

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

jihō

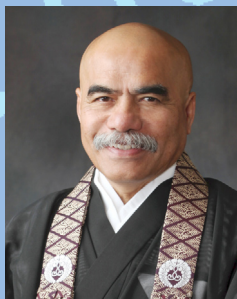
WWW

No. 480

September - October 2023

RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON DANA AND DONATIONS



**Rimban William
Briones**

"An offering is not a true offering, if after the act, there are feelings of regret or of self-praise. A true offering is one that is given with pleasure – forgetting oneself as the giver, the one who receives it and the gift itself."

True offering springs spontaneously from one's pure compassionate heart with no thought of any return, wishing only to enter into a life of Enlightenment together."

As a child, my mother would wake me up early every Sunday morning to attend the 6:30 morning Mass at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Like any child, I hated getting up early just to spend what seemed like hours of sitting, kneeling, standing and genuflecting. Worst yet, was Father Doyle's sermon. To this day, I can't remember a single thing that Father Doyle attempted to impart upon the congregation, save for asking for donations and talking about money.

Perhaps this is why I shy away from talking about matters concerning money in my dharma messages or talking about dues, donations, orei, fees for facility use, and such to our members. Unfortunately, my good looks don't pay the utility bills (\$5K - \$8K/month), BCA Dues (\$10 K/month), trash (\$2K-4K/month), fire and security (\$2K) our staff salary and much, much more. To run such a large temple, not only do we ask for your generous donations, but we ask for your precious time. So I'm sure no wants to hear about raising Betsuin temple dues, fundraisers or more donations.

However, through generous donations, temple

membership and fundraisers made possible by the dedication of hard working temple members and temple friends, our sangha is able to sustain our temple. Especially, during the past three years, as COVID took its toll on our fundraisers and our ability to ask for donations. The continued support by our members and community is the heart of our sangha. This is the very essence of dana, selfless giving that Shakyamuni Buddha spoke of. When we have benefited from the teachings, we in turn naturally want to give back.

The verse I began with comes from the Dhammapada, words spoken by Shakyamuni Buddha over 2500 years ago. It is a reminder for us that a true gift is given from the heart. It's about dana, the first of the six Paramitas—the selfless giving without expecting anything in return or of recognition.

Dana a word from Sanskrit that can be translated into donation, charity or sharing. It is an expression of love and compassion for all beings. Dana was one of the six kinds of practices by which were traditionally practiced by Buddhist monks and nuns that were truly living the bodhisattva ideals. However as mere "mortals" living in the mundane, the Paramitas can serve as a guide, a reminder of our Buddhist path.

I believe this was the understanding of our Issei and Nisei pioneers. They built our tem-

(continued on page 9)

MAUI DISASTER RELIEF

The Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) have provided information as to how donations can be made to aid in the relief for the Maui disaster.

Information on pages 10-12

Los Angeles
Honpa Hongwanji
Buddhist Temple

815 East First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

TEL: 213.680.9130
FAX: 213.680.2210

WEB: nishihongwanji-la.org

EMAIL: info@nishihongwanji-la.org

FOCUS AND CONCENTRATION

by Rev. Hibiki Murakami



Rev. Hibiki
Murakami

The autumnal equinox is approaching. There are two Ohigans — Spring and Fall, a time to set aside to contemplative nirvana. It will soon be Fall. Since COVID's influence has been minimized, I have been busy with the children's camping programs this summer. I can't tell you how many times I mentioned the word "focus" with the children. It wasn't that the children were not listening to my explanations —they were trying to listen. I was frequently saying, "concentrate" or "focus," but, truthfully, it was for my own sake. I was constantly preoccupied with what to do next. So, I wasn't confident in focusing on what I was supposed to be doing.

In this regard, the children have a better sense to experience what is going on in front of them than adults. This is a point that we, as adults, should learn from them. However, when it comes to avoiding distractions, it takes discipline regardless of age. For example, when you are listening to someone talk and a loud noise occurs, instantly, you are distracted. Though it is not a good idea to always ignore a loud sound in that it may be a sign of danger. It is, however, clearly more dangerous to be distracted by a cell phone or a passenger's conversation while driving. Undoubtedly, smartphones and the internet have made our lives more convenient. On the other hand, such technology can steal your attention at any time. This is a double-edged sword. This technology gives you an excuse to neglect what you should be focusing your attention. How would one feel if you are spending time with friends or family and you're busy being occupied by your phone? If you said, "My old classmate who I haven't heard from in a while just texted me." Would your friend sitting in front of you respond with, "Well, what about me?"

With this, I believe, to keep your focus on what should be is a basic discipline of Buddhism.

Recently, I read an article about neuroscience. There, the writer explained that the human brain is not capable of processing tasks one at a time. Today, speed and efficiency matter. So those who are able to deal with matters quickly appear to be smart. The article states, however, that no one is able to multi-task. Instead, those who are seemingly able to accomplish much in a short period must have put in a great deal of effort and spent a lot of time to accomplish such tasks effectively.

I remember Shinran Shonin's words: "Think about your own portion and situation." Just as "Rome was not built in a day," there is no magic that produces results in an instant. A baseball player once said about effort; "Blind effort never fulfills your wish. Only the eligible effort can be paid off."

I believe concentration asks how much honesty you can pay yourself. It is a challenge how you can show honesty to yourself by full attention to something you know you should be listening to, without excuse. There are many temptations in the world to take your attention. Therefore, you need to assess what you really need to "hear." But you never know where they lie around. You may find it in idle chatter, or you may learn it from children's play. In the end, there are many treasures out there that deserve your full attention. Conversely, I also remind you to avoid halfheartedly listening and get a sense of assuming you should know an answer, then stops thinking. Concentration means to open one's mind outwardly and not reject what comes from the outside. When you're in a state of full focus, you actively take it into yourself and freely output outwardly.

At the end of my message, trying to fit this method in the Shin Buddhism context, as Shin Buddhist, full focus listening would be to know Amida Buddha's approach for us due to Amida's compassion shall not abandoning each deep karma we own. How deep is the depth of our karma? If you take a moment to think about this, it will be appreciated.



*When catching a cold, cough comes out.
Saichi caught a cold of Seeker and Dharma,
and cough of Nenbutsu comes out again and again.*

— Asahara, Saichi

かぜをひけば せきがでる
才市が 御ほうぎの かぜひいた
念仏のせきが でるでる
— 浅原才市

BETSUIN BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Pam Tabata

Thank you for your continued support of our Obon festival. It was wonderful to see everyone that attended. We didn't anticipate the attendance and we will be better prepared next year.

As I have mentioned before, I enjoy Spring and Fall Ohigan. Maybe because of the great weather or the dango we receive after service. Or, it may have something to do with my son's birthday being March 22 and his daughter's birthday is September 21. Since my granddaughter's birth, I have missed many Fall Higan services. Because of the pandemic, I was able to Zoom the service and be with my family at the same time.

We have heard the Higan story, but I recall Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto's rendition of this story. He had one side of the center aisle was water and the other was fire. Because it was interactive, the children enjoyed participating. I am so thankful we have had many ministers come and speak to us. Their presentation of the stories that represent our special services are done in many ways and hearing these stories gives us a different way of hearing it.

As I thanked Rev. Mas Kodani at our Obon Service, I mentioned that I have known him since I was a child and that the older I get, the smarter he gets. I really appreciated Rev. Tets Unno's classes as well. Because of his classes, I was able to understand his talks so much better because I am older and could hear his messages. I need to mention Rev. George Matsubayashi. His sermons grab your heart and because I can understand his talks, that shows how well he knows his subject and is able to talk at my level. As I previously stated, we are very lucky to hear these ministers and get a better understanding of our dharma.

In *gassho* during this Fall Higan

BETSUIN CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

- 03 Family Service (10:00 am)
- 04 Labor Day (Temple closed)
- 10 Regular Service (10:00 am)
Dharma School Registration
BWA Sponsored Flu Shot Clinic
Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo (1:00 pm)
- 16 Fall Ohigan Seminar
- 17 Fall Ohigan Service (10:00 am)
- 24 Regular Service (10:00 am)

OCTOBER

- 01 BWA Sponsored Eshinni/Kakushinni
Memorial Service (10:00 am)
- 08 Regular Service (10:00 am)
Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo (1:00 pm)
- 15 Regular Service (10:00 am)
- 22 Regular Service (10:00 am)
- 29 Regular Service (10:00 am)

NOVEMBER

- 05 Regular Service (10:00 am)
General Sokai Meeting
- 12 Regular Service (10:00 am)
Eiktaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo (1:00 pm)

In order to access any of these services via Zoom, contact the Betsuin for information:

213-680-9130 or

NishiDharmaCenter@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to the supply shortage of materials to mail the Betsuin Jiho, there will be a change in the format from the next issue. The November-December 2023 issue will change from tabloid size to letter size.

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama

MEMORABLE JAPAN, MAY 2023

DAY 1: Four of us [Linda Inagaki (LA), Hannah Nishimoto (WLA), and Susan Ogawa (Senshin)] arrived a few days ahead of the [BWA American Holidays Japan Tour](#), arriving at Kansai Airport in Osaka. In the arrival area, what a surprise, to be met by Rev Masayuki Nakagaki and his mother, Mrs Sachiko Nakagaki! The late Rev Masami Nakagaki, father and wife of the above, was very active and visible at the Los Angeles Betsuin in 1950s and 1960s. Rev. Masa, who also helped at the Betsuin in the 1970s, kindly offered to drive us to Kyoto that evening but communication with the limo company was not possible so we waited and had a very nice visit instead.

DAY 2: We met Professor Michihiro Ama and his wife, Tomoko in the lobby of Rihga Royal Hotel Kyoto. The professor is currently at Ohtani University Kyoto. I first met Ama Sensei in Los Angeles when he was studying for his Ph.D. at UC Irvine, under the guidance of Rev Dr Duncan Williams. After receiving his degree, he went to the University of Alaska then to the University of Montana. What a pleasant surprise to hear from him before I left for Japan to let me know that he was in Kyoto! He and his wife were very kind and helpful in our plans for pre and post tour activities. Tomoko (formerly Haruno) was active at our Betsuin and BWA especially in publishing/layout designs in Japanese sections of the Betsuin Jiho, Centennial Celebration books and BWA's 90th Anniversary Celebration book. In addition, she is the sister of Moruko Okita.

DAY 3: Ama Sensei's was able to acquire tickets for us to view the 850th Anniversary Special Exhibition Shinran Shonin The Life and Legacy of the Founder of Shin Buddhism, at the Kyoto National Museum. It was an awesome experience to see the originals of many of the writings, drawings, and sculptures by and of Shinran Shonin, the venerable master, who, in my mind, was always illusory, just a thought, just an idea. The exhibition made the venerable Shinran Shonin a real human teacher who existed 800 plus years ago.

Rev Masa Nakagaki was kind enough to take a day off from his duties in Osaka and viewed the Shinran Shonin exhibit with us. He, then, drove us to Osaka for a walk



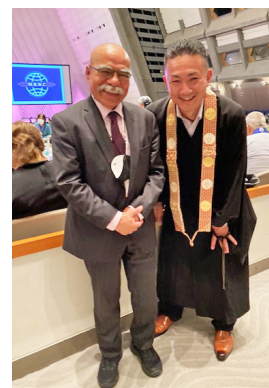
Professor Michihiro Ama and wife, Tomoko with Eiko Masuyama (right)

through Osaka's Dotonbori and a sumptuous okonomiyaki lunch. We were so satiated, we were unable to sample the variety of food and drink at the Koshien Stadium, watching the Hanshin TIGERS baseball team win.

DAY 4: Carrying the late Amy Miyakawa's okesa in her handmade okesa holder, I was ready to attend the 850th Celebration of Shinran Shonin's Birth and 800th Celebration of Beginning of Jodoshinshu Teaching. Leaders Pam Tabata, Jean Kawakami, and Rimban William Briones met us in the lobby and walked us to Nishi Hongwanji (Honzan). We took a group photo and then were comfortably seated near the front with headphones which provided English translation.

DAY 5: Today, not only did I have Amy's okesa, but also, the memory of Kayo Uno, who, together with me, had been attending the BWA conventions and conferences, Southern District, Federation, and World. We were bussed to the huge Kyoto International Conference Center for the 17th World Buddhist Women's Convention. We arrived early so we were able to find our reserve seating in lobby area for between workshops. Banquet seating was in groups of five with one international member assigned the middle seat. I sat and exchanged gifts with ladies from Hiroshima and Fukuoka and other parts of Japan. They loved the purple mask with the sagarifuji (wisteria) with attachment purchased at our recent Silent Auction. The delegate from Hiroshima found me the next day and we exchanged names/addresses. When I returned to the LA Betsuin, there was a postcard with a drawing of Eshinni and kobushi flower waiting for me. Mrs. Miyoko Sakamoto of Fukuyama, Hiroshima, wrote me in English, expressing pleasure in our meeting and looking forward to seeing me in Hawaii!

Highlights were the group dancing up and down aisle doing Haru Koma, one of my favorite bon odori dances. I joined in along with Setsuko Nakahara and Linda Inagaki. The dance was a bit different, subdued, compared to the more energetic version that we do at home. The ladies in my group were surprised that we danced bon odori each summer. Ernest Hida, our tour escort, had arranged for us to have our lovely



Rimban William Briones (left) and Rev. Koken Torimi (Saikoji Temple, Nara)

(continued on page 5)

(KNOW? - continued from page 4)

boxed dinner together across the street.

DAY 6: We transferred to the convention center for opening ceremony keynote speech, followed by lunch, and panel presentations, general assembly, and closing ceremony. We were surprised to cross paths with Rev Koken Torimi who was at Nishi Betsuin, 2004 - 2006. Also, as we were leaving the convention, we came upon Rev, and Mrs Kojo Kakihara (2008 – 2010) and their two children from Hiroshima. Unfortunately, there was little time to reminisce. It was so very nice to see both ministers from the past.



Rev. Kojo Kakihara and wife, Masayo and their children, Satone (11) and Shujo (8) with Tacoma delegate Patti Wong (center).

DAY 7: We visited Kyoto’s Fushimi Inari Temple with its hundreds of red torii gates in a row up the hillside along with hundreds of other tourists. Shinran Shonin’s birth place, Tanjoin, was a quieter, nicer visit, followed by lunch.

Following lunch, we left the group to see kabuki at the newly renovated Minami-za Theatre. Beautifully remodeled, the interior was impressive. Opening day had been the day before. The lecture on kabuki, unfortunately, was in Japanese only followed by Negai no ito enishi no odamaki. It was not very exciting, but colorful. We had one extra ticket so Joy Tomita joined us.

DAY 8-12: It was farewell to Kyoto and travel to Takayama to view Takayama Festival Yatai (floats). This area is known for Hida beef and sarubobo — red human-shaped doll amulets for protection. We traveled to Shirakawago to view Gassho-Zukuri traditional thatched roof houses, similar to the ones we saw in Miyama in the outskirts of Kyoto. We then went to Miyagawa River morning market and to Matsumoto and its historic Matsumoto Castle which I opted to view from the outside and skip the many uneven steps from the bottom to top of the castle. It was a lovely, warm sunny day to sit beneath wisteria vines, enjoying a soft ice cream cone and viewing the lovely Black Castle from afar. We visited a wasabi farm and enjoyed a wasabi soft ice cream cone.

We went on to Nagano and Joetsu, the site of Eshinni No Sato Museum and grave site to view kobushi (type of magnolia) flower tree. The museum store was sold out of many items. Fortunately, I had bought a t-shirt with kobushi flower at the convention! We then went on to

Kusatsu Onsen a famous hot spring area. In the 1960s, I used to come here from the Tokyo area to ski in the winter before its development into a high class hot spring. We stayed overnight at a ryokan and had a wonderful Japanese dinner.

I met up with a high school pal, Harriet Lovatt Clune (with Rich Stewart), and discovered another Manual Arts High School Toiler, Irwin Wong (with wife, Judy) on this Japan Tour. What fun reminiscing.

We traveled to Ashikaga to view the Ashikaga Flower Park. Unfortunately, wisteria bloom was over but there were many other lovely flowers.

It was now “Good-bye” to the American Holidays Japan Tour group. The original four of us, with the addition of Sachi Oda (Senshin), continued on for another ten days or so.

* * * * *

Thank you for donations of books to Nishi Library from Rev and Mrs. Harold Oda; also, from Sharon Nishi, Suzy Saita, Robert Oda, Rev Furumoto of Senshin and Nishi BWA; for archive donations of photos (late Helen Adler) from Michael Richards; also memorabilia (late Amy Miyakawa) from Sharon Nishi; event programs of the past and photo (late Frank Oda) from Robert Oda.



ADOPT-AN-OBUTSUDAN

Connect the family to the Buddha-Dharma

A donation of \$100+ would be appreciated.

NISHI ABA ACTIVITIES

by Joanne Nakamura

Listen, Oh Listen to the Rhythm of the ABASonics sound!

Nishi ABASonics held a fundraising concert at the Betsuin's West Lot. Family and friends enjoyed a musical concert by the ABA Sonics Band. "Golden Oldies," reminiscent of familiar songs were performed. The audience couldn't help but dance to these great melodies. What a fun evening it was! Many door prizes were given also supporters participated in a 50/50 raffle. Part of the proceeds from this event went towards much-needed temple office equipment.

Special thanks to **Cindy Nakamura** and **Karen Escano** for chairing this successful event. A round of applause to the ABASonics band members: vocalists: **Denise Otani**, Drummer: **Roy Yamatoku**, wind: **Yoshi Ono**, lead guitar and vocalist: **Thomas Mochizuki**, bass guitar: **Gerald Falla** (missing was vocalist Eric Quon). The MC for the evening was **Derek Escano**, and our sound engineer was **James Nakamura**.



ABA Sonic
Concert
June 3, 2023



The canopies were provided but the audience brought their own seats, bento, and beverages to enjoy the outdoor concert on a pleasant evening in the Betsuin's west parking lot.



L-R: Moruko Okita, Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, and Rimban Briones enjoying the ABASonic vibes.



There were fancy table settings...

Hooray for the Red, White and Blue!

Nishi ABA, with family and friends from Venice and Gardena enjoyed one of LA's favorite traditions at the Hollywood Bowl. The Beach Boys lit up the night with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra. Thomas Wilkins conductor and the legendary fireworks entertained a sold out crowd.

The Beach Boys mark more than a half century of making music. The group continues to ride the crest of a wave unequalled in American musical history. The Beach Boys have become synonymous with the California life style and have become an American icon to fans around the world.

Lead singer Mike Love led the evening program with special guest John Stamos (Full House). Songs such as Surfin USA, I Get Around, Kokomo and many more had the audience nostalgically singing along.

The most spectacular firework display culminated the evening. Synchronized patriotic songs performed by the orchestra was most impressive and inspirational.

This outing was made possible by the efforts of **Lonny Quon**. Everyone is grateful for his continuous support and generosity. Thank you Lonny!



Nishi ABA family and friends at the Hollywood Bowl enjoying the Sounds of the legendary Beach Boys.



Distributing Raffle Prizes

L-R: Dianne Odagawa, Harumi Hatakeyama, Karen Escano, Cindy Nakamura, and Derek Escano

BETSUIN 2023 OBON



Rimban Briones and Rev. Murakami do a sutra chanting to begin the bon odori.



L.A. Taiko Ichiza brought the crowd to the bon odori area with the booming sounds of their rousing taiko pieces.



Seibi Okita, produce expert, overseeing the produce booth.



Pam Tabata, temple president



The Nishi Center children demonstrating their weekly odori class skills.



"The Gohan Guys"



The young children doing their best in keeping up with the grown-ups.



Tea Ceremony Demonstration



The ever-popular Dough Ball game...



Bondaiko kids taught by Yuki Inoue (far right) and Denise Okimoto.



(L-R) Rev. George and Mrs. Kay Matsubayashi, Rev. Murakami, and Rimban Briones

BETSUIN PHOTOS



Visitors enjoying being back at the LA Betsuin enjoying themselves in the kaikan with food, beverages, and BINGO.



Nishi Aikido Demonstration



Laurens Chao (3rd from left) and Matthew Hayashi (4th from left) received BWA scholarships based on submitted essays that reflect how Jodo Shinshu has influenced their lives. Pictured beside them are their parents, along with Jean Kawakami (BWA president), Rev. Murakami, and Rimban Briones.



Dharma School students who have earned attendance awards.



Rev. Murakami conducting the Obon Service at Evergreen Cemetery.



Rev. Mas Kodani served as guest speaker for the Obon Service.



Hatsubon Service
Names along with lit candles for those who passed in since Obon 2022.

(Rimban - continued from page 1)

ples in the worst of economic times. Through financial and personal hardship they endured yet they generously gave back to the temple. Dana, was the foundation of their spiritual life.

As the Issei pioneers built the foundation of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple almost 118 years ago in downtown Little Tokyo, the Nisei in 1965 with foresight and a vision purchased one and one-half acre at First and Vignes streets to relocate the Betsuin from the Central/First Street site. With the generous support of the temple members and friends they were able to raise enough funds to complete the construction of the new Betsuin in 1969.

And yet again when our members were asked for donations for our Betsuin's 100th Anniversary, our members supported the campaign and as a result our sangha was able to complete the nokotsudo and Wisteria Chapel.

As the Betsuin facility reached 50 years at the present site, it was necessary to refurbish the naijin and to repair or replace outdated or damaged areas within the temple grounds and facility. Our members and temple friends were asked once again to continue the legacy of your parents and grandparents. And once again temple members and friends were generous and donated.

As Betsuin returns to some semblance of normalcy, may we look back in gratitude. This gratitude is an important part of our life through which we may experience a renewed closeness with ourselves and all of those around

us. We come to realize that life gives generously to us therefore we naturally reciprocate and give generously back to life.

Dana, is a reflection of our spiritual life. And as we endeavor this practice through donations and service, we become aware of what is truly important in our lives, and we discover that true happiness arises from the selfless act of giving.

To those individuals and groups that have donated not just monetarily, but through your service, my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to you. The dana that you have expressed through your generous donations will not only maintain our temple facilities but most importantly, they will ensure that the nembutsu teachings are available to all those who want to hear and experience it.

Namo Amida Butsu

IN MEMORIAM

The Nishi Betsuin extends its deepest condolences to the families of the following members who have recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the Nembutsu.

--Namo Amida Butsu

May 16 - July 15, 2023

May 2023

- 20 Sharon Michiyo Nishioka
- 29 Ernesto Romero
- 30 Hiroshi Fukushima

- 24 Takako Uyeda
- 24 Kiyu Ono
- 25 Sally Toshiko Yoshikawa
- 27 Cisato Yamaguchi
- 27 Roy Yukio Wakamiya

June 2023

- 04 Dale Yuuki Take
- 10 Shuichi Ito
- 13 Kimberley Masumiya
- 17 Aiko Yabuno
- 17 Stella Itamura
- 17 Mitsue Takatani

July 2023

- 06 Atsuko Fukushima
- 06 May Itano
- 08 Katsuko Kitadani
- 10 Talaye Takamoto
- 13 Takako Matsui

**BETSUIN
VEHICLE DONATION**

**Donate any vehicle:
car, truck,
motorcycle, or
boat**



2023 MEMBERSHIP

Valid from January 1 through December 31, 2023

\$250 FOR EACH ADULT FAMILY MEMBER

CHECKS ARE PAYABLE TO:

L.A. HOMPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Betsuin Jiho

**Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones
English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto
Photos: Koichi Sayano Glen Tao**

LAHAINA HONGWANJI



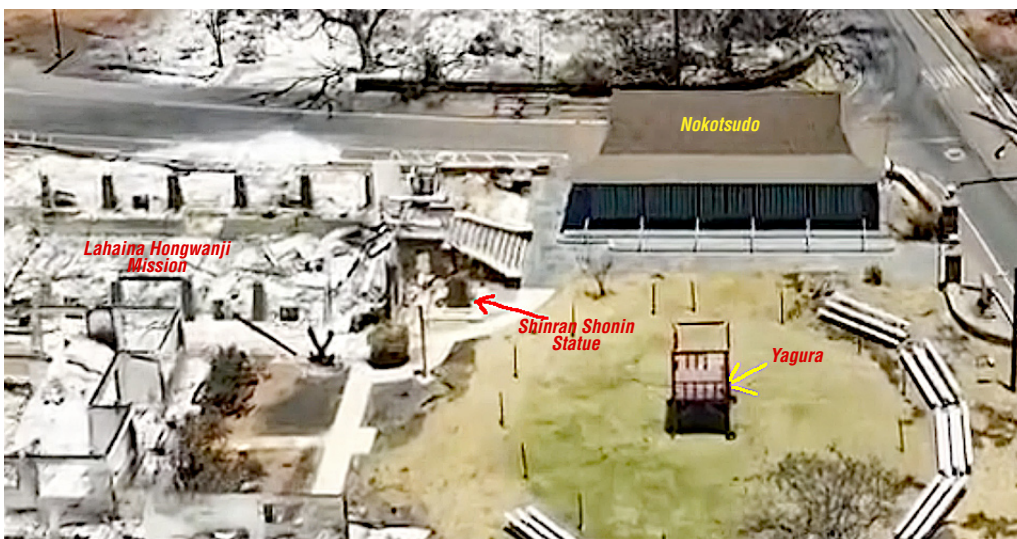
The beginning of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission dates back to 1904. The minister of Wailuku Hongwanji Mission was assigned to commute 25 miles on horseback over the pali's precarious mountain trail to Lahaina. He began the propagation of Shin Buddhism

in Lahaina town. A permanent minister was eventually dispatched to become the first resident minister of the Lahaina Hongwanji Mission.

The current Lahaina Hongwanji property was purchased in 1911. By October 1912,

the construction of the temple, minister's residence, and school was completed. That temple building was replaced in 1933, by the temple as it exists today.

The nokotsudo was built and dedicated in 2012.



The Lahaina Hongwanji Mission was set to have their Obon festivities during the weekend following the devastating fires. Note the yagura and bleachers set out in preparation for the bon odori, the first since the outbreak of the pandemic.



This photo is from Google Maps



Buddhist Churches of America

BCA Launches Relief Efforts to Aid Maui

The Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and its Social Welfare Committee have launched Maui disaster relief efforts in full support of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH).

Donations can be made online through: <https://bca.kindful.com/>, or by check payable to: BCA Endowment Foundation (Please note on memo line: Maui Relief). Mail checks to: BCA Endowment Foundation at 2140 Durant Ave., Berkeley, CA 94704.

The BCA and HHMH are affiliated organizations and are a part of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist based at the Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan.

“We watched with great sadness and horror the loss of life and destruction of homes and communities in Maui because of the devastating wildfires,” said BCA Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada. “Our thoughts go to all there who have lost loved ones, homes, businesses, temples and churches, and their community.

“In the face of such devastation, we will all do what we can do, whether it is to contribute to the disaster relief, or to share our support, or for those in Maui, to help them begin to rebuild, one step at a time, doing what they can do.”

The wildfires in Maui have led to 99 deaths as of Aug. 13, making it the deadliest natural disaster in Hawaii since it became a state in 1959. The winds from Hurricane Dora that fueled the wildfires have destroyed or damaged more than 2,700 structures in Lahaina, including the HHMH’s Lahaina Hongwanji Mission.



HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII

STATE HEADQUARTERS

1727 PALI HIGHWAY ■ HONOLULU, HI 96813 ■ PH: (808) 522-9200 ■ FAX: (808) 522-9209

www.hongwanjihawaii.com

August 10, 2023

Dear Dharma Friends,

We have been watching in disbelief the tremendous destruction caused by the recent wildfires on Maui. The loss of life, livelihood, and property has been devastating. Lahaina Hongwanji and its Sangha were directly affected by the fires. The temple, columbarium, classroom building, and minister's residence were completely destroyed in the horrific fires that devastated historic Lahaina town. Many temple members were forced to evacuate, and many homes were burnt to the ground. Our hearts go out to all who have been impacted by this disaster. As residents and our fellow Sangha members begin the process of rebuilding and healing, Hawaii Kyodan is committed to supporting relief efforts on Maui.

In the spirit of compassionate action, we have established the **MAUI WILDFIRE DISASTER RELIEF FUND**. You can donate in the following ways:

1. Online at www.hongwanjihawaii.com by clicking on the "Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief" button under the "Donate" tab.
2. Through GoFundMe at the following link: <https://gofund.me/ff77a520>
3. Check and cash donations can be sent directly to Hawaii Kyodan Headquarters. Please make check payable to HHMH and in the memo line designate "Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief" to ensure proper credit.

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
1727 Pali Highway
Honolulu, HI 96813

All donations collected will go to support Lahaina Hongwanji and relief efforts on Maui. The Office of the Bishop and Committee on Social Concerns will prioritize addressing the immediate and short-term needs of temple families displaced by the fires and supporting the greater community as it rebuilds. The Committee will select reputable relief agencies and organizations to support in order to ensure our donations will directly aid those impacted by this disaster. Updates will be shared on our website at www.hongwanjihawaii.com.

Mahalo for your generosity and support during this time of tragedy.

In Gassho,

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani
Bishop

Dr. Warren Tamamoto
President

Rev. Blayne Higa, Chair
Committee on Social Concerns