

# Dharma Wheel

## 1/2025

## Lihue Hongwanji Mission, a Shin Buddhist Temple

Volume 79 Issue 1

JANUARY 2025

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## New Year's Greeting

Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness

Happy New Year! At the beginning of the New Year, I would like to extend my warm regards to you all.

As in previous years, many people throughout the world have been affected by natural disasters, including earthquakes, floods, and



forest fires. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to all who have perished in those calamities. I would also like to express my sympathies to those who are still coping with the dire situations. It is my sincere hope that all who have been affected will soon be able to return to normalcy.

In addition to the continuing Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022, armed conflict in the Middle East since October 2023 has intensified, putting a toll on civilians. As Buddhists, let us embrace the words of Sakyamuni Buddha that "Everyone fears violence and is scared of death. In consideration of all life, do not kill and do not make others kill."

We, as human beings who have received life in this world, shall have our human rights equally guaranteed regardless of reason, and must never have our lives threatened. However in reality, conflicts and terrorist attacks have occurred everywhere in the world and for many people, their right to live and exist has been threatened. As Buddhists as well as Nembutsu followers who aspire to achieve peace, we must keep seriously in our hearts the words of Sakyamuni Buddha as well as Shinran Shonin who aspired for a peaceful world in pursuing our endeavor of contributing toward world peace and security.

Through the Jodo Shinshu teaching, we are guided to appreciate Amida Buddha's working that enables us to become aware of our true self. Being caught up in our self-centered thinking and desires, we are unable to accept the Universal Truth of dependent origination and impermanence, and that is why we constantly suffer from our human desires.

Unable to leave us in such a state, Amida Buddha continuously works to lead us to the Dharma. By regarding each individual Continued on page 3

## **Calendar of Events**

#### **JANUARY 2025**

Wed	1	10:00 AM	New Year's Day Service Installation of 2025 LHM Board of Directors
Sun	5	9:00 AM	Family Dharma Service Birthday & Monthly Memorial
Thur	9	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Mtg. (via videoconference)
Sun	12	9:00 AM	Hoonko Service Memorial for Shinran Shonin Guest speaker: Rev. Eric Matsumoto
Sun	19	9:00 AM	Family Dharma Service Installation of LHWA Officers for 2025 Luncheon to follow
Sun	26	9:00 AM	Family Dharma Service

## **Office Hours**

Office hours for Rev. Yagi are as follows: Monday: Day off Tuesday - Sunday: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Closed for lunch: 12 noon - 1:00 pm If you wish to speak with Rev. Yagi, it is suggested that you call ahead for an appointment, as he may be away from the office on temple business. The temple must be locked when Rev. Yagi is

not available. Thank you for your understanding.

## FEBRUARY 2024

Sun	2	9:00 AM	Family Dharma Service Birthday & Monthly Memorial
		10:00 AM	LHWA Meeting following refreshments after service
Fri & Sat	7-8		HHMH Legislative Assembly In person on Oahu and via Zoom
Sun	9	9:30 AM	Family Dharma Service
Thur	12	7:00 PM	Board of Directors Mtg. (via videoconference)
Sun	16	9:00 AM	Family Dharma Service
Sun	23	9:30 AM	Family Dharma Service

## **Refreshments!**

Please join us on Sundays after our service for friendship, talk story and refreshments!





## **Columbarium Hours**

Due to recent thefts in the area, we are forced to lock our

precious Columbarium 24/7.

If you wish to visit the Columbarium, please call the temple, (808) 245-6262, to make arrangements with Rev. Yagi during office hours.

Thank you for your understanding.

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#### From front page

as a fellow traveler following the same path being guided and embraced by Amida Buddha, we are enabled to respect and help each other while courageously coping with difficult social issues. Let us continue listening and appreciating Amida Buddha's working as Buddhist followers while cherishing each and every day.

January 1, 2025 Ohtani Kojun Monshu Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

## 2025 New Year's Message: "Nurturing Nembutsu, Cultivating Awareness"



As we stand at the threshold of 2025, I am filled with profound gratitude for the Sangha of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and the spiritual journey we continue to share. The theme for this year, "Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness," reflects not only our collective aspiration but also our personal commitment to deepening our connection with Amida Buddha and fostering a more profound awareness in every aspect of our lives.

The Nembutsu, "Namo Amida Butsu," is much more than a simple recitation. It is the living embodiment of Amida Buddha's all-embracing Compassion, a compassion that transcends all boundaries we create. No one is left behind. No one is excluded from Amida Buddha's deepest aspiration to save all beings. In this truth, we find solace and strength, knowing that no matter our imperfections or struggles, we are always embraced by the boundless Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha.

I, too, wrestle with my limitations—foolishness, selfishness, ignorance, and the tendency to judge or discriminate against others. These failings often cloud my perspective, narrowing my view of the world and of others. Yet, despite these limitations, I am continually reminded that Amida's Compassion does not waver. The Nembutsu is my anchor, a reminder that I am welcomed just as I am into the warmth of Amida Buddha's embrace. My heart and mind are nurtured in this space, and in turn, my Nembutsu becomes a living expression of joy, gratitude, and humility for the life I live within this Compassion.

As we are nurtured by Amida's Compassionate voice, we are also called to cultivate awareness. This awareness is not merely intellectual or passive; it is a dynamic and active practice that calls us to wake up to the reality of our interconnectedness. It invites us to see the world with clearer eyes, to recognize the oneness of all life, and to develop a deeper understanding of the truths that shape our existence.

In today's world, where distractions and self-centeredness abound, cultivating awareness becomes even more crucial. It helps us move beyond the narrow confines of our Continued on page 4

#### From page 3

personal concerns, allowing us to see the interdependence of all beings. It teaches us to live more mindfully, to understand the suffering of others, and to act with greater compassion. The gift of the Nembutsu is this awareness—an invitation to step forward, to embrace others with open hearts, and to recognize that we are all held within the same Compassionate Light.

Let us renew our commitment to live a life of Nembutsu. Let us nurture our hearts and minds by participating in temple services and activities, deepening our relationships with the Sangha, and listening to the Dharma. In doing so, we not only deepen our appreciation of the Nembutsu but also cultivate an awareness that allows us to live more fully and purposefully.

As we step forward into 2025, let us move together with hearts full of joy and gratitude infused with awareness. Let us share the joy of Nembutsu with everyone we encounter, and through our mindful living, let us help to build a world that is more compassionate, more aware, and more connected.

I wish each and every one of you a joyful and peaceful New Year. May the light of Amida Buddha continue to shine upon us and guide us always.

Namo Amida Butsu.

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani Bishop Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## President's New Year's Message

### Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Happy New Year! Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and in good spirits as we look forward to the New Year, 2025!

As we enter the new year, it is natural to look back at the past year. As I look

back at the year 2024, I have many warm and happy memories of family and friends. Wonderful family trips to the mainland USA and Japan. An "epic" hiking trip to Korea. Quiet reflection during temple service on Sunday mornings followed by fellowship and delicious lunches! And for myself, one of the highlights of the year was the memorable weekend we spent at the Triple Celebration (850<sup>th</sup>/800<sup>th</sup>/135<sup>th</sup>) in September, held at the Ala Moana Hotel. There were sad occasions as well, with loss of family and close friends. Reliving memories from the past year, I feel fortunate and I am so grateful for all of the events of the past year. *Ichigo ichie*. I hope that you feel the same way.

Looking forward to the New Year, I do not know what the future holds for us - as individuals, as a community and as a Buddhist organization. Just think, five years ago no one thought that we would need to survive a pandemic or experience a Maui wildfire. However, in the face of

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hardship, we persevered. We met the challenges placed before us by caring for each other and by working together. I believe we are stronger as a Buddhist organization because of how we, each one of us, responded to adversity.

Our five year theme which begins in 2025, **"Nurturing Nembutsu"** reminds us that the Nembutsu is the "core" of our existence. The Nembutsu, expressed as "Namo Amida Butsu" is our expression of gratitude in awareness of Amida's Compassion. Nembutsu is not just our gratitude, it is our response to Amida's voice which is calling out to each one of us. "Nurturing Nembutsu" reminds us that we nurture the Nembutsu when we share it with others, and in turn we are nurtured by Amida's love for us. Let us be mindful of the all-embracing Amida and continue on this journey together.

"Happiness does not depend on what you have or who you are;

it solely relies on what you think." - Buddha

With Gassho, Warren Tamamoto MD President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

## LHM President New Year's Message

How time flies when we're having a great time! 2024 is over and we're all another year older. I'm grateful that we're all here. We survived!

I was reminded of a song that my son Kyle had to learn for a program when he was in high school in the 90's. The song is "If We Hold on Together" from the movie "The Land Before Time."

The movie is about a young dinosaur, Littlefoot, who endures prejudice, discrimination, an earthquake and famine. His mother perishes while trying to save him. Before she dies, she tells him how to get to the Great Valley, a place with abundant food and protection from predators.

She tells him "Let your heart guide you. It whispers, so listen closely."

This story reminded me of our quest to find sustenance for our temple. Her advice can be interpreted as "Let Amida be your guide. He whispers, so listen closely."

The story goes on to Littlefoot and his friends going through hardships and adventures to reach the Great Valley, just as we will do "If We Hold On Together" to sustain our temple. (The words to the song are included on the next page.)

With humble appreciation, Namo Amida Butsu.

Lynne Matsumura, LHM President

The words to the song are on the next page.



## New Year's Message from Rev. Yagi



## Happy New Year!

As we welcome 2025, I extend my warmest wishes to you and your family for a year filled with joy, peace, and good health. The New Year is a time for reflection and renewal, a chance to look back on the past with gratitude and forward to the future with hope.

In 2025, we have a truly special reason to celebrate as Lihue Hongwanji marks its 125th anniversary. This milestone is a testament to our temple's

enduring spirit and its deep roots in our community. It is a great opportunity not only to celebrate but also to learn and reflect on our history. Let us honor and appreciate the dedication of the past ministers, members, and community who have shaped Lihue Hongwanji into what it is today.

We will have opportunities throughout the year to come together in gratitude and joy, deepen our understanding of the Nembutsu teachings, and strengthen our Sangha bonds. These celebrations also remind us of the impermanence of life and the importance of treasuring each moment as we continue to follow the path of Amida Buddha's boundless compassion and wisdom.

As we embark on this significant year, I encourage us to reflect on how we can contribute to our temple's legacy. Whether through participation in temple activities, sharing the Dharma, or fostering connections within our community, each of us has a role in ensuring that the light of the Nembutsu continues to shine for future generations.

May 2025 be a year of deep gratitude and joy for all of us as we celebrate this remarkable milestone together.

In Gassho, Rev. Shawn Yagi Resident Minister, Lihue Hongwanji

<u>If We Hold On Together</u> (from the movie "The Land Before Time") Writers: Will Jennings, James Horner

[Chorus] If we hold on together I know our dreams will never die Dreams see us through to forever Where clouds roll by For you and I

## To all Lihu'e Hongwanji members:

If you would like a copy of your 2024 donations for tax purposes, please contact the office (808-245-6262) to request that it be mailed to you. If there is no answer, please leave a detailed message including your name and address along with the request. You may also make a request via email at <u>lihuehongwanjimission@gmail.com</u>. Please remember to include your name and mailing address so your donation copy can be mailed.

Deadline for request is January 15, 2025.

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## Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Web: <u>hongwanjihawaii.com</u> Email: <u>hqs@honpahi.org</u>



#### **Bishop's Message**

\*Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani delivered the following message at the Hawaii Kyodan Board of Directors Meeting on December 7, 2024.

Good morning. As this is the final Board of Directors Meeting for the year, I want

to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation to the ministers and lay leaders of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii for your unwavering leadership and dedication. Your commitment is deeply valued, and I sincerely thank you for your continued efforts in achieving our shared mission.

I have submitted my written report, which also includes updates from my role as the Buddhist Study Center (BSC) Interim Director. If you have any questions or would like to know more details, please contact me.

As I shared in the most recent HQ Update, we hosted the Temple Presidents Retreat at the BSC on November 16. This retreat welcomed 26 temple presidents or their representatives and was designed to create a peaceful and engaging environment for networking, interaction, and mutual support.

The retreat was very well-received, and I would like to share some of the participants' comments:

• "It was good to talk to others in the same position."

• "Now I know that I have a network of resources if I need any help."

- "We are not alone."
- "Very engaging and meaningful."

• *"This was so helpful as a new president coming in."* 

"It was wonderful to network with everyone."

As the retreat concluded, presidents expressed a renewed sense of purpose and reassurance. They returned to their temples with fresh ideas and the confidence that they are supported by a strong

network of fellow presidents and the Headquarters.

While there is no simple solution to the challenges facing our temples, districts, and state organization, retreats like this remind us that we can navigate these challenges together. Each of you plays an indispensable role in HHMH, and your participation is vital to our collective efforts.

In many ways, our work is like playing a soccer match. Imagine a soccer field where the goal represents our shared mission in the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii—to spread the Dharma and nurture our communities.

In soccer, no single player can control the entire game, no matter how skilled they are. Each player has a role, and success depends on everyone working together, understanding their responsibilities, and trusting their teammates.

Sometimes, the ball moves smoothly down the field, just as our projects and goals progress seamlessly. Other times, obstacles arise—like opposing players blocking our path. When the ball is intercepted, it's easy to feel frustrated. But in soccer, no single player is blamed. Instead, the team regroups, adjusts its strategy, and works together to recover and move forward.

There are moments of joy when we score a goal celebrating a successful event, reaching a milestone, or welcoming more people to the temple. These achievements are the result of shared effort and determination. Every pass, every attempt, and every step forward contributes to the greater game.

Our journey in HHMH is a collaborative one. Ministers, Kyodan Board Members, Temple Presidents, Temple members ... each of us plays a vital role, and by working together, we will overcome challenges, celebrate successes, and continue toward our shared goal of spreading the Nembutsu teachings and serving our communities. Thank you for your leadership, dedication, and commitment to the growth of HHMH. Let us continue to move forward together. Namo Amida Butsu.

Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani







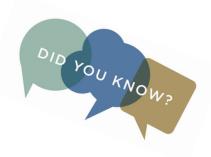
## Do You Remember?

As a lead-up to our 125h Anniversary Celebration in November, we will be featuring an article every month regarding little-known facts, memories and thoughts about LHM through the years. Come back every month for more information! If you have anything you would like to share, whether information or photos, please contact LHM through our official church account: <u>lihuehongwanjimission@gmail.com</u>

Even though Lihue Hongwanji Mission officially began to serve the Shin Buddhist community in 1900, we did not have a president until 1938, with Kyoichi Kawasaki serving as our first president from 1938-1941. Between 1941 and 1949 there were no presidents because the temple was closed. Since 1949, we have had 26 presidents, some serving multiple terms. In our LHM ohana of presidents we have had the following family representatives:

- Brother and sister, Katsumi Yamasaki and Harue Tada
- Husband and wife (2 pairs), Setsuo Ushio and Edith Ushio; Wayne Fujioka and Carol Valentine
- Father and daughter, Kiyoshi Sasaki and Lynne Matsumura
- Brothers, Shigeo Miyoshi and Isamu Miyoshi
- Brothers-in-law, Guy Fujiuchi and Michael Nii
- Uncle and nephew (2 pairs), Sadao Tanabe and Morton Yamasaki; Tetsuji Omoto and Michael Nii

So many family connections over the years.



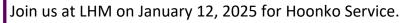
## NY Party 2025 & Kitchen Renovation

A much needed renovation of the LHM kitchen will be starting soon in order to be completed in time for our Bon Dance in June. Because of the renovation and the work involved prior to the renovation (clearing out the cupboards and drawers and moving all of the appliances), it is necessary to cancel our New Year's Party for 2025. We apologize for any disappointment but there will be another celebration in November. See the previous page and stay tuned for more details.

We are looking forward to the 125th Anniversary celebration on November 2 when we will be able to gather together again for food, fun and fellowship. Please mark your calendars for November 2nd and join us in celebrating the 125th Anniversary of LHM.

## Hoonko Service, Memorial Service for our founder, Shinran Shonin

Shinran Shonin passed away on January 16, 1263 at the age of 90. For Shinran Shonin's 33rd year memorial service, Kakunyo Shonin, the 3rd Monshu of Hongwanji composed "Hoonko-Shiki" to praise Shinran Shonin's virtue. This was the beginning of our Hoonko Service. Since then, Jodo Shinshu followers have observed the Hoonko service on the memorial day of Shinran Shonin for over 700 years. This service is the most important service for Jodo Shinshu followers.



## Bon Dance 2025, Save the Date

The Kauai Buddhist Council has finalized their Bon Dance plans for 2025 and LHM will be holding our Bon Dance Festival on **June 20-21, 2025**. Save the date! We can always use volunteers to help make it successful.

The complete schedule will be:

June 13-14: Waimea Shingon Mission June 20-21: Lihue Hongwanji Mission June 27-28: Kauai Soto Zenshuji July 4-5: No Bon Dance July 11-12: West Kauai Hongwanji Mission, Hanapepe Temple July 18-19: Kapa'a Hongwanji Mission July 25-26: Waimea Higashi Hongwanji Mission





# LHWA News



## For members

Tour of Kauai Museum (LHWA to cover the cost of admission) Luncheon to follow at Kiibo's (Luncheon cost on your own) Thursday February 13, 2025 Save The Date!

Installation of LHWA Officers for 2025 will be on Sunday January 19, followed by a luncheon.

## Election of LHWA Officers for 2025

President:	Carol Valentine
VP/Program:	Lynette Mizuo
VP/Projects:	Marian Ogata
Secretary:	Lynne Matsumura
Corresponding Sec:	Karen Nishimoto
Asst. Corr. Sec:	Gail Shibuya
Treasurer:	Yoko Takabayashi
Asst. Treasurer:	Avis Hirahara
Auditors:	Carol Ozaki
	Diane Fukuyama

Thank you to Gail Shibuya for chairing the Nominations Committee.

Thank you to those who have agreed to serve!



## Two people needed

to help with light cleaning of the temple.

The "Hoshakai" group meets on Friday mornings at 7:00 AM. Most of these hard-working people are in their 80's. Mahalo for their dedication!

If you can join the group or help out on your own schedule, please call the temple at (808)245-6262 or email <u>lihuehongwanjimission@gmail.com</u>.

## **Homebound Project**

On Saturday, December 14, the following people came out to help make the barazushi for bento boxes to be delivered to LHM members who are home bound and over 90 years of age on Kauai. They were: Arlene Fujikawa, Mona Lee and Gail Shibuya (chair) with packing help from Lynne Matsumura and Marian Ogata. Additionally, Lynne Matsumura made sweet potato manju to include in the bento boxes.

A great big MAHALO goes out to LHWA members who came out on December 7 to make the kadomatsu that were included with the home bound bento boxes: Diane Fukuyama, Shirley Hashimoto, Lynne Matsumura (Chair), Lynette Mizuo, Marian Ogata, Carol Ozaki, Gail Shibuya, Lorraine Shimauchi, Carolyn Yamasaki, Morton Yamasaki and Yoko Takabayashi.

The bento boxes and kadomatsu were delivered by the following people: Wayne Fujioka, Marian Ogata, Gail Shibuya and Rev. Yagi.

There were 21 Home Bound recipients and all of them were very happy to receive the kadomatsu and barazushi.

A Big Mahalo to everyone who helped!



Gail Shibuya, Homebound



Chairperson of Project



# HELPING HAND



## **HELP WANTED**

## Looking for a few energetic people

Some of the men doing this work are in their 80's. Can you help? Please call the office at (808)245-6262 or email <u>lihuehongwanjimission@gmail.com</u> to volunteer or for more information.





## LHM PRESCHOOL



On December 6th we participated in the "Lights on Rice" parade. The parents built and decorated a beautiful float. Although it rained while they were waiting, it didn't rain during the actual parade. Lots of beautiful memories were made.

On December 19 we held our annual Christmas Program. The highlight was Santa 's visit. We enjoyed having a pizza party luncheon afterwards.

Everyone worked together to provide these special moments for our children.

It's the season of good cheer.

We would like to wish everyone.

Happy Holidays! Enjoy spending time with family and friends. Happy New Year also!

We would like to thank the following people for their help and donations: Carol Ozaki, Lynne Matsumura, Carol Valentine, Morton Yamasaki , Eric Kato, and Suzette Naito







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If there are errors please email us at: <u>lihuehongwanjimission@gmail.com</u> or call the office at 808-245-6262.

#### **MEMORIAL DONATION:**

In memory of Sadao Tanabe Morton & Carolyn Yamasaki In memory of Helen Harada Morton & Carolyn Yamasaki In memory of Irene Shimokawa Wesley & Marcia Shimokawa In memory of Charles Niitani Janet Niitani & Family

### **COLUMBARIUM DONATION:**

In memory of George & Elsie Toyofuku Guy & Lori Toyofuku In memory of the Kondo Family Emery Kondo In memory of Charles Niitani Janet Niitani & Family In memory of Shigeru Kurashige Hiroko Kurashige

## **SPECIAL DONATION:**

Roy & Carol Fujioka **(Thanksgiving)** Kenneth & Lynette Mizuo Teresa Bailey HAPPINESS DONATION: Gail Shibuya (Birthday)

**<u>KITCHEN RENOVATION DONATION:</u>** Kathleen Sasaki

**GATHA BOOKS FOR TEMPLE DONATION:** Shirley Hashimoto

## **MAJOR PROJECT DONATION:**

Roy & Carol Fujioka

SOCIAL CONCERNS: Kenneth & Lynette Mizuo





### Seeking Families to Host Visiting Students From Japan

Japanese students from Nagoya University of Foreign Studies, Kaua'i Study Group, are looking for homestay with local Kauai families. They are being led by Professor Eric Hirat, who has family ties to Kauai and likes to bring his students to Kauai to experience the diverse local lifestyle that is a mix of American, Asian, and Native Hawaiian cultures.

The group is seeking families in the Lihue-Hanamaulu area up to Wailua and Wailua Homesteads on the east side and Kalaheo, Omao, Koloa on the south and west side. The dates for the hosing would be February 1-6, 2025.

If you are interested in hosting a student or have any questions, please let Professor Hirata know. You can email him at <u>eric@nufs.ac.jp</u>

**MEMORIALS** 



With Deepest Sympathy

Lihue Hongwanji extends its deepest sympathy to the family of::

The late Gene Oshiro who passed away on October 24, 2024 at the age of 93 years.

## MEMORIAL SERVICE (HOYO) JANUARY - FEBRUARY

The following is a list of members who passed away during the months of January and February. In Jodo Shin Buddhism, memorial services are observed to remind the family members of the compassion of Amida Buddha in memory of the deceased. Lihue Hongwanji Mission recommends that the families and relatives of the deceased members listed below contact the temple office at (808) 245-6262 for an appointment.

2024 January 3 Frances Natsuko Fujioka 2001 January 8 Arata Mi	inatova
	matoya
2001 January 17 Kazuko (	Omori
Brd YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE—2023	
.023 NONE <u>33rd YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE</u>	<u>-1993</u>
1993 January 15 Hanayo	Mukai
1993 February 4 Takeo Y	'oshinaka
1993 February 12 Kiyoshi	Kato
7th YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE—2019 1993 February 17 Yoshio F	Fujioka
2019 NONE 1993 February 23 Shoji To	omita
13th YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE—2013 2013 January 29 Masao Tamura 50th YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE-	<u>–1976</u>
1976 January 16 Itaru Kid	0
L7th YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE—2009 1976 February 10 Terry Mo	orishige
2009 January 5 Jose Bernal	



### Lihue Hongwanji Mission, a Shin Buddhist Temple

Lihue Hongwanji Mission 3-3556 Kuhio Highway Lihue, Hawaii 96766

**Return Service Requested** 

## **Nurturing Nembutsu**

(Cultivating Awareness)



Address Label

Email: lihuehongwanjimission@gmail.com

WE'RE ON THE WEB! lihuehongwanji.org