



SOTO MISSION OF HAWAII

BETSUIN NEWSLETTER

April 2021

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Hawaii Buddhist Council Buddha Day Service

On April 4, 9:30 AM, the Hawaii Buddhist Council will be observing Buddha Day Service Online. This is a service dedicated to Shakyamuni Buddha's Birth.

Shakyamuni Buddha was born as a prince of the Shakya Clan and was named Siddhartha. Stories tell that his mother, Maya, dreamed of a white elephant entering her body one night. She woke up to her surprise at bearing a son. In the ancient India, mothers would return to their home village to give birth to their child. Like so, Siddhartha's mother also traveled to her village for birth. However, on their way, as they were passing through the Lumbini Garden, Maya gave birth to Siddhartha. Stories tell that Siddhartha stood up and walked seven steps, pointing his right pointer finger up and the left pointer finger down and said, "天上天下唯我独尊," meaning "I alone am the world honored one." If you look at the word literally, it may sound very selfish but it means that everyone in this world is in its purest form a precious life. With the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha,



we practice compassion to bring the character within us so that we can all attain peace and harmony in this life.

Let us practice the teachings together on this special day as we celebrate the birth of our founder, Shakyamuni Buddha, by registering using the link on the flyer.



Hawaii Buddhist Council
Virtual Buddha Day Service
“Hanamatsuri”

Celebrating the Birth of Shakyamuni Buddha

Date: Sunday, April 4, 2021
Time: 9:30 am (HST)
Where: Online via Zoom
Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson



Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson is a professor of Religious Studies and East Asian Studies at Renison University College, at the University of Waterloo, in Ontario, Canada. In 2018 he was the Numata Visiting Professor in Buddhist Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Dr. Wilson is the author of numerous books, including “Mindful America” and “Buddhism of the Heart.” His current research is focused on Japanese-American Buddhism and social engagement. He is also an ordained minister in the Honpa Hongwanji tradition.

*Please call (808) 522-9200 or (808) 531-9088
or email at mail@hawaiibuddhistcouncil.org for more information.*

REGISTRATION - FREE

Use the link to register or scan the QR code. (Deadline: April 3, 2021)



http://bit.ly/2021HBCBD_registration

DONATIONS WELCOME

Use the link or scan the QR code to donate. Thank you!



http://bit.ly/2021HBCBD_donations

Let's Learn about Soto-Shu: What is A Memorial Service

Buddhist Memorial Service

Hoji (a Buddhist service), also known in Hawaii as "Nenki," is referred originally to the teachings of the Buddha, and familiarization with the heart of the Buddha. However, it later came to refer to a Buddhist ritual or ceremony, or a memorial service in honor of the departed ones of your family.

In a memorial service, the family member gains merit through virtuous deeds like offering food, drink, and flowers to the Buddha, or chanting sutras. They then transfer this merit to their deceased family members and ancestors, making a prayer that all beings, including themselves, attain the Buddhist Path.

As the family, it is important that one understand the meaning and appropriate manners for the service so that it can be carried out earnestly.

Deciding the date for the service

The memorial service should be held on the anniversary of the day of death or on the eve of that day. However, if those days are inconvenient, a date prior to the anniversary of the day of death should be set. When a date for the service has been decided upon, they should contact the temple to make an appointment.

With the COVID-19, at Betsuin, we offer virtual online service



when requested when the individual and the family cannot come to the temple due to physical and health reasons. If you wish to have your service virtually, please contact the temple and request an online service. We are also able to perform services on your behalf if you are unable to come to the temple or go online. This service will be part of the daily ministers' morning services.

When multiple memorial services fall on the same year

If possible, memorial services should be held separately for each deceased person. However, anniversaries of the death of multiple persons—such as the seventh anniversary for one family member and the



thirteenth anniversary for another—can fall in the same year. In such a case, joint service on the anniversary of the most recent day of death can be done. In the above case, for example, the thirteenth anniversary service would be held on the day of the seventh anniversary service.

However, the anniversary service for the first year after death should be performed separately, if possible, to pay your respect for the deceased individual who has moved on with their life.

Dress and prayer beads

In Hawaii, many dress causally to the temple to visit their family in the Nokotsudo or visiting the temple office. However, it is polite and respectful to the Buddha and the deceased to wear Aloha Attire during the memorial service. If you went through lay confirmation ceremony, you may have a wagesa, a special robe that one would wear around their neck like a lei. In such



case, it is appropriate to wear the wagersa during the service. Also, if you have juzu, that should also be worn and used during the service.

At the memorial service

When the service begins, the family should sit quietly and place their hands together when the minister(s) is recing the sutras. You are encouraged to chant along with the ministers.

Each aspect of the service has a special significance: the chanting expounds the teachings of the Buddha, the scent of the incense purifies the participants, and the smoke rising from the incense is said to deliver our thoughts and



prayers to the deceased. In addition to purifying oneself and praying for the welfare of the deceased, it is important that one view the memorial service as an opportunity to come into contact with the heart of the Buddha and his teachings.

When the priest announces the time to offer incense, one should come to the front of the altar to offer incense. After the final chanting and sermon by the priest, the service is officially concluded.

Donation and special envelope

Donation to the temple is appreciated for the memorial service. Donations symbolizes the "Fuse" or the spirit of giving as one shares their gratitude and support to the temple.

(Article from Sotoshu Shumuchō and edited to reflect Hawaii Custom)

Different Types of Services Available at Soto Mission of Hawaii

At Soto Mission of Hawaii, we are always thinking of how we can serve the members of our congregation. In doing so, we are always available for special services and not many may know that we

do these services. We would like to share with you some services that are done and welcome anyone who may want the prayer.

- Wedding Ceremony
- Car Blessing
- Boat Blessing
- House Blessing
- Buddhist Altar and New Buddha Statue Blessing
- Disposing of Old Buddhist Altar Service
- Blessing Services for individuals (Illness, Good Luck, Yakudoshi, ward and protect from bad luck, etc.)
- Memorial Service
- Funeral Service
- Bed Side Service
- Spiritual Counseling
- Baccalaureate Service
- New Born Blessing Service

and many more. If you think you need any special services and prayers that are not on the list, give the temple a call and let us know. Most likely, we are able to accommodate your request to bring you peace of mind.

Cultural Classes at Soto Mission of Hawaii

With the COVID-19 restriction, many of the classes that were held at the temple have been canceled or on hold as we wait for the situation to get better. However, some classes are starting to come back with all precaution and prevention in mind. Some classes have been doing classes through online platform as well. So if you are interested in learning a new hobby or return to your old hobby or talent, now might be a good time to do so.



Some of the activities that are available now are Shodo - Japanese Calligraphy, Sumie - Calligraphy Art, Japanese Dance, Kyudo - Japanese Archery, Aikido - Martial Arts. Many of the groups practice or teach following the rules and regulation.

Help Needed: Volunteers to Clean the Nokotsudo

We are still looking for volunteers who are able to come to the temple during the weekday to help clean the nokotsudo, including changing the water in vases, disposing of dried flowers and wiping the counter. If you are able to assist us, please call or come to the temple to let us know about your availability.



Upcoming Events

April 4, 9:30 AM

Hawaii Buddhist Council Hosted
Buddha Day Service [Virtual Service]

May 9, 9:30 AM

Buddha Day and Mother's Day Service
(Betsuin)



Acknowledgment of Donations

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their generous donations in February.

Nehan-e (Pari Nirvana) Service Donations

Katherine Higuchi, Jamie Peterson, Linda Unten, Bernice Koike, Warren & Karen Motosue.

Kannon Ko Donations

Jean Maekawa, Bernice Koike, Linda Unten, Wayne & Ann Uradomo, Thomas & Chiye Itagaki, Sally Nozaki, Toshio Ozeki, Keiko Kawagishi, Jamie Peterson, Mona Sawai, Katherine Higuchi, Ellen Nishimura

Memorial Service / Funeral / General Donations

Toshiko Abe, June Motokawa, Merritt Sakata, Dara Luangphinit, Kathleen Tasaka, David Nakamoto, Aileen Morikawa, Paul Okamura, Yoshikatsu Tsukahara, Jeanne Kaneda, Clara Ogawa, Edna Akita, Kenneth Hirai, Ryuko Kokuzo, Teruko Towata, Wayne Masato Yagi, Masae Hayashi, Amy Dang, Wendy Nakamura, Sanshin Afuso-Ryu Grant Murata, Alvin Honbo, Nobuko Ito, Susan Iwasa, Leslie Komori, Arden & Mary Loomis, Michael K. Nakamura, Nancy H. Nishimura, Tsuyoshi Onuma, Linda Shirai, Takako Taba, George Takeuchi, Natalie & Glen Taniguchi, Elizabeth Uno, Howard Yoshinobu, Duane & Patti Young, John & Helen Shih, Ellen Nishimura, Claudia Akizaki Kuwana, Pualani Kondo, Martin Matsuura, Kenneth Iinuma, Lynn Maurer, Wayne Warashina, Frank Hirazumi, Mark & Sharon Bryant, Marin Furukawa, Vaughn & Gwen Kunishige, Milton & Katherine Kwock, Lay Lim, Warren Craig, Warren & Karen Motosue, Geraldine Nagatoshi, Onomoto & Imai Families, Karen Prestidge, Mona Sawai, Hiromi Shimada, Dorothy Takeshita, Uno Family, Living Ohana Hawaii, Ritsuko Takahashi, Neil Horikoshi, Ronald Horiuchi, Kathleen Tasaka, Nora Kurosu, Jon & Cynthia Nishimura, Carl & Helen Tanigawa, The Aikido Ohana, Hawaii Soto-Shu Head Office, Fuchat & Yeeling Chan.



Bishop's Office Newsletter

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Second Quarter, 2021

Issue No. 36

Bishop's Message: Bishop Shugen Komagata

Aloha from the Bishop's Office,

Time flies faster than a speeding arrow! Spring is already here in Hawaii! I pray that you and your family are staying healthy and safe throughout these difficult times. April is a happy month, because it is when we observe Hanamatsuri, transliterated as the "Flower Festival." Hanamatsuri falls on April 8 and commemorates the birth of Prince Siddhartha Gautama (who would later become Shakyamuni Buddha). Flowers adorn the hanamido, a miniature pavilion housing a statue of the infant Buddha. Sweet tea called amacha is poured over the statue, like sweet rain from the heavens. Legend has it that the infant prince emerged from his mother's side, walked seven steps, and said while pointing to heaven and earth, "this is my last rebirth."

I received my second dose of the COVID-19 vaccination several weeks ago (one of the perks of being over 75 years-old) and look forward to traveling soon. However, I know that we are not out of the woods yet, so I will continue

to do my best to wear my mask and socially distance in public. I encourage everyone to do the same and take advantage of the first opportunity you get to be vaccinated.

Life at the temple has been a bit challenging over the past twelve months. We had to cancel our Fujinkai conference, Bon Dances, and various other services. At one point, we were not even able to allow people to visit the columbarium to put flowers! However, one of the amazing things I witnessed was our ability to adapt. We had virtual Bon Services, online dharma talks, a virtual temple tour, and even online classes on the Buddhist precepts! In April, the United Hawaii Soto-Shu Women's Association will be hosting a "hybrid" Lay Confirmation Ceremony. Ceremony attendees will have the option to participate in person or virtually.

I would like to thank the ministers, deacons, and Lay Temple Assistants, along with all the temple members and supporters, for "hanging in there" throughout these difficult times. Although navigating through the pandemic has been challenging, I am extremely grateful for their continued commitment to supporting the temples.

Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones.

In Gassho,

Bishop Shugen Komagata



Online Study of *Zen Seeds* to Begin in April

“60 Essential Buddhist Teachings on Effort, Gratitude, and Happiness” by Shundo Aoyama Roshi

Translated by Patricia Dai-En Bennage Roshi

One may register for either group 1 or group 2. Facilitated by Rev. Jikō, these weekly Dharma sessions will offer participants a chance to read the material and share their thoughts, reflections, and life experiences in an online atmosphere that is kind, respectful, and compassionate.

Group 1: Starting April 6, Tuesdays from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Group 2: Starting April 10, Saturdays from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Zen Seeds is a sparkling collection of short stories by Shundo Aoyama Roshi, who is among the foremost Zen teachers in contemporary Japan and a living treasure of Soto Zen. She now serves as advisor to Sojiji Monastery and is the chief priest of a training temple for female priests in Nagoya, Japan.

The book may be ordered online.

Like all Dharma offerings, these sessions are open to all at no charge. Donations to Daifukuji Soto Mission are welcome. <http://www.daifukuji.org/donation/index.html>

For more information or to register, please contact Rev. Jikō at (808) 322-3524, rev.jiko@daifukuji.org.

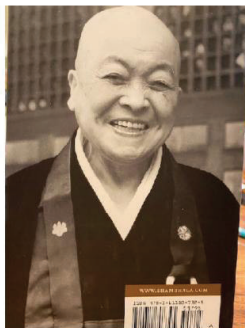
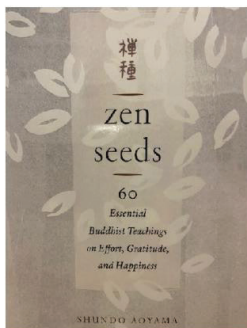


Photo Tour of SE Asia - Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam

April 18, 2021

10:00 a.m. via ZOOM

by Betsy Kairen Morrigan

Please take a trip with me and experience the Buddhist temples, amazing ancient sites and modern cities, and the people, places, and food of Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. In January and February 2020, I traveled to S.E. Asia for the first time. Thailand is an emerging bustling economy, very tourist oriented, with all signs in Thai and English, both Buddhist and Muslim. Angkor Wat, a major Buddhist temple complex located in Cambodia, is the largest religious temple in the world in a desperately poor country. Vietnam continually surprised me in its religious and geographic variety as I travelled 1500 miles north from Ho Chi Minh City (old Saigon) to Hanoi by bus and sleeper train. I went to Vietnam partly to do penance for the atrocities our country committed there during the twenty year Vietnam War.

I'd like to invite you to join me on this trip through a Zoom presentation lasting about an hour on April 18 at 10:00 AM. Reverend Jiko will send you a Zoom link and all you have to do is click on it to enter. There will be plenty of time for your questions and responses.

If you would like to receive the Zoom link, please give Rev. Jiko your name and email address (rev.jiko@daijukuji.org.).



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Zooming Through the Precepts **by Rev. Jiko Nakade**

"What a delightful surprise studying the precepts with a Zoom sangha has been! I appreciate the diversity of the sangha: ages teens to 80+ year olds, the diversity of experience in practicing Buddhism, from "I grew up in it but don't know much about Buddhism" to "having studied and practiced for decades." The Zoom sangha gives us an intimate, sacred space to share our thoughts and our life experiences as we contemplate the precepts. I am grateful for this opportunity to learn, share, and grow together." Mary Park

I echo the sentiments expressed by Mary Park. Studying the precepts with an online Zoom Sangha has been a delightful surprise.

In March of 2020, just a few weeks after a group of Daifukuji members began studying the precepts together in person, the temple had to close its doors due to the Coronavirus crisis. Disappointed and saddened by this turn of events, we thought we would ride out the pandemic and meet again in a few months. As the pandemic stretched on and worsened and the hope of meeting any time soon began to diminish, I began to think that I could at least offer a course of study using Zoom, a video communications platform which was being widely used.

Not knowing how effective using Zoom would be, I decided that it would be worth a try using it to teach the sixteen precepts. Remembering that Bishop Shugen Komagata had announced at a ministers meeting that he wished to offer Soto Zen Buddhist Lay Confirmation ceremonies at our various Hawaii temples once it becomes safe to gather, I asked our bishop if he would like me to open up my classes to other Hawaii Soto Zen sanghas, since using Zoom would make this possible. Bishop Komagata gave his support and encouraged me to do so.

Shortly thereafter, I heard from Mrs. Jaymie Komagata that the United Hawaii Soto Shu Women's Association (UHSSWA) was considering having a virtual precepts ceremony, to be officiated by the bishop, for interested Fujinkai members in lieu of the association's annual conference, which had been cancelled due to the pandemic. She asked if it would be okay for Fujinkai members from our various Hawaii temples to join the Zoom precepts sessions. Gladly, I decided to offer a second series of sessions for this group.

Word went out and responses came in. Twenty-three people registered for the 8:00 a.m. Saturday classes, and seventeen for the 1 p.m. classes. Each group was comprised of a mixture of people from various temples.

"When Rev. Jiko started up a new series via Zoom this year I asked to sign up for the Saturday afternoon session. The class is very inclusive and encourages participation. I have met a new supportive Sangha from other islands and my understanding of the Precepts is growing. The informational emails we receive have been thought provoking. I am very grateful for this opportunity to study the Precepts again with Rev Jiko." Susie Weaver

What is delightful is not only having members of the various Fujinkai women's groups join the afternoon sessions, but several men as well, among them Glenn Tango and Carl Kawauchi of the Soto Mission of Aiea Taiheiji.



“We’ve learned that the 16 precepts are guidelines for living a ‘good’ Buddhist life. They are all presented together in one place. They are guidelines and not commandments, so should help us live good Buddhist lives if we can follow them. We are also learning other aspects of Soto Zen Buddhism: e.g., what is meditation and how do we do it; karma and the six realms of existence; how we should generally live our lives; discussions on abortion and homelessness.” **Carl Kawauchi**

“I have enjoyed the precepts Dharma class because it has given me a chance to contemplate the precepts and express my thoughts on the precepts. Usually, it is just the minister or a reading through which you get an interpretation of a precept. It has been most interesting to hear what my fellow Buddhists have to say. I like this Zoom format because it gives a feeling of semi privacy. We are facing each other if you have your video on, but we are in our own comfortable private setting. I feel that I can be more open.” **Glenn Tango**

Although being together on Zoom is not the same as being together in person, people have found that Zoom Dharma study has its benefits, such as not having to drive and deal with traffic, being able to stay in the comfort of one’s home, being able to better hear what others are saying by controlling the volume on one’s personal device, and being able to focus on whoever is speaking without the distractions found in large group gatherings since everyone, except the speaker, is muted. Also, being able to attend a meeting without having to wear a mask.

“Studying the precepts with Rev Jiko via Zoom is lovely. While I’m not yet comfortable chatting on the medium, my own personal expansion of understanding has exploded. The convenience of not leaving home, coupled with the opportunity to join with others far away physically is absolutely wonderful. Internet-created sangha. Go Buddha nature, limitless, eternal, always connected. I’m grateful for my companions, walking each other home.” **Laura Brown**

“It has been my great good fortune to be a part of the Daifukuji online precepts class. I am not a tech savvy person and I would have never expected that this type of class being conducted online would have meaning to me - but it does. If anything, the online experience has been even richer than it would have been in person due to the time and energy saved by not having to take the long drive to and from the temple on a weekly basis.” **Dan Gordon**

With more and more people getting vaccinated, I am looking forward to once again holding in-person Dharma study sessions at Daifukuji Soto Mission. I would also like to continue offering Dharma study through Zoom. Through the sharing of their thoughts and reflections on the precepts, as well as their life experiences and challenges, the members of the Zoom sangha have bonded and are enjoying the sweet joy that spiritual friendship brings.

“The online Zoom Dharma sessions have been so far very enlightening. Each week is a new and important perspective of being a Buddhist. Having an opportunity to share the Buddhist precepts with others brings about right understanding. I am happy to have this chance and feel welcomed by the Sangha. Seeing people grow in the teachings while sharing is a very joyful experience.” **David Fiedler**

I can honestly say that I look forward each week to opening these Zoom meetings and to hearing the Zoom doorbell chime ring as, one by one, Sangha friends join the meeting from living rooms and kitchen tables throughout Hawai‘i. Seeing the faces of teenagers, young adults, mothers and their children, older adults, and seniors on my computer screen, all making time in their lives to study the Teachings of the Buddha and Dharma ancestors fills my heart with unspeakable joy and wonder. I wish to express my warmest mahalo to all of the members of the Zoom sangha. I also thank Bishop Komagata for supporting this endeavor.

Namu kie butsu, namu kie hō, namu kie sō. We take refuge in Buddha, we take refuge in Dharma, we take refuge in Sangha.



I'll do it

“俺がやる *Ore ga yaru* (Japanese proverb)”

Story by Rev. Daito Noda

“I’ll do it.” “I’ll take care of it.” Hearing these words makes anyone feel good. And when one enjoys doing something one is good at, these words come out naturally. But what if it’s work you don’t like?

There is a phrase which Zen monks often say, “Don’t pass on to someone else, work that is yours to do.” For Zen monks, this means that “I have been tasked to do this work as a part of my Zen training. To pass on some work to someone else because I don’t like doing it, is the same as robbing me of my zen training. There’s no way I’ll let that happen.”

I remember an incident that happened shortly after I entered the monastery. A fellow novice was assigned to clean the toilets for the next three months. I expected him to grumble how he, a college graduate, didn’t come all the way to these remote mountains to clean toilets.

To my surprise, he said, “Don’t pass on to someone else, work that is yours to do.” Then with a determined look, he said, “All right. I’ll make the toilets spotless until they shine.”

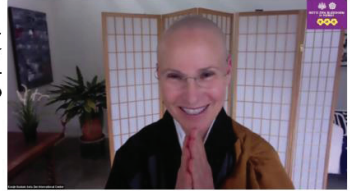
For me, his words and attitude were like a thunderclap in a cloudless sky. For the first time in my life, I had heard this Zen expression.

From then on, I repeat that phrase to myself, “Don’t pass on to someone else, work that is yours to do.” In today’s world, if you truly want to develop spiritually, rather than staying in your comfort zone and doing what you are good at, wouldn’t it be better to face the “now” in your life, that which you dislike, what you would like most to escape? How about practicing this from this day?

SDGs Lecture by Rev. Konjin Godwin

We invited Rev. Konjin Godwin, the Director of Soto Zen Buddhism International Center and held the event to learn about how Buddhism relates to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on February 21, 2021. Following is the video of the link.

<https://youtu.be/nraIpJsLS8Y>



Online Dharma Message

