

Puna Hongwanji Mission



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April 2023 Hi-Lites

Stay connected with
Puna Hongwanji Mission by:

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www.instagram.com/punahongwanji1902/

Webpage: www.punahongwanji.org

Online donation:
www.punahongwanji.org/donate/

2023 Honpa Hongwanji Theme & Slogan
Building Healthy Sanghas
(Sharing Joy Together)

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.

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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 is permitted following health guidelines. Online memorial service also available.

April 2023

1 yr.	Mitsue Iwashita Yoshie Kuroda	April 12, 2022 April 17, 2022
3 yrs.	Elaine Sako Earl Mukai	April 14, 2021 April 19, 2021
7 yrs.	Katsuki Kubo	April 9, 2017
13 yrs.	Yasuo Aoki	April 30, 2011
17 yrs.	Hideko Furukawa Rosie Tanaka	April 7, 2007 April 14, 2007
25 yrs.	Eugene Kujubu Shoichi Maeda	April 9, 1999 April 12, 1999
33 yrs.	Toyoko Shiba Yoshitaka Asayama	April 14, 1991 April 26, 1991
50 yrs.	Mantsu Namihira	April 16, 1974

A memorial service is a time for family members and friends to gather in memory of our loved ones. It's held in gratefulness for the Compassion of Amida Buddha who is always embracing our loved ones and each of us warmly and gently.

You may schedule this memorial service on the memorial day listed above, or either before or after the day whichever is most convenient. Please contact Puna Hongwanji at (808) 966-9981 or email at mpunahongwanji@twc.com

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

Helen Yamada

Thomas Kumano





Minister's Message

How do you fill in the blank in the following sentence?

"I was born to _____."

Some may say I was born to marry you, or others may say "to work." There isn't one correct answer and it is up to each person. Queen, a British rock band composed a song and it says "I was born to love you." With its melody and Freddie Mercury's powerful voice, the song is so resonating and has an impact. The question above is posing another question of "What is the purpose of your life?" or "What is the reason why you exist?" Usually, we may not think about those questions so we may feel uncomfortable or we may just ignore the questions. In Queen's other song "Bohemian Rhapsody", a lyric says "...I don't want to die. I sometimes wish I'd never been born at all..." Have you had a moment like this? This may indicate a person's regrets, frustration, despair, unfairness, hopelessness, struggles and uncertainties. Birth into this world is the beginning of joy & laughter as well as tears & pains. Because we were born, we enjoy talking stories and because we were born, we go through the pains of human relationships. As Miyoko Gyoren Nozawa said, "although the umbilical cord is cut, a permanent attachment remains", what should we do with this attachment and how can we attain true peace & happiness, and what is the reason for my existence?

Buddha's teachings begin to shine to those who seek the answers to the questions. Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism was born as a prince on April 8 about more than 2,500 years ago. He had everything as a noble person but he had a question about his own existence and was concerned about life, aging, illness and death that he tried to avoid but failed to. In order to find the answer, at the age of 29, he renounced his position as a prince and king-to-be and performed various practices for 6 years. After realizing those practices did not lead him to the liberation of suffering, he had a deep meditation under a tree (which later named Bodhi tree), and attained enlightenment which made him Sakyamuni Buddha when he was 35 years old. Although the teachings are vast and profound, its essence is the same: the teaching that liberates all from suffering and brings joy to all. In other words, transforming suffering to the awakening.

Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu Pure Land tradition understands the birth of Sakyamuni Buddha as below:

"Sakyamuni Tathagata (Buddha) appeared in this world
Solely to teach the ocean-like Primal Vow of Amida;
We, an ocean of beings in an evil age of five defilements,
Should entrust ourselves to the Tathagata's words of truth.-Shoshinge.

Amida Buddha's vow is to save all from suffering through the vow of Namo Amida Butsu who calls out to us: "Come to my embrace! I shall liberate you as you are." Nothing is required from us and no conditions are given to us. Hearing the Buddha's compassionate and commanding voice of Namo Amida Butsu without doubt, upon the moment of entrusting ourselves to the vow arose, our hands are placed together naturally and recitation of the Name comes forth from our mouth. That connection gives me comfort and assurance that I am loved, I am thought of, I am protected by, I am cherished by, I am cared for, I am concerned by...how grateful we are for the fact that we have someone who thinks of us more than we do for ourselves. No matter where we go, whenever it is, whatever we may encounter, and even when we run away from the Buddha, Amida Buddha's compassionate embrace is always with us, no matter what. Life begins to shine when we encounter this embrace which guide us to reflect upon our lives: where we are and how am I living, and it also leads us to find comfort that death is not ending but transition to the Pure Land to attain enlightenment, returning to this delusional world in many ways to help people left behind in this world.

Sakyamuni Buddha was born to teach the Primal Vow of Amida.
Amida Buddha was born to save all through the primal Vow.
I was born to _____.

On April 2 at Lili'uokalani gardens and on April 9 at Puna Hongwanji, we will observe Hanamatsuri, Celebration of Buddha's birthday. Let us celebrate the birth of Sakyamuni Buddha who taught me the warm presence of Amida Buddha. Let us hear the compassionate embrace of Amida Buddha. And let us find the answer to the question of "I was born to ____" in Amida's vigorous compassion and transcending wisdom.

生死という言葉は、どのように読みますか？生死不明の場合は、「せいし」と読み、生きているか死んでいるかが、明らかでない、という意味になります。仏教では、「しょうじ」と発音し、生まれることと死ぬことです。生老病死とは、生まれることが、老い、病、死、人生で直面するすべての苦悩の始まりということです。「あなたはどのようにして生まれたのですか？なぜ生きているのですか？」と問われたら、皆様は何とお答えになりますか。仏教を開かれたお釈迦様は、この質問への回答を探すための29歳からの6年間の修行が実らず、深い瞑想によってついに35歳のとき、さとりを得られました。仏教の始まりです。お釈迦様の教えは数多くありますが、その根本は、迷いを転じてさとりを開かさせる（転迷開悟）ことです。苦しみから解き放たれ、安らぎを得ることです。

浄土真宗を開かれた親鸞聖人は、ご自身の人生の苦悩が、今生だけではなく、遠い過去からもずっと生まれ変わり死に変わり（生死）を繰り返してきたのちと考へ、そこから離れるための生死出づべき道を求められました。20年の修行が実らず、出遇ったのが南無阿弥陀仏の願いでした。「そのまままかせよ、必ず救う」という大いなる願いです。この願いに出遇えた、そして救われた喜びから、親鸞聖人は、「お釈迦様のご誕生になったのは、ただただこの阿弥陀仏の願いを説くためであった。私たち迷いの者は、ただ一心にこの南無阿弥陀仏におまかせすべきである」といただかれました。「行き先が分かれば行き方が分かる。行き先が分かれば生き方が分かる」という言葉があります。行きたい場所（スーパー）によって、どのように行くかが自然と判明します。同じように、いのちの行き先（お浄土）が理解されることで、毎日の生活が仏様の智慧と慈悲にいだかれたお念仏の生活となります。旅行に安心して行けるのは、帰るお家があるからです。お家に泥棒や火事があったと聞いたら、旅行どころではありません。人生は思い通りにいかず苦悩の連続です。どんなことがあろうとも、帰る家、往く家が定まっているならば、いつも、いつでも、いつまでも安らかなる心に支えられていきます。

4月2日は、ヒロのリリウオカラニ公園、4月9日はプナ本願寺で花まつり-お釈迦様のご誕生のお祝いがあります。南無阿弥陀仏のみ教えを説いてくださったお釈迦様のご誕生をお祝いしましょう。そして、私のいのちの在り方を振り返り、死ぬいのちではなく、阿弥陀様の願いにいだかれてお浄土に生まれるいのちを生きていることをいただきましょう。

Puna Hongwanji Kyodan Highlights



Here is a synopsis of the Kyodan Board of Directors meetings held in January and February. Minutes were recorded by Jennifer Kurohara, Secretary.

March was a fairly busy month! Hope everyone is staying safe and healthy!

Approved Activities and Announcements:

- A third AED unit has been received and will be installed in the kitchen / dining room area.
- Temple security continues to be evaluated and addressed by Stan Mason and Clifford Furukado. While the temple wants to maintain a welcoming atmosphere, the safety of everyone on premises is most important. Thank you for your kindness and understanding. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.
- The elevator will be getting a nice parts upgrade so it can continue to run smoothly.

Mahalo Nui Loa:

- Reverend Satoshi Ka'imipono Tomioka continues to share dharma messages every Wednesday via PHM YouTube and Facebook.
- The Hawaii District Ministers Spring Seminar was held on Saturday, March 18th. Rev. Elaine Donlin of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco presented "Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Joy Together". It was an excellent opportunity to learn about sustaining and growing a sangha by learning the difference between welcoming others and making them feel like they belong. Very interesting perspectives and insight!
- Kyodan Board of Directors for their continued leadership and guidance.

Looking ahead...

- There will be a cinder sale in May.
- Planning has already begun for the annual Memorial Day Service.
- Obon in July!

BWA NEWS

A Dana Sunday Service was celebrated on February 19, 2023. A video defined Dana as selfless giving where nothing is expected in return. Dana needs three things: a giver, a receiver and an object. Other ways of showing Dana are: having compassion, saying warm words to others, smiling, giving up your seat in a crowded place, or offering someone a place to stay.



KT Cannon Eger was the guest speaker, who spoke of her “treasure”, the Liliuokalani Garden. KT is seen as the giver, the receiver is the community and the beautiful park for all to enjoy is the object.

In 1917, talk began to create a Japanese Garden in Hilo. It would be a gathering place and a place to exercise. A Teahouse was finished in 1972. Many projects needed to be worked on. The Rotary Club volunteered to help thin out the bamboo grove. The Lion’s Club helped to repair the pavilion, clean the pond, and repair the pond’s edge. Water testing was done by the UHHC. This group also helped to remove 6,000 pounds of mud from the pond.

KT has been the driving force along with her committee to maintain the ponds, walkways, buildings, gardens, and community relations. The committee depends on the community to help care for the gardens. The committee relies on grants and donations to keep the park safe and well maintained. The Dana Service calabash donation was given to the Friends of Liliuokalani Garden.

Just a friendly reminder that the 2023 BWA dues can be dropped off at the kitchen drop box or mailed to Puna BWA, PO Box 100, Keaau , HI 96747.

In Gassho,
Naomi Hirayasu
Ilene Hara

MEMBERSHIP

Please welcome Richard Kodani of Hilo to our Sangha.

Thank you for your dues payments & donations. We will be on a very tight budget and need your help with timely payments. Recommended dues are \$240.00. Payments can be made, weekly, monthly, & semi-annual. If you are head of household and in a care home situation, your dues are exempt. And if you have a new mailing address, please inform the office.



In Gassho,
Roy Toma
Membership Chairman
808-935-7712

PROJECT DANA



Executive Director Cyndi Osajima of Oahu and Hawaii Island Coordinator Claudia Uyeda hosted the Project Dana Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on March 3rd at Higashi Hongwanji. There were thirty-three East Hawaii volunteers from Hilo, Papaaloa and Puna in attendance.

Since it was also Girl's Day, the tables were attractively set with fresh floral bouquets and bags of treats with a Girl's Day theme.

The program started with a game allowing participants to walk around and to get to know one another by asking each other a series of questions.

Following the game, Cyndi and Claudia had Etsuko Kurokawa of Hilo Betsuin and Eileen Usagawa of Puna come up to the front. Etsuko and Eileen were honored with leis and framed certificates of appreciation for their distinguished service as site coordinators. Etsuko credited Elaine Sugai as the person who set the foundation for the Hilo Dana Program. Eileen thanked the volunteers, who unselfishly provide services to the seniors.

Kawamoto Store provided the delicious bentos that were then distributed to be enjoyed by all, along with a delicious cake from KTA. This was the first social gathering for volunteers from East Hawaii since the pandemic. It was suggested that the units have home and home social gatherings in the future.

On March 8th, a surprise home visit was made by Lei Kakugawa, Florence Nishimura, Masako Sanehira, Eileen Usagawa and Stella Miyashiro. It was Mieko Nagao's 98th birthday which was celebrated with leis, a cupcake, mochi, koko, and fruits.

On March 14th, Ann Toma, Lei Kakugawa, Adela Hara, Kiyoko Sumi, and Dora Hashimoto visited Bernice Tanioka and Bill Eger at Life Care Center. They also made a friendly home visit to brighten Kay Kawazoe's day.

Puna Project Dana can maintain services to our seniors, thanks to the generosity of temple members and friends. Please inform the site coordinators, Richard Solie and Stella Miyashiro, if you or a family member need a service that our program can provide.



Happy Birthday, Mieko!



Stella Miyashiro
Eileen Usagawa

DHARMA SCHOOL

On Sunday, February 26th, Puna Hongwanji participated in the 49th Annual Gathafest hosted by the 4 Temples Hongwanji Council made up of Honomu, Honohina-Papaaloa and Papaikou. The theme of this year's Gathafest was "Building Healthy Sanghas: Sharing Joy Together"

The constant rains of the prior weeks gave us their blessing with clear skies except for a short shower during the singing of the first song, "You Are My Sunshine" by our hosting temples.

After a Sunday Service officiated by Rev. Joshin Kamuro and assisted by Rimban Kazunori Takahashi, Revs. Masanari Yamagishi and Satoshi Tomioka, we began our Gathafest.



We were then treated to a wonderful array of songs. Even with a wait because of some technical problems, our choir and friends did a commendable performance of "In This Life" by IZ.

The program ended with everyone singing "Ondokusan". Then, came the equally important highlight of the event...FOOD! The refreshments of bento lunches, drinks, salad, and homemade desserts was very impressive and ONO! The program got it so right when it listed "Lunch/Refreshments/Fellowship/Good Time" which it was.





Our contingent of around 26 people that carpooled to Papaikou Hongwanji included our Puna Hongwanji Choir and friends of the choir, and temple members. We also sang “Happy Birthday” to Karen Mason and later on to Craig Shimoda.

Thank you to the hosting temples that worked so hard to make this Gathafest happen, after a long hiatus of being postponed.



Hilo Betsuin will host next years’ Gathafest and Puna Hongwanji the following year. We look forward to seeing you there.
In gassho, Dharma School

SCOUTS



Scout Sunday was held on February 5th. It is soo good to have the Scouts back at Puna Hongwanji. Calabash donations that were collected will be donated to Pack 67.

PUNA HONGWANJI CHILDREN'S DAY SHARING JOY

Please bring your children, grandchildren, family, and friends to our 1st Puna Hongwanji Children's Day Sharing Joy event on Saturday, April 29, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. We are working to finalize and get commitments for our event. We will post on our social media, our Puna Hongwanji website, and email those that we have emails for about the update of things we will have available.

In the hall we will have games. Purchase a punch card and visit all the different games we will have available. Tickets will be given to those that win. The tickets can be traded in for prizes. Other things we will have are relay games, entertainment (as of this submittal of the article we have a commitment from our very own Puna Taiko), arts/crafts (Ben Franklin will have 3 activities available), community organizations, body art, Aloha Bubbles, onolicious food, and the Puna Hongwanji Boutique in the dining room.

The Puna Hongwanji Boutique can accept donations in small quantities.

If you would like to help, please come down as any help offered will be greatly appreciated to make this event a success for our community.

Cinder Sale

Puna Hongwanji will be having a cinder sale on May 13th from 10 am to 2 pm. A bag of cinder will be sold for \$5.00 and there will be no delivery. We are asking for volunteers to help with the bagging which will begin at 8 am that day. Please come out if you are able to help. Lunch will be served.

Storm Damage

The Honpa Hongwanji Social Concerns Committee asked us if any of our members suffered property damage as a result of the recent storms. If you did, please contact Clifford Furukado at (808) 938 3177. Thank you.

AJA Veterans Scholarship

The AJA Veterans Legacy Association is offering a \$1000.00 Scholarship to Hawaii Island High School Seniors who plans to enroll full time at any accredited college or university for the 2023-2024 school year. Deadline is April 7, 2023. For the application, please contact Clifford Furukado at (808) 938-3177.

Childrens Day Food Booth

The Kyodan will be selling food at the Childrens Day on April 29th. Rather than asking for donations of food items, we would appreciate any small monetary donations to help with expenses. Please indicate that the donation is for the Childrens Day Food Booth. We are also asking for volunteers to help with food prep prior to the event and sales that day. If you can help, please call Clifford Furukado at (808) 938-3177. Thank you very much.

Sr. YBA

April 5, 2023, at 7 pm will be our Sr. YBA meeting and it will be available on Zoom only.

Lili`uokalani Gardens News



"Many hands make light work," grandmother used to say. That's true with assembling and installing the koinobori display at Lili`uokalani Gardens every year. Saturday, April 29, we will gather in the parking lot of Mokuola at 9:00 a.m. to place koinobori on bamboo poles then install them throughout the Waiakea peninsula from Suisan to Ponds.

The display will remain in place through Saturday, May 6 when it will be taken down at 4 p.m.





Puna Hongwanji Buddhist Education

"What is the relationship between Amida Buddha and Shakyamuni Buddha?"

Guest Lecturer: Rev. Masanari Yamagishi
Kamuela Hongwanji Mission

Did you know that the statue of the Buddha in Jodo Shinshu temples is called "Amida Buddha", not "Shakyamuni Buddha"? Let's talk together about the relationship between those two Buddhas.



Saturday
May 6, 2023
4 pm-5:30 pm. Potluck fellowship dinner to follow



In-person & Zoom Online
To get link, email at mpunahongwanji@twc.com

Free / Open to anyone / No Registration

Any Questions? Call at 808-966-9981

Location: 16-492 Old Volcano Rd. Keaau HI 96749

Puna Hongwanji Buddhist Education "How basic can you get?"

-Learn about all the things you've always wanted know about Jodo Shinshu Tradition-

Saturdays, March 25 & April 8
10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Instructor: Rev. Satoshi Ka'imipono Tomioka



1

Basic rituals:
Incense offering, temple bell,
bowing, Nenju Buddhist beads, etc.

2

Teaching:
What is Namo Amida Butsu?

3

History:
Hongwanji in Hawaii.

No Registration / Free / Open to anyone

Join online? Please email at mpunahongwanji@twc.com


Location: 16-492 Old Volcano Rd. Phone: 8089669981

2023 BIG ISLAND BUDDHIST FEDERATION
In Person Service

HANAMATSURI

Celebrating the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha

When: April 2, 2023
Where: Lili'uokalani Park
189 Lili'uokalani St #151, Hilo, HI 96720
(Small Pavillion)
Time: 10:00 AM



Guest Speaker:
Rev. Dr. Catherine Mie Ishida
will share her reflections on story The Goddess and the Flowers.

Questions may be emailed to hilotaishojii@gmail.com
or call 808-935-8407

Puna Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
16-492 Old Volcano Road, Keaau (808) 966-9981

Puna Hongwanji Children's Day's Sharing Joy

Saturday, April 29, 2023
9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Games, prizes, relay games, entertainments,
arts/crafts, food, community organizations,
body art, Aloha Bubbles, Puna Hongwanji
Boutique

