彼岸法要法要

日時 2017年3月19日 午前10時
法話 マイケル コンウェイ 博士 (講師、大谷大学、京都)

*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。

hold our own blind passions.

But there may be many interpretations. Holding the beads helps us to remember that we are filled with blind passions. In our daily lives, we forget about our blind passions, and become self-centered and think in a one-sided way.

But the beads are a reminder for us. The blind passions themselves are not good or bad. They are human nature. The blind passions will become treasures for us. The value and quality will be transformed without any changes in appearance. Each bead is linked by the string of deepest wishes from Buddha to make us realize the truth and the reality. And the linked

beads of Buddha's wish encircles and ties our Gasshō hands.

This is why we put *onenju* around our palms when we do Gasshō. An *onenju* tries to keep our Gasshō lifestyle. It says, "Don't forget you are filled with blind passion...keep putting your hands together...create a distance from self-centeredness...this is the only way to connect with the truth!"

These are the meanings of holding *onenju* when attending a Buddhist service.

Thank you very much for gathering for today's service.

Gasshō,
Rev. Koen Kikuchi



Marian Tsuji and Ray Uyema became new members of the Betsuin board of directors.

New directors elected, members celebrate at general meeting- New Year party at the Betsuin

There will be new faces at Betsuin board meetings as two new directors were unanimously elected at the general membership meeting held Feb. 26 at Otani Center.

The new directors are Ray Uyema and Marian Tsuji, who, like all other Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii officers and directors, are elected to serve a two-year term.

We will feature the new directors in future issues of Wa so that you can know them better. Meanwhile, we welcome both aboard and look forward to their contributions and insights to help the Betsuin navigate through its second century in Hawaii.

Once the business portion of the general meeting was done and over with, it was time for the annual *shinnen enkai*, or New Year gathering, starting



Rev. Kita and Hana, Kokoro & Mai Kikuchi of the K & K Family Dance troupe let loose and perform Pikotaro's PPAP viral video routine.

with some serious grinding, with the buffet menu including Chinese chicken salad and cold ginger chicken in honor of this *toridoshi* Year of the Rooster.

Following a skit by the Sunday school kids, the Dharma Hawaiians ukulele band played a medley of favorite Japanese songs—from *Haru ga Kita* to *Kan Kan Musume*—with audience sing-along.

Ed Nakano gave Frank Sinatra and Perry Como some competition before Rev. Kita and the entire Kikuchi family took the stage with "I have a pen..."

Super volunteers Carl Okuda and Joyce Masaki, fixtures on the temple grounds, were surprised with a special gift card and sun hats for their work.

With valuable food and other gifts awarded for lucky numbers, as well as tons of Lucky Me! and bingo prizes, there was something for everyone. No one was allowed to go home empty-handed.

Mahalo to all who contributed and participated in this year's fun event!

Materials available from public lecture & joint dharma gathering

If you weren't at the Feb. 3-4 presentations by Dr. Nobuo Haneda, director of the Maida Center of Buddhism in Berkeley, you missed some interesting discussion about the similarities of Shakyamuni and Shinran and how Buddhism is basically a teaching of self-examination.

While not the same as being there for Dr. Haneda's live delivery, we have outlines and other materials you may borrow that may help get you up to speed. Contact the temple office at 531-9088 for more information.

The Makioka Sisters: "...a vitalizing mix of emotions..." —New Yorker

This lyrical 1985 adaptation of the beloved novel by Junichiro Tanizaki was a late-career triumph for director Kon Ichikawa.

Structured around the changing of the seasons, *The Makioka Sisters* follows the lives of four siblings (Keiko Kishi, Yoshiko Sakuma, Sayuri Yoshinaga, Yuko Kotegawa) who have taken on

their family's kimono business in the years leading up to World War II. The two oldest have husbands (Juzo Itami, Koji Ishizaka) who married into the family but according to tradition, the youngest sister cannot wed until the third, conservative and terribly shy sister finds a husband.

This graceful study of a family at a turning point in history is a poignant evocation of changing times and fading customs, shot in rich, vivid colors.

Showtime: 6:30 pm, Tues., March 28, 140 min. Color. Japanese audio, English subtitles. Free admission. Light refreshments, or bring to share.



細雪 (ささめゆき)

谷崎潤一郎の同名小説を名匠・市川崑監督が映画化したドラマ。ある旧家の4姉妹それぞれの一年間の物語を、三女の縁談話を中心に、四季折々の風物を織り交ぜて描く。昭和13年の春。京都嵯峨の料亭。旧家・蒔岡の4姉妹が花見の宴で一同に会する。長女・鶴子（岸恵子）と次女・幸子（佐久間良子）はいまだ未婚の三女・雪子（吉永小百合）と末娘・妙子（古手川祐子）の結婚を気にかける毎日。おとなしい雪子は親類の勧めで次々と見合いをするが本人の気が進まず一向にまとまらない。一方、奔放な妙子も恋人が急逝し酒浸りになる…。

公開：1985年、カラー、言語：日本語、字幕：英語、映時間：140分、3月28日(火)午後6:30時、入場無料。

SHINSHU CENTER OF AMERICA (HIGASHI HONGANJI)
PUBLIC SEMINAR ON SHIN BUDDHISM



Liberation through Amida's Wisdom

***Considerations of the Twelve Names in
Praise of Immeasurable Light***

Rev. Dr. Michael Conway

Lecturer, Otani University, Japan

Saturday, March 18, 2017, 1:00 pm

Free and Open to the Public

No background in Buddhism is required.

The Seminar will be followed by a Q&A.

Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

1685 Alaneo Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Rev. Dr. Michael Conway

Rev. Dr. Conway was born in Chicago in 1976. He graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in History in 1997. Soon after, he started attending the Buddhist Temple of Chicago in 1998. In 2003, he entered Otani University's Graduate School in the Shin Buddhist Studies Major. There, he served as Departmental Assistant in Otani University's Department for Shin Buddhist Studies from 2009 to 2011. He completed his Ph.D. in Shin Buddhist Studies in 2011. He served as the Managing Editor of *The Eastern Buddhist* academic journal from 2011 to 2015. He has been a Full Time Lecturer at Otani University since 2015. Rev. Dr. Conway is also an ordained minister of the Shinshū Ōtani-ha (Higashi Honganji).

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TEMPLE ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

MARCH

3/5	Sun	10 am	Shōtsuki memorial service/ Sunday school
3/5	Sun	12 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rev. Kikuchi in Japanese
3/9	Thu	7 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English
3/12	Sun	10 am	Sunday service/Sunday school
3/14	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
3/18	Sat	1 pm	Shinshu Center of America public seminar <i>"Liberation through Amida's Wisdom"</i> Dr. Michael Conway at Otani Center
3/19	Sun	10 am	Ohigan service/Sunday school
3/19	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting
3/21	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Kaneohe
3/26	Sun	10 am	Rennyō Shōnin memorial service/ Sunday school
3/26	Sun	12 pm	Omigaki polishing of altar items Volunteers needed to help
3/26	Sun	12 pm	Art of Paper Folding class led by Jeanne Kawawata
3/28	Tue	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service
3/28	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice
3/28	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Makioka Sisters</i> (1983)

APRIL

4/2	Sun	10 am	HBC Buddha Day service Jodo Mission of Hawaii, 1538 Kewalo St. (No service at Betsuin)
4/9	Sun	10 am	Hanamatsuri service/Sunday school
4/9	Sun	12 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in Japanese Fukuhara conference room
4/11	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice Fukuhara conference room
4/13	Thu	7 pm	The Larger Sutra study class led by Rinban Kawawata in English Fukuhara conference room
4/16	Sun	10 am	Shotsuki service/Sunday school
4/18	Tue	7 pm	O-kō: Dharma discussion at Betsuin
4/23	Sun	10 am	Sunday service/Brainstorming
4/23	Sun	12 pm	Betsuin board meeting Fukuhara conference room
4/25	Tue	3 pm	Ukulele class/band practice Fukuhara conference room
4/25	Tue	6:30 pm	Movie night: <i>Key of Life</i> (2012) Fukuhara conference room
4/28	Fri	10 am	Shinran Shōnin memorial service
4/30	Sun	10 am	Sunday service/Sunday school

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