

SOTO MISSION OF AIEA
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TAIHEIJI BULLETIN



JULY & AUGUST 2023

Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center Construction to Begin

The Soto Mission of Aiea Vision Team Committee met on June 11, 2023 to discuss our long awaited Activity Center project. After a long and thorough discussion on the many different issues, the Vision Team Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Directors to vote in favor of the commencement of construction. The temple board quickly responded with overwhelming support to move forward with the project.

On behalf of the Soto Mission of Aiea Board of Directors, **I am elated to announce that the Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center construction project is set to begin on August 28, 2023!** It will be bittersweet as we say goodbye to the old Japanese School building and minister's residence. Decades of termite damage made it just too costly to repair and restore.

The entire project is estimated to take a year to complete. While we are extremely excited for the project to begin, we still need to raise more funds. Increased labor costs due to the pandemic and supply shortages have driven up the overall price tag on the project. With your support, though, I am confident that we will be able to successfully complete this project. We will be sharing much more of the plans in the upcoming months!

Saturday, July 15:

Kala Kokua Fundraiser Pickup

Thank you for your support with the Kala Kokua Fundraiser! Please pick up your products on Saturday, July 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Soto Mission of Aiea.

Your contributions to this project through the purchase of Kala Kokua products will help Taiheiji with the day-to-day costs of running the temple. Mahalo!!!

Taiheiji Bon Services Report

Taiheiji Bon Services were successfully held on June 15, 17, 18, and 19. The familiar sight of the otoba—the six-foot tall wooden tablet with dedication prayers written for departed loved ones—along with beautiful flowers, colorful flags, and lanterns, adorned the temple altar. Another strong sign of returning to pre-pandemic activities was the distribution of sekihan (mochi rice with azuki beans) on the first day of Bon service. This *okumotsu* (food offering made on attendees' behalf to the Buddha, which is then taken home after the service) was well received by all. Thank you to the Hokama family for donating the mochi rice from Japan and the Matsufuru family for donating the azuki beans. Mahalo to Donna and Sidney Matsufuru, and Marcia Enga for making the sekihan.

Thank you to Bishop Shugen Komagata, Rev. Hirosato Yoshida, Rev. Masataka Hoshino, and Rev. Shoryu Fukagawa for attending the Bon Services. Thank you to Rev. Shuji's son, Reigen for diligently assisting on the altar. Mahalo to Mrs. Jaymie Komagata 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 Remi Komagata for serving as the emcees 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.

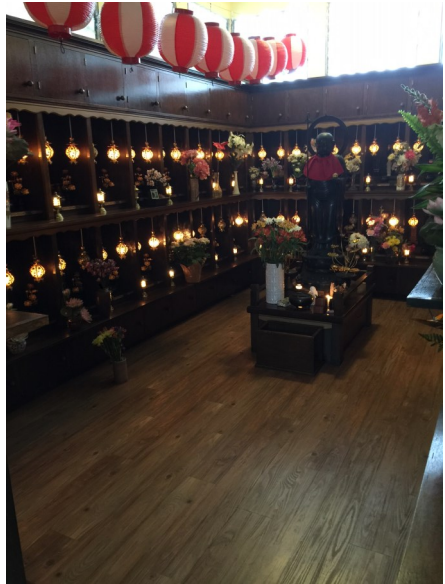




What is Bon?

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.

Bon Dance News

Plant and Flower Sale Returns!

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!

Fujinkai Bon Dance Fundraiser: Baked Goods

The Fujinkai will once again hold its annual Baked Goods fundraiser at Taiheiji's Bon Dance on August 11 and 12. 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!!

Yagura Construction

On Sunday, August 6, 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

2023

PUBLIC IS INVITED!

LOCATION:
99-045 KAUAHALE STREET
AIEA, HI 96701

TWO NIGHTS!!!



FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2023

6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 2023

6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

LIVE MUSIC!

SOMEI TAIKO PERFORMANCE

BOTH NIGHTS AT 7:00 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 CHECK OUT...

THE PLANT & FLOWER SALE!!!



FOR INFORMATION
VISIT WWW.SOTOMISSION.COM
CALL TAIHEIJI AT 488-6794

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.

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 for more information.

Recycling

Mahalo for participating in the Hawaii Deposit Beverage Container Program (HI-5). 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 for more information.

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.

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.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

July 2023

- 11 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 18 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 23 Sun 9:00 a.m. Taiheiji Board Meeting
- 25 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen

August 2023

- 1 Tue 6:00 a.m. Zazen
- 6 Sun 8:00 a.m. Temple Cleanup & Yagura Set up
- 11 Fri 6:00 p.m. Taiheiji Bon Dance
- 12 Sat 6:00 p.m. Taiheiji Bon Dance
- 13 Sun 8:00 a.m. Disassemble Yagura
- 15 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

Steven Aisaka	Memorial Service for the late Jordan David Aisaka
Bishop Shugen Komagata	Dollar-a-Day Donation
Bruce Behnke	Donation to New Building Construction Fund
Fumiko Kosuge	1 Year Memorial Service for the late Tamikichi Kosuge
Fukiya	Donation to Temple
Edith Matsuda	Funeral & 7th Day Service for the late James Matsuda
Edith Matsuda	Burial Service for the late James Matsuda
Amy Mijo	7th Memorial Service for the late Frances Tango
Christy Kokami	Donation to Temple
Fukiya	Donation to Temple
Diane Maeda	Funeral & 7th Day Service for the late Takeo Maeda
Diane Maeda	Donation to New Building Construction Fund
Caroline Masutani	23rd Year Memorial Service for the late Daniel Masutani
Christy Kokami	Donation to Temple
Aiko Karaoke School	Donation to Temple
Tara Miyata	Funeral & 7th Day Service for the late Lilly Ihara
Tara Miyata	Burial Service for the late Lilly Ihara
Angela Naito	Donation to Temple
Renee Yamamoto	Bedside Service for the late Michiko Iwata
Crane Saito	27th Memorial Service for the late Minoru Saito
Aiea Taiheiji Kendo Club	Donation to Temple
Aiko Karaoke School	Donation to Temple
Bishop Shugen Komagata	Dollar-a-Day Donation
Fukiya	Donation to Temple



Dharma Lei



Bishop's Office Newsletter

Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office

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email: info@sotozenhi.org WEB: <http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/eng/>

Third Quarter, 2023 Issue No. 45

Bishop's Message:

Aloha from the Bishop's Office,

Oh, how time flies! As we find ourselves already in the middle of 2023, I hope that you and your family are doing well. The conditions surrounding COVID-19 have improved steadily and I am happy to see people slowly returning to their normal routines.

We are now in the middle of the Bon Season here in Hawaii. As I have mentioned in the past, Bon is a time for us to remember our departed loved ones. We offer our gratitude to them and pray for their continued peace in the world of Nirvana.

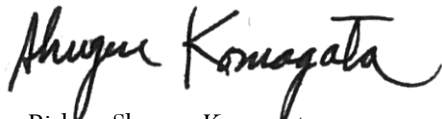
I would also like to emphasize the importance of Bon amongst the living. At the Bon Dance, while dancing around the yagura in a symbolic reunion with the departed, people further cultivate their love and appreciation for their families and friends as they spend time in fellowship. For those who are actively grieving the loss of a loved one, I pray that the Bon Service offers comfort and solace. Truth be told, there are also times in life when family members and friends go through



challenging times with one another. I pray that the season of Bon, with all that it represents, offers people the opportunity for reconciliation, forgiveness, and healing.

I am happy to announce that Bon Services at all the Hawaii Soto Mission temples are in-person again this year. The Soto Mission of Hawaii will not be hosting its Bon Dance this year due to ongoing repairs and renovations on the temple and adjacent Komagata Hall, but I am excited that all the other Hawaii Soto Mission temples are having Bon Dance. Please inquire with your temple when your Bon Service and Bon Dance will be held. As you enjoy this beautiful summer, please continue to take care of yourself and your family.

In Gassho,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shugen Komagata". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shugen" and the last name "Komagata" clearly distinguishable.

Bishop Shugen Komagata

2023 Hawaii Soto Mission **Buddhist Study Tour**

From May 26 to June 2, 2023, a group of ten from Japan, Hawaii, and New Mexico traveled to California for the **2023 Hawaii Soto Mission Buddhist Study Tour**. Led by Senior Minister Rev. Shuji Komagata, the tour began at Los Angeles Zenshuji Soto Mission for their Centennial Celebration and the North America Preliminary Service for Keizan Zenji's 700th Memorial. During the two days spent in Los Angeles, the group visited Zen Center of Los Angeles and the Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple. The trip next took the group to the Bay Area. Over the next four days, they visited Green Gulch Farm Zen Center, Sonoma Mountain Zen Center, the San Francisco Zen Center, Sokoji Soto Mission, Berkeley Zen Center, the Buddhist Church of America in Berkeley, and Kojin-An. All participants appreciated the opportunity to explore the richness and diversity of Buddhism in California. This trip was coordinated by the Hawaii Soto Mission Bishop's Office and sponsored in part by the Hawaii Soto Mission Association.



A view of the Golden Gate Bridge



Berkeley Zen Center



San Francisco Zen Center



Sokoji Soto Mission



Oakland Kojin An

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