



JHO

July 2020



Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Building Healthy Sanghas: Embracing Generosity and Openness

Updated COVID-19 Guidelines

Effective June 1, 2020, Hawaii County has allowed the reopening of places of worship subject to Federal, State, and County restrictions and physical distancing. While we eagerly anticipate the day when we can safely gather in person again, our journey will not be quick or linear. We will base our decisions on good science, do our best to plan prudently for a couple of months at a time, and build flexibility into every plan.

Based on current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and connecting this guidance with Buddhist teachings and values, the gradual reopening of our community activities will progress carefully and deliberately. We expect that progress will not be linear and we anticipate moving back and forth through stages of openness in response to this public health crisis.

Our Guiding Buddhist Values:

Lovingkindness. We will prioritize the welfare and wellbeing of our Sangha, and the safety of those most vulnerable to infection, as well as the general public health, based on a heart of compassion.

Interdependence. We will act with the understanding that our thoughts, words, and actions, affect not only ourselves but also the lives of others.

Benefiting self and others. We are all responsible for one another. We will “open up” as slowly as we need to ensure the mutual health and safety of everyone.

Operating Guidelines Effective July 1, 2020

- Temple office is open for in-person business.
 - All visitors must comply with proper hygiene, mask-wearing, and physical distancing guidelines.
- Nokotsudo (Columbarium) is open for visitation.
 - No more than two (2) persons shall be in the columbarium at any given time.
 - Offering of incense is not allowed.
 - All visitors must comply with proper hygiene, mask-wearing, and physical distancing guidelines.
- Continue holding online services and programs.
- Committees and other groups continue to meet online.
- Private Funerals and Memorial Services are allowed in the temple main hall (Hondo)
 - No more than twenty-four (24) individuals in the main hall (Hondo) at any given time.

- Please wear a mask or face covering at all times.
- Please sanitize your hands upon entry.
- Please practice physical distancing of at least 6 Feet with people not of your household.
- Please sit only in designated pews (You may sit together if you are in the same household).
- Please refrain from touching areas and things unnecessarily.
- There will be no congregational chanting or singing in order to prevent transmission.
- Incense offering has been modified to reduce transmission.
- All visitors attending a service will have their temperature taken and must fill out a Wellness Questionnaire before entering the temple.
- If desired, Kona Hongwanji can livestream funeral and memorial services for family and friends who are not able to attend in person due to occupancy limits, are high-risk or kupuna, or are not able to travel.
- If desired, funerals and memorial services may be conducted virtually and live-streamed to family and friends so in-person attendance may be avoided entirely.
- Rev. Blayne is available for in-person or virtual End-of-Life Services.
 - Rinju Gongyō (service conducted at end-of-life)
 - Makuragyō (service conducted immediately following the passing of a loved one)
- Rev. Blayne is available for in-person or virtual pastoral care and counseling.

When Visiting the Temple

The following hygiene rules must be observed by all persons visiting the temple for any reason:

- Wash with soap or sanitize hands when entering and exiting temple facilities.
- Wear face mask/face covering at all times.
- Maintain six (6) feet of physical distancing.
- Items used by multiple people are not permitted, e.g., Service Books, Gatha Books, incense container lids, shared nenju, etc.
- If you feel sick, stay at home!

Kona Hongwanji strongly recommends that High-Risk* populations and kupuna continue to stay at home.

**The Center for Disease Control defines high-risk populations as people 65 years and older, living in a nursing home or long-term care facility, with chronic lung disease, severe asthma, serious heart conditions, who are immunocompromised, who have severe obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or liver disease. For details, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>*

During these challenging times, our Sangha has never been closed. We journey through life embraced by Amida Buddha wherever we are. We can go to the Dharma for guidance anytime and anywhere. We are Sangha through our actions, not by being in a temple. Caring for our community means a thoughtful and careful reopening. This is how we care for our 'Ohana. Mahalo for your patience and understanding.

For assistance, please contact the temple office at (808) 323-2993 or konahongwanji@twc.com.

President's Message

As we experience troubling times across our country, I hope everyone is staying safe & healthy as we move toward what will hopefully be better days to come. Along those lines, a committee has been formed to explore the timeline and procedures for once again opening our temple and its facilities to in-person services and activities. The safety and health of our sangha members will be the primary principle for this committee and will guide all its decisions. Guidelines from Federal, State & County authorities, as well as Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, will all be considered in the new procedures. As we move toward establishing these new procedures, please continue to make use of the various online and virtual services available to you. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the members of our temple who have volunteered to serve on the committee.

Speaking of activities, our food distribution events are continuing to assist our sangha members through the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Our next scheduled event is on June 27, 2020. The generosity of our sangha members in providing financial support, donating items to be distributed, and assisting with the physical distribution itself continues to impress upon me the strength of our sangha and our willingness to help one another through this difficult time. Again, my deepest appreciation for all who join to help in this project.

As always, please contact the temple if you find yourself in need of spiritual or other assistance as we go forward.

In Gassho,

Joseph Gusman
Kyodan President

A Lotus Blooms in Mud: Our Life of Awakening Rev. Blayne Higa

The lotus flower is an important symbol in Buddhism because it represents the life of awakening taught by the Buddha. It is said that the lotus only grows in mud and not in clean water. Similarly, our awakening arises from the muck of this world of delusion. We all know how much more we learn from our failures and times of difficulty. The Dharma teaches us that dissatisfaction and distress are inevitable and can be the spiritual nourishment for our lives. The troubles we face are like the mud which enables the lotus flower to bloom beautifully.

“Lotus flowers emerging from the mud” symbolizes the process of development and growth which enables us to become true and real human beings. A Buddhist life of awakening is founded upon deep self-reflection and a spirit of discovery and wonder. The Dharma asks us to face our troubles sincerely and directly with a compassionate heart. This spiritual inquiry will often take us to hidden and uncomfortable places. However, we are not alone on this journey because our way is illuminated by the Buddha’s light of wisdom and compassion.



Shinran Shonin describes Amida Buddha’s guiding light in the following poem from the *Hymns of the Dharma Ages*,

*It is a great torch in the long night of ignorance;
Do not sorrow that your eyes of wisdom are dark.
It is a ship on the vast ocean of birth-and-death;
Do not grieve that your obstructions of karmic evil are heavy.*

Amida's light helps to reveal the mud of our lives and enables us to transform our ignorance into wisdom. Waking up is a lifelong journey of discovery about ourselves and our world. The past several months have been quite a journey as we have faced the pandemic and civil unrest in our nation. What have we learned about ourselves and our world? How has the mud of our lives nurtured our development and growth?

I wrote the following reflection shortly after the murder of George Floyd and it shares some moments of awakening that have led me to explore my own hidden and uncomfortable places. I hope it offers you a moment of critical self-reflection as we face our many challenges together.

I woke up and over 100,000 (mostly people of color) had died of COVID-19.

I woke up and George Floyd (a black man) was killed by a white police officer who took a knee on his neck for 8 minutes.

I woke up to cities burning because people are tired of injustice and inequality.

I woke up to protesters being shot for exercising their rights.

I woke up to a President who called for fellow citizens to be shot for lawfully protesting.

I woke up to white protesters with guns allowed to enter a State Capitol and disrupt a legislature in session without penalty.

I woke up to a President who called COVID-19 a "Chinese Virus" and Asian-Americans have been attacked.

I woke up to people feeling outraged that they should actually give a damn about other people by simply wearing a mask.

I woke up to the headline Two Deadly Viruses are Killing Americans: COVID-19 and Racism.

I woke up to what is "normal" in America.

I woke up to the truth of white supremacy which is destroying our nation.

I woke up to realize my place as a minority in America.

I woke up crying Namu Amida Butsu for all who are suffering.

I woke up crying Namu Amida Butsu for myself.

I woke up crying Namu Amida Butsu for the healing of our communities.

I woke up crying Namu Amida Butsu because all I can do is entrust.

Every day I wake up to the working of greed, hatred, and ignorance in our world.

Every day I wake up to the working of wisdom and compassion which has turned my heart toward justice and love.

Every day I wake up to Namu Amida Butsu.

Every day I wake up ready to help build the America that should be.

Every day I wake up ready to try.

May we continue to learn and grow along this remarkable journey of life guided by the working of wisdom and compassion. Namu Amida Butsu.

Compassionate Care



The Dharma offers guidance and support for our whole lives, especially during times of difficulty. I am here to be a compassionate presence and companion to you on life's journey. I am available for pastoral care and counseling via phone or videoconference. I am also available for bedside end-of-life services and grief care. Please contact me at 808-323-2993 or for emergencies only at 808-383-9153.

Aloha, Rev. Blayne

Dharma Family Zoom Service

We recently held our very first virtual service with over twenty people participating from Kona and all the way from the East Coast! We had a wonderful time chanting sutra, singing gatha, and hearing the Dharma together from the safety and comfort of our homes. We even had an opportunity to catch up with Dharma friends we haven't seen in a while during our virtual coffee hour after service. We plan to hold Dharma Family Services on Zoom during the months of July and August. Upcoming services will be on Sunday, July 5 and July 19 beginning at 10am. Rev. Blayne will share service information in his weekly email updates. Please contact the office to be included in our email list to receive temple updates and information. We look forward to seeing you online!



Helpful COVID-19 Resources

You may find the following community resources helpful for keeping informed during this pandemic:

- **Information:** For current coronavirus-related information go to the Hawaii State Department of Health website at <https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/>.
- **Food resources:** Hawaii's Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) has compiled an extensive list of food resources (food banks, food delivery services, farm link programs) organized by county. Find the "Hawaii Food Resources" PDF file linked prominently at hawaiiadrc.org. Or call the ADRC at (808) 643-2372.
- **211 hotline:** Aloha United Way 211 is "Hawaii's only comprehensive, statewide community information and referral service." For personalized help connecting to services or getting answers to your questions about COVID-19, you can call 211, email info211@auw.org, text (877) 275-6569. There's even an online chat option and searchable database at auw211.org.

Weekly Sangha Talk Story

Rev. Blayne has been hosting a weekly virtual talk story session for Sangha members to connect and to share how life is going during the pandemic. The Sangha Talk Story happens every Thursday evening at 7:00pm over Zoom. If you would like to participate, please email Rev. Blayne at bhiga@honpahi.org to be sent the meeting link each week.

Be Prepared for Hurricane Season

Hurricane season runs from June 1st to November 30th and it is important to be prepared. Here are a few helpful resources to stay informed and to be ready for emergencies.

Hawaii County Civil Defense

Website: <https://www.hawaiicounty.gov/departments/civil-defense>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hawaiicountycivildefense/>

On Twitter:

https://twitter.com/CivilDefenseHI?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

Sign up for free emergency alerts: <https://member.everbridge.net/index/371914103062563#/signup>

Statewide Emergency Management Information (HI-EMA):

Website: <http://dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/>

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HawaiiEMA/>

On Twitter: https://twitter.com/hawaii_ema?lang=en

Hawaiian Electric Emergency Preparedness Handbook:

<https://www.hawaiianelectric.com/safety-and-outages/storm-center/emergency-preparedness-handbook>

Kona Hongwanji Preschool Accepting Students!

The Kona Hongwanji Preschool is accepting students for the Summer starting on July 20th and for the new school year beginning on August 3rd. The staff has worked hard to ensure a healthy and safe learning environment based on DHS guidelines. Please encourage your family and friends to apply. Contact our Preschool Director, Leanne Abe at KHP72016@outlook.com or at 808-323-3737 for more information.

Everyday Dharma

A poem from *Buddhist Voices From Metta* published by the Buddhist Study Center Press:

Behold the Buddha's Breath

By Henry R. Milander

Surrounding us, giving life.
Becoming empty, we become full.
Is this not Buddha nature?

The spirit of the Buddha is like the air.
It surrounds us, yet we take it for granted.
It enters us and gives us life and strength.
It never stops flowing through us
Unless blocked by self-ness.
When our lungs are empty there is room for fresh air.
When I empty my mind
There is room for Buddha nature.

A reflection from the article *How to Be a Good Citizen in Troubled Times* in Lion's Roar Magazine:

Believe in Possibility

by Ira Sukrungruang

A few days before my son, Bodhi, was born, a man entered a nightclub in Orlando and extinguished forty-nine lives. I shut down. I couldn't bear to hear about another shooting, another bombing, another death. I suffocated. I was going to be a father, and the thought of my son coming into this world of violence and hate shook me to the core. But he came. And he was beautiful.

This is our world, this mix of tragedy and joy.

When I look at my son, I see possibility. I see a future. It is bright. And it is dark. I can't shield him from this. The American journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote to his son, "I would have you be a conscious citizen of this terrible and beautiful world." I want the same for Bodhi.

There is nothing we can do to stave off pain. It will come. But how we handle ourselves in the aftermath is a truer definition of who we are as citizens. Awareness. Open-mindedness. I want my boy to believe in possibility. To hope. To strive for something better.

Read the full article at:

https://www.lionsroar.com/how-to-be-a-good-citizen/?utm_content=buffer3d07f&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com/lionsroarbuddhism&utm_campaign=buffer&fbclid=IwAR1a_3HeXP_rT8gGKSdK4PaRFSjKsNUQlvORjl-l4gZler2G_HWEU65IYtc

Kona Hongwanji Featured in Hongwanji Newspaper

The July 1st edition of the *Hongwanji Shinpo* features an article about Kona Hongwanji's Food Distribution Program and Hilo Hongwanji's Hot Meals Program serving our temple members during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The article celebrates Dana (Selfless Giving) in action by our amazing volunteers. Mahalo for your support!

外出禁止令の中、高齢メンバーなど気遣い ハワイの寺院が弁当や食品提供

ダーナの心で絆つなぐ



ハワイ州にあるハワイ開教区のヒロ別院（西山真道輪番寺）とコナ本願寺（比嘉アレイ開教使）は、新型コロナウイルス感染症拡大より、4月にハワイ州にも外出禁止令が出され、人々のつながりが遮断されることや、外出がままならない高齢者が多いことを考慮して、弁当や食料品を無料提供を続けている。

ヒロ別院

信徒に無料で提供している（写真）。



ヒロ別院では、シニア・シニアYBAのケビンYBA（仏若青年会）が、サカイ会長は「政府のダーナの实践として毎週 自宅待機期間中、外出で日曜日、約300食の弁 きたない高齢メンバーの担当を準備しメンバー門 めに食事を届けよう」と提

案したところ、会員が心 受け渡しし、高齢で外出 が困難なメンバーには、 から貸出して、この 自宅まで配達している。 の活動によって、高齢メ ンバーの外出機会が減 り、感染リスクが減るこ とにもつながります。こ の活動は今までもおそやメ ンバーのために長くして いる。 西山輪番は「外出禁止 令は徐々に緩和されてい きてくれた高齢メンバー への恩返し。アロハ精神 の表れ」と話し、高校生 の息子のネットくんも初 回から一緒に手伝ってい る。 毎回、会員が別院に集 まり、同じメニューにな らないよう献立を変え て調理。弁当は、別院で

このダーナ活動は、別院 ぐ大変意義深いもの。お 念仏のご縁を通して互い に助まし合い、共に困難 を乗り越えていきたい」と 話している。 活動はハワイ州外出禁 止令が解除されるまで統 ける予定。



コナ本願寺

コナ本願寺では毎月か ら4回にわたり、メンバ ーに食料品を無料で提供 している。 あるメンバーが、食品 販売に携わる友人から 「お寺なら、買い物に出 かけられない人にも配っ

ていたたけるのでは。飲 食店などが休業して余っ た食料品を安く提供した い」と提案を受けたのが きっかけ。すぐに活動を スタートさせ、比嘉開教 使は、電話などでメンバ ーの健康状態などを確認 する際、食料品が無料配 布を告知していった。

受け渡しは同寺での下 ライフスルー形式。当日 は、有志15人が集まり、 購入した冷凍鶏モロ肉、 豆腐、卵とパンの箱詰め 作業を行う（写真）。回 を重ねることに企業、 野菜を作るメンバーなど から食品提供の申し出が 増え、現在は100箱 ほどを準備している。

受け取った高齢メンバ ーは「様子を気遣う電話 をいただき、さらに食料 品をいただき感謝してい る」と喜ぶ。また「外出 できない高齢者のために 自発的に配達するメンバ ーもあるなど、互いに助 けあう姿も見られた。

比嘉開教使は「困難に 直面している地域社会へ の奉仕活動として、メン バーのみならず、寄付 業を手伝ってくださる、 頭下がる思いです。ほ びい。大変体が軽くな が、共力を合わせて、この 状況乗り越えていきたく

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NIRVANA DAY, HAIB BUDDHA DAY, AND MARCH SERVICES

Total - \$852.00

ESHINNI DAY

Total - \$516.00

ANNUAL MEETING

Total - \$1,589.00

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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***Please let us know if
there are any
corrections.***

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