

# PUNA HONGWANJI MISSION



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# June 2025 Hi-Lites

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## 2025 Honpa Hongwanji Theme & Slogan

Nurturing Nembutsu,  
 Cultivating Awareness

### 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.

### **Hi-Lites Committee:**

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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**Production:** Lei Kakugawa, Ann Toma,  
Dora Hashimoto, Susan Sunada &  
Clifford Furukado, Keri Furukado.

Buddha who is always embracing our loved ones and each of us warmly and gently. This is also a precious opportunity for family and friends to reflect upon their lives while remembering departed loved ones. You may schedule this memorial service on the memorial day listed, 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](mailto:mpunahongwanji@twc.com). Zoom online service is also available.

### **June 2025 & July 2025**

<b>1 yr.</b>	Gilbert Uyeda Roy Toma	June 29, 2024 July 11, 2025
<b>3 yrs.</b>	None Hatsuko Yamashita	June 2023 July 26, 2023
<b>7 yrs.</b>	Rex Shimizu Jinsei Nako Roy Yamashita Gail Miura	June 4, 2019 June 24, 2019 July 14, 2019 July 19, 2019
<b>13 yrs.</b>	Haruo Kajiyama Loren Mochida Misue Sakae	June 8, 2013 June 14, 2013 July 13, 2013
<b>17 yrs.</b>	Takashi Shinchi Charles Tonda Patsy Arakawa Reynold Miyashiro	June 4, 2009 June 9, 2009 July 19, 2009 July 24, 2009
<b>25 yrs.</b>	Shizuko Itagaki None	June 16, 2001 July 2001
<b>33 yrs.</b>	Hisashi Uchida Noboru Kobashigawa Lisa Kawai	June 16, 1993 June 20, 1993 July 1, 1993
<b>50 yrs.</b>	Russell Imai Masaji Sako Eizen Gusukuma Hideo Furuta	June 4, 1976 June 5, 1976 June 25, 1976 July 8, 1976

### **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

*Dick Kina*

*Kikue Toma*

*Sueko Miyamoto*

### **Memorial Service (Nenki年忌)**

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.



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

# JUNE 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 <b>Baccalaureate Service 9 am</b> Judo Clinic 1-3 p Dining Rm Taiko 2 -6:30 pm	2 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm D. Rm Rental 6-8 p	3 Choir 12:30 pm Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm	4 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Farm to Car 3-6 p Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm <b>Sr. YBA Mtg. 7 pm</b>	5 Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm	6 Chair Yoga 9 – 10:30 am Ukulele Class 10:00 a Total Body Fitness 4 p Karate 6:00 pm Scouts 6:30 am	7 Judo Tourney Off site
8 <b>Family Service 9 am</b> Taiko 2 -6:30 pm	9 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm D. Rm Rental 6-8 p	10 Choir 12:30 pm Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm	11 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Farm to Car 3-6 p Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm	12 Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm D. Rm. Rental 5-7p	13 Chair Yoga 9 – 10:30 am Ukulele Class 10:00 a Total Body Fitness 4 p Karate 6:00 pm	14
15 <b>Family Service 9 am Father's Day</b> Taiko 2 -6:30 pm	16 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm D. Rm Rental 6-8 p	17 Choir 12:30 pm Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm	18 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Farm to Car 3-6 p Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm	19 Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm <b>BOD Meeting 7 pm</b> <u>Juneteenth</u>	20 Chair Yoga 9 – 10:30 am Ukulele Class 10:00 a Total Body Fitness 4 p Karate 6:00 pm Scouts 6:30 am	21
22 <b>Obon Service 9 am Columbarium Service</b> Judo 12 - 3 Taiko 3 -6:30 pm	23 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm D. Rm Rental 6-8 p	24 Choir 12:30 pm Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm	25 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Farm to Car 3-6 p Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm	26 Taiko 3 – 6 pm Judo 6:30 – 8 pm	27 Chair Yoga 9 – 10:30 am Ukulele Class 10:00 a <b>OBON Set-Up 3 p</b>	28 <b>OBON Hatsubon 4 p Dance 6-10 p</b>
29 <b>No Service Obon Clean up 9am</b> Taiko 2 -6:30 pm	30 Yoga 9- 10:30 am Judo 5:30 pm Karate 7:00 pm D. Rm Rental 6-8 p					

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## Minister's Message



Every Obon season, I recall a story shared by senior ministers that deepens my appreciation for Obon in Jodo Shin Buddhism. One night, a minister was startled awake by an emergency call—he was needed for a bedside service. Quickly gathering himself, he left the temple and hurried to the hospital. While searching for the patient's room, he encountered a mother cradling her child. Assuming the child was asleep, he gently praised her, "What a beautiful boy. How old is he?" She smiled, "Three years old." As they spoke, a nurse arrived, thanking the minister for coming. When he asked about the patient, the mother softly responded, "Reverend, the patient is in my arms. My child has just passed away." Tears streamed down her face. That night, the minister solemnly led the bedside service, later conducting the wake, funeral, and subsequent ceremonies.

Overwhelmed by grief, the parents turned to counseling, sharing their sorrow and memories with the minister. When Obon season arrived, they attended their son's *Hatsu Bon* service—their first Obon without him. The mother gently placed his photograph on the altar, adorned with a lei. As she offered incense, she caressed the image, tears cascading down her cheeks. "I yearn to be with my son. I fear he is lonely," she confided. "Since his passing, I talk to his photo every day, offering incense and rice. He is always in my thoughts. Why did this happen? I wish I could be with him." Hearing her pain, the minister replied, "No words can touch the depth of your sorrow. Yet, in Obon, we remember and respect for our departed loved ones—tending to their resting places, offering flowers, and reflecting on their guidance." He continued, "You wish to be with your son. There exists a realm of suffering, where beings, lost in anger and desire, fight endlessly—even a mother and child may not recognize their bond. If your son were there, would you still wish to follow him? And upon death, where will you go?"

That conversation marked a turning point for the mother. She realized that if her son suffered in a realm of torment, joining him would not reunite them as family. The minister's words resonated: "All beings must face life's end. But Amida Buddha's vow, born from infinite compassion, embraces all, leading them to the Pure Land, where they attain enlightenment. Your child, held within this boundless vow, now guides you toward life's truths. Our rituals are not to elevate the deceased, but to honor Amida Buddha, who embraces us all. Through memory, we hear Buddha's teaching. Our loved ones, in Amida's care, illuminate the path to peace and happiness amid life's suffering. Mortal lives are finite, yet within Amida's infinite life, we remain ever-present. In the Pure Land, we reunite in beauty. This vow is *Namo Amida Butsu*. Entrusting in it, we recite *Namo Amida Butsu*, feeling its warmth and embrace." Moved, the mother placed her hands together and tearfully chanted *Namo Amida Butsu*. Though she will always miss her son, she now understands—he is lovingly cradled within Amida's embrace, teaching her life's truths through cherished memories, kind words, and warmth.

"Years may pass, yet tears will always flow. But within Amida's infinite compassion, there is also solace and a smile. Such deep gratefulness for Amida's boundless embrace!" During Obon, let us joyfully remember our departed loved ones and their enduring influence in our lives. Amida Buddha's compassion is unwavering, guiding us through life's trials. "Don't worry, be happy. I hold you close," whispers Amida Buddha. Though we part in the physical realm, in Amida's embrace, farewells do not exist—we are always together." As you join in bon dances and services, take a moment to offer incense at the temple altar, reflect, and chant Namu Amida Butsu. With reverence and entrusting heart (shinjin), we place our hands together in gratitude.  
Namu Amida Butsu

お盆の由来は、孟蘭盆経うらぼんきょうに基づきます。お釈迦様の10大弟子のお一人であった目連尊者もくれんそんじやが、亡くなったお母さまを探していました。しかし、あの世のどこを探しても見つからず、最終的に発見したのはお母さまが餓鬼がきという苦しみの世界に生まれていたことでした。あんなに優しくかったお母さんがどうしてと戸惑いながら、なんとか力を尽くして救おうとしますが成功しません。そのときお釈迦様から、餓鬼に落ちた理由は、自分の子供がかわいいために他の子どもを邪険に扱ったその自己中心性によるときき、目連尊者は悲しみに暮れました。自分のせいでお母さんは。。。お釈迦さまは目連尊者に、僧侶の集まりに飲食の施しをし、仏法僧さんぼう（三宝）の力によってお母さんは救われると説きました。いわれたとおりにしたところ、三宝の功德によってお母さまは餓鬼から救われ、目連尊者は喜びのあまり、手と足を叩いて喜んだそうです。これが盆踊りの由来といわれます。

目連尊者の母親の姿は、我々の姿でもあります。私たち人間は自分を中心に、その家族、子供が大事であり、関係性が薄い人々を家族と同じように思うことはできません。いい人、悪い人という言葉の前に、「あの人は自分にとって都合が」と付くように、自分の都合や物差しがあるのが私です。そんな私は、本来ならば死後には餓鬼の世界に生まれるはずですが、しかし、そんな私をご覧になり、必ず救う、餓鬼なんかに行かせてなるものか、と誓ってくださったのが南無阿弥陀仏です。お浄土という仏さまの願いの国に生まれ、先立たれた方と再び会い、色々な形でこの世に残された方々を導くいのちにしてくださるのです。死んで終わりではない、また会える世界があるのです。（俱会一処くわいいつしよといい、俱に、一つの処ろで会う）この願いに触れ、自分の都合のいい心を知らされ、少しずつ仏様の智慧と慈悲に導かれ毎日を過ごさせていただくのですね。考えてみると、目連尊者のお母さまは確かに他の子を雑に扱ったかもしれませんが、目連尊者にとっては大事な大事なお母さんだったのです。どんなことがあっても、どんなあなたになっても、大好きだよ、と言ってくれる存在がいることは、人生の大きな支えになります。人間の命に限りがあるからこそ、阿弥陀様は、無量寿むりょうじゆ

（限りがないいのち）の仏様として、過去、現在、未来、時を超え場所を超え、私たちを暖かく包んでくださっております。「別れても思い出は残る 別れても言葉は残る 別れても同じぬくもりに包まれる喜びがある」ともにお念仏を申しませう。南無阿弥陀仏

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## Puna Hongwanji Kyodan Highlights



Well, hello there June! In the immortal words of DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince – “Summer, summer, summertime. Time to sit back and unwind...” Except, it’s Obon Season! We have made a few changes – for the good – and are looking forward to spending the evening of June 28<sup>th</sup> with our temple members, relatives, friends, and community! Mahalo to our Bon Dance Committees, past and present, for all of their hard work.



Donations Needed for Bon Dance Concession:

Rice, Spam, nori, shoyu, sugar (white & brown), flour, bottled water, regular & diet sodas (Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Diet, 7Up, Sprite), money, and manpower!

Welcome to new board member Robert Sugihara! You will often see Robert at temple as an MC for Sunday services, always greeting new faces and making sure they feel welcomed while at the podium. Robert is on the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee and is heading up our Capital Campaign, which is no small feat! Thank you for your dedication to our sangha!

Coming Soon...

June 1<sup>st</sup>: Baccalaureate Service 9:00 a.m.

June 28<sup>th</sup>: Hatsubon 4:00 p.m. & Bon Dance 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

September 13<sup>th</sup>: Pahala/Naalehu Bon Dance

September 27<sup>th</sup>: Sake and Food Pairing Fundraiser 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

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## MEMBERSHIP

Warren Tanigawa is the new membership Chair.

Recommended dues are \$250.00. It can also be paid weekly, monthly, or 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 our office at 808-966-9981.

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## DONATIONS

April/May donations will be listed in the July issue

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## PROJECT DANA



On Easter Sunday, April 20, Claire Arakawa, Ilene Hara, Dora Hashimoto, Clifford and Keri Furukado, Lei Kakugawa, Hiroshi Kozohara, Florence Nishimura, ChunLi Ramsdell, Marilyn Sato, Craig Shimoda, Kiyo Sumi, Warren Tanigawa, Carol Tsunezumi, and Eileen Usagawa were invited to attend the annual Project Dana Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon at the Poly Feng Yuan Restaurant.

Site coordinator, Stella Miyashiro, began the Easter festivities with an egg coloring contest. The colored eggs were judged in three categories: most beautiful, most creative, and funniest. Winners were Claire, ChungLi, and Richard respectively.

The colored eggs were then used in an egg fight. Hiroshi's egg survived the fight and his prize was a ceramic bunny.

The final activity was passing an egg with a plastic spoon around the table twice. The volunteers used their right hand first then used their left hand. The winning table received Easter treats.

Richard gave the Words of Thanksgiving after which everyone was invited to the buffet table for a delicious lunch.

Project Dana would like to thank temple members and friends for their generous donations. Your kind support enables the organization to continue serving our seniors in need.

In gassho,

Stella Miyashiro

Eileen Usagawa





ChunLi and Richard won the colored egg contest for the most creative and most funny respectfully.



Kiyo Sumi didn't do the egg fight with her colored egg. She wanted to take it home uncracked.

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## BWA

Gail Takaki was our speaker for Sunday, April 27, the annual Lady Eshinni and Lady Kakushinni Day. Gail is the founder and vice president of NexTech Hawaii, an organization dedicated to connecting keiki throughout Hawaii Island with fun, high-impact science, technology, engineering, and math experiences.

Her talk reflected on the winding path that brought her and all of us to temple that day, the connections we share in the community we love, and thoughts for the future. Thank you Gail.



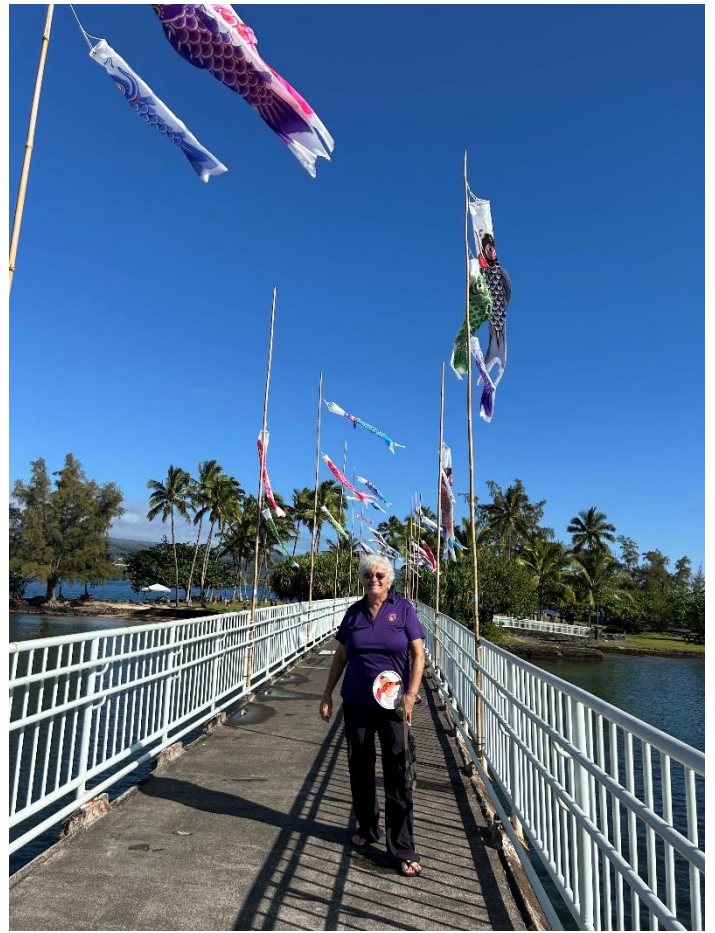
HIUHBWA supported the revived AIDS Walk in Lili`uokalani Gardens. On Saturday, May 3, ministers and members from Hilo and Puna joined to assist in passing out snacks and tee shirts at the well attended event at the southern shaded corner of the park. Funds raised stay on Hawai`i Island. Organizers from Kumukahi Health + Wellness were most grateful for our continued support and enthusiasm.

During the AIDS Walk, the annual koinobori display was still in place. We were delighted and grateful to have the opportunity to stand there with BWA friends and sisters.

Thank you to the gentlemen of Puna Hongwanji for the Mother's Day brunch. Everything was delicious.

Thank you for your enthusiasm and support,

K.T. Cannon-Eger



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**Puna Hongwanji Mission presents:  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sake & Food Pairing  
A fundraiser for our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary temple repair projects  
Saturday, September 27, 2025, 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., in the  
social hall.**

Tickets on sale starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, \$80.00 per person. This includes eight (8) delicious pairings and a souvenir sake cup. Please see any committee member if interested in attending. Remember to have a designated driver!

Mahalo to our returning Committee Members: Glenn Watarida, Donald Ikeda, Stan Mason, Robin Sato, Jenn Kurohara, Haruka and Reverend Satoshi Tomioka, Clifford Furukado, Toby Taniguchi, and Ryan Kadota.



On Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, we completed our first fundraiser of the year. Thank you to everyone who supported our Bake Sale where we made \$577 in donations! Your thoughtfulness and support have not gone unnoticed – domo arigatou gozaimasu!

Special thanks to:

- Robin Sato – Peanut Butter Party Mix
  - Robin made her delicious party mix and packaged them in three varied sizes. This allowed supporters to select options according to their needs.
- Misaki Saito – Japanese cheesecake and chocolate chiffon cake slices
  - You can tell Misaki is a pro! Perfect bakes and such care in packaging!
- Haruka Tomioka – standard and chocolate rusks
  - This was the perfect opportunity for many members to try something new and delicious!
- Karen Mason – chocolate chip marshmallow brownies
  - If “gooey” and “sticky” are supposed to be positive adjectives, then that is what these brownies were. A perfect trifecta of stretch, texture, and taste.
- Jenn Kurohara – Eclectic Chocolate Chip Cookies
  - This is always a fun bake – a simple cookie base that can hold any desired extras. Only one rule: Must have chocolate chips.

In Gassho

- Thank you for continuing to support our sangha! Your presence is appreciated.
- **Next meeting is on Wednesday, June 4, 2025**, at 7:00 p.m. Mahalo to VP Jason Hashimoto for taking the lead that evening.
  - August 6<sup>th</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>, and December 3<sup>rd</sup>
- As a reminder, meetings are on the first Wednesday of even-numbered months. We accept new members throughout the year so please join us!
- T-shirts and polos are still available for purchase. If you need a specific size, we can easily place single orders.
- Time to plan the next fundraiser!

## MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

Thank you to everyone that came to the Mother's Day Brunch. The proceeds earned from this event goes towards our Puna Hongwanji Scholarship fund. We had people that bought tickets and people who made a donation to the scholarship fund. Thank to the men (and women) that prepared the delicious food and desserts that everyone in attendance enjoyed. The women also went home with some wonderful prizes as well. Thank you also to Shar Oyadomari for making all the beautiful floral arrangements which were used as prizes too.

Some of the women decided that it would be fun to wear a hat. The temple and social hall were adorned with many ladies with hats. Those that wore the hats enjoyed it so already reserved the same hat to wear next year.

When you enter the temple doors you see our friendly greeter, Dora Hashimoto. On Mother's Day she was standing at the door and when she looked out she thought...hmmm that looks like my Nikki and Robin. She said as they got higher up on the stairs she said it was her Nikki and Robin. Her two granddaughters surprised her from San Francisco. There were four generations of family members in attendance for the Hashimoto family (Dora (mother) – Alison (daughter) – Caitlyn (granddaughter) – Yuna and Haru (great grandchildren).



Some of the family with their mothers. Last photo: some of the ladies with their hats. Sorry didn't get take a lot of photos.

## BACKPACK DRIVE

We have participated in the Hawaii Police Department backpack drive since 2022. Since 2022 we have donated a total of 159 backpacks to this drive. The backpacks that we collected were delivered to the officers in the Keaau station. We have been working with Officer Chad Sato for the past few years as they also attend our Children's Day activities by providing Keiki ID's. In the past Officer Sato indicated that all backpacks were being sent to Hilo, but they realized that the backpacks were not getting distributed to our area of need. Last year some of the backpacks we delivered were distributed to the children in Fern Acres. We will do a backpack drive for the month of June through July 13. Times are a little harder for everyone these days, but if you are able to help our keiki it would be appreciated. They are looking for new and unfilled backpacks. Backpacks are the most requested non-food item by charities in Hawaii. Backpacks are also donated to children at women's shelters, homeless shelters, and transitional housing facilities around the island. Many of us are unaware of the number of children that get taken out of their home environment. A backpack is one possession that these kids who have to be pulled out of the house immediately will get so that they can keep their "new" personal items in. Therefore, the backpacks that we donate not only help a school child carry their books, but also helps a child who is abruptly taken out of the home into safety.

You may drop off your backpacks at the temple on Sunday's or when you are at temple. You can also bring them to Bon Dance on Saturday, June 28 to the Children's Game area. If you have any further questions, please contact Jenn Kurohara or Robin Sato.



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## Origin of Bon Bon-gathering of Joy.

Part of the inspiration for bon comes from the Ghost Festival of Chinese folk religion, as re-envisioned in a Buddhist context. The word bon is the shortened form of *urabon-e* which means to suffer as if being hung upside down, and comes from of the *Ullambana Sutra*.

The Sutra tells the story of *Mogallana*, one of Sakyamuni Buddha's ten great disciples, had the extraordinary sense perceptions-seeing after life. He saw his mother was in the world of hungry ghosts and how he suffered over the death of his mother and a fact of being in the hungry ghosts, feeling a deep sense of regret and sorrow. He believed that her devotion to him had been a barrier to her understanding the truth of life. To love, take care and protect her own son, she might have not paid attention to other children and people. Although Mogallana tried to save her from suffering in the hungry ghosts, he couldn't make it. The Buddha told him to make offerings to Sangha of disciples. And Buddha also told him to reflect upon mother's situation, and Mogallana, known for his deep insight, came to realize that his mother's devotion to him was based on an unselfish love. With virtuous merit and three treasure-Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, his mother was saved from the hungry ghosts. With this deep insight into his mother's life, he danced with joy as his regret and sorrow were transformed into appreciation and gratitude. It is said this is the origin of bon dancing.

For Hongwanji Shin Buddhist Tradition, outdoor folk dancing (*Bon Dance*) is done in memory of the deceased and not to welcome back the spirits of deceased or not to generate merit for them. In the embrace Amida Buddha's Wish which promised to save all from suffering, and guided by Amida Buddha's Compassion and Wisdom, our loved ones are always with us and lead us to a life of gratefulness, peace, reflection, and harmony. Thus, the bon is also called Gathering of Joy (*Kangi-e*) in grateful remembrance of all those who have influenced our lives. We remember and honor those who have gone before us and celebrate our family ties with and through our loved ones. This also leads us reflect upon our lives and urges us to take refuge in Namo Amida Butsu who is assuring our birth in the Pure Land at the end of life through the power of Primal Vow.

A saying goes, "Even though we lose our loved ones, we still hear their words in our hearts. Even though we lose our loved ones, their warmth still glows in our hearts. Even though we lose our loved ones, we share the joy of being embraced by the same Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha."

Although we have been going through difficulties, let us remember that we are never alone in Amida Buddha's Great Compassion and Wisdom, which is Namo Amida Butsu.

(References- "Jodo Shinshu a guide" Hongwanji, "Shin Buddhist Service Book" Buddhist Education Center)

