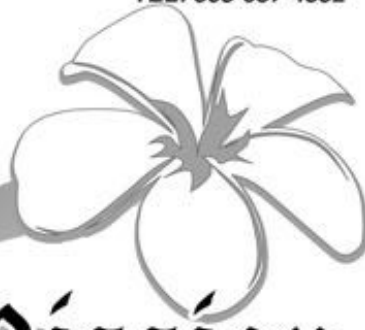
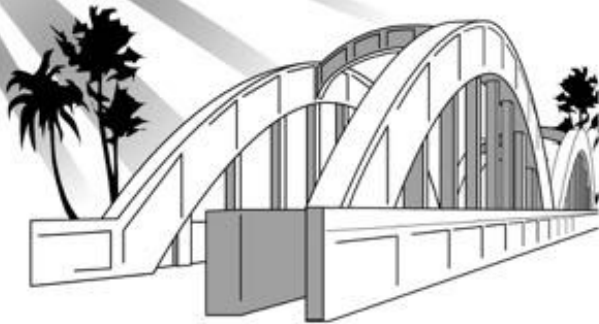


P.O. BOX242 HALEIWA, HI 96712
TEL: 808-637-4382



Haleiwa Jodo Mission

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HALEIWA JODO MISSION

OCTOBER, 2024



FAMILY SERVICE

10:00 AM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

10:00 AM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2024

THE 850TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF JODO SHU

THE 130TH ANNIVERSARY OF HAWAII JODO SHU

AT JODO MISSION OF HAWAII

10:00 AM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2024

KOKUA DAY

9:00 AM

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2024

SERMON AT THE HIGAN SERVICE

ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

Rev. Koji Jeff Ezaki

Minister of Haleiwa Jodo Mission

We are gathered to observe the Autumn *Higan* Service. First, I would like to explain the meaning of *Higan* and why *Higan* is important for Buddhists. We have two *Higans* in a year. The first is in Spring and the other is in Autumn. Spring *Higan* is on the day when spring begins, and Autumn *Higan* is on the day when autumn begins. This year, spring began on March 19 and autumn will begin on September 22. This means *Higan* on these two days is when the season changes and when the length of day and night is equal. In Japan, the two *Higans* are national holidays called "Shunbun no hi" for the Spring *Higan* and "Shubun no hi" for the Autumn *Higan*. Both are special days that are designated as national holidays in Japan. Why are they special? In Hawaii, seasonal changes are lightly felt because of our mild year-round climate. The daily attire for many

people is a T-shirt and short pants. However, having lived in front of the ocean for 25 years, I considerably feel the ocean's seasonal changes. Generally, living in Hawaii, we seldom feel the changes in seasons. Although we may not be as aware, there are definitely changes in the seasons. Here on the North Shore, waves rise during the winter and are calm during the summer. That is why we can observe toro nagashi in summer and world class surfing in winter. We surely feel seasons even in Hawaii. By observing *Higan* Services two times a year, it serves to remind us of the seasonal equinox change, and the importance of appreciating our daily life by living in moderation or Middle Way. *Higan* is also the day we give thanks for receiving our lives from our deceased loved ones and ancestors. By observing *Higan* Services in September, we will be aware to live life together with nature and all that we are receiving from them and to live our life as best we can. This is the reason we observe *Higan* Services.

Now, I would like to explain about the Buddhist gatha that we always sing during the Family Service.

Today we had a sutra chanting so we did not sing the Buddhist gathas. In our *Otsutome* book, we have Vandana and Ti-Sarana which we always sing at the beginning of the Family Service. I am sure the person who always participates in the service is familiar with this song. Please look at the *Otsutome* book again on page 5. The second lyric of the Ti-Sarana says,

“We go to the Buddha for guidance.
We go to the Dharma for guidance.
We go to the Sangha for guidance.”

The first lyric is Pali, the word of the ancient Indian language. The word Pali has the same spelling and pronunciation of Pali Highway but they are not related. The second verse is the English translation. In this verse, Buddha means Amida Buddha. Jodo-shu teaches that we must take refuge in Amida Buddha. Dharma is the teaching of Buddha. We must respect Buddha’s teachings. We always practice and follow Buddha’s teachings to become enlightened. The third one, Sangha, signifies a group of Buddhist followers. This group of Buddhist followers means you, Buddhists, the members of Jodo-shu and Haleiwa Jodo Mission. We must respect each other. By singing this song at the beginning of the service, we confirm the importance of our faith: respect Buddha, Buddha’s teachings, and Buddhists’ group. This is the meaning of Ti-Sarana. Buddha means Amida Buddha, Dharma signifies Buddha’s teachings, and Sangha is our group.

In Buddhism, “Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha” are interpreted as “merrily, rightly, and friendly.” Amida Buddha’s body is gold and shining. His peaceful face gives us ease and calmness. He urges us to live brightly and merrily like him. Singing “I go to the Buddha for guidance” means we swear to “live brightly and merrily like a Buddha.” How about Dharma? Dharma is a law that we must obey as Buddhists. Buddha’s teaching always says we must discard anger, hatred, and delusions from our mind and do good to others, by following the Eight-Fold Path, Golden Chain, and so on. So, singing “I go to the Dharma for guidance” means we swear to “live rightly and correctly following Buddha’s teaching.” The last one, Sangha, signifies that we swear to “live by getting along with each other in the group.” We, humans, live in a community. In order to live in the circle, we must respect each other. The word Sangha implies the importance of our relationship with others. This song, Ti-Sarana, contains an important message as to how we should live as Buddhists: no, not only as Buddhists but also as human beings.

Is there anyone who starts every morning fighting with and yelling at people as soon as you wake up? Do you like to punch and beat up others

instead of saying good morning? I don’t think there is such a person. Do you like a happy person or a gloomy person? Do you like a merry person or a violent person? I bet you like happy, bright, and shiny, not dark, scary, and gloomy. The rental of a house that gets lots of sunshine is pricier because people love sunny and warm weather. Needless to say, we love warm relationships. We love sunny houses. Definitely, people are attracted to a happy and warm person and keep away from a gloomy and mean person. That’s human nature.

Buddhism is a teaching of Buddha and also a teaching to become a Buddha. We all have a so-called Buddha-nature which is a seed to become enlightened, but Buddha-nature is covered and dimmed by delusions such as, desire, anger, hatred, ignorance and so on. By respecting Buddha, Dharma and Sangha throughout our daily lives, by living merrily, rightly, and friendly, we polish our Buddha-nature. Jodo-shu teaches that we must utter “Namu Amida Butsu.” It’s not enough to think “Namu Amida Butsu” only in your mind. Some shy people don’t want to say it. Jodo-shu teaches us that making an action, uttering “Namu Amida Butsu,” and showing your spontaneous spirit by recitation will illuminate your mind. This positive spirit enhances your mind, your heart, and your entire life. Please respect Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and recite “Namu Amida Butsu” throughout your life.

Today, the kitchen helpers made Japanese sweets called *ohagi*. We also call it *botamochi*. Ohagi and botamochi are the same food. The name changes depending on the season. When we eat it for the Spring *Higan* Service, it is called botamochi because the shape looks like a *botan*, peony, a flower that blooms during spring. When eaten for the Autumn *Higan* Service, it is called *ohagi*. The shape is like a *hagi*, bush clover, that blooms in autumn. Japanese people have enjoyed the same food with different names depending on the season. *Ohagi*’s ingredients are mochi rice, azuki beans, and sugar. In ancient times in Japan, these three ingredients were very expensive and used only for special occasions. The Spring & Autumn *Higans* were two such occasions when eating small *zeitaku* or luxurious sweets was enjoyed in appreciation of their lives. When our *Fujinkai* lady’s organization was active, Mrs. Muraoka led the *Fujinkai* members in making *ohagi* during the *Higan* Services. Ever since Mrs. Muraoka passed away, we stopped making them. I wanted everyone to know or remember this tradition, so I asked Tomomi to make *ohagi* for today’s gathering. She has prepared and setup a “DIY” table to make your own *ohagi*. When you go to the social hall for lunch, please make your own and experience one of the traditions of Japan.

FIRST SUNDAY OF OCTOBER

The first Sunday of October will be a Family Service starting at 10:00 am at the Haleiwa Jodo Mission Buddhist Temple. Lunch will be served. Please join the service.

SERMONS IN THE BULLETINS

Rev. Ezaki is very happy to receive appreciation, *Gobutsuzen* and *Ofuse*, from people who enjoy his sermons and the articles in the bulletins. The main teaching of Buddhism is how we control our own minds and obtain calmness in our daily lives, not change others. Rev. Ezaki tries to apply Buddha's teaching to see ourselves inwardly and to improve our entire lives from the viewpoint of Buddhists. Mahalo.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Marianne Ono, Bertram Kawamura,
and Edwin Kawamura

(In memory of Haru Kawamura)

Shirley Kitamura (In memory of George Kitamura)

Lillian Miyasaki (In memory of Neal Miyasaki)

Katherine Fujii (In memory of Frances Bowers)

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Myra Shiratori

MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR MONTH OF OCTOBER

1 YEAR

TAMURA, DUANE

OCT 21, 2023

MURANAKA, LORRAINE

OCT 30, 2023

BON FESTIVAL FOR 2025

The Board of Directors of Haleiwa Jodo Mission has decided the dates of our 2025 O-bon Services will be August 1 & 2, 2025. As usual, a Bon Dance will be held on both nights and Toro Nagashi will be held on August 2 at 9:00 pm. We really need your help to succeed in our big event. Please mark these dates in your calendar and help us make it a successful Bon Festival 2025.

THE 850TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF JODO SHU & THE 130TH ANNIVERSARY OF HAWAII JODO SHU

This year marks 850 years since the founding of our Pure Land Buddhist school, Jodo Shu, by our founder Honen Shonin and the 130th anniversary since the arrival of the first Jodo Shu ministers to Hawaii. The Hawaii Council of Jodo Missions will observe these commemorative celebrations on October 20, 2024 at the Jodo Mission of Hawaii. We would like to extend this invitation to our members of any Jodo Shu temples.

- 10:00 am Commemorative Affirmation Ceremony at the Jodo Mission Hondo

This ceremony is for both new and existing members to confirm official members of Jodo Shu. This is a ritual where members commit to Jodo Buddhist practice and principles. All participants will receive a blessing from the officiant.

- 11:00 am Commemorative Service at Jodo Mission Hondo

- 12:30 pm Commemorative Lunch & Entertainment at the Jodo Mission Social Hall

The Hawaii Council of Jodo Missions consists of thirteen historic temples on four major islands across the State. Hamakua Jodo Mission is the first sanctioned Buddhist temple built in Hawaii in 1896. Most recently, Lahaina Jodo Mission was destroyed by the 2023 Lahaina fires and is working to rebuild. Through this celebration, we wish to overcome our challenges to continue to serve our community by providing religious, cultural, and educational programs and activities throughout our beautiful State. Please RSVP to jodobulletin@gmail.com

PET MEMORIAL

Haleiwa Jodo Mission prays for your beloved pets who were one of your family members. It is common practice to have one's beloved pets cremated after they pass on. However, many pet lovers do not know how they can enshrine their pets further to give them a final resting place. Rev. Ezaki created the Pet Memorial because he saw that many families keep the urns of their pets' ashes in their homes with no place to go.