



# **SOTO MISSION OF HAWAII**

## **BETSUIN NEWSLETTER**

**January 2021**

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# New Year's Greetings

Happy New Year! We are grateful to all who have provided generous support last year and we hope you will have a wonderful 2021.

(Please see Bishop's message in the Dharma Lei)

## Joya-no-Kane (Dec. 31 @ 11:45pm)

As we close off this year, we will be having our Joya no Kane Service on December 31 at 11:45 pm. We will be ringing the temple bell 108 times, which signifies eradicating the different types of negative karmic desires that we have accumulated throughout the year. By cleansing and purifying ourselves, we welcome the new year of the ox.

We hope that you will be able to join us on this occasion. We usually serve New Year's Eve special refreshments but we will not be serving this year due to COVID-19.



## Daihannya New Year Blessing Service (Jan 3, 2021 @ 9:30 AM) [Online Service]

This coming year's Daihannya New Year Blessing Service will be conducted virtual or live-streamed, due to the current situation of the COVID-19. As this has been a very difficult decision to make, we ask for your understanding as we take all precaution to keep the wellbeing and safety of our members and staff/volunteers. The service will be done live-streamed and you may watch the service at [www.sotomission.org/live](http://www.sotomission.org/live) or from our homepage.



During this service, we will be blessing the Daihannya Ofuda and other omamori. If you ordered your Ofuda Packet, please pick up the packet anytime starting the afternoon of January 3.

# 2021-2022 Board of Directors Nomination

The Nomination Committee has finalized the slate of officers and Board members for the 2021-2022 Board of Directors. Please use the ballot enclosed to cast your vote for those who will be representing you. The new Board of Directors and officers will be installed in February at our Nehan-e Service.

## Membership Dues and Nokotsudo Maintenance Fee

We appreciate your generous support each year through the timely payment of our Membership Dues. This helps us maintain and operate the temple each year.

Membership Fee for 2021 is \$150.  
Nokotsudo (Columbarium)  
Maintenance Fee is \$24 per Niche.

Please use the enclosed envelope to send in your Membership Dues Form and payment to the temple or by filling out online. We thank you for your support and contributions.



## Fundraiser was a Big Success!

We had a very successful fundraiser despite the difficulties we all faced during this year from the pandemic. We express our gratitude to everyone who supported us.

We would also like to thank all the hard working volunteers who helped setup, navigate traffic, packing, cashiering, and runners. We appreciated Fundraiser Chair, Mr. Milton Kwock, for his close attention to the details and with the added task of keeping the fundraiser safe for our members and volunteers.

We hope that you have all enjoyed the flame broiled chicken and the arabiki sausage. Once again, thank you.

## End of the Year Temple Clean up

As we wrapped up this year, we thank everyone who came out on December 20 to our Temple Clean Up. Big Mahalo!

# Hawaii Soto Mission Virtual Tour and Discussion

On behalf of the Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office, I would like to invite you to the Hawaii Soto Mission Virtual Tour and Discussion on Saturday, January 30, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. This is a free "virtual" tour that will be held on Zoom and is open to everyone. We are honored to have Professor George Tanabe and Professor Willa Tanabe, authors of the book, "Japanese Buddhist Temples in Hawai'i," serve as our tour guides. They will provide you with an in-depth look at the Soto temples in Hawaii, with pictures and discussions on the many similarities and differences between our temples and the rest of the Buddhist community.

EVENT: Hawaii Soto Mission Virtual Tour and Discussion

DATE: Saturday, January 30, 2021

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: This is a "virtual" tour, held online using Zoom

HOST: Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office

PRESENTERS: Professor George Tanabe and Professor Willa Tanabe

All the temples are painted with their unique colors of history, but the future remains a blank canvas. Dwindling memberships, maintenance and operation costs, the changing community around the temple, the connection to the youth, and more—these are challenges so many of our faith-based institutions are facing today. Join us on this Hawaii Soto Mission Virtual Tour and Discussion to learn how many of the Hawaii Soto temples are taking on these issues. Our presenters will not only discuss how temples must adapt, transform, and change to meet the needs of the people of Hawaii, but also how the temples are embracing change to ensure a brighter future.

Participants on this Hawaii Soto Mission Virtual Tour will also be given the opportunity to ask Professors George and Willa Tanabe questions. Your presence and participation will bring depth to interactions and enrich the virtual tour for others as well.

Please click below to register and confirm your attendance

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwocumppzMiH9znN-cabNTHmUcKQLGognU5F>

If you have any questions, please contact me at 808-224-2584 or 7676shuji@gmail.com

In Gassho,  
Rev. Shuji Komagata  
Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office

## **Let's Learn about Sotoshu: History of Sotoshu**



It was during the Southern Sung period that Dogen Zenji traveled to China to study the Dharma. After visiting many temples there, Dogen Zenji, at the age of 26, encountered Nyojo Zenji, the abbot of Tendosan Keitokuji and the dharma heir of the Soto Zen lineage. Because of this fortunate meeting, Dogen Zenji was able to study with Nyojo Zenji and succeed to the Authentically Transmitted Buddha Dharma that has been passed down from Shakyamuni Buddha.

Immediately after returning to Japan at the age of 28, Dogen Zenji authored A Universal Recommendation of Zazen (Fukan Zazengi) to proclaim the Authentically Transmitted Buddha Dharma. In spite of opposition from older schools of Japanese Buddhism, especially the monks on Mt. Hiei, Dogen Zenji felt it to be an urgent task to foster true seekers of the way in order to proclaim the truly transmitted teachings. With this in mind he first settled at Koshoji in Uji and then at Eiheiiji in Echizen. Faithful to his pledge that even one person or even half a person would be enough, he dedicated himself wholeheartedly to raising up true followers of the Buddha Way.

This mind of Dogen Zenji was then passed on to his successors: Koun Ejo Zenji, the second abbot of Daihonzan Eiheiiji, and from Ejo Zenji, Tettsu Gikai Zenji who founded Daijōji in Kaga. Tettsu Gikai Zenji's disciple Keizan Zenji then inherited that Dharma. Among Keizan Zenji's disciples was Meiho Sotetsu Zenji who later inherited Yokōji, and Gasan Joseki Zenji who inherited Daihonzan Sojiji. These masters also produced many outstanding students who spread the teachings of the Soto Zen School around Japan.

Although the Rinzai Zen School, which also inherited one stream of Chinese Zen, had the support and belief of many powerful people, including the shogunate government and the nobility, the Soto Zen School counted adherents mainly among wealthy families in the rural districts as well as the general masses. Because of this the Soto Zen School popularized its teachings mainly in the countryside.

During the end of the Kamakura Period and into the Muromachi Period, the Rinzai Zen School established five main temples in Kyoto and Kamakura, thus inaugurating the system of the "Five Mountains-Ten Temples" (Gozan-Jisetsu). This greatly encouraged the development of culture influenced by the Zen mind, especially in the literary movement known as Literature of the Five Mountains (Gozan-Bungaku). In contrast, the Soto Zen School avoided connections with central power, preferring to merge with the masses and respond to the simpler needs of commoners while continuing a slow but steady course of teaching activities. Of course through the flow of history the Soto Zen School has experienced periods of confusion and change.



The establishment of the jidan seido (temple/lay parishioner's system) by the Shogunate in the Tokugawa Period led to central organization and control of temples throughout the country. During this time many outstanding masters teaching in the Soto Zen School made their appearance. They included Gesshu Soko, Manzan Dohaku

and Menzan Zuiho. These masters were instrumental in correcting vices in Dharma transmission while emphasizing the need to return to Dogen Zenji's original mindfulness of Authentic Face-to-Face Transmission (menju-shiho). This was one part of a movement to revive the original realization of the Soto Zen School. It also led to copious research and editing of classics of the Soto Zen School, beginning with Dogen Zenji's magnum opus The Treasury of the True Dharma Eye (Shobogenzo).



With the Meiji Restoration, the new government rested on the authority of the Emperor and his divinity as it was supported by Shinto theology. Because of the close relationship between the emperor system and indigenous religion the government moved to locate the traditional Shinto religion in the center of society, separating Shinto and Buddhism while attempting to stamp out Buddhism. The government went so far as to proclaim the need to anti-Buddhist persecution (haibutsu-kishaku). This proved to be a major blow to the Buddhist world, but the various schools of Buddhism were able to overcome those troubles.

In this period the Soto Zen School saw the appearance of Ouchi Seiran Koji, who edited the original version of the Meaning of Practice and Verification (Shushogi). Azegami Baisen Zenji of Daihonzan Sojiji and Takiya Takushu Zenji of Daihonzan Eiheiiji made revisions to Ouchi's text and promulgated it as the standard for spreading the teaching of the Soto Zen School. The Shushogi has played a major role in popularization of the teaching among laypeople. Today, the Soto Zen School has developed into a major religious movement which includes about 15,000 temples and some eight million adherents throughout Japan.

(Article from <https://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/>)



## Bishop's Office Newsletter

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### Bishop's Message: Bishop Shugen Komagata

Aloha from the Bishop's Office,

I pray that this message finds you and your family in both good health and spirits. One year ago, the Novel Coronavirus was discovered. Since then, over sixty-nine million people have been infected with COVID-19, and 1.5 million people have died from it. We pray for the repose of all those who have died, and we pray for the recovery of those who are suffering the effects of this devastating illness.

I am encouraged by the news of a vaccine that is arriving in Hawaii. Although it will take time, I am hopeful for a positive resolution to this pandemic.

2020 has certainly been an unusual year. The pandemic has redefined nearly every aspect of our daily social interactions. Social distancing, masking up, frequently washing hands, restrictions on gatherings, quarantines, and restriction on gatherings are just a few of the things we experience daily now. Despite all the challenges, I have also seen how resilient people this year have been. So many people in Hawaii are very considerate, patient, courteous, tolerant, and polite.

2021 is the year of the Ox, or "Ushi" in Japanese. The ox is the second symbol in the Japanese Zodiac. Legend has it that when all the Zodiac animals were initially summoned by the gods, the rat hitched a ride atop the ox for the long journey. At the end of the trek, the rat jumped off and ran ahead to the finish line right before the ox. Although the ox came in second, the gods recognized the ox for its steady determination and patience on the long journey. So, in the spirit of the Ox in 2021, let us be both steadfast and patient in our journey to realize the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please take care of yourself and your loved ones.

In Gassho,

Bishop Shugen Komagata





## *You can't predict the future*

“人間万事塞翁が馬 *Ningen banji saiou ga uma* (*Japanese proverb*)”

*Story by Rev. Daito Noda*

In this world, there no telling what event might lead to happiness or unhappiness.

Long ago in China, there lived a wise old man in a remote fortress town. This old man had a son who was adept at riding a horse. One day, this horse the son was taking care of ran away from a barn, and nobody knew where the horse went. Many in the fortress town visited the old man and expressed their condolences. To these folks, the old man said, “Well, in this world, there is no telling if this incident might lead to fortune or misfortune in the future.”

A few months later, that missing horse came back with six beautiful wild horses. Neighbors came over to the old man's house and remarked how lucky he and his son were. To this, the old man said, “Well, in this world, there is no telling if this incident might lead to fortune or misfortune in the future.”

A few days later, this man's son fell off from one of the new horses. The son broke his leg. The injury was so severe that the son limped visibly thereafter. Folks in this village came to the old man's house and expressed their sorrow. To this, the old man said, “Well, in this world, there is no telling if this incident might lead to fortune or misfortune in the future.”

One year later, the neighboring enemy country invaded the old man's fortress town. Every able-bodied young man in this town was drafted and went to war. But the old man's son was not drafted due to his disability and remained in the village. While almost all young men died in this war, the son lived on. He was the only young man left in this village.

Fortunes and misfortunes are all parts of one's life. The only thing we can do is to do our best in this world.



# Online Dharma Message

Soto Zen Buddhism in Hawaii is providing online Dharma talks on YouTube and Facebook two times a month. Rev. Shuji, Rev. Hata and Rev. Hoshino's video have been published. You can watch the videos by using the link or scanning the QR code below.



## Youtube Page Link

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsTHV\\_8A59kEfZIBRImDtRw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsTHV_8A59kEfZIBRImDtRw)

## Facebook Page Link

<https://www.facebook.com/Soto-Zen-Buddhism-in-Hawaii-111602773848472/>



*Please scan the QR code with your smartphone to access the website!!*



## Schedule

Rev. Myoshin Kaniyama Dec 27, 2020  
Bishop Shugen Komagata January 10, 2021  
Rev. Hiroto Yoshida January 24, 2021  
Rev. Ryokei Ishii February 14, 2021

Rev. Daito Wright February 28, 2021  
Rev. Shoryu Fukagawa March 14, 2021  
Rev. Jiko Nakade March 28, 2021



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# 2021 Zazen For Early Risers

On Monday, January 4, 6:30 AM, we will be having our first zazen of the year. Begin your New Year with zazen session followed by shojin-okayu breakfast. Minimum donation for this special session will be \$10, which will help us supplement the cost of breakfast. Reservation is needed. Please email livingohana808@gmail.com with a header "New Year's Zazen and Breakfast" to reserve your spot.

## Special Temple Hours

Dec. 31 Reopen from Joya no Kane Service to 2 AM (Jan 1)  
Jan. 1 8 AM to 2 PM  
Jan 31 Closed in observance of 5th Sunday

## Acknowledgment of Donations

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

### Eitaikyo/Osuna Fumi Service

Thomas & Chiye Itagaki, Linda Unten, Katherine Higuchi, Ethel Watanabe, Tsuneko Habuki, Bernice Koike, Karen & Harry Takane, Wayne Warashina, Eleanor & Carl Takahashi, Helen Tsuchiya, Violet Machida, Masae Hayashi, other various donors.

### Memorial Service / Funeral / General Donations

Gayle Fujihara, Wayne Warashina, Daryl HK Chow, Clayton Kirio, S. & C. Ono, Akiyo Fujioka, Violet Machida, Bernice Koike, Steven Ono, Lynn Kobayashi, Melvin Sakae, Gail M. Krieger, Byron Kitagawa, Ryuko Kokuzo, Thad & Yoko Wakasugi, Diane M. Tamane, Lauri Sukekane, Wenda H. Lai, The Aikido Ohana, Martin Matsuura, Mari Shinri Nakamura, Irene S. Kodama, Akiko Towata, Arden & Mary Loomis, Denise C. Oguma, Frank & Kimberly Gomi, Lon K. Okada, Ann S. Okada, Reid & Lauren Nakamura, Kristin Nakamura, Sally M. Nozaki, Shugen Komagata, Theodore Y. Ozawa, Irene A. Ogozo, Deborah Saito

