

P.O. BOX242 HALEIWA, HI 96712
TEL: 808-637-4382



Haleiwa Jodo Mission

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION



APRIL 2025

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HALEIWA JODO MISSION
P.O. BOX 242
HALEIWA, HAWAII 96712
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HALEIWA JODO MISSION

APRIL, 2025



BUDDHA DAY FAMILY SERVICE

10:00 AM

SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2025

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

10:00 AM

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2025

KOKUA DAY

9:00 AM

SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 2025

SERMON AT THE HIGAN SERVICE

Rev. Koji Jeff Ezaki

Minister of Haleiwa Jodo Mission Buddhist Temple

Today, we are gathered together for the Spring *Higan* Family Service. *Higan* services are observed twice a year during the Spring and Autumn equinoxes. Equinox is when the length of night equals the length of day. In winter, the sun sets early and gets dark around 6:00 pm, but from Spring equinox, nighttime will become shorter. The actual equinox date varies from year to year. This year the Spring equinox is March 20. This occurs not only in Japan. I use a monthly planner from Office Max and the calendar also indicates that "Spring begins" on March 20. In Japan, *Higan* is a national holiday. Many Buddhist temples observe *Higan* Services and people are encouraged to visit the gravesides of their deceased loved ones. *Higan* is a good time to appreciate our deceased fathers, mothers, grandfathers, and grandmothers who gave us our lives and reflect on how to live as Buddhists when the season changes.

First, let me explain the word "*Higan*." *Higan* literally means "other shore" and symbolizes the world of Enlightenment, or "Pure Land," as expressed in Jodo Shu. "Other shore" is the other side to our everyday life. We are living "this shore." *Higan* is the day to reach the "other shore" by practicing Buddha's teachings. Buddhism helps lead us from "this shore" to the "other shore" of spiritual awakening. The reason why *Higan* services are held at this time is that the length of day and night are the same, it is

neither cold nor hot, and makes it the best time to think about life in a moderate climate. Please remember the word *Higan* even though we don't use this word in our daily lives. There are calendars in America that show that spring begins on March 20, 2025.

Do you know the Jodo Shu dogma? As a minister's son, I learned it during my childhood. The saying goes like this: "We value.....first: Clean-up, second: Worship and third: Study." According to the Jodo Shu teaching, clean-up is more important than praying for Buddha and studying his teachings. Some people may wonder why is clean-up so important? Some of you may have experienced or saw pictures of beautiful yards swept with bamboo rakes at temples in Kyoto or Nara. Fine stones on the ground are neatly arranged like waves or streams. The yards were swept and neatly arranged by the monks. Seeing the artistic, well-arranged yards at historical temples in Japan, will not only make you feel impressed, but also give you a sense of calmness. Many visitors sit on the temple's hallway and observe the beautiful yard for hours and hours forgetting the passage of time. We, humans, really love beauty and cleanliness!! However, as a whole, people do not like to clean up. For example, we enjoy eating delicious foods, but hate to wash the dishes. We use the toilet many times in a day, but are not willing to clean it. I have often heard that at a company, a losing team of a sales competition or jankenpo must take the trash out. For us it is like a game where clean-up is imposed on

the losers as penalties or punishments.

In Japan, school has a specific time for clean-up. When school is over, students clean the floor of their classroom, windows, hallways, toilet, and yards. Some of you who went to Japanese schools in Hawaii many years ago may have had the same experience. About 10 years ago, when YouTube was just starting to become popular, a YouTuber introduced an amazing video titled, "Japanese kids clean their schools themselves after school!" The number of views was incredible. This is a common sight in Japan, but I imagine it would have been shocking footage in America, where this culture doesn't exist. Before this time, all we had was television, where we hardly got much information about other cultures. Thanks to YouTube, we now have more exposure to see cultures of other countries through videos. The Japanese not only learn the importance of clean-up from the Jodo Shu dogma, but also from the first grade as a part of their education. The fundamental idea that is taught to children through clean-up at school is "It is my responsibility to clean with thankfulness and appreciation for all the things I used." If this is implemented in America, parents may sue the school for abuse because clean-up is part of the custodian's job, not the students. Teachers may also become upset. Even at workplaces, if your job description doesn't include clean-up as part of your duties, you are not required to do it.

In Jodo Shu dogma, the state of mind of "I don't like clean-up" represents "laziness of our mind." Every night before I go to bed, I always clean my desk around the computer. An array of pens, document papers, letters, USB drives, schedule notes, cell phone, etc, that I used during the day, are returned to their original positions. However, after an exhausting day or drinking too much, I sometimes leave the mess on my desk and go to sleep. The next day, I take a long time to find my keys or drives because they are buried under my stack of papers and binders. I often regret that I should have cleaned the desk the previous night. Those who use computers at a workplace, will understand that if you don't organize your desktop icons, you may lose important documents in your computer. As I always say, Buddhist teaching hits the spot of weakness in our mind. When your mind is clouded by laziness, you may not achieve happiness. Only a person who overcomes his weakness will obtain a state of enlightenment. We cannot achieve happiness without effort. Some of you may think today's sermon hits your sore spot. But remember today we are observing *Higan* service. *Higan* is the day to practice to reach the other shore of spiritual happiness. To go to the other shore, we must get rid of laziness in our mind.

If you become aware of something about yourself when listening to today's story, I will be happy. Buddha does not command us to do this, however; He gives us awareness. Buddhist teaching is a teaching

that leads us to happiness. Becoming happy or not depends on our mental attitude. What we need is motivation. Just practice the Eight-Fold Path in your daily lives by using your body, time, and energy to get to *Higan*, the other shore. Try to begin cleaning from one area, such as your table, kitchen, or living room. You may find junk mails, piled up on the table or unnecessary things on the kitchen counter. How about around your computer, inside your closet or cabinet? Your positive attitude in "clean-up" cleans the place and also drives away laziness from your mind. If your physical surroundings are clean, your mind will surely be clean and well-organized too. *Higans* in spring and autumn give us a chance to clean our minds. Please embrace and understand the Jodo Shu value of clean-up.

DATES OF BON FESTIVALS

Haleiwa Jodo Mission	August 1 & 2, 2025
Wahiawa Hongwanji	June 13 & 14, 2025
Haleiwa Shingon Mission	July 11 & 12, 2025
Wahiawa Soto Mission	July 18 & 19, 2025
Jodo Mission of Hawaii	August 16, 2025

BUDDHA DAY SERVICE

A Buddha Day Service will be held on the first Sunday of April. Lunch will be served after the service. Please join us.

MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR MONTH OF APRIL

3 rd YEAR	MIYAKE, WAYNE APRIL 20, 2023
7 th YEAR	YAMAMOTO, MARIAN APRIL 28, 2019 NISHIKAWA, TSUNEO APRIL 19, 2019
17 th YEAR	MASATSUGU, ETHEL APRIL 3, 2009 NAKAMURA, JUNE APRIL 19, 2009
25 th YEAR	KOGA, WILFRED APRIL 5, 2001
43 rd YEAR	WATANUKI, SUE APRIL 9, 1983
50 th YEAR	TERANISHI, YOSHI APRIL 9, 1976

STATE YBA SCHOLARSHIP

Those who are interested in applying for the State Y.B.A. Scholarship, please ask Rev. Ezaki for the application form. The deadline will be May 31, 2025.

HALEIWA JODO MISSION OBON SCHEDULE 2025

The Board of the Haleiwa Jodo Mission has decided on the following schedule for the 2025 Bon Festival. We need your help!

Cemetery Clean-up	May 24, 2025
Cemetery Service	June 1, 2025
General Clean-up & Toro Shelves Building	July 13, 2025
Toro Making / Yagura Set-up	July 26, 2025
Set-up for event	July 31, 2025
Beach Clean-up	August 3, 2025
Yagura Take-down	August 3, 2025

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MEMBERSHIP DUES (2025)

Alvin Watanabe	Joshua Choi
Etsuko Morikawa	Sharon Nakamura
Lori Campbell	Brandon Ito
Elwin Matsumoto	

BIRTHDAY DONATIONS

George Hokama

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Susan Tasaki

(In memory of Ernest Tasaki)

Melvin Fukuda

(In memory of Tokuichi Fukuda)

SPECIAL DONATIONS

Lori Campbell Elwin Matsumoto

OMAMORI DONATIONS

Melvin Fukuda

PATIO DONATIONS

David Au

HIGAN FAMILY SERVICE

Jennifer Pang	Shinae Sakai
Grace Iwane	Nadine Matsukawa
Dennis Nakamura	David Koizumi
Myra Shiratori	Katherine Fujii
Keith Yamauchi	Vera Tabe
Sheri Yamauchi	Joan Yamamoto

PET MEMORIAL

Available to Members and Non-Members



With Love, We Remember

RULES CONCERNING THE PATIO RENTAL

To keep providing the use of the patio as a service to its members, Haleiwa Jodo Mission asks that everyone read and abide by the following rules before reserving/using the patio:

- Patio Rentals are limited to Active Dues Members who have been members for the last three (3) years at a minimum
- "Active Dues Members" are members who participate in Family Services, Kokua Days, Bon Festivals, or other activities regularly
- We DO NOT ALLOW people to become members for the sole purpose of renting the patio
- The member who made the reservation should be present for the entire duration of the party (exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis due to a sudden illness, etc.)
- The member is responsible for ensuring that every area they use is cleaned and returned to its original condition (Plastic bags, garbage bins, toilet paper, etc., are not provided)
- Participants must also clean up any dirt or sand they left behind in the patio, bathroom, shower area, etc.
- If the patio is not clean enough, Rev. Ezaki may call you and ask you to come back to clean up.
- We forbid any loud music (live band music, DJs, etc.)
- We do not allow the use of the kitchen, refrigerator, and or freezer.
- Please make an appropriate amount of "Patio Donation" to support Haleiwa Jodo Mission.
- If the temple has memorial services on the same day, please show respect during the services (they typically last about one hour)

Haleiwa Jodo Mission reserves the right to decline/cancel any reservation that does not abide by these rules. Please call Rev. Ezaki to make a reservation and ask him for details.

KOINOBORI CELEBRATION

Haleiwa Jodo Mission will display about 100 koinobori or carp streamers on the temple grounds. Koinobori, carp-shaped windsocks, streamers, decorate the landscape of Japan from April through early May, in honor of Children's Day (originally the Boys' Festival) on May 5.

Bishop Ishikawa started this project a couple of years ago in the yard at Jodo Mission of Hawaii. Rev. Ezaki praised this project and has displayed them every year since 2023. The koinobori will be displayed from April 29 to May 5. Those interested in taking pictures with your children or grandchildren, please stop at the temple grounds during this time.