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TAIHEIJI BULLETIN



MARCH / APRIL 2026

Spring Higan and Kannonko Service

Spring is a time of renewal, balance, and reflection. As the days and nights come into harmony during the spring equinox, we observe the season of Higan. The word “Higan” means “the other shore,” symbolizing our aspiration to cross from the shore of delusion and suffering to the shore of awakening. It is an opportunity to reflect on the Six Paramitas: generosity, ethical conduct, patience, diligence, meditation, and wisdom, and to consider how we may bring these teachings more fully into our daily lives.

Our Spring Higan and Kannonko Service will be held on **Sunday, March 8, at 9:00 a.m.** At this time, we also honor Kannon, the embodiment of compassion, whose vow is to hear the cries of the world and respond with wisdom and care. As we reflect on compassion in our own lives, we are reminded that even small acts of kindness can bring comfort and connection to others.

Members and friends are warmly invited to attend this meaningful service. After the service, we will gather for fellowship and a potluck. Please consider bringing a dish to share so that we may enjoy time together as a sangha. Your presence and participation help strengthen our temple community.

Hawaii Buddhist Council Buddha Day Service

The Hawaii Buddhist Council will hold its annual Buddha Day Service on **Sunday, April 5, at 9:30 a.m.** This year’s service will be hosted by Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, located at 1727 Pali Highway. Parking may be entered from Lusitana Street. For additional information, please call 808-522-9200.

Buddha Day, or Hanamatsuri, celebrates the birth of Gautama Buddha and reminds us of the universal potential for awakening that exists within each of us. It is a time when Buddhists of many traditions gather in a spirit of unity, gratitude, and joy.

The guest speaker for this year’s service will be George Tanabe, a retired professor of Japanese religions at the University of Hawaii. Dr. Tanabe currently serves as president of both BDK Hawaii and BDK America. He is well known as the co-author, with his wife Willa Tanabe, of the book *Japanese Buddhist Temples in Hawaii*. His latest publication, *Making Belief: Stories of the Formation of Shinto and Buddhism in Japan*, offers insightful perspectives on the historical development of religious traditions in Japan.

All members and friends are encouraged to attend this special island-wide service as we come together to celebrate the Buddha’s birth.

Hanamatsuri at Taiheiji

Hanamatsuri will be observed at the Soto Mission of Aiea on **Sunday, April 26, beginning at 9:00 a.m.**

Hanamatsuri, or “Flower Festival,” commemorates the birth of the Buddha. According to tradition, when Gautama Buddha was born, flowers blossomed and sweet rain fell from the sky. During the service, we will pour sweet tea over the statue of the baby Buddha, symbolizing this joyful event and our gratitude for the Buddha’s teachings that guide us in our daily lives.

We invite everyone to join us in celebrating this important occasion. Hanamatsuri is especially meaningful for families and children, as it reminds us of the preciousness of life and the potential for wisdom and compassion in every person. Let us gather together in appreciation of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

Following the service, we will enjoy fellowship and refreshments. Please bring a potluck dish to share. Everyone is encouraged to stay after the service and spend time together in the spirit of community. See you then!

Note: Hanamatsuri was originally scheduled for April 12, but due to a scheduling conflict, the date has been changed to April 26. Mahalo!

Request for Flowers for Hanamatsuri

As we prepare for Hanamatsuri on Sunday, April 26, we kindly ask for your support in helping to decorate the Hanamido (Flower Pavilion) that will enshrine the statue of the baby Gautama Buddha.

Hanamatsuri, or “Flower Festival,” celebrates the Buddha’s birth and reminds us of the beauty and preciousness of life. According to tradition, flowers bloomed and sweet rain fell at the time of his birth. In keeping with this spirit, we decorate the Hanamido with colorful and fresh flowers, creating a joyful and welcoming atmosphere for all who attend.

Members and friends are invited to bring flowers to the temple on the morning (8:00 a.m.) on Sunday, April 26, or contact Bishop Shuji to arrange a drop off at the temple on Saturday. Any type of fresh flowers will be appreciated. Your offering of flowers is a beautiful expression of gratitude and devotion, and it helps make this special celebration meaningful for everyone, especially our children and families.

Thank you for your continued support and for helping us create a warm and festive Hanamatsuri for our temple community.



Taiheiji New Year's Service and Daihannya Ceremony



The New Year's Service and Daihannya Ceremony was held on January 1 at the Soto Mission of Aiea. We were honored to welcome at the service Rev. Ryohei Ishii, Rev. Hiroshiro Yoshida, Rev. Masataka Hoshino, and Rev. Shoryu Fukagawa.

This year, the service was held inside the temple, returning to our custom before the pandemic. The temple was filled to capacity, and it was heartening to see so many members and friends gathered together to welcome the New Year. Many shared that they were deeply moved by the powerful Daihannya Tendoku ceremony.

The Daihannya Haramitta-kyō, or Great Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra, is the largest scripture in all of Buddhism, consisting of 600 volumes that teach the wisdom of compassion, generosity, and emptiness—the understanding that all things are impermanent and interconnected. This vast sutra was brought from India to China by the great monk Xuanzang after years of hardship. Because it is impossible to chant every word, Buddhist ministers developed the practice of Tendoku, an abbreviated reading in which key passages are chanted while the volumes are turned, representing the recitation of the entire sutra for the benefit of all beings.

During the ceremony, the books are lifted and moved with strong, deliberate motion. This action expresses energy, protection, and prayer. The movement of the sutras is believed to dispel misfortune, purify the space, and share blessings with those present. Each volume represents wisdom carefully preserved for centuries, and caring for these sacred books is an act of devotion and gratitude. Through the continued support of our members, this important tradition will be preserved so that the blessings of wisdom, compassion, and protection may continue for future generations.

Attendees to this auspicious annual ceremony then received their individual blessing from Bishop Shuji Komagata. Standing in front of the bishop with hands together in gassho, the sacred Rishubun—a book containing the teachings of the Buddha—was placed atop each person's head and shoulders, thus transferring holy blessing to everyone.

Ofudayaki Service

The Ofudayaki Service was held on January 11 at the Soto Mission of Aiea. We are grateful to all who attended and brought their old ofuda and omamori to be respectfully returned.

This service is an important annual observance in which protective talismans and charms from the previous year are offered in a ceremonial fire. Through this ritual, we express gratitude for the protection and guidance received during the past year while also renewing our prayers and aspirations for the year ahead.

The burning of these sacred items is done with mindfulness and respect. Rather than simply discarding them, we return them in a dignified way, recognizing the sincerity and faith with which they were received. This practice reminds us to reflect on the passing of time and to renew our commitment to living with wisdom, compassion, and gratitude.



We sincerely thank everyone who participated and helped prepare for this service. Your support and presence continue to strengthen the spirit of our sangha and our shared commitment to the teachings of the Buddha.



Nehan-e and Setsubun Ceremony

The Nehan-e and Setsubun Ceremony was held on Sunday, February 1 at the Soto Mission of Aiea. It was wonderful to see so many people in attendance on this meaningful day.

Nehan-e commemorates the passing of the Buddha and reminds us of the teaching of impermanence. Setsubun marks the seasonal turning toward spring, and through this observance we symbolically cast away misfortune and welcome good fortune in the coming year.

The food was delicious, and everyone enjoyed spending time together in fellowship. It was a joyful gathering and a beautiful reminder of the warmth and strength of our temple community.



Soto Mission of Aiea Annual Fundraiser

The Soto Mission of Aiea is pleased to once again hold our annual fundraiser in partnership with Kala Kokua. This year, we are offering four delicious items: Smoked Meat, Chicken Portuguese Sausage, Jumbo Arabiki Sausage, and Flame-Broiled Chicken (new item). Each item is \$13.00 and comes fully cooked, frozen, and vacuum-packed for freshness and convenience. These make wonderful gifts for family and friends and are perfect for an easy, quick meal at home. Presale order forms will be distributed in mid-March. Product pick-up is scheduled for **Sunday, May 2**, at Soto Mission of Aiea.

We sincerely appreciate your continued support and participation in this important fundraiser. Proceeds will help us maintain and care for our temple facilities so that we may continue serving our community. Additional donations are always deeply appreciated. Please kokua by selling as many tickets as you can. With everyone's support, we can ensure the continued strength and vitality of our temple. Mahalo for your generosity and commitment.

Acknowledgment of Generous Donations Received

Steven Aisaka	In Loving Memory of the late Jordan Aisaka
Harold Haga	Donation to the Temple
Wayne & Colleen Nakatsu	Donation to the Temple
Fred Takakawa	Donation to the Temple
Aiko Karaoke School	Donation to the Temple
Fukiya	Donation to the Temple
Mae Oyama	13th Memorial Service for the late Glenn Oyama
Verna Rabacal	Donation to the Temple
Charlene Yamaguchi	13th Memorial Service for the late Toshio Shiraki
Melvin Yamaki Jr.	7th Memorial Service for the late Melvin T. Yamaki
Wesley Fukada	Donation to the Temple
Vivian Lee	Donation to the Temple
Ed Nose	33rd Memorial Service for the late Eunice Nose
Sandra Tanaka	Donation to the Temple
Calvin & Agnes Kaya	Donation to the Temple
Gail Nagamine	Donation to the Temple
Yuriko Sakae	Donation to the Temple
Todd & Nikki Imamura	Donation to the Temple

Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center Legacy Wall Sponsors

\$500 Tier Level

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Susan & Martien Bergman	Sidney & Donna Matsufuru
Stanley Enga	

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 Glenn Nakagawa
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 Stephen Omiya
 Raymond & Kathleen Tagawa
 Betty Takahashi
 Jamie Matsuda

Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center

Completion of the Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center is now in sight. We anticipate the building will be finished and ready for operation soon. This marks a major milestone and the beginning of a new chapter in the history of our temple.

We are excited to welcome Hale Hauoli as the provider for the Taiheiji Adult Care Center on the ground floor of the building. This modern facility was carefully designed and constructed as an adult day care center, allowing for the most effective and meaningful use of the space. It will provide much-needed services and support for seniors and their families in our community.

The Activity Center reflects the vision and generosity of our members and supporters. It represents our commitment to serve not only our temple membership but also the broader community, embodying the spirit of compassion and care that is central to the teachings of Gautama Buddha. The culmination of this project will be celebrated at the Grand Opening Ceremony of the Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center and New Year's Party on Sunday, March 1.

Sponsorship and Remembrance: The Legacy Wall

In our previous newsletter, I shared about the various tree sponsorship opportunities connected to our new Activity Center. Thank you to everyone who stepped forward so generously to help root this project in faith, memory, and community spirit.

This past month, we have also begun receiving sponsors for our Legacy Wall, featuring a beautiful copper Bodhi Tree sculpture that will be created by artist Sooriya Muthukumar. This sculpture will grace the side of the Activity Center and serve as a lasting symbol of awakening, gratitude, and continuity.

We would like to sincerely thank our recent Legacy Wall sponsors at the \$500 level: Robin & Linda Fujikawa, Carl & Mutsumi Kawauchi, Susan & Martien Bergman, Sidney & Donna Matsufuru, and Stanley Enga. Your generosity ensures that the spirit of dana (selfless giving) continues to flourish at Taiheiji.

The Activity Center is more than a building. It is an offering to future generations as a place where the Dharma will be shared, our loved ones cared for, and Sangha members will sit in quiet zazen together. The Legacy Wall allows you to become a visible and enduring part of that future.

There are four sponsorship tiers available for the Legacy Wall: **\$20,000, \$10,000, \$5,000, and \$500**. The size and placement of each inscribed nameplate will correspond to the level of sponsorship.

This is an opportunity to memorialize a loved one and offer dana as a statement of faith in the future of our temple. Each name placed on the Legacy Wall becomes part of our collective story that is rooted in the past, alive in the present, and extending into the future. If you would like to participate as a "Legacy Donor," please contact the temple office for more information on how to participate as a "Legacy Donor." Together, let us continue building not only walls and rooms, but a living testament to gratitude, compassion, and community.

Schedule of Events

March 1	10:00 a.m.	Soto Mission of Aiea Activity Center Grand Opening Ceremony
	11:00 a.m.	Shinnenkai (New Year's Party) (by RSVP only)
March 8	9:00 a.m.	Spring Higan, Kannonko Services
April 5	9:30 a.m.	Hawaii Buddhist Council Buddha Day Service (at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin)
April 18, 19		59th Annual UHSSWA Conference (hosted by Kona Daifukuji Fujinkai)
April 26	9:00 a.m.	Hanamatsuri, Kannonko Services

Zazen Schedule (6:00 a.m.)

March 3, 10, 17, 31

April 7, 21, 28

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