

Puna Hongwanji Mission



Location: 16-492 Old Volcano Road Keaau, HI
Mailing address: P.O. Box 100
Keaau, HI 96749-0100
Tel: (808) 966-9981 Fax: (808) 966-7732
Website: punahongwanji.org

Resident Minister: Reverend Satoshi Tomioka
Cell: (808) 285-0275
Email: stomioka@honpahi.org
Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri– 9am to 12pm*
*unless called away by other duties
Thurs. – day off

Kyodan Pres.: Jason Hashimoto (Cell: 937-5941)

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June 2020 Hi-Lites



Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus) all activities, classes, meetings and Sunday services will be cancelled until further notice.



2020 Honpa Hongwanji Theme & Slogan **Building Healthy Sangha** *(Embracing Generosity and Openness)*

Puna Hongwanji Vision Statement

Puna Hongwanji Mission will be a dynamic and unique temple for Hawaii serving the spiritual needs of the community through Jodo-Shinshu teachings.

Puna Hongwanji Mission Statement

Puna Hongwanji Mission is a community of people joined in the joy of a common faith in Amida Buddha to share the Dharma in our daily living.



The Hi-Lites Monthly Newsletter

The Hi-Lites is published monthly by the Puna Hongwanji Mission. The articles and opinions expressed by the editors and individual contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of Puna Hongwanji Mission.

Email: "hilites@punahongwanji.org"

Editorial: Sam Horiuchi
Tammy Molina

Production: Lei Kakugawa
Ann Toma
Dora Hashimoto
Susan Sunada
Clifford Furukado

Advisor: Rev. Satoshi Tomioka

With Deepest Sympathy



Puna Hongwanji Mission extends its sincerest sympathy and condolences to the family and relatives of the following member(s) who recently passed away

Yukiko Uchida

Memorial Service (Nenki)

Families, relatives, and friends of deceased members listed, please contact the temple if there are any corrections or omissions. Researched and compiled by Reverend Satoshi Tomioka.



*****Memorial services in-person will be postponed until further notice.**

*****Monthly Memorial Service will be held online.**

*****Private online memorial service will be available.**

*****Please contact Rev. Tomioka for more information.**

June 2020

1 yr.	Rex Kazumi Shimizu	June 4, 2019
	Jinsei Nako	June 24, 2019
3 yrs.	None	
7 yrs.	None	
13 yrs.	Tsugio Uehara	June 1, 2008
	Hisayo Ogasawara	June 1, 2008
	Naoko "Nancy" Sugihara	June 4, 2008
	Masayuki Tatsuta	June 6, 2008
	Kiyomi "Kay" Nakanishi	June 7, 2008
	Teruyo Yamada	June 14, 2008
	James Yoshito Hoota	June 15, 2008
17 yrs.	Itsuko Furuta	June 4, 2004
	Tsuruko Toyama	June 7, 2004
	Hideo "Blackie" Muranaka	June 8, 2004
	Ryoichi "Roy" Okamoto	June 9, 2004
25 yrs.	None	
33 yrs.	Tatsuji Nagao	June 3, 1988
50 yrs.	None	



Ethics Statement

1. While photographing subjects in public places without permission is legally acceptable, we maintain sensitivity towards “camera shy” subjects and those that request photo ID anonymity.
2. We always seek permission when photographing subjects in private places (residences, care homes, etc.).
3. We provide appropriate photo credits of public domain, online or copyright material.
4. We provide appropriate and accurate context documentation when publishing all photos.
5. We strive to be accurate and comprehensive in the representation of subjects.
6. We do not intentionally contribute to, alter, or seek to alter or influence events by staged photos.
7. We insure that edited photos maintain the integrity of the photographic images' content and context and not mislead viewers or misrepresent subjects.
8. We strive to follow normal sensibilities and the highest ethical standards in all our reporting efforts.

The articles and opinions expressed by the editors and individual contributors are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of Puna Hongwanji Mission.

Give us your feedback and suggestions

Sam Horiuchi

Tammy Molina

Newsletter Committee

Email: hilites@punahongwanji.org

Minister's Message

Aloha Kākou,

A friend of mine posted a picture on social media. The picture is of a whiteboard in the classroom. On the whiteboard, there was the date “March 22, 2020” written. I guess that was the last time and day of school before the closure. I’m writing this message on May 19, 2020. So



almost about 2 months has passed since March 22, 2020. This date “March 22, 2020” shows what happened to the school due to the COVID-19 and things totally changed and stopped, however, life goes on. Have you ever had this kind of experience in your life? Something significant happened in your life and you felt that your life stopped but the world continued on and felt like you were left behind.

A member told me a story after his wife passed away. He said “*sensei* (Minister), after she passed away, everything still looks the same. I have coffee in the morning, go out to get the newspaper, watch TV, have lunch, go shopping, socialize with my friends, dinner, and go to bed. But, after she passed away, everything looks different. I have my daily routine without her. There is an empty chair where she always sat, dish she always used, TV program she enjoyed. Everything looks same but everything looks different without her. Sensei seems my life had stopped when she died, but every day comes without her, Life continues going on. And I guess yeah, after I die the world will go on as if my death is nothing.” I listened to him and he continued, “...and I guess it is life, cannot be help. Life goes as it is and nothing we can. Do you call it, sensei, impermanence? Everything is changing. Nothing and no one remain forever. Therefore, there lies a truth of unrepeatable moments and preciousness of a life. Sensei, I know it and understand it, and think I accept her death. Yet, I am still sad, lonely, and have regrets too.” As I listened to him, our founder’s words came to my mind. Master Shinran said, “It is taught that ten *kalpas* have now passed since Amida attained Buddhahood, but he seems a Buddha more ancient

than *kalpas* countless as particles. -Hymns of the Pure Land #55, Collected Works of Shinran, page 340. Kalpa is an idea and concept of time in Buddhism. Its length is metaphorically explained in different way, but it manifests an immeasurably long period of time or countless years. Our founder Master Shinran understands that Amida Buddha has been there even before that ten kalpas of years too. This means that Amida Buddha's Compassion and Wisdom are limitless and has been working forever to save him from suffering including in the previous lives. It's like a parents' love that has always been there even before the child realizes it. Master Shinran was struggling to be freed from suffering and failed to attain Buddhahood by his own effort. The more he tried to control his mind and heart, the more his greed, anger and ignorance were revealed. That moment, Master Shinran encountered Amida Buddha's Primal Vow which promised to save him from suffering and assured him to attain enlightenment. Out of joy and gratefulness for Amida's benevolence, Master Shinran was made to know that Amida Buddha has been there always and calling him even before he realized it. It was his ignorance which prevented him from seeing the Light of Amida Buddha which always illumines him. Even when he was struggling and feeling like there was no hope, he was not alone. He had been in that Embrace. When Master Shinran contemplated on this, he cannot help thinking that he must have been wondering countless years in the previous lives too, therefore Amida Buddha has been there always to save him beyond ten kalpas, beyond the time. Master Shinran entrusts himself to Amida Buddha and is always grateful for Amida's Primal Vow which saves him.

As we human being we have a limited life, the day when we take our last breath that will be the moment we are born into the Pure Land and become a Buddha by the power of Amida Buddha's Primal Vow. Amida Buddha's infinite Life and the Light that has been embracing all of us always. Even when we feel we are left behind and the world is going on without our loved ones, Amida Buddha's compassion is always with us and calls us, "Don't worry, be happy, I shall embrace you as you are." Because it is infinite Life and everlasting compassion of Amida Buddha, we are forever in that embrace even after taking our last breath. Rather, guided by the virtue of this Amida's Compassion, we are enabled to guide people who

are left behind in this world. In Amida's embrace, we are forever together. Even death cannot separate us from each other. We are together in Namo Amida Butsu.

As the situation of COVID-19 will last longer than we expected, please remember that whatever you may go through and you may feel-sad, worried, upset, despair, depressed, or confused-Amida Buddha always embraces you and is with you. You were never alone. You are never alone. You will be never alone. Once Amida grasps us, never to be abandoned. Let us take refuge in Namo Amida Butsu. Mahalo Satoshi



Puna Hongwanji Kyodan **Highlights**

Synopsis of Kyodan Board of Directors' Online Meeting held on Thursday, April 16, 2020. Minutes were recorded by Marilyn Sato, Secretary.

Repair and Maintenance

- Yard Maintenance crew continues to keep the temple looking good
- Toban groups have been suspended for now due to stay-at-home orders and the closure of the temple. Rev. Tomioka has been maintaining the temple as much as he can to keep the temple clean and neat.

Approved Activities/Announcements

- Rev. Tomioka said people will feel three things under our present circumstances – loneliness, helplessness, and boredom. He has been calling members and friends of Puna Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and is happy to learn that members are doing the same. Please continue to support each other. If you need assistance, contact Rev. Tomioka.
- Donations from Yoga (January) and PiYo (February) were received
- 1st VP Clifford Furukado received rental cancellations for May and beyond

- 2nd VP Robin Sato and Rev. Tomioka are testing Facebook Live and each week things are improving. She also had to learn new things about saving a video and uploading it to YouTube. She also started working with other temples on doing Facebook Live.
- Working on putting a donation button on our website – like a digital version of an offertory box
- A wonderful Puna Spring Festival (51 vendors and a great line-up of entertainers) was planned but due to Covid-19, it had to be canceled.
- If the live Puna Interfaith Memorial Day Service is canceled, a virtual service may be considered.
- A new plaque on the Veteran’s Memorial may cost @\$2,500. A new one is needed to include additional names of fallen heroes from Puna.
- Large gatherings may be a problem so President Jason Hashimoto and the Board are discussing Obon. President Hashimoto will attend a meeting of the Hawaii District Council to get more information. If we cancel, Rev. Tomioka will work with the hatsubon families.

In Appreciation – Thank You Very Much

- Thank you to the Yard Maintenance crew for keeping your social distance while taking care of the yard. You keep the yard & hedges worthy of praise.
- Rev. Tomioka is basically a one-man operation. Not only does he continue with his Dharma messages, classes, book talk, etc., he is taking care of the temple. Thank you, Rev. Tomioka.
- Thank you to those who continue to make donations to the temple. Even though we are closed, we still have expenses.

BISHOP'S CORNER



Let me, first, express my hope that you are well. However, even in Hawaii, 17 precious lives have been lost to COVID-19 and more individuals have yet to recover. My condolences and well-wishes. Fortunately, in Hawaii we have been able to keep our

numbers low. I attribute it to the strong sense of togetherness, respect and mutual acknowledgement of each other that we have for one another in Hawaii. Truly, let us not forget that we are all in this together.

The most difficult period was when COVID-19 was spreading very quickly and the death toll kept rising, but we may be entering another very difficult phase of this Pandemic. Great economic loss is being felt, people are experiencing “Quarantine Fatigue” and many who live alone are in social isolation and in some cases even getting the basics are challenging. Let us help each other. Let us do our best to act in a way that will be beneficial for others too. It is a difficult balancing act. We can be torn by our individual wants and what might be best for society as a whole.

In Buddhism, there is the saying “Human beings tend to move in the direction of their thoughts” (The Teaching of Buddha, BDK) and thus what we think is very important. Especially in these challenging times, let us be especially cognizant of our thoughts.

In the book, “Leaves of My Heart” published by American Buddhist Study Center, translated and edited by Wayne S. Yokoyama, Lady Takeko Kujo, daughter of the 21st Spiritual Leader of the Hongwanji, writes about a single stem rose on her desk. Looking at it blooming with all its might she says she is inspired by it. She continues by saying that precious works of art of the past are not awe-inspiring because they were created a long time ago, but that contained in those works of art is “an eternal life.” The artwork exudes something that

the artists realized by looking deep within themselves. She continues by saying that one seeks to nurture one's course of life because of a "fulfillment of being constantly in the light of eternity."

In other essays, she says that it is only natural for people to admire good and despise bad, but unless we deeply reflect on the negative in our own selves we can never become free from it. She encourages us to deeply reflect on our limitations. By reflecting on my spiritually foolish self, then, I will be able to appreciate the Buddha's Vow equally promising enlightenment to all.

As I was reflecting on her thoughts and words, I, then, recalled a statement by Monshu Emeritus, His Eminence Koshin Ohtani, the 24th Spiritual Leader of Hongwanji, from his book "The Buddha's Wish for the World." He said, "When this vast and great vow of Amida Tathagata touches our hearts, one does not think, "Well, as long as I am happy, that's all that matters..."

Putting their thoughts together, "Our Pledge" composed by the His Eminence Monshu Kojun Ohtani, the 25th Spiritual Leader of Hongwanji, immediately came to my mind.

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.

Illuminated, embraced and nurtured by the Light of Infinite Wisdom and Immeasurable Compassion (Amida Buddha), in grateful response to that Wisdom and Compassion which totally understands my plight and predicament, let us take Gomonsu's words to heart. May it guide us every day, but especially in today's difficult time as we continue to deal with the challenge of COVID-19. Again, we are all in this together. Let us humbly support others and be appreciative of the support we receive from others. Thank you. Namo Amida Butsu/Entrusting in All-Inclusive Wisdom & All-Embracing Compassion.

Namo Amida Butsu

In gassho,
Eric Matsumoto, Bishop



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Aloha! I hope that you are well, physically and spiritually in this "Act with Care" period of the COVID-19 pandemic. It appears that our islands have escaped the worst of the pandemic when

compared to other areas of the country such as New York. However, the nightly news reminds us that the virus is still causing significant illness and death in our state. In addition, for many thousands of people there is an emotional toll as well because of employment and income insecurity.

The world changed drastically just as I was elected to be President of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii on February 7, 2020 (unrelated). As we gathered for our Legislative Assembly in early February, we were just

starting to have concern about the disease COVID-19 caused by the coronavirus that started in China in late 2019. Since that time about 3.5 months ago, the COVID-19 pandemic has dominated our thoughts and actions. Temples were closed in mid-March. Per directive by our State and County leaders, temples will remain closed until at least June 30th. It is still not clear when we will be able to fully open our temples and we may not be able to have large gatherings until 2021.

Challenges that we face because of the COVID-19 pandemic include financial strain because of loss of donations and inability to have fundraisers. Ministers and temple members cannot connect in-person. Social and emotional isolation is a problem for some elderly members. Many (possibly all) Bon Dances in 2020 are cancelled or will be cancelled.

Fortunately, Hawaii Kyodan ministers, temple leaders and Sangha members have responded in a very positive way. For example, our HK ministers quickly adapted by holding live-streaming services on-line and the videos are available on the web such as via YouTube or Instagram. The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii website was updated frequently in response to requests for guidance from HQ by temple leaders. If you have not done so recently, please go to our website where you can view past HHMH Sunday services, COVID-19 memos, messages from our ministers and links to useful community resources. The Buddhist Women's Association responded by sewing over two thousand masks and donating them to various groups. Temples and ministers have reached out to their Sanghas by telephone calls, letter writing, emails and in some cases, delivering food and supplies.

As we gradually re-open our temples, we (HHMH) face a difficult road. First, we need to adapt to a new way of interacting with each other and sharing the Dharma. It appears that we will not be able to have large gatherings for many months. We tried to encourage openness and warmth among our Sangha and sometimes that included handshakes and hugging. Now we are instructed not to touch people. However, we

can still connect with our smiles, our kind words and our thoughts through letters, phone calls and the internet. Second, we need to improve the way we share the Dharma in this era of social media. Webinars, virtual meetings, Facebook and Instagram are just some of the ways that we can connect with people while being physically separated. These new-fangled modes of communication won't replace the old ways, but they are here to stay.

Third, Hawaii Kyodan and individual temples are facing severe financial difficulty because of loss of income. As we try to reduce our expenses, we will have to find ways to increase income for individual temples and for Hawaii Kyodan in general. We do not have all of the answers, but we, the leadership of the Hawaii Kyodan will do our best as we navigate our way through this pandemic. We will be a stronger organization because we will adapt. In turn, we ask for your patience and your support.

In Gassho,
Warren I. Tamamoto MD, President
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



Puna District Interfaith Memorial Day Service

Although we could not gather on the front lawn to remember our Puna District fallen heroes we did the next best thing and shared a video. Thank you to Rev. Satoshi "Ka'imipono" Tomioka (Puna Hongwanji Buddhist Temple); Pastor Jack Snell (Puna Covenant Church); Pastor Lorin Carmichael (Sure Foundation Puna); Pastor Alan Tamashiro (Puna Baptist Church); Gary Thomas (Sure Foundation Puna); and Michael Donenfeld (Mindfulness Mediation Facilitator, Artist, Community Builder) for offering your words and prayers. Thank you to our guest speaker Lieutenant Colonel Loreto V. Borce, Jr., US Army. Thank you to Colton Miyazono for stepping in at the last minute for the recitation of In Flanders Field. Thank you to Marilyn Sato for being the virtual MC. Thank you to Paul Sakamoto for putting all

the individual recordings into one video that we premiered on our Facebook and YouTube pages. If you didn't get the opportunity to see it the video it is still available in the video section of our Facebook page and available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYqwPx9WNBE>.

Thank you also to all those that brought bouquets, loose flowers, and greenery. Thank you to Shar Oyadomari and Marilyn Sato for putting together the arrangements with all the loose flowers and greenery. Between the two of them they made about 18 arrangements that were placed in front of the monument. Thank you also to Craig Shimoda for being the man power and carrying the finished arrangements and prepping all the oasis.

We hope that next year we are able to be out on the front lawn. Please stay safe and healthy.

In Gassho Memorial Day Committee,
Glenn Watarida, Jan Nakamura, Rev. Tomioka, and Robin Sato



CHORALFEST 2020 POSTPONED

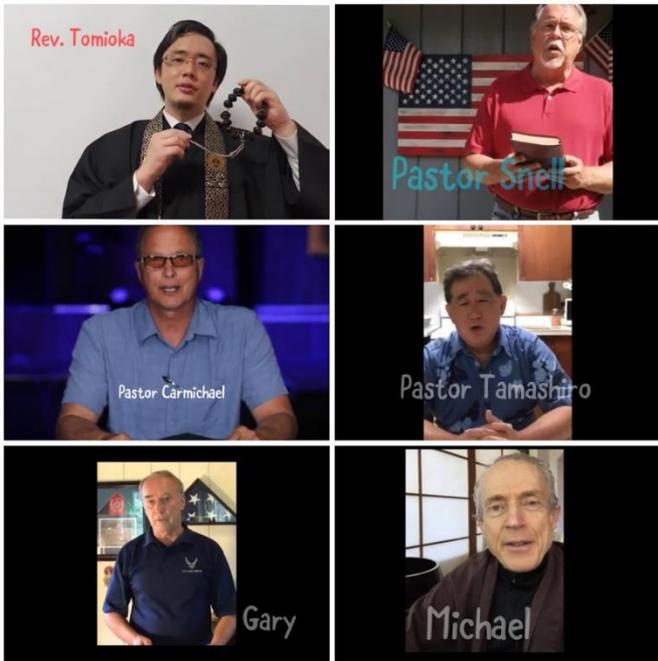
The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's Choralfest 2020, which was scheduled for September 26-27, 2020 at Hawaii Betsuin, has been postponed as a result of current public health uncertainties. Registration fees received will be refunded. Determination of a future date for the event will be made at a later time. Your understanding and interest are appreciated.



PUNA HONGWANJI OBON 2020 CANCELED



Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, we will not be having our Bon Dance this year. For those observing Hatsubon this year, Reverend Tomioka will be contacting you.



HOT MEALS PROJECT CONTINUES

Puna Hongwanji will be continuing to offer hot meals on Tuesday, June 9th and June 23rd. Pick-up time will be 3:00 pm. If you **haven't already** signed up, please call the temple office at 966-9981. If you are unable to pick up, please let us know and we can arrange for delivery. If you plan to have someone else pick up for you, please let us know. Please rest assured that every precaution will be taken to ensure your safety.

Thank you to the volunteers who are currently helping with the preparation and distribution and thank you those that have contributed desserts and food items and also those that have donated to the Social Concern's Fund which funds this project. The Food Basket continues to offer non-perishable food items in response to the Covid -19 pandemic. Puna Hongwanji members who are not currently receiving some type of assistance are eligible. Puna Hongwanji has been allotted up to 24 packages and so far, we have only three requests. If you would like to receive this assistance, please contact Clifford Furukado at 938-3177.



VIBRANT HAWAII ISLAND

Our Puna Hongwanji and Naalehu Hongwanji members are continuing to sew mask that are dropped off at the Hawaii County Office of Aging to be shared with Vibrant Hawaii Island. Vibrant Hawaii Island then donates the mask to places in need of masks.

Thank you to our Puna Hongwanji donors we have donated 306 thus far. It's not too late to join in buy sewing or donating material to be sewn as in two week another mask collection will take place. Thank you Carol Tsunezumi for taking the lead and dropping off the donations. From Puna Hongwanji thank you for your mask donation totaling 148 masks this week by: Ilene Hara, Kay Aoki, Claire Arakawa, Ethel Miyashiro, Warren Tanigawa, Carol Tsunezumi, Mieko Nagao, Jing Fukutomi, and Carol Toma.



Carol mask collector



Masks made by Puna Hongwanji members



Kay with her mask donation



Donation by Naalehu Hongwanji

