

Soto Mission of Hawaii  
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# SOTO MISSION OF HAWAII BETSUIN NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021



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## Autumn Higan and Ryosoki Service

On September 19 @ 9:30 AM, we will be observing Autumn Higan and Ryosoki Services. The meaning of Higan is "the other shore", the land where the Buddhas and our Ancestors live. It is a time for us to reconnect with our Ancestors. Ryosoki is the service dedicated to the two founders of Sotoshu, Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji. Dogen Zenji is the original founder of Sotoshu, who traveled to China to learn the teachings of Zen from his master Nyojyo Zenji. After returning to Japan, he established Eiheiiji Temple located in the mountains in Fukui Prefecture. On the other hand, Keizan Zenji, who is also the founder of Sotoshu, was the fourth disciple of Dogen Zenji. You may wonder why we have two founders: this is because Keizan Zenji was responsible for teachings to the lay community and spreading the teachings throughout Japan. Thus, in Sotoshu, we honor both of them, one as the original founder of the sect and the other as the one responsible for the dissemination of the sect.



This year, we are honored to have Rev. Shoryu Fukagawa, minister of Wahiawa Ryusenji Soto Mission join us as he shares the teachings of Autumn Higan and Ryosoki Services. Rev. Fukagawa trained at Sojiji Head Monastery, the temple Keizan Zenji founded. He is from Akita Prefecture in the northern part of Japan and moved to Hawaii with his family in December 2016.

We will be having the service in person and online. Join online by visiting the following link ([www.sotomission.org/posts/fall-higan-and-ryosoki](http://www.sotomission.org/posts/fall-higan-and-ryosoki)) or on our YouTube page. During the service, if you would like to dedicate and pay tribute to your deceased love ones or your ancestors be tribute and dedicated during the service, you may make a donation with your credit card by visiting the Fall Higan Service page from the link above or you can mail us your check/cash by September 15.

## Virtual Bon Dance

Bon season is ending just around the corner. If you haven't had the chance to feel the spirit of Bon Dance, we have the virtual Bon Dance that was made by the Oahu Soto Mission Bon Dance Association on our YouTube Channel. You can watch the virtual Bon dance at <https://bit.ly/36T1Qvk>. The Oahu Soto Mission Bon Dance Association worked hard preparing the event for members of Soto Mission. We hope that you will enjoy it.

## Big Mahalo for a successful Bon Service

We would like to take this time to say thank you very much to everyone for your patience as we worked on having our annual Bon Service Online for the second year in a row due to COVID-19. Thank you for everyone who joined us live and those who prayed later. We can't say thank you enough for understanding and although it was through the screen, prayers and chants were delivered together to our departed loved ones.

For those who have not had the chance yet, the video will be up until the end of September so please watch them at your earliest convenience.

## Ring Your Bell for Peace Day

September 21 has been recognized by the United Nations as World Peace Day. We invite everyone to join by ringing a bell that you have at home at 9:01 AM. This year, Jake Shimabukuro will be the peace ambassador to bring excitement, joy, and peace to the world. For more information on signing up for the event, visit <https://hongwanjihawaii.com/peaceday2021>.

The Buddhist Temples of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i  
invite you to

## Ring Your Bell for Peace Day

Ring your bell for the International Day of Peace, from your temple, church, school, or favorite place and join with hundreds of others by Zoom around the world.

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Pre-celebration at 8:30 a.m.  
Bell ringing at 9:01 a.m.



Special Guest appearance by  
**JAKE SHIMABUKURO**  
2021 Ambassador for Peace Day  
In Hawai'i and the World

Please register in advance:  
<https://hongwanjihawaii.com/peaceday2021>  
Rene Mansho, Peace Day Committee Chair:  
808-291-6151, [renemansho@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:renemansho@hawaii.rr.com)

We encourage young people to participate!

With gratitude to our Peace Co-Sponsors: the  
United Nations Association Chapters of Hawai'i-  
Honolulu and University of Hawai'i-Manoa,  
and to KTUH radio



# HAIB Intergenerational Program, Buddhism and Art

On October 2, Hawaii Association of International Buddhists will be hosting a workshop for adults and children to participate together in drawing Buddhist art. Professor Thomas Chung, an American visual artist and an associate professor of art at University of Alaska in Anchorage will be sharing his dharma and teach us how to draw. The event is free (donation is welcome) to attend. You will need to sign up for the event at [www.hawaii buddhists.org/events](http://www.hawaii buddhists.org/events).

## Let's Learn About Soto-Shu: What is Higan and Ryosoki

### Equinox Ceremony (Higan-e) March and September

The week-long ceremony takes place on the spring and fall equinoxes, the middle of an important week when the weather is usually very good [in Japan].

Higan is the teaching that leads people from the world of delusion to the world of awakening. There are six components of this teaching: giving, precepts, perseverance, diligence, zazen, and wisdom. It is taught that if we carry out these practices we will be blessed with happiness and good fortune.

On the day before Higan, it is the custom in a Japanese home to clean the Buddha altar, to straighten up the various Buddha implements, and to change the flowers on the altar. It is also customary to make offerings of rice dumplings on the first day of the week. On the equinox (the middle day of this week) rice cakes covered with bean jam called ohagi or botamochi are offered. And once again on the final day of the week, dumplings made from rice flour are offered. During this time, offerings of food, special sweets, and fruit are also made.

### Visiting the temple

It is customary at this time to visit the temple to present offerings of pounded-rice cakes (mochi), sweets, fruit, and so on to the principal image of Buddha as well as the family ancestors.

It is also the custom at Higan to visit the family grave to express our gratitude to the family ancestors. For those people living far away from the family grave, it is especially good to visit the temple and family grave during Higan. This is a good way to learn the warm-heartedness customarily expressed during Higan of giving rice cakes covered with bean jam to the neighbors and one's relatives.

### Visiting the family grave

A visit to the family grave first begins with cleaning the grave stone and grave site. It is particularly important to scour places that easily become dirty such as water basins and flower vases. Older wooden stupas are mindfully removed and disposed of according to temple instructions. Once the grave has been cleaned, fresh offerings of water, incense, and favorite delicacies of the deceased ancestors are made. The temple priest is then asked to chant a sutra at the grave, at this time, we join our hands in wholehearted prayer.

Following the visit to the grave site, it is proper to remove the food offerings. No one likes to see spoiled offerings and they are also unsanitary. It is also good to clean up the special grave site for graves that are no longer tended by family members and offer incense and flowers. In Japan, this is thought to express the beauty of one's heart and mind.

**HAIB INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM PRESENTS:**

**SEEING THE TRUE NATURE OF REALITY**  
A LESSON IN INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND DRAWING

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**PROFESSOR THOMAS CHUNG**  
American visual artist and Associate professor of art at University of Alaska in Anchorage

**SCHEDULE**  
**OCTOBER 2, 2021**  
1:00 pm Welcome Address  
Introduction of speaker  
1:05 pm Lecture and introduction to the hand on activities  
1:40 pm Guided drawing activities with Professor Chung  
2:15 pm Sharing your experiences and reflections  
2:30 pm Closing

**BIOGRAPHY**  
**PROFESSOR THOMAS CHUNG**  
Tom Chung was born in New Jersey and grew up in Hong Kong and New York City. He is an associate professor of art at the University of Alaska Anchorage where he has been teaching drawing and painting courses since 2015. He received his Bachelors of Fine Arts Degree from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2010 and his Masters of Fine Arts Degree from Yale University in 2013. He has participated in numerous group and solo shows throughout the United States. His multidisciplinary work has been written about in Art in America, The New Yorker, and Modern Painters Magazine. His artwork has been featured on Fox News and PBS. Chung is a member of the Katong Mati Ling Sangha of Oahu and is a student of Tibetan buddhism under Khentri Lodrö Thayé Rinpoche. His recent artwork explores concepts in Buddhism and how they intersect with traditional culture and everyday life.

**WHO IS THIS FOR?**  
Any one who is interested in Buddhism and art.

**SIGN UP FOR THE EVENT**  
Sign up for the event at [www.hawaii buddhists.org/events](http://www.hawaii buddhists.org/events)

**THINGS YOU NEED**  
Blank paper,  
Pencil (2B graphite),  
Eraser



Keizan Zenji (left), Dogen Zenji (right)

## Ryosoki or Memorial Service for Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji

For the lay believers of Sotoshu, it can be said that Dogen Zenji and Keizan Zenji are, in terms of their faith, like father and mother.

Dogen Zenji died on August 28, 1254 at the age of 53 and Keizan Zenji died on August 15, 1325 at the age of 58. According to the Western calendar, both of these dates fall on September 29th. On this day, a ceremony called Ryosoki is respectfully held at Sotoshu temples to honor these two important ancestors.

Two other important celebrations are held on the date of Dogen Zenji's birth on January 26th and the date of Keizan Zenji's birth on November 23rd.

(Article from Sotoshu Shumuchō)

## **Announcements**

### **-Soto Academy Incentive Program**

Soto Academy created a new incentive program for members of Soto Mission of Hawaii who refers any students to Soto Academy. A Soto Mission of Hawaii member who refers a student to Soto Academy would receive a one-time \$1000 reward. The family of the new student will also receive a \$1000 benefit in the form of a tuition discount of \$1000. The family of the student may continue to receive a yearly tuition discount for being a member of Soto Mission. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact the Soto Academy Office at 533-0452.

### **-Upcoming Events**

September 19 Autumn Higan and Ryosoki Service

September 21 Ring Your Bell for Peace Day

October 2 HAIB Intergenerational Program: Seeing the true nature of reality

October 17 Hawaii Soto Mission Association Fall Conference

### **-Temple Hour Changes**

September 6 Temple closes at noon in observance of Labor Day

## **Acknowledgment of Donations**

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

### **Bon Service/Chochin Donations**

We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who donated for the O-Toba Bon Service, Chochin Orders and generous donations during the Bon Season. Each donation helps the temple maintain and protect the history and legacy of our ancestors and to keep sharing important Buddhist teaching for future generations. Thank you once again for sharing your Dāna, the virtue of generosity, charity and giving.

### **Kannon Ko Donations**

Arden & Mary Loomis, Ellen Nishimura, Thomas & Chiye Itagaki, Keiko Kawagishi, Bernice Koike, Sally Nozaki, Mona Sawai, Ethel Watanabe, Jean Maekawa, Katherine Higuchi, Linda Unten, Jamie Peterson, Tsuneko Habuki

### **Memorial Service / Funeral / General Donations**

Debbie Hlraoka, Dara Luangphinit, Bernice Koike, Kathryn Koshi, Amy Timas, Ryuko Kokuzo, Ellen Nishimura, Katherine Higuchi, Iris Kimura, May Sato, George Wakayama, Honolulu Fukushima Kenjinkai, Lauri Morohashi, Charleen Ikeda, Dennis Oshiyama, The family of the late Mitsuo and Amy Yamane, Family of the late George Ogoso, Diane Toma, The Aikido Ohana