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# TAIHEIJI BULLETIN



JULY & AUGUST 2022

## **Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center & Legacy-Endowment Bond Updates**

By Rev. Shuji Komagata

There have been both good and bad news surrounding the construction of the Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center in 2022. Please allow me to update you.

### **First the good news:**

As reported earlier, the Legacy-Endowment Bond offering was very successful and the entire one million dollar goal was achieved. Additionally, thanks to a handful of generous purchasers who donated their (\$180,000 worth of) bonds back to Taiheiji, we were able to resell them to new purchasers (of which we have only \$30,000 available)! We've also collected over \$150,000 from many other generous donors to help us build our new Activity Center. Combined, our temple investment account currently holds over 1.5 million dollars!

### **Now some bad news:**

1.5 million dollars would have been enough to cover our original projected construction costs, but the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have nearly doubled costs to the latest construction bid price of 2.7 million dollars. Out of necessity, the temple is working with Central Pacific Bank to secure approval of a loan for up to \$800,000.

Unfortunately, with total costs approaching the 3 million dollar mark, even that will not be enough as we continue to face many obstacles. Permitting delays, the lingering effects of COVID-19, high inflation, rising interest rates, economic fears, and the continuing conflict in Ukraine all contribute to the ever-increasing construction costs of our project. What do we do?

## **Fundraising:**

Our Fundraising Committee is working on multiple ways to meet the shortfall. The “Aloha Kansha Project,” led by Linda Fujikawa, implemented the creation of the Ojizo-sama stickers sold during our drive-thru New Year’s Blessing Service. Linda has other projects planned throughout the year (TBA).

“Grants and Donations” are being led by Candace Tasoe. She is working very hard to secure as much funding support as possible from various community minded organizations. She has also taken charge of the Plant and Orchid Sale fundraiser during our upcoming Bon Dance festivities.

“Taiheiji on-line Auction” is being organized by our new Board of Directors’ Secretary, Corinne Gyotoku. The auction sounds exciting as well as very promising.

These projects are just the beginning with more to come! It may seem very challenging and extremely daunting at times, but with everyone’s help, much can be accomplished. With that in mind, please reach out to us to help with any of these projects. Your ideas and *kokua* will certainly be appreciated!

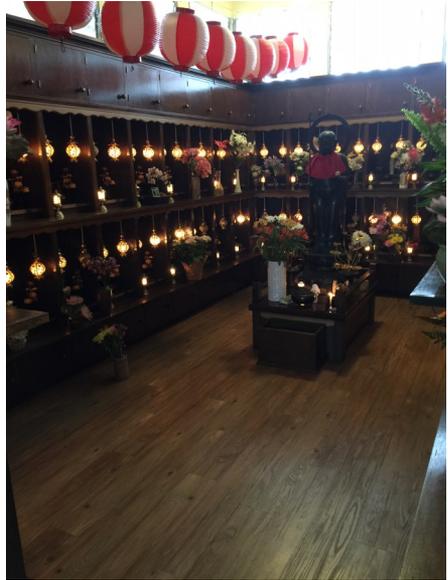
## **When will we start construction?**

Delays, delays, and more delays. Permitting requirements, design modifications, and cost escalation are just a few of the hurdles that impede our progress, but all we can do is to address each one as they come as best we can. With the upcoming Bon Dance scheduled in August, it appears that we might still be able to break ground later this year. As we try to navigate through these uncertain times, I humbly ask for your continued patience as we hope for the best outcome possible.

# What is Bon?

*The following is reprinted from Soto Zen literature published by the Soto-Shu Shumicho (Soto-Shu headquarters in Tokyo, Japan.)*

The memorial services held at Obon have two meanings. One is to honor the Buddha and show reverence for one's ancestors and others who have died. The other is to express gratitude to all people to whom we are indebted, including people who are alive such as our parents, relatives, and friends.



*Taiheiji's Columbarium*

The full expression for Obon is Urabon-e which is derived from "Ullabana," an old Indian word. According to the Bussetsu Urabon Sutra, the origin of this tradition goes back to a ceremony performed by Shakyamuni Buddha for the deceased mother of Maudgalyayana, one of the Buddha's immediate disciples. Ullabana means "hanging upside down" and it was by means of this ceremony that the suffering of that world in which she lived (the suffering was so intense it was like hanging upside down) was removed.

These days, people think that this ceremony will prolong the life of parents and remove all suffering and anguish. This is also one of the traditional holiday periods in Japan when people exchange gifts. The other traditional time is over New Years. Obon is a ceremony to respectfully honor the spirits of the ancestors; it is also to ask for the long life of our parents. In preparation for meeting the spirits, it is customary to thoroughly clean our house and put ourselves in order as if meeting guests.



## Taiheiji Bon Services Report

After having virtual Bon Services in 2020 and 2021, Taiheiji returned to in-person Bon Services on June 16, 18, 19, and 20. The temple was beautifully adorned with beautiful flowers, colorful flags, lanterns, and otoa. Attendees received packages of Hawaiian Candy senbei as *okumotsu* (food offering made on attendees' behalf to the Buddha, which is then taken home after the service).

Thank you to Bishop Shugen Komagata, Rev. Ryohei Ishii, Rev. Kokei Yoshida, Rev. Shinryu Hoshino, and Rev. Shoryu Fukagawa, for attending the Bon Services. Thank you to Rev. Shuji's son, Reigen for diligently assisting on the altar at each Bon Service. Mahalo to Mrs. Jaymie Komagata and daughter Remi for making sure the services ran smoothly and for offering incense on behalf of all families who could not attend the services in-person. We are also grateful to Robin Fujikawa and Todd Imamura for serving as the emcee at the Bon Service. A special thank you goes to the Gerald and Susan Tachino and their entire family for greeting and checking in the attendees at the services.



# Bon Dance News

## Plant and Flower Sale

Do you have a green thumb or would like to kickstart your garden at home? The Soto Mission of Aiea invites you to visit the Plant and Flower Sale, to be held at this year's Bon Dance! Proceeds from the sale will help fund the construction of the all-new Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center.

Relying on the generosity of our temple members and supporters to create the inventory of plants and flowers to sell, we are very grateful for the early outpouring of pledges to donate plants and flowers. If you are able to donate plants, or would like to help with this project, please contact Rev. Shuji. Mahalo!

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## Fujinkai Bon Dance Fundraiser: Baked Goods

The Fujinkai will once again hold its annual Baked Goods fundraiser at Taiheiji's Bon Dance on August 12 and 13. The ladies of the Fujinkai humbly request donations of baked goods from its members as well as supporters of the temples. Please call Rev. Shuji or Jaymie Komagata for more information on how you can be a donor to the Baked Goods sale!!

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## Yagura Construction

On Sunday, August 7, at 8:00 a.m., we humbly ask for volunteers to assist in the construction of our Bon Dance yagura. The Yagura is the red and white tower that everyone dances around during the Bon Dance. Please wear covered shoes and bring power drills if you have them. Lights will also be set up during this time.



SOTO MISSION OF AIEA  
**BON DANCE**



2022

PUBLIC IS INVITED!

LOCATION: 99-045 KAHALE  
 STREET  
 AIEA, HI 96701

TWO NIGHTS!!!



FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, 2022  
 SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 2022

6:30 PM - 10:00 PM  
 6:30 PM - 10:00 PM

LIVE MUSIC!

**SOMEI TAIKO PERFORMANCE**

BOTH NIGHTS AT 8:00 PM

**OKINAWAN BON DANCE**

**LED BY HAWAII EISA SHINNYUU-KAI**

BOTH NIGHTS FROM 8:30 PM

**AIEA TAIHEIJI YAGURA GUMI**

RETURNS FOR THEIR HOMECOMING!

THERE WILL BE LOTS OF FOOD ITEMS ON SALE BOTH NIGHTS.

AND COME TO CHECK OUT...

**THE PLANT & FLOWER SALE!!!**



FOR INFORMATION  
 VISIT [WWW.SOTOMISSION.COM](http://WWW.SOTOMISSION.COM)  
 CALL TAIHEIJI AT 488-6794



# Dollar a Day Donation Drive

The recent facelift of the Taiheiji's website has really given the temple a broader readership and made online giving an alternative, yet effective way to contribute to Taiheiji. Please visit the temple website to learn more about Taiheiji, and participate in the new "Dollar a Day Donation Drive." Donating to the Dollar a Day Drive is a positive expression of dana (selfless giving) and helps Taiheiji look optimistically to the future in sharing the Buddha-Dharma. This tax-deductible gift is collected monthly (\$30.00). Donors will be recognized in the Taiheiji Bulletin when they sign up to participate in the Dollar a Day Donation Drive. Donors will also be recognized on the Taiheiji website, [www.sotomission.com](http://www.sotomission.com).

**Instructions:** Please enter **\$30.00** (or more if you choose) as your donation amount. This amount will be charged to your credit card each month. Please contact Rev. Shuji Komagata at 808-488-6794 for more information.

## Nokotsudo Niches Now Available at Taiheiji

Located in the front corner of the Soto Mission of Aiea temple is a very special room called the Nokotsudo. This is the columbarium, a beautifully crafted room with dark mahogany niches adorned with traditional golden lanterns. It is the final resting place for many temple members and their families, including former resident minister, Rev. Kogan Yoshizumi and his wife, Mrs. Taki Yoshizumi. Just recently, a very limited number of niches have become available. If you are interested in learning more about how you can reserve a future space for you and your loved ones, please contact Rev. Shuji at 808-488-6794. Information is also available on the temple website, [www.sotomission.com](http://www.sotomission.com).

# Cemetery Plots Available for Purchase

Taiheiji can help you and your family make arrangements for a final resting place in the future. Through the generous donations by temple members and supporters over the years, the Soto Mission of Aiea owns several cemetery plots at Hawaiian Memorial Park Mortuary and the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park that are available to the Taiheiji community. If you are interested in acquiring a plot for you or a loved one, please contact Rev. Shuji at 488-6794. He will be able to send you more information. Additionally, if your family has an available plot they would like to generously donate to Taiheiji, please contact Rev. Shuji. Mahalo! Visit [www.sotomission.com](http://www.sotomission.com) for more information.

## Recycling

Mahalo for the great response following the announcement of Taiheiji's participation in the Hawaii Deposit Beverage Container Program (HI-5) earlier this year. Each month, many people have been dropping off their cans and bottles at Taiheiji, giving the temple the opportunity to receive the 5¢ redeemable deposit benefit of this state funded program. Please stop by Taiheiji to drop off your recyclables! You can contact Rev. Shuji at 808-488-6794 or visit [www.sotomission.com](http://www.sotomission.com) for more information.

Visit the Temple website at  
[www.sotomission.com](http://www.sotomission.com)

Please take a moment to check out Taiheiji's updated website at [www.sotomission.com](http://www.sotomission.com). There, you'll find helpful information on various events and activities, as well as Buddhist resources. It is our hope that the website will be an effective way for members and supporters to stay connected to the temple. You also have the ability to make online donations. **You can make donations online to the New Building Construction Fund as well!**

# Zazen at Taiheiji: Tuesdays, 6:00 a.m.

## **What is Zazen?**

Zazen is a meditative discipline that is typically the primary practice of the Zen Buddhist tradition. In general, it can be regarded as a means of insight into the nature of existence.

## **Do I need to be a Buddhist to sit in Zazen?**

Absolutely not! Everyone, no matter what their religious beliefs may be, should try to make meditation a part of their lives. The practice of Zazen is to make you a better self.

## **What is the Zazenkai?**

The Zazenkai is a group that sits together in Zen meditation. They support one another in the practice of Zazen.

## **When does the Zazenkai meet?**

The Zazenkai meets every Tuesday from 6:00 am to 7:00 am in the Taiheiji social hall.

Please check the latest Taiheiji Bulletin or contact Rev. Shuji at 808-488-6794 for the monthly Zazen schedule.

## **I don't have any experience sitting in Zen Meditation. May I still join the Zazenkai?**

The Zazenkai is open to everyone. No experience necessary.

## **Zazen Etiquette**

All participants are to arrive a few minutes early and be seated **before** beginning time. Please refrain from talking. While at Taiheiji, participants are asked to abide by the following five precepts, which promote the harmony and wellbeing of the Zazenkai.

- Refraining from killing and harming living beings
- Refraining from taking that which is not given
- Refraining from causing harm through sexual misconduct

or inappropriate behavior

- Refraining from false speech, harmful speech, gossip, and slander
- Abstaining from drugs, tobacco and intoxicants that cause carelessness or loss of awareness

Please dress comfortably and in a way suited to visiting a spiritual place. Please do not use strong fragrances during Zazen. Outside food and drink, with the exception of water, are not permitted. You may select either a chair or zafu (cushion) on which to sit.

### **Zazenkai Donations and Dues:**

A small offertory bowl will be put out on the table. Your donations are greatly appreciated. You are also encouraged to (but not required to) officially join the Zazenkai. Monthly dues for the Zazenkai are \$40 and will be used to support Taiheiji and the meditation group. Thank you for your kind support.



## **Protective Masks at Taiheiji**

Following the expiration of the statewide mask mandate on March 25, 2022, the Soto Mission of Aiea Board of Directors voted on April 24, 2022 to lift its requirement of wearing masks at Taiheiji. However, they continue to strongly recommend social distancing and wearing masks while at Taiheiji. The groups that use Taiheiji for their activities, like Taiko, Kendo, Karate, Yoga, & Zazen may set their own requirements on mask wearing.

# UPCOMING SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

## July 2022

- 5 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 12 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 19 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 24 Sun 9:00 a.m. Taiheiji Board Meeting

## August 2022

- 5 Fri 6:00 p.m. Waipahu Taiyoji Bon Dance
- 6 Sat 6:00 p.m. Waipahu Taiyoji Bon Dance
- 7 Sun 8:00 a.m. Temple Cleanup & Yagura Set up
- 12 Fri 6:30 p.m. Taiheiji Bon Dance
- 13 Sat 6:30 p.m. Taiheiji Bon Dance
- 14 Sun 8:00 a.m. Disassemble Yagura
- 16 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 23 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 30 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen

## Monthly Kannonko Services in July and August

During the Bon season months of July and August, Sunday Services at Taiheiji will be put on pause. Rev. Shuji will be traveling, as well as helping at other temples as they observe their Bon Services.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GENEROUS DONATIONS RECEIVED

Glenn & Elizabeth Tango	In Loving Memory of the late Richard Tango and the late Frances Tango
Caroline Masutani	Donation to New Building Construction Fund
Shizuko Matsumoto	3rd Year Memorial Service for the late Kazuo Yoshioka
Leslie Takahashi	Donation to Temple
Gary & Candace Tasoe	Dollar a Day Donation
Ralph & Lillian Yokouchi	Donation to Temple
George Akahori	Donation to Temple
Lilly Ihara	Donation to Temple
Joe & Gertrude Nishida	Memorial Service for the late Miyoko Hashizume
Len & Michele Ogata	In Loving Memory of the late Richard Nagamine and the late Gladys Nagamine
Betty Matsui	Donation to Temple
Lisa Ann Lee	Donation to New Building Construction Fund
Fumiko Kosuge	49th Day Memorial Service for the late Tamikichi Kosuge
Christy Kokami	Donation to Temple
Craig & Kim Iinuma	7th Year Memorial Service for the late Gladys Iinuma
Pat Radona	7th Year Memorial Service for the late Masaharu Suzuki
Aki Tamura	Inurnment Service for the late Toshiki Tamura
Glenn & Ivis Tanaka	Donation to Temple

Correction:

It was brought to our attention that in the May & June Taiheiji Bulletin, a generous donation from Glenn and Elizabeth Tango was incorrectly printed, "In Loving Memory of the late Koji Tango." This Father's Day and Mother's Day donation should have been printed, "In Loving Memory of the late Richard Tango & the late Frances Tango." We apologize for the error.



# *Dharma Lei*



## **Bishop's Office Newsletter**

**Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office**

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Tel & Fax: 808-538-6429

email: [info@sotozenhi.org](mailto:info@sotozenhi.org) WEB: <http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/eng/>

Third Quarter, 2022 Issue No. 41

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

Aloha from the Bishop's Office,

Can you believe we've already arrived at the halfway point of 2022? I hope that you and your family have been healthy, happy, and enjoying the year so far! While the weather in Hawaii has been utterly beautiful recently, the COVID-19 pandemic rolls on, gas prices are through the roof, and the Russia and Ukraine War sadly sees no end in sight. Let's send our prayers to all those who may be suffering both near and far from us.



The familiar season of Bon is upon us now. Bon is a time to offer our prayers to our departed loved ones and friends. Bon is also a time for us to offer our deep gratitude to our ancestors who passed on well before our time here. When the pandemic forced us to rewrite the way we interact with others, the use of online virtual services certainly helped to enable people to continue to offer Bon prayers from the safety of their homes.

I am happy that in 2022, several of our Soto Mission temples have been able to return to in-person Bon Services. The ability to see one another, interact with one another, and offer prayers together in-person at the Bon Service are invaluable. I pray that by next year all the Soto Mission temples in Hawaii will be able to safely gather for in-person Bon Services.

In many ways, we can look at our lives presently in the middle of 2022 and assess that although we have made great strides battling the COVID-19 pandemic, we are still trying to figure out what the new normal in life will be for the future. There is still a lot of uncertainty ahead, it can be a bit unsettling. However, there are a lot of good ‘certainties’ already in our lives. For me personally, I constantly remind myself of the small blessings in my life: speaking to my sisters in Hawaii, California, and Japan on the phone, having a Father’s Day video chat on Facetime with my son in New Mexico, having weekly dinners with my other son and his family, and being able to continue my work each day as the head minister of Betsuin and the bishop of the Hawaii Soto Mission. “A happy life is often taken for granted,” I tell myself.

So please recount your blessing in your life. They may be small things, but they are blessings, nonetheless. And as Buddhists, let us never lose our original determination—that is to help others around us. Whether it is lending a hand, offering a prayer, or even giving a smile, it is the small things in life that can have a positive impact on others.

In Gassho,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shugen Komagata". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes, particularly in the 'S' and 'K'.

Bishop Shugen Komagata

# New Resident Minister of Maui Mantokuji

Aloha,

Nice to meet you. My name is Tomoki Hirasawa, new resident minister of Mantokuji from Japan. I left Japan on April 13th. After a 5-day orientation on Oahu, I arrived at Mantokuji on April 18th.

I was born and raised in Kanagawa Prefecture. Kanagawa is famous for the port city of Yokohama and The Great Buddha of Kamakura. Some of you might have been there on a trip. After graduation from the university, I lived at Sojiji Temple, one of the head temples of Soto Mission, to devote myself to Buddhist training for a year with Rev. Hoshino and Rev. Hata. They are my friends with whom I have shared many experiences.



During our training, we woke up early in the morning, cleaned up every nook of the temple, had a few rice and vegetables meals, and did Zazen everyday. Those days were very hard but also fulfilling.

After my training, I worked at a city government office in my hometown for 10 years. I worked in the tax department and community center. At the same time, I helped my father, who is a resident minister of his temple.

I got married in 2018. Hawaii was the place of our honeymoon trip. We loved Hawaii because of its warm, mild, comfortable climate, beautiful nature, and the kindness of its

people. Now we are back in Hawaii. This is an incredible experience for us and we are

grateful for this opportunity.

I last came to Maui 3 years ago in 2019. Since then, it has been a very long time with two painful years due to COVID-19. Many people have

supported us to come here. I would like to thank all the people in the Sangha who have been waiting for us.

When I entered the Hondo of Mantokuji, I am reminded of my hometown and feel at ease. I am sure that this is the same feeling that you, your parents, and all ancestors felt. This is the meaning of the temple's existence and the reason why I should be here. I would like to show my respect to all the ancestors who rest here, and to all those who have saved this temple until now. I am now very happy to be here.

I will study English hard and hope to be able to communicate with all of you soon. Please feel free to talk to us when you come to Mantokuji.

In gassho,

Tomoki Hirasawa

The 9th resident minister of Mantokuji



# Lay Confirmation Ceremony At Daifukuji Soto Mission



Fifteen sangha members received the bodhisattva precepts and their Buddhist names in a Soto Zen Buddhist Lay Confirmation Ceremony held on May 22, 2022 at Daifukuji Soto Mission. This ceremony was officiated by Bishop Shugen Komagata with the assistance of Reverend Shuji Komagata from the Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office, and Reverend Jiko Nakade and Deacon Jikai Nakade of Daifukuji.

A warm congratulations to the following recipients: Stephen Shōdō Tanaka, MaryAnne Jiu Seibert, Kym Jōshin Peck, Frank Kai-on Galman, Richard Jigan Morley, Travis Hosshin Marsh, Huong Seishin Lam, Linda Jōkō Calloway, Aimee Myōshō Disharoon, Markus Myō-on Fahrenberger, Dan Taihei Gordon,



Jonika Jōren Grossi, John Jiun Hamm, Gerald Jōgan Hirata, and Mark Kōshin Holst. All of the recipients completed a three-month online study of the 16 precepts under the guidance of Rev. Nakade.



The Daifukuji sangha sends an ocean of gratitude to Bishop Komagata for serving as preceptor and to Rev. Shuji for serving as the service M.C.

The ceremony was followed by a potluck lunch and fellowship in the Daifukuji social hall. It was truly a joyful day!

**Soto Mission of Aiea  
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