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August, 2020

(808) 322-3524 www.daifukuji.org

See "archives" on our website for previous newsletters.

Obon Greetings from Rev. Jikō



Dear Daifukuji members and friends,

Inside the temple, it feels like Obon. Delicate paper lanterns called *chochin* have been hung to guide the spirits of the ancestors homeward and tall wooden boards called *otoba* are lined up on the altar in honor of the recently deceased. Yet, with no Bon Dances to be celebrated in community this year, Obon is not quite Obon. On the rain-free evening of July 11, when our Bon Dance was supposed to have been held, the temple grounds were dark, quiet, and empty.

Fortunately, Deacon Jikai thought of a way to brighten the atmosphere by suggesting that the two of us conduct a short Bon Dance service and invite our Bon Dance instructor Winifred Kimura to come over to dance the *Tanko Bushi*. In a simple way, we celebrated Obon, holding all of you in our hearts and holding all of you in safety. You may watch this service on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZkKKS5EH7Y&t=1100s>. Later this month, Daifukuji's youth taiko group will be recording their first virtual Obon taiko performance for your enjoyment. Please be sure to watch it. The group is amazing!

Under the present circumstances surrounding this COVID-19 crisis, we must all continue to do our best by staying calm and centered, remaining flexible, always keeping the health and safety of others in mind, and practicing compassion for all beings. Please take care.

Namu kie butsu. Namu kie hō. Namu kie sō.

With warm aloha, in gassho,

Rev. Jikō



Temple President's Message

We continue to ask for your understanding as we slowly reopen Daifukuji. While we may all feel some frustration at how slowly things are progressing, the Kyodan Board will do our best to make the best of the current situation and act in a responsible manner that adheres to the mandates of our elected officials.

Perhaps you noticed how often I used the words "we" and "our." I've always been attracted to Buddhism because of "We," the Sangha, one of the three jewels of Buddhism. Growing up the only child of a single mother, I have to admit to you how much I envied my friends who had brothers and sisters, and mothers and fathers. Though my best friends always tried their best to include me in their sanghas, at the end of the day, I was always left to fend for myself. The solitude of a latch-key kid, though not always unenjoyable, is nevertheless palpable and tangible.

Through those valuable experiences as a child, I can truly recognize and appreciate the importance of the fellowship offered by Daifukuji to so many of our members. Maybe we are not related by blood, but we are certainly family, spiritually connected through the Three Jewels - the Buddha, the Dharma and yes, the Sangha. I will always be guided by the value of the Sangha as we search for expeditious ways to safely re-open Daifukuji.

In Gassho,

Bobby Command



Welcome to Our Sangha!

We extend a warm welcome to **Cheryl Otsuka** and thank her for becoming a member of Daifukuji Soto Mission.

New members are always welcome. Membership information is available on our website: <http://www.daifukuji.org>.

Mahalo Nui Loa



Mahalo nui loa to the following persons who have recently donated face masks, Softsoap, hand sanitizer, & toilet tissue to Daifukuji:

Andrea (Harai) Shea, Corinne Oshima-Koseda, Jiko and Michael Nakade, Barbara Shoshin Bosz, Philip Kakuho Hema, and the ladies of the Visitor Information Program at the Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport - Stacy, Kiyomi, Aki, Yumiko, Randi, and Reiko.

To all Sangha members, thank you for your love, support, donations, and kōkua during this challenging time.

August Programs



Currently, the following activities are open to members only since space is limited due to social distancing protocol. Temperature checks, the wearing of masks, and hand sanitization are required. We thank you for your understanding and look forward to the day when we can again welcome members of the public.

Zazen (Meditation)

- * Every Wednesday morning from 6:00 a.m. - 7:00 a.m.
- * Thursdays, August 13 and August 27 from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Please arrive 15 minutes before starting time.

The Gay Sangha - Friday, August 7 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Meetings are the first Fridays of each month at 6:00 pm. Meditation and discussion. Call Clear or Steve at (808) 328-0329.

Yoga

Mondays from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. in the Daifukuji Social Hall. No fee, but donations accepted. Bring a mat or towel. Call Liz at (808) 345-1270.

Soleful Strutters Walking Moai

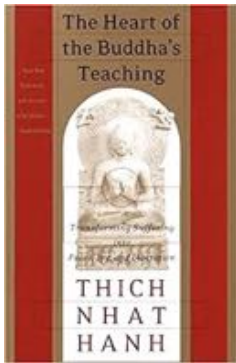
Tuesdays from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. A T'ai Chi warm up followed by walking on temple grounds. Call Hannah at (408) 421-8845.

GROUPS MEETING ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Dharma Study Classes - see page 4 for information.

Sangha Sister's Women's Spirituality Circle - Meetings are held on the second Friday of the month. Call Susie at 936-5817 for information.

Bare Bones Writers Group - Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month. Call Kathryn at 345-2976 for information.



The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: A New Series of Online Dharma Classes Starting in August

Group 1: Starting August 4, Tuesdays from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. (Chat room opens at 2:30 p.m.)

Group 2: Starting August 6, Thursdays from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. (Chat room opens at 1:30 p.m.)

All are invited to join the Dharma Fellowship which now meets using ZOOM video conferencing. You may sign up for one of two groups. Group 1 will start on August 4 and group 2 on August 6. We will begin a new book called *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy, and Liberation*. Authored by the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, this book covers the core teachings of the Buddha in a very accessible and understandable way that's pertinent to our lives today. Books are available for purchase through Rev. Jiko at the reduced price of \$8 with checks made payable to: [Daifukuji Gift Shop](http://www.daifukuji.org).

To register for this new series and to purchase a copy of the book, please contact Rev. Jiko at (808) 322-3524, or info@daifukuji.org. Please let Rev. Jiko know which session (Tuesday or Thursday) you will be joining.

Donations to Daifukuji Soto Mission are appreciated and can be given through the temple's website: <http://www.daifukuji.org/donation/index.html>.

Library News

By Clear Houn Englebert



Here are the new arrivals:

"How to Meditate" by Rev. Koten Benson is an unpretentious booklet with the potential to change lives. Beginning and experienced meditators can both benefit from reading these 45 pages.

"Buddhist Cosmology" by Akira Sadakata is an amazing book, especially if you like complexity.

"Within Our Own Hearts" is by Ayya Khema, who is one of my absolute favorite Buddhist writers. This book is NOT complex.

"Buddhism: Wisdom of Compassion and Awakening" is a two-disc DVD set. It's a lecture by the Venerable Chin Kung read by Wu Lin.

We have two more books by Thich Nhat Hanh: *"Silence"* and *"Stepping into Freedom"*. The first book has the subtitle *"The Power of Quiet in a World Full of Noise"* and the latter book is subtitled *"An Introduction to Buddhist Monastic Training"* which is something I recommend to everyone—young and old.

Thanks to Spring Liao, we have three wonderful pamphlets by the Venerable Hsing Yun: *"The Five Precepts"*, *"When We Die"*, and *"Questions on Buddhist Practice"*. These are short, inspiring, and informative.

Taiko Performance

by Akemi Iwamoto



Aloha 'Ohana,

Obon is a time for us to remember and honor our ancestors. Here at Daifukuji, it has also been a time for us to celebrate our high school graduates. This year, sadly, due to COVID-19, our beloved Daifukuji Bon Dance was cancelled.

In honor of our ancestors and our graduates, the Kona Daifukuji Taiko Group will be sharing a virtual performance with our sangha in early August. Once our project is complete, viewing information will be shared.

Here's wishing you all health, wellness and happiness!

Fujinkai Announcements

The Daifukuji Fujinkai Women's Association's autumn field trip to Hilo has been postponed due to the COVID-19 circumstances. It will be rescheduled when engaging in group travel and activities are again safe.

A big mahalo goes out to all who submitted recipes for the United Hawaii Soto Shu Women's Association's new cookbook which will be available for purchase in time for the holidays. Thank you to Merle Uyeda for her work as a member of the UHSSWA cookbook committee.

Autumn Higan & Founders (Ryosoki) Service

Tentatively — Sunday, September 13

If conditions are favorable in September, we would like to hold the Autumn Higan & Ryosoki Service. Reservations will be required since seating is limited due to the social distancing requirement. It is possible that two services will be held in order to accommodate everyone. More information will be available in the next newsletter.

Repairs and Improvements

Mahalo to Larry Yoshiyama, Warren Ikeda, and Stephen Tanaka for repairing the handicap ramp and spiffing up the temple steps and lanai.



You Can't Predict the Future

from the book *Kappa Hitorigoto* by Roshi Daito Noda

Translated by Michael Nakade & edited by Leslie Ozawa



In this world, there is 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 a skilled horseman. One day, a horse the son was caring for escaped from the barn. No one knew where the horse went. Many in the fortress town visited the old man and expressed their sympathies. 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, the 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 after that. 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 the battlefields. But the old man's son was not drafted because of 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 part of one's life. The only thing we can do is to do our best in this world.



Rev. Blayne, Rev. Jiko, & Deacon Jikai

Mahalo to Rev. Blayne Higa, resident minister of Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, for the comforting Dharma message which he delivered at Daifukuji's Obon service on June 28. His message can be viewed on Daifukuji's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51GOU2GkIu0&t=21s>.



Bishop's Office Newsletter

Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office

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Third Quarter, 2020

Issue No. 33

Bishop's Message: Bishop Shugen Komagata

Aloha from the Bishop's Office,

As we continue through these unprecedented times, I hope that you and your family are doing well. The novel Coronavirus has infected millions of people worldwide with COVID-19 in a little over six months, and the devastation of this pandemic will certainly continue for quite some time. I pray that we will be able to weather these turbulent times and soon be able to return to a life of normalcy.

The longer days and warm weather of the summer months have long announced the arrival of the annual Bon Season here in Hawaii. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, our Soto Mission temples here in Hawaii have been forced to modify our Bon Services to follow the restrictions on physical distancing. Thanks to modern technology, Virtual Bon Services—services that will be filmed and broadcast over social media—will allow people to still be a part of this year's ceremonies. I am happy that most of our temples in Hawaii will be able to observe Bon Service this year using this method.

Bon is a time for us to remember our loved ones. Even though our congregations won't be able to physically visit the temple for Bon Services this year, it is still important to take this time to cultivate our ability to love, appreciate, and celebrate the lives we are so fortunate to live. It is important to also pause to honor and remember those who are no longer with us physically. The quote, "Heijoshin kore do," interpreted as "the Buddhist path lies in the ordinary mind of our daily lives," comes to my mind during this time of Bon. It shows us that even though we cannot physically participate in Bon Services this year, the true meaning of Bon—having a sense of "gratitude"—can still manifest itself within our hearts each day in our daily lives.

Recently, we have seen the relaxation of some social and travel restrictions in Hawaii. Nonetheless, in the best interest of everyone's safety and health, I recommended that all the Soto Mission Bon Dances be cancelled this season. I hope that the global environment will improve in time for next year's Bon Season!

Let us extend our prayers to all the people who have lost their lives because of the novel Coronavirus, and those millions of people who have been infected worldwide. And again, please continue to take care of yourself and your family.

In Gassho,

Bishop Shugen Komagata



Shushogi, Chapter 5: Verses 26-29

By Rev. Jiko Nakade
Daifukuji Soto Mission



V. Practicing Buddhism and Repaying Blessings

“Arousing the thought of enlightenment is mainly something that human beings in this world should do. Should we not rejoice that we have had the opportunity to be born in this land of the Buddha Shakyamuni and to have encountered him?”

Have you ever considered how fortunate you are to have encountered the teachings of the Buddha and ancestors? When I think about the circumstances of my own birth and the compassion of my birth parents which resulted in my being raised in Hawai'i, I feel a surge of gratitude. Had I not been given to my adoptive parents who lived in Hawaii, I could have grown up in a small town in Ohio without ever having encountered the Buddha-Dharma. But, thanks to the supreme generosity, love, and thoughtfulness of my Aunt Alice and Uncle Bob (my birth parents), who gave me as a gift to my adoptive parents whose baby had died, I was carried to Hawaii as an infant, immediately immersed in a Buddhist household, and raised by loving parents who took me to Daifukuji throughout my childhood. Truly, I rejoice in my good fortune and wish to repay the blessings bestowed upon me by the buddhas & bodhisattvas, as well as by my teachers, ancestors, and two sets of parents. Had the circumstances been different, even by a hair, I might not have had the good fortune of encountering the Buddha Shakyamuni. If you are reading this, it means that you, too, have had the good fortune of encountering the wondrous Dharma. Let us rejoice together!

“We should calmly consider that if this was a time when the true dharma had not yet spread in the world, we would not be able to encounter it, even if we vowed to sacrifice our very lives for it. We who have at present encountered the true dharma should make such a vow. Do we not know that the Buddha said, ‘When you meet their teachers who expound supreme enlightenment, do not consider their family background, do not regard their appearance, do not dislike their faults, and do not think about their conduct. Simply, out of respect for wisdom, bow to them three times daily, honor them, and do not cause them any grief.’”

It is said in our Buddhist tradition that it is not an easy thing to encounter the Buddha-Dharma. In fact, not only is it considered rare to be born into human life — just think of how many different kinds of life forms there are! — it is even rarer to encounter the precious Dharma which liberates one from suffering.

Continued on next page



Using an ancient metaphor, to have this opportunity to meet teachers such as the Buddha who expound supreme enlightenment is as rare as a blind turtle in a vast ocean swimming up to the surface and, by chance, poking its head through a ring that just happened to be there. In other words, when, in the course of one's life, one meets a sensei who teaches the Dharma, regard this as a precious opportunity and don't hesitate to demonstrate your respect and appreciation to your teacher and sangha. You have indeed received a great blessing!

“That we are now able to see the Buddha and hear the dharma is due to the blessings that have come to us through the practice of every one of the buddhas and ancestors. If the buddhas and ancestors had not directly transmitted the dharma, how could it have reached us today? We should be grateful for the blessings of even a single phrase; we should be grateful for the blessings of even a single dharma. How much more should we be grateful for the great blessings of the treasury of the eye of the true dharma, the supreme great dharma. The injured bird did not forget its blessings, but showed its thanks with the rings of three ministries. The trapped tortoise did not forget its blessings, but showed its thanks with the seal of Yubu. If even animals repay their blessings, how could humans ignore them?”

One's joy and appreciation are heightened when one considers how the Dharma has been transmitted, heart to heart and mind to mind, from the Buddha Shakyamuni who lived 2,600 years ago in India to people like ourselves, living in the 21st century. Just the fact that the Dharma has passed through many lands and reached us is mind-blowing! One can only imagine the countless number of men and women, monks and laypersons alike, who've diligently practiced the Buddha Way and transmitted the Dharma light through the ages! Had they not done so, we today would not have received even a single verse of the Dharma. Truly, we are blessed. Therefore, let us not take this precious opportunity for granted. Like the injured bird and the trapped tortoise who were recipients of acts of great compassion & showed their gratitude, let us rejoice and offer our thanks, for we have received something of great value. We have received the gift of Dharma which excels all other gifts.

“Our expression of gratitude should not consist in any other practices; the true path of such expression lies solely in our daily practice of Buddhism. This means that we practice without neglecting our lives day to day and without being absorbed in ourselves.”

How do we express our gratitude to the buddhas and ancestors? Dogen Zenji is saying that we do so through our daily practice of the Buddha Way; that is, by living each moment of our precious lives with mindfulness and by dedicating our practice to the welfare of others, so that others, too, may be liberated from suffering and attain spiritual peace. To have such an aspiration is the Way of the Bodhisattva. To live in such a way is to repay the blessings of the buddhas and ancestors.



Online Dharma Message

Soto Zen Buddhism in Hawaii is providing online Dharma talks on Youtube and Facebook every two weeks. You can watch videos of Bishop Shugen Komagata and some Hawaii ministers' Dharma messages by using the link or scanning the QR code below.



Youtube Page Link

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsTHV_8A59kEfZlBRImDtRw

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!!



Following is the schedule;

Rev. Ryokei Ishii June 28, 2020
Rev. Shinsho Hata July 12, 2020
Rev. Hirosato Yoshida July 26, 2020

Rev. Shuji Komagata August 9, 2020
Rev. Shoryu Fukagawa August 23, 2020
Rev. Tom Wright September 6, 2020

