



JHO

January 2021



Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect

Virtual Dharma Family Services

Please join us for our virtual services in January. All online services will begin at 10:00 am on Zoom (unless otherwise noted). A link to join the service will be emailed to you a few days before. Please contact the office to be included in our email list to receive weekly temple updates and information. We look forward to seeing you online! Please consider making an offertory donation for our virtual services just like attending an in-person service. Mahalo!



HAPPY NEW YEAR!



New Year's Day Service

Friday, January 1, 2021 at 10:00 am

The first day of the new year is a time to reflect and, with renewed dedication, to endeavor to live a life of gratitude and joy within the compassionate embrace of Amida Buddha. Let's begin 2021 by rededicating ourselves to hearing and sharing the Dharma as Ohana!

Hōonkō Candlelight Service

Saturday, January 16, 2021 at 7:00 pm

Guest Speaker: Rev. Candice Shibata

Resident Minister of the Buddhist Church of Stockton

This observance marks the death of Shinran Shōnin (May 21, 1173-January 16, 1263), the founder of Shin Buddhism. Hōonkō literally means "Dharma gathering for acknowledging indebtedness" and is observed to express our profound gratitude to Shinran for sharing the Nembutsu teachings. This is an opportunity to reflect deeply on how we encounter the compassionate Vow of Amida Buddha and realize the entrusting heart of shinjin in our lives.

35th Annual Ellison Onizuka and Space Shuttle Challenger Memorial Service

Sunday, January 24, 2021 at 10:00 am

Guest Speaker: NASA Astronaut E. Michael Fincke (Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Ret.)

For Assistance

Office Clerk: Ramah DeMello (Phone: 808-323-2993 Email: konahongwanji@twc.com)

Resident Minister: Rev. Blayne Higa (Emergency only 808-383-9153)

Temple President: Joseph Gusman (Emergency only 808-896-4988 or 808-324-0708)

KONA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

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President's Message

Though this month's newsletter may arrive a bit early, I would like to take the opportunity to extend my sincere wish for a happy New Year to everyone. While our celebrations will not be what we've traditionally experienced quite yet, we can have new hope that things will get back to some sense of normal sooner rather than later. I am sure we are all looking forward to ringing in the new year, but please be cautious and safe when doing so. Remember, every one of you is a special part of our temple Sangha.

Speaking of "ringing" in the new year, don't forget to come to the temple on New Year's Eve, between 5:30 pm & 6:30 pm to take your opportunity to ring the temple bell. Everyone is invited to this drop-in bell ringing which will be conducted with appropriate COVID-19 precautions. Please join us if you are able.

Looking forward a little, everyone is also invited to attend our annual Kyodan Meeting and Service on February 21, 2021. As we have been doing with our recent services, the annual meeting will be conducted virtually via Zoom. Look for information regarding attending the annual meeting elsewhere in this month's newsletter. Please join us as we honor our Keirokai members, remember our sangha members who have passed away since our last meeting, conduct the business of the temple, and recognize the new members of our sangha. Hope to see all of you there!

In Gassho,
Joseph M. Gusman
Kyodan President

Our Journey Together as Sangha

Happy New Year! The transition from one year to another is a time for reflecting on all that we have experienced and learned in the previous year. It is also a time for us to look forward by thinking about the lessons we will take with us into the new year. 2020 was quite a challenging year, but it afforded us an opportunity for spiritual growth by deepening our understanding of the Dharma and strengthening our reliance on Amida Buddha's compassionate Vow.

In the *Dhammapada*, Shakyamuni Buddha taught that "The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, not to worry about the future, and not to anticipate troubles, but to live wisely and earnestly for the present." We have certainly come to know this teaching intimately as we journeyed through the chaos of the past year. Living through the pandemic has forced us to slow down and to take stock of our lives. We have had to focus on truly living the present moment mindfully with compassion and grace for ourselves and others. With the Dharma as our guide, we learned that we have an enormous capacity for kindness and that we are more resilient than we ever imagined.

I am continually inspired by your trust in the Dharma and your willingness to expand the ways we care for each other as Sangha. Your dedication to our temple and the members of our community gives me hope that we can thrive even under the most challenging of circumstances. That when we journey together guided by the Buddha's teachings, there is nothing that we cannot accomplish or endure. I look forward to the challenges and opportunities we will face together as Sangha in the year ahead.

As we begin this year with a sense of renewal and hope, let's rededicate our efforts to hearing and responding to the call of Amida Buddha by striving to build a healthy Sangha by nurturing empathy and respect. The theme for this year is a challenge for us to live the teachings through our everyday actions. Let's all strive to put the Dharma at the very center of our lives giving us a limitless source of resilience, joy, and peace. May your journey in the new year be illuminated by the light of great wisdom and compassion. Namo Amida Butsu.

In Gassho,
Rev. Blayne Higa



Notice of Bylaws Amendment

The Kona Hongwanji Board of Directors has proposed an amendment to the Bylaws for discussion and approval at the General Membership Meeting scheduled for Sunday, February 21, 2021. A full version of the proposed amendment can be obtained by contacting the temple office.

The proposed changes to the Bylaws are as follows:

- Article IV. OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES, Section 4. To reposition the third sentence in front of the current second sentence so that the entire section reads as follows, “The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or inability of the President to act. The Vice President under the direction of the President shall oversee the functions of such Councils as the President may designate. In the absence or inability of both the President and Vice President to act, or if these offices become vacant through any cause, the Board of Directors shall designate a Council Director to perform the duties of President.”
- Article V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS, Section 1. to amend the composition of the Board of Directors from sixteen (16) to fifteen (15);
- Article V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS, Section 1.B to amend the number of Council Directors from four (4) to three (3);
- Article VI. COUNCILS & COMMITTEES, Section 1.A. to replace the head of the Administrative Council from the Director to the Vice-President;
- Article VI. COUNCILS & COMMITTEES, Section 2. to amend recognizing that the term of the Vice-President is defined in Article IV. OFFICERS & THEIR DUTIES with the addition highlighted as follows “**With the exception of the Vice-President as specified in Article IV, Section 1,** all Directors of the Councils provided under foregoing Section 1 shall be elected by the general membership for two (2) year terms or until their successors are elected. Their terms of office shall be coterminous with that of the President. Each Council Director shall serve as a member of the Board of Directors.”
- Article VI. COUNCILS & COMMITTEES, Section 3 to amend an incorrect reference in regards to standing committee from Article VII to Article VI.
- Revision Dates to reflect the most recent amendment date on the first and last page to the date when approved by the general membership at the annual meeting

Weekly Sangha Talk Story

Rev. Blayne hosts 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 on Zoom. Talk Story will resume on January 7th. If you would like to participate, please email Rev. Blayne at bhiga@honpahi.org to be sent the meeting link each week.

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 video conference. 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*



Welcome New Members!

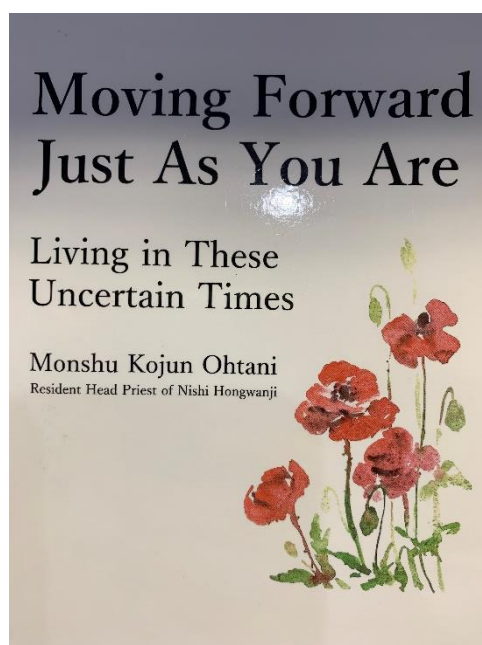
Mahalo to Annette Green and Danny Matsuoka for becoming sustaining members. Welcome to our Sangha!

Please encourage family and friends to join our temple ‘Ohana. New members are always welcome!

KHBT Virtual Book Club

Are you interested in learning about the teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and how it can relate to your everyday life? Are you looking for a relaxed and fun environment to read and explore the Shin Buddhist Path together and discuss what it personally means to you? If so, the Kona Hongwanji Book Club is the place for you!

Join us as we explore ***Moving Forward Just As You Are: Living in These Uncertain Times*** by Monshu Kojun Ohtani. We will meet weekly via Zoom from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm on the following Wednesdays in January (13, 20, 27). A few extra copies of the book are available for purchase. Please contact the temple office if you are interested.



Preschool News

December was another busy month for our preschoolers. National Day of Giving on December 1st kicked off our Giving Tree: A fund collection for the Hawaii Food Basket. We wanted to have the children experience the joy of helping others in need by “hanging” their donations, in ornaments made out of decorated paper towel rolls, on our Giving Tree. The response was outstanding; we had donations coming from children giving of their coins from their own piggy banks to entire family donations to donations solicited through clients of PoolBrite, a company that students Zander and Zoey Steele’s father works for. Together with their close to \$700 donation, we gathered a total of \$1,292.43 for the Food Basket.

We celebrated National Cookie Day on December 4th by having the children decorate sugar cookies donated by Jaylee’s mom, Candace Fujino, of Standard Bakery, learned brownie facts, and ate brownies for National Brownie Day on December 8th, and made gingerbread houses for National Gingerbread House Day on December 11th.

Our year ended with a fun-filled Holiday Spirit Week of dressing up in daily themes, celebrating Chocolate Covered Anything Day by dipping apples, pretzels, and marshmallows in melted chocolate, and decorating sweater-shaped cookies for National Ugly Sweater Day. It was also bittersweet as we said farewell to our wonderful aide, Cheryl Camacho, who retired at the end of December. We are grateful to have had her as part of our preschool family and she will be greatly missed.

On that note, we are looking for a teacher’s aide, teacher, and sub aides and teachers. Anyone interested is asked to complete the registry through PATCH Hawaii and contact the preschool director at 323-3737 for an interview.

Wishing everyone joy, peace, hope, goodwill, and harmony in 2021. Take care and be safe.



In December Kona Hongwanji Preschool held a fund drive for the Hawaii Food Basket to support families and individuals experiencing food insecurity in West Hawaii. Mahalo for supporting our community!

President's New Year's Message Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Happy New Year! Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Hauoli Makahiki Hou!



I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and in good spirits as we enter the New Year. The year 2020 was a year to remember, mostly from the effect that the COVID-19 pandemic had on all of us. We experienced lockdowns, isolation from family and friends, and job loss or insecurity. And most difficult of all, some of us lost family or friends to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you have kept up with the news, you know that there is a very good chance that 2 or 3 pharmaceutical companies will have vaccines available for the Coronavirus before the end of this year. The good news is that the first two vaccines appear to be very effective in preventing COVID-19 disease. Also, you can be sure that the FDA is looking very carefully at the safety profile for each vaccine. As vaccine availability increases, there is good reason to believe that we may be looking at an optimistic scenario of returning to a more “normal” lifestyle by the summer or fall of next 2021. Let’s hope that the vaccines continue to show effectiveness with a good safety profile and that enough people will step up and get vaccinated!

Through the difficult times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, our collective Sangha responded by sewing masks for others, helping with daily chores such as shopping or cleaning, sharing meals, delivering produce, and by calling or messaging others. Ministers shared the Dharma through YouTube, Facebook and other electronic media. Small in-person services were held as permitted by law in spite of the risk to our ministers’ health.

Our actions through this pandemic confirms that our Sangha is vibrant, caring and compassionate. Although we were separated physically, we connected with others through individual and collective acts of kindness.

As we look forward to the New Year of 2021, let us reflect upon what we are grateful for-life, family, friends and a supportive community. Let us wake up each morning grateful for Amida Buddha’s Compassion, which surrounds each one of us.

*“Happiness does not depend on what you have or who you are;
it solely relies on what you think.” - Buddha*

With Gassho,
Warren Tamamoto MD
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Nurtured by Amida Buddha’s Light of Wisdom and Compassion

Our Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Theme & Slogan for 2021 is “Building Healthy Sanghas: Nurturing Empathy and Respect.” It is a timely slogan especially as we begin a new year. When we take a moment to reflect on the situation of our nation and our society with the Coronavirus Pandemic, racial discrimination and even the climatic changes that are occurring on a global scale, it is not hard to see what our world needs is more respect and empathy.

The Larger Sutra provides wise counsel *“People in the world...should truly respect and love each other, refraining from hatred and envy. They should share things with others, refraining from greed and miserliness. They should always be friendly in speech and expression, refraining from quarrel and dispute.”* Unfortunately, it laments, *“...people in the world...do not believe that performing good deeds brings good results, or that seeking the Way leads them to attaining it.”*

However, all is not lost in that the Great Compassionate Light of Amida Buddha illuminates, nurtures and unconditionally embraces the spiritually foolish being who cannot completely break free from blind passions and attain enlightenment on one’s own. In the Larger Sutra it says *“Sentient beings who encounter this light have the three defilements swept away, and they become soft and gentle in body and mind. They leap and dance with joy, and the good mind arises in them. When those suffering pain and travail in the three evil realms see this light, they all find respite and become free of afflictions. After their lives have ended, they will all gain emancipation.”* Thus, I believe, the late Jodo Shinshu Scholar Rev. Jitsuen Kakehashi was able to say, *“When we look at the world with an ordinary mind, it is distinctly divided into things we love and things we*



hate, but with the mind of the Tathagata, we are made to know that everyone is equally the Tathagata's indispensably important child. From that standpoint, we realize that we are all brothers and sisters and fellow human beings. Then slowly but steadily, we come to reflect on our self-centered thoughts, reject our blind passions and make efforts to see things and live our lives in a way that can be approved by the Tathagata." In this way, thanks to the Working of Other Power, we begin to slowly live in a new awareness and are assured the attainment of Enlightenment at the end of this finite life with our birth in the Pure Land.

His Eminence Gomonsu Kojun Ohtani says, *"By listening to the Primal Vow and how it was established by Amida Tathagata, we are enabled to become conscious of our own ignorance and self-oriented inclinations, and through such awareness, we naturally become gentle in word and deed in our efforts of minimizing our egoistic way of thinking."* *"Even though our efforts may pale in comparison to the Buddha's Compassion, we are at least guided in the proper direction by the Buddha Dharma."* Let us take to heart his words.

To conclude, I would like to share His Eminence's "Our Pledge." The original was written in Japanese and his expressed wish was that it be translated by each locale in a way that would resonate with the people of that region. Thus, this is Hawaii's Version (which can also be sung as it has also been put to music by BJ Soriano). In a few short verses, it captures the essence of a healthy Hongwanji Sangha which recites the Nembutsu in awareness, joy and gratitude of Great Wisdom and Compassion, and emphasizes respect and empathy.

Our Pledge

Reaching out to others,
I will share a smile and gentle words.
Just like the Buddha, who always calls out with Aloha.

Breaking away from my greed, anger and ignorance,
I will try to live in peace and harmony.
Just like the Buddha, who shares tranquility and kindness with all.

Moving forward from self-centeredness,
I will share a life of joy and sorrow with others.
Just like the Buddha, whose caring heart always embraces us.

Realizing that I live because of others,
I will strive to live life to the fullest with an attitude of gratitude.
Just like the Buddha, who promises to embrace us all.

Thank you, Happy New Year and Namō Amida Butsu.

In gassho/anjali,
Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

New Year's Greeting



Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

Throughout the last year, the world suffered from the pandemic of COVID-19, which brought tremendous hardship to many people, and we still are not able to see when normalcy would return to our world. On this occasion, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who fell victim to the disease and express my sympathies to those who are currently undergoing treatment.

Meanwhile in the US, the media has widely reported systematic discrimination against African-Americans, social unrest and division among the general public brought on by the presidential election. It concerns me that many people have been left isolated in the midst of hardship.

'Dependent origination' is a universal truth that Buddha Sakyamuni presented. This fundamental Buddhist principle expresses that every thing, matter, and phenomenon arises from various causes and conditions. None of us lives by ourselves. We are living while being interconnected and mutually supported by one another. Considering the reality of a divided society, it is important that everyone deeply reflects on the principle of Dependent Origination that represents the true state of the world.

Even though having been introduced to the truth by Buddha Sakyamuni, ordinary people like us are still not able to accept it as it is. Therefore, to guide us to cope with the suffering caused by our own ignorance, Shinran Shonin clarifies Amida Buddha's compassion that always embraces us all. When the world is facing this unimaginable crisis, it is crucial that each of us experiences Amida Buddha's great compassion ourselves, and live each day to the utmost, having that joy and sensation in our hearts as the basis of our life.

I have been told that in this difficult time and situation, many of your sangha have been adopting new measures for sharing the Jodo Shinshu teaching that had not been previously considered. I find such efforts truly reassuring. It is my hope that your temples will continue serving as your spiritual home, and therefore, I sincerely ask for your understanding and cooperation to allow them to be so. With my heartfelt appreciation for each one of you, I would like to conclude my new year's greeting.

January 1, 2021

OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

年頭の辞

新しい年のはじめにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。

昨年は新型コロナウイルス感染症(COVID-19)が世界的に大流行し、多くの方が犠牲となりましたが、いまだその収束が見通せません。ここに、新型コロナウイルス感染症によりお亡くなりになられた方々に謹んで哀悼の意を表しますとともに、罹患されている皆さまに心よりお見舞い申しあげます。

また、アメリカにおいては黒人差別の問題が提起され、大統領選挙も社会に混乱をまねき、社会の分断が指摘されています。このような中で、悩みや苦しみを抱えている方、孤独な状況に置かれている方も多くおられるのではないかと思います。

仏教を説かれたお釈迦様は、「物事は必ず何らかの原因があり条件があって生じ、存在している」という存在に関する普遍的な原理を「縁起」として示されました。私たちは、自分一人で生きているわけではありません。周りのすべての方々とのつながりの中、お互いに支え合って生活しています。社会の分断が生じる現状にあって、この世界のありのままの姿である「縁起」の道理を深く心に留めたいと思います。

親鸞聖人は、お釈迦様の説かれたこの世界の真理をそのままに受け入れることができずに悩み苦しむ私たちに、阿弥陀さまのおはたらきが届いていると明らかにされました。思ってもみなかった出来事に見舞われている世界ですが、阿弥陀さまのおはたらきを聞き、それを依りどころとして日々の生活を過ごしてまいりましょう。

このコロナ禍の中、今までとは違った方法で浄土真宗のみ教を広く社会へ伝える試みもなされていると聞き、たいへん心強く思います。これからもお寺が皆さまの心の支えとなりますよう、お寺の活動にご理解とご協力を頂きますことをお願い申し上げ、年頭のご挨拶といたします。

2021年1月1日

浄土真宗本願寺派
門主 大谷光淳

Growing Up Buddhist: One Woman's Perspective

By Mernie Miyasato-Crawford

2020 Bodhi Day Speaker

Thank you, Rev. Blayne, and the Kona Hongwanji Sangha, for this opportunity to share a few thoughts on this important occasion of Bodhi Day. As Buddhists, we celebrate to commemorate the day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, experienced enlightenment. As Buddhists, it's a day to reaffirm ourselves to a path towards enlightenment, of compassion and kindness to others – but also to understand the relevance of our faith in this modern time. It's a time to reflect, and thanks to this invitation, I will share mine with you all.



To be perfectly honest, I can't say I always knew what it means to *be* Buddhist, let alone know what it means in a dynamic, daily sense. Even now at my older age, it's still a work in progress. Therefore, as I contemplate, it's a surprise to find myself -- as I reflect over the circumstances of my birth, my family, life experiences, and a bit of acquired knowledge and perspective -- feeling more grounded in my embrace of Buddhism, its relevance and influence in my daily life. Taking stock, here's why -- 4 reasons:

First: **Family**. As is the case for many in my Sansei generation, going to Temple, attending Dharma School, participating in Temple activities and Jodo Shinshu events was just a natural part of growing up – as much as going to regular school, the dentist and the doctor were. Except for the years during my elementary school days when we lived in Los Angeles, our faith and its community were a vital part of our family routine and were at the center of our family's social circle. I at least neither questioned nor paid conscious attention. Purely through the powers of immersion and osmosis, though, I learned and was shaped by the dharma as it was taught and as I observed in its purest sense, as expressed in the Golden Chain of Love: interconnectedness, kindness, mutuality, respect, compassion. These were all values my parents strove to teach us anyway but were effectively reinforced formally every week. Fast forward 25 years, and David and I strove to do the same with our children, Nick and Maya. Not a small part of my pride in being a Buddhist is the knowledge that our core values are sourced from my Jodo Shinshu Dharma equally as they were from my husband David's Christian teachings, making both of us better people and better parents.

Second: **Temple**. When our family returned to Honolulu after many years on the Big Island and California, we also returned to Jikoen Hongwanji Temple – a homecoming in so many ways. Jikoen as many of you know has its roots not only in the Hongwanji movement but in the local Okinawan community. As such, our Grandfather, our Father's Father Shohei Miyasato, was intimately tied to both and was key to the survival of each through WWII and the damages wrought. Jit-chan Miyasato was seamlessly a leader in both communities, with Jikoen serving as both the purpose of and the platform from which he did good works in the larger community. He helped raise financial and in-kind contributions as critical support to an Okinawa devastated by the war and was one of the 7 men who coordinated and escorted 550 pigs from the West Coast to Okinawa on a ship they mobilized via the US Military. He served as a lay minister when Jikoen's Resident Minister, Rev. Yamasato, the Uncle of our late Resident Minister and Bishop, Rev. Chikai Yosemite, was unjustly interned along with other local Japanese leaders, holding services and maintaining the Temple proper. As such, I saw how the dharma informs and connects to the wider society – in small ways and big ways, I grew up seeing the Temple as a place where dharma is activated for a larger good. Fast forward again to the present times: I feel so much pride that our Jodo Shinshu leadership has had the courage to take public stands of advocacy for social justice: for Marriage Equality and LGBTQ rights in general, against the recent xenophobic and racist Immigration Ban, and most recently, in support of the Black Lives Matter movement and in acknowledgment that without doubt, systemic racism continues to infect this country at every level.

Third reason: **Career**. I'm a Social Worker in the medical field, with a specialization in gerontology/aging. Throughout my career, I've dealt with cases in which people are in crisis due to illness, injury, and loss. My staff and I encounter patients and families at the end of their lives and those lost in the maze of western medicine and the complex, often conflict-laden healthcare delivery system. The skills taught me as a Social Work clinician are those intended to engender positive relationships and alignment with people through which to effect positive change. Change that is in accordance with their need, within the limits of the options available to address them. Social Work practice and profession is systems-based, with a Person-in-Environment perspective that emphasizes the importance of genuine warmth and empathy, and the principle that change begins where the client is, not where we want to be, or on our imposed judgment of where they

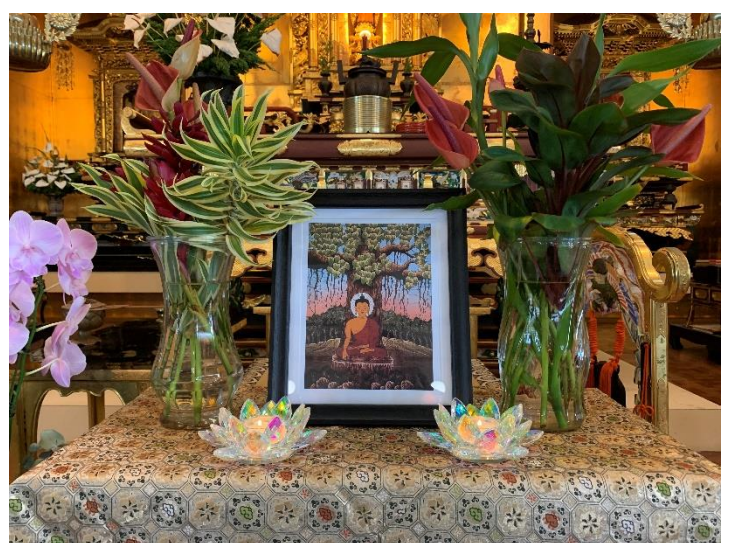
should be. Moreover, the therapeutic approaches most appealing to me as most useful in helping to counsel and guide my clients/patients/staff have been those that emphasize the links between one's values and beliefs and one's thoughts and behaviors, and less on those focused on intrapsychic meanings as a way of fixing some "psychopathology". "*Normal human beings encountering abnormal stressors and traumas*" is the professional SW point of view. As I've lived more years as a Jodo Shinshu follower and as a Social Worker, I've come to more and more realize that these tenets at the core of my professional practice mirror those of my faith: That each of us is already whole, that we are all interconnected such that our thoughts and actions are both shaped by and shape those of others. Awareness of self is essential in SW practice -- as a way to realize that self and my 'self-hood' is not IT. Every single day in my work I am aware of this synergy and it brings me strength in my work and for me in my faith.

Finally, regarding my Buddhism, I think about: **Modern Life and Times**. Every day to my horror, and despite the optimism I took for granted growing up in the 60s, assuming that politics, government, and culture would continue to progress on a liberal path, I see evidence that the larger society is devolving in the reverse direction. A large proportion of our country is retreating from science and scientific thought, and from basic facts in general. Many folks express and behave out of increased fears over anyone or anything perceived to be different or unfamiliar. So much energy and effort is spent on denying and de-legitimizing any input that contradicts a system of beliefs that supports bigotry, exclusion, and division.

Now, more than ever, I feel a need for and a surge of pride in our Jodo Shinshu Dharma and our Sangha, as it stands out amongst the most progressive of faiths. As a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, I do not have to deny anything that is modern or different, I do not have to do mental contortions to reconcile what I learn in the classroom and hear in Dharma Talks, I do not have to compartmentalize or rationalize who I am with what I believe in, and how I express my faith. Instead, I can choose to embrace new ideas, different people, diverse cultures, and beliefs -- with reason and judgment based on core values from our dharma -- By asking myself: what supports the well-being of all living and non-living things? Science, globalism, environmentalism, multiculturalism, equality of the sexes, equality of sexual orientation, gender identity, and diversity are all to be acknowledged and incorporated into daily life practices vs. denied against all evidence to the contrary. This I know as a Buddhist, but also because I am a Buddhist.

As I deal with the stressors I encounter within my own family, in my work, my neighborhood, and my circle, in our dharma, I don't expect to find concrete answers as to what's right and wrong, but instead, I find the clarity, strength, comfort, and reaffirmation from which to make my *own* choices. I can embrace my imperfections and failures and still feel moments of joy and hope. Day in day out, my faith grounds and centers me; Shakyamuni's awakening to the profound realizations expressed in the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path resonate strongly. For all I've gained as an imperfect follower on my own path, I am forever grateful.

In gassho, thank you again for allowing me this time to share.



Mernie Miyasato-Crawford and her mom Mrs. Shizue Miyasato joined us live from Oahu for our Bodhi Day Service on December 6, 2020.

Essay from Lion's Roar Magazine:

The Heart of Good Spiritual Friends

BY KOSHIN PALEY ELLISON | SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

When we are with others in times of suffering, says contemplative care expert Koshin Paley Ellison, we can take the four noble truths as our guide.

The Buddha said, "Friendship is not half of the spiritual life, but all of it." But what's a good spiritual friend in the time of Covid-19? How can we show up for one another in the midst of so much hurt?

The Buddha's formula of the four noble truths has guided me through conversations with people who are struggling, and even in conversations with myself when I am struggling. At the New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care, we use the formula as part of our training for doctors, nurses, and other medical workers. I've found it works beautifully, even when our methods of comfort are limited to phone calls and Zoom.

How can we be present for someone who's suffering and not feel like we're there to fix them?

The first noble truth is that there's suffering in life. In the context of being a good spiritual friend, this is a suggestion to be truly curious. When we ask people how they are, we can pause and be sincerely interested in the answer.

The other day, I was talking with a friend who's been fighting with his partner during shelter-in-place. He told me he feels helpless, sorrowful, a little broken. As good spiritual friends, we can receive what others have to say, accepting it without reaching for the usual pat answer: "Things will get better."

Once we've truly heard the suffering, perhaps we can move with our spiritual friends into the second noble truth: that suffering has a cause. It's important to see which parts of our suffering we're creating ourselves. But what often happens is that a loved one isn't self-reflecting, meaning that while the causes of their suffering may be very clear to us, they aren't to them.

Maybe we see a friend, for instance, repeating the same mistakes. Maybe we've had the same conversation with them many times before. Actually, that's okay. We don't need to teach or push anything. If we find ourselves pulling our hair out about why someone won't reflect and change, it might be a good time to apply the second truth inward. We can ask ourselves, "What are the causes of my suffering in this situation?"

The third noble truth is that there's an end to suffering. I like to think of that as a pivot into having confidence in impermanence. We might not know if things are going to get better, but they're definitely going to change. Knowing this can shift people, even if it's just slightly, out of the darkest of places. If the timing feels right, we can potentially aid this transition by asking our friend, "When you've gone through struggles like this in the past, what helped?" Be receptive to the answer.

The fourth noble truth is that the path to end suffering is the eightfold path. Can we identify our friend's path of nourishment? What do they need to help them find freedom from suffering? Asking them the question instead of providing suggestions is often more useful.

When our friend answers, we can look to see if there's anything in our power that we can provide. Sometimes what's needed is simpler than expected. I asked a friend of mine this question, and she asked if we could set up a weekly date to chat. She's living alone during lockdown and feeling isolated. What an easy request to honor!

These guidelines aren't necessarily linear, and they might not all apply during a particular instance. What might be most important is reframing our mindset from being a "caregiver" to a "care partner." How can we be present for someone who's suffering and not feel like we're there to fix them?

If we think we're there to make our friend feel better, it can be a setup for failure. But if we're simply there to be fully present, this may be the beginning, middle, and end of the way of compassion. This is how we meet each other on the receptive ground of the dharma, and learn to be good spiritual friends.

[The Heart of Good Spiritual Friends - Lion's Roar](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS—December 2020

SERVICES

Melvin Harano, 7th Year Memorial Service for Tamaki Harano

Nelson Harano, 7th Year Memorial Service for Tamaki Harano

Mr. & Mrs. Warren Okabayashi, 17th Year Memorial Service for Minoru Okabayashi

Yasue Okino & Family, Funeral Service & Related Expenses for Charles Okino

Michitoshi Murakami, Funeral Service & Related Expenses for Sally Murakami

Lee Anne Sako, 17th Year Memorial Service for Masao Nishikawa

Total - \$1,750.00

HAKASOJI and NOKOTSUDO

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Higashi

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hirata

Susan Nishioka

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Sugiyama

Mr. & Mrs. Carl Shirashi

Pauline Ege

Elbert Iwane

Betty Matsuo

Danny Matsuoka

Fujie Sato

Jenny Uemura-Sano

Total - \$ 695.00

Jiho

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Higashi

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Sugiyama

Fujie Sato

Jenny Uemura-Sano

Susan Nishioka

Ronald Shiotsuka

Lilly Ushiroda

Betty Matsuo

Total - \$750.00

CAPITAL FUND

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Higashi

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Satsuko Matsuoka

Chizu Nakashima

Takeo Nakasone

Keith Nishihara

Ellen Nishikawa

Helen Oishi

Doris Yamamoto

Total - \$ 370.00

Acknowledgements continued:

SPECIAL DONATIONS

Anonymous

Claudia Chang

Lori Marcello

Sueto Matsumura

Michitoshi Murakami

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Mr. & Mrs. Tami Murakami

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Ken Love, IMO Paul Motomura, Yasunori Deguchi, Sally Murakami

Sueto Matsumura, IMO Sanae Matsumura, 3rd Year

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Gail Murakami, IMO Sally Murakami

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Lynn Nakamura, IMO Sally Murakami

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Brice, Leon, Boyce Aoki, IMO Dale Aoki, 1st Year

Sidney Aoki, IMO Dale Aoki, 1st Year

Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Tokuyama, IMO Dale Aoki, 1st Year

Total - \$ 4,450.00

Mahalo for your generous donations!
Please let us know if there are any corrections.



Did you ever notice the Bodhi Tree growing in a pot near the wall by Rev. Blayne's house? It's a small but healthy tree and a beautiful reminder of Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment that we celebrate on December 8th each year.

Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, List of Memorial Services for 2021

Dear Members:

At specified intervals after a loved one has died, we gather for services to listen to the Dharma. During memorial services, we remember the deceased with gratitude for enabling us to be who we are and to receive the Dharma. It is a time not only to strengthen family ties, but also to reflect upon relationships beyond the immediate family, remembering and appreciating the oneness of all life.

Please note the list below and make an appointment at least **Three Months** prior to the service date.

FIRST YEAR (2020)

DATE	NAME	DATE	NAME
4/27	Nakahara, Miles	5/10	Katoku, Takao
5/23	Fujino, Robert	6/10	Yoshioka, Yaeko
7/28	Nakagawa, Mary	8/24	Tashima, Bernice
8/25	Murakami, Sally	10/8	Okino, Charles
11/12	Saito, Ukie	12/01	Zakahi, Stanley

THIRD YEAR (2019)

01/16	Miyahira, Leatrice Emiko	01/17	Takamoto, Katsumi
03/02	Sakamoto, Tsuneo "Charles"	04/09	Kunitomo, Stanley Mitsuo
04/18	Shiraki, Desiree Jade	05/07	Tanaka, Takiyo
06/16	Sato, Saeko	07/17	Miyose, Janet Mieko
07/17	Harano, Makoto	07/18	Pratt, Asako
08/16	Sakamoto, George T.	09/23	Fenske, Jane Emiko
10/23	Katoku, Naoto	11/16	Matsuoka, Fujie
12/05	Aoki, Dale Kakuma	12/28	Matsumoto, Glenn Tatsuki
12/28	Deguchi, Yasunori	12/30	Matsuoka, George Hideaki

SEVENTH YEAR (2015)

01/09	Nozaki, Nora Tonoye	02/16	Imai, Herbert Masao
02/23	Taniyama, Tomokichi	03/06	Kadooka, Sunao
03/18	Nakagawa, Tatsuyo	03/31	Ozaki, Florence Masako
06/14	Kunitomo, Gladys Hideko	06/28	Higashi, Sanford Tatsuya
07/18	Oue, Tatsumi	08/17	Matsumoto, Thomas Shinichi
09/18	Oue, Ross Akiyoshi	09/19	Nakamoto, Jean Aiko
11/06	Maeno, Yukio	11/07	Aoki, Kazue
11/16	Okabayashi, Yaeko	11/20	Aoki, Kazuyoshi
11/23	Ichishita, Gary Kazuyoshi	11/27	Cheng, Minolu Reen

THIRTEENTH YEAR (2009)

01/10	Matsuyama, Beatrice Sakae	01/17	Oshima, Toshi
01/19	Hirai, Clifford Hiroshi	02/08	Hayama, Ritsue
02/15	Sakamoto, Susumu	02/28	Tobara, Janet Noriko
03/15	Shiotsuka, Shinichi	04/14	Kanai, Minnie Mitsue
04/19	Nakamura, Katsue	05/04	Kaneo, Motoji
05/14	Iseri, Misako "Mitzi"	06/05	Oura, Sadako "Janet"
07/27	Kawahara, Kathryn Kinoe	09/16	Yanagi, Brent Akio
09/26	Nakamoto, Toshio	10/18	Kurozawa, Yukiko K.
10/22	Okumura, Mitsuru "Irene"	11/17	Wagle, Satsue

SEVENTEENTH YEAR (2005)

01/16	Fujikawa, Masako	01/22	Oue, Yasuko
01/28	Morimoto, Dorothy Tokiko "Dot"	01/29	Okumura, Masao "Masa"
02/07	Tanaka, Gilbert Masanori	02/15	Nakamaru, Kaname
02/18	Hayashi, Tomio	02/28	Kuroyama, Kimie
05/17	Yamato, Kikue	05/23	Harano, Daniel Manabu
06/29	Nakashima, Jace Masao	07/14	Koike, George
08/09	Wakata, Leighton Hisao	08/20	Oga, Masao
08/22	Koshi, Tomeko	08/31	Murasaki, Takeo
09/14	Sato, Torami "Amy"	10/13	Murata, Clarence Kiyoshi
10/30	Tanaka, Hiroshi	11/03	Ide, Kiyoshi
11/08	Kazama, Toshinori	11/10	Tashima, Takie
11/30	Kirihara, George Yukio		

TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR (1997)

01/13	Ban, Hisayo	02/02	Murata, Karen Kazuko
04/28	Ito, Yasue	05/10	Kato, "Sadie" Sadako
05/11	Sakamoto, Tomio	05/18	Fukunaga, Aiko
05/27	Kadohiro, Yasuo	07/05	Ota, Matsue
07/26	Fujimoto, Yoshinobu	07/29	Miyazono, Sadayuki "Barney"
08/09	Teshima, Torao	09/01	Nozaki, Clarence Yoshito
11/07	Komo, Clarence Satoru	11/09	Hirata, Harold Hiromi
11/23	Nakamura, Harold Yoshiyuki		

THIRTY-THIRD YEAR (1989)

01/20	Uchimura, Kazuo	01/25	Nakamoto Sr., Hitoshi Wally
01/26	Fujii, Goro	01/28	Doi, Yoshio
03/03	Takashiba, Chiyoko	05/07	Saito, Konoe
06/05	Fujimoto, Chiyono	06/01	Kitaoka, Takeshi
06/07	Shimamoto Jr., Cornell	08/22	Nakatani, Arthur Masao
08/26	Fujikawa, Cary Shizuo	09/27	Sonoda, Jane Tomiko
09/28	Kaku, Yumiko	10/14	Fujii, Masuo

FIFTIETH YEAR (1972)

01/02	Yoshimoto, Miju	01/15	Tanaka, Denzo
03/11	Ueda, Katsue	03/29	Fujino, Ine
04/11	Nishina, Tojiu	05/13	Yamasaki, Takeo
05/22	Izuno, Tokio	06/28	Onaka, Shizue
08/04	Shikada, Sueo	09/12	Eto, Tsurue
10/08	Obata, Tsuya	10/10	Honda, Iwaki

NOTE: If you have any questions or corrections regarding the information listed above, please call the office at 808-323-2993. Thank you.