



# HAKUHO

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**JULY 2021**

## MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Aloha, Members and Friends of Taishoji,

On June 6, we had the Kaisanki, Rekijuki, Baikako deceased members memorial service and Kannonko Service. During my sermon, I talked about Taishoji's most valuable item in my opinion. It is Taishoji's Temple Bell. Our temple bell is hanging by the entrance and Deacon Juho or Deacon Jigaku hits it at our Sunday Services. The other day, when I hit the bell at a memorial service, I noticed the short sentences engraved on the bell. It is all in Japanese, so this is the translation. "Hawaii Island, Hilo City, Soto Zen,



**Taishoji Temple Bell**

Hokuhozan Mountain Taishoji Temple Treasure. October 25, 1917, Rev. Hakudo Ezawa." I was really surprised. I thought that this bell was installed about 20 or 30 years ago, but actually this bell was installed in 1917, during the first minister, Rev. Hakudo Ezawa's time. Rev. Ezawa engraved the sentences by himself. So this bell has been used by all the Taishoji ministers since October 25, 1917. All the ministers and members would have listened to the sound of this bell.

Regardless of this story, I'd like to introduce you to a Zen phrase. This is "Shoju Sennen no Midori (松樹千年の翠)." It literally means that "the pine tree keeps showing us lush greenery for more than one thousand years without changing." We can see pine trees at Lili'uokalani Garden. The pine tree is beautiful, but since a pine tree doesn't change during the year, people tend to notice other flowering trees more than the pine tree. The pine tree doesn't usually stand out, but has impressive vitality and remains firmly rooted under any circumstances. The pine tree keeps green by repeating small changes for more than one thousand years.

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In our daily life, we tend to look at only something new, changing or gorgeous, but we should not forget that we can learn the true nature of our life from things that don't change much or things which doesn't stand out. So this Zen phrase means that "learn the true nature of our life from things that don't change much or things doesn't stand out."

Back to my story, I thought that the Taishoji bell and the pine tree are very similar. We might not pay attention to the sound of the bell much, but the sound of the bell is the sound of true Buddhism which has been continuing since Taishoji was established. This bell has spent a precious time with the past ministers and members who prayed for the prosperity of Taishoji and world peace. After I realized that, I thought we have to cherish this bell as Taishoji's most valuable item even more. When you listen to the sound of the bell next time, please remember that the sound of the bell has resonated for more than one hundred years and was cherished by all the past ministers and members.

In Gassho,  
Rev. Shinsho Hata

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Aloha Members & Friends of Taishoji,

I hope everyone had their vaccine shots and is doing okay. I know some of us had some reaction and hopefully got over it without any major problems.

This year we are still in the Covid 19 era so all of our temple services are being held with minimum attendance and live streamed on Facebook and later shown on YouTube.

We are having a Virtual Video of our Bon Dance for 2021 that will be video taped earlier to be shown on **Saturday, July 24 at 6:00 pm on YouTube**. It will be about a 1 hour video. **(PLEASE CHECK THE JULY TAISHOJI SCHEDULE)** for dates and times and the showings of the services. The Links for **Facebook** and **YouTube** are also posted in the July schedule.

**From July 27, 2021 - September 14, 2021, Rev. Hata** will be in Japan to help his father during the O-Bon season. During his absence, Deacon Juho & Deacon Jigaku will take care of Sunday School / Family Service when it is scheduled. Please come and support the Deacons during this time. They have very interesting Dharma messages to share with all of us.

### **DURING THE ABSENCE OF REV. HATA**

I will be the contact person so if you need any assistance for any reason during Rev. Hata's absence, please contact me by calling **Taishoji Soto Mission at 808-935-8407 or my cell at 808-640-9956** and I will try to assist you if I can or if I can not, I will try to contact someone who will be able to assist.

Rev. Hata has made arrangements with several ministers locally in case anyone needs a bedside service or other occasions that needs a minister and I will contact a minister for you. If you have a memorial service coming up during his absence, we would appreciate it if you can put it on hold until **Rev. Hata returns on September 14, 2021**.

### **FUJIN KAI**

Aloha Fujin Kai members, friends, and supporting family members,

How are you? We are hoping that you are all doing well as summer fully approaches. The O-Bon season of 2021 is here. This year's O-Bon Service and Toba Kuyo will be held both in-person and Live-Stream on July 25<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 10 am. We will welcome Rev. Jiko Nakade, Deacon Jihai Nakade and Mr. Michael Nakade from Kona Daifukuji. Hatsubon Services will be held at 10:30 am for some families and 1:30 pm for other families. All our sympathy to the Hatsubon families. There will be no O-Bon luncheon this year, so Fujin Kai will not cook that day. Toro Nagashi will be virtual again this year. Bon dance will go virtual also this year so you can see it on YouTube after 7/24. We remember our past O-Bon seasons and appreciate your many years of service.

(If you have any question, please call: 808-345-1765)

With gratitude in gassho,  
Yoko Gussman



**Japanese Hydrangea Blossoming in the middle of the rainy season**

## BUSSHIN KAI

### Ashoka the Great Buddhist Emperor

In all of world history, there has never been such a wise, magnificent ruler as Emperor Ashoka of India's Mauryan Empire. Many kings and dictators have come and gone. But, none has influenced world history and cultures as Ashoka did. While mighty conquerors have ruled by force or cunning, Ashoka ruled his people by moral persuasion. While other leaders hid their laws and policies from their people, Emperor Ashoka carved them on solid rock all over his empire so that his followers will know the laws and not unknowingly break them and get punished. He planted trees along highways so that travelers could rest under shade trees. He sent Buddhist missionary monks to spread his Buddhist teachings to all parts of the ancient world, especially Alexander the Great's Greek / Hellenistic Empire. His monks taught the humanistic, non-theistic teachings created by Lord Shakyamuni Buddha 300 years earlier. Buddha's wisdom religion reached places such as Alexandria, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Persia / Iran, Asia Minor / Turkey, Afghanistan, Nepal, Tibet, China, Burma and other places. Such teachings of wisdom, compassion and gentle persuasion remained with the many groups of people in the known world for centuries. But the violent, domineering, monotheistic and polytheistic civilizations persecuted and massacred them. But, they remain in our history books as the Manichaeans, Mandaeans, Therapeutae, Bogomils, Cathars, Knights Templar, Freemasons, Shriners, and so forth. In America, many of the Founding Fathers and the first 5 U.S. Presidents were Freemasons. Even the Marquis de La Fayette was a Freemason, as well as Ethan Allen, commander of the Green Mountain Boys who captured Fort Ticonderoga, the first victory in our Revolutionary War.

Just who was Ashoka?

Ashoka the Great was the ruler of the mighty Maurya Empire of India (274 BCE - 232 BCE).

Although Ashoka, (a word which means "without sorrow" in Sanskrit), conquered his vast empire with much bloodshed while he was still a warlike Hindu emperor, he felt so much guilt and sadness for the great carnage and destruction that he caused when he conquered the Kalinga kingdom, which lay south of his east India kingdom of Magadha, in 261 BCE, that he became a Buddhist like his third wife, Devi, was. From then on, he worked extremely hard to make the lives of his subjects a much happier and comfortable one.

Ashoka died at age 72 and ruled India for 41 years. Science fiction novelist H. G. Wells wrote of Ashoka: "In the history of the world there have been thousands of kings and emperors who called themselves 'Their Highness,' 'Their Majesties,' 'Their Exalted Majesties' and so on. They shone for a brief moment, and as quickly disappeared. But Ashoka shines and shines brightly like a bright star, even unto this day."

Emperor Ashoka is the only emperor in history to rule by moral persuasion. He allowed all religions to live in India. The founders of the modern country of India regarded Ashoka so greatly that they put the Ashoka Chakra (Buddhist Wheel of 24 Spokes) in the center of the Republic of India's flag. Plus, the emblem of India is a replica of the three lions of the Ashoka Stone Pillar. Ashoka's empire was the largest of India's many empires and it lasted for 135 years. Thus, Ashoka's name is second in importance only to that of Lord Shakyamuni Buddha.

In Gassho,  
Walter Tachibana

### O-BON & TORO NAGASHI REMINDER

It's still not too late to turn in your O-Bon donations and Toro Nagashi request forms that was printed in the June issue of the newsletter. It is due by **Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>**. Lanterns are a donation to the **Taishoji Busshin Kai for \$25.00** each for 2 names written on it. **Donation for the O-Bon Service donation is to Taishoji Soto Mission** for (1) one of our (4) four Major Temple Services during the year for remembering our ancestors in gratitude and remembering them in our prayers. If not for them we would not be here today.

In Gassho,  
Taishoji Soto Mission  
Busshin Kai

## RELEVANCE

Buddhism has been around for at least five centuries, and of course the teachings are very old. But unlike other things, it does not grow old, or fall apart and is still relevant in the world today. Why? Because human nature has not changed.

We still have worry, tension, anxiety, and stress, just as people have had for millenniums. These are all forms of mental suffering. The Buddha taught how to overcome suffering. We know that because many times in the old sutras He says " Formerly and today O monks, I teach but one thing, suffering and the cessation of suffering."

The second Noble Truth tells us the cause of suffering is " Tanha " thirst, craving, or desire. He tells us that we have suffering because of these wants or desires. We want many things, and are disappointed if we do not get them. Sometimes we get things, and they turn out to be not what we expected. Sometimes we get the thing we wanted, only to have it change or go away. Often we worry about our new possessions. This " Dukkha" or suffering comes in many forms. Because our nature is the same as people of the Buddha's time, His teachings are just as valid now as they were then.

One does not have to live in a monastery to practice Buddhism or to be a Buddhist. We only have to follow His teachings. All of which we can do at home and in our daily lives. Then we can develop a peaceful and happy life.

In Gassho,  
Deacon Juho

Hello friends and Family,

I hope everyone is having a wonderful summertime. O-bon is right around the corner and that makes this a wonderful time to spruce up or start a home altar if you do not have one. Home altars also called Butsudan are a terrific way to continue our daily practice outside of the temple. A small table or shelf with a few objects is all that is needed, though fancy or custom butsudan are also available. I recommend finding an image of the Buddha that resonates with you. In Soto Zen, our main object of veneration is usually a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, but you can use whatever feels right to you, for many years I used a statue of Lord Ganesha (an Indian deity, with ties to Buddhism, and associated with Kannon-sama) given to me as a gift. The main thing to keep in mind is that the image is not there to be worshipped, but to raise the Buddha mind it represents. Any Buddha or Bodhisatva image you feel comfortable with works. Other items typically found would be a small flower holder, water/food dishes, candle holder and incense holder of your preference. Use what works for you.

You do not need a butsudan for daily practice at home, but it is a great tool to connect with your practice daily as a physical and visual representation. You can choose to use it as much or as little as you want, from just offering a stick of incense in the mornings or evenings to chanting or doing Zazen. It is a comfort to me when I want to sit Zazen or offer prayers to sit in front of the Butsudan as I connect with my practice. For O-bon time the Ihai of ancestors are normally placed on the altar as we welcome loved ones back and honor them. There are more religious and symbolic meanings to the items used, however, I encourage you to use the Butsudan as a tool of your practice without overthinking things too much.

My recommendation to those interested in deepening their home practice is to start small and simple and see what works for them. If using a Butsudan, do not feel forced to perform lavish rituals, just do what feels comfortable and remain sincere in your practice. The three fundamental practices of Soto Zen are sitting, gassho and worship. Let us sit with quiet minds in gassho expressing our reverence as we reflect and practice the teachings of the Buddha.

In Gassho,  
Deacon Jigaku



## Hou(榔)

This is called “Hou” or “Gyoku” in Japanese. This is a wooden instrument which is struck on its side with a mallet to announce a meal. At the monastery, the monk who is in charge of serving food usually uses this wooden instrument just before a meal. The biggest “Hou” is about 7 feet long. Hou is said to be the model for the Mokugyo which is used for chanting of the sutra at Taishoji. As fish do not blink their eyes, it is said that the “Hou” symbolizes wakefulness and the monk’s strict training with little sleep. By hitting the Hou, the sound reminds monks in training to avoid the three poisons of greed, anger and ignorance. The Hou is highly symbolic. The ball which the fish has in its mouth expresses the mind of our greed, anger and ignorance. By hitting the Hou, your mind of greed, anger and ignorance will come out from your mouth.



## OTAKIAGE



Otakiage Service on June 20, 2021



Burning Religious Items

## TAISHOJI INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

We recently created a **Taishoji Instagram Account**.

Please follow it through the **QR** code on right: .

Or the link: **URL: [https://www.instagram.com/taishoji\\_soto\\_mission](https://www.instagram.com/taishoji_soto_mission)**



## TAISHOJI JULY 2021 SCHEDULE

3	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 1
10	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 4 Rev. Hata to Maui Mantokuji for O-Bon Service
17	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 2
18	Sun	8:00 am	<b>LANTERN REQUEST FORMS DUE</b>
		10:00 am	<b>Kyodan Meeting</b>
22	Thu	7:00 pm	Rev. Hata to Waipahu Taiyoji for O-Bon Service
24	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 3
		6:00 - 7 pm	<b>VIDEO OF TAISHOJI BON DANCE 2021 (On YouTube)</b>
25	Sun	9:00 am	<b>O-BON &amp; TOBA KUYO SERVICE</b> (LIVE on Facebook) (With Audience Participation)
		5:30 pm	<b>TORO NAGASHI (TO BE VIDEO TAPED ON 7/25)</b> (AND VIEWED ON YOUTUBE ON 7/26)
Facebook Link - <a href="https://www.facebook.com/Taishoji-Soto-Mission-121688031174831/">https://www.facebook.com/Taishoji-Soto-Mission-121688031174831/</a>			
26	Mon	10:00 am	O-BON, TOBA KUYO & TORO NAGASHI CAN BE VIEWED ON: YouTube Link - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSQ4EVugUml_rGhb1c-8RQQ">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSQ4EVugUml_rGhb1c-8RQQ</a>
27	Tue		Rev. Hata to Japan 7/27/21 - 9/14/21 to assist his Father with O-Bon Services

### AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION FOR SERVICES

Majority of our temple services are held with a limited amount of audience participation, except when it says no audience or doesn't mention audience participation. If you want to attend any of the audience participation services in person, you are welcomed to do so by calling Rev. Hata at 808-935-8407 to hold a seat (s) for you.

### TAISHOJI ZAZEN / YOGA / TAIKO / TROOP 95 / GO SCHEDULE

Yoga & Zazen	Monday	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
<b>ZAZEN</b>	<b>SUNDAY'S / BEFORE SUNDAY SCHOOL</b>	<b>8:00 am - 8:35 am</b>
Taiko	Thursday, Friday	5:00 pm - 6:30 pm
Troop 95	Wednesday	7:15 pm
Go Class	Thursday	5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

### TENTATIVE TAISHOJI AUGUST 2021 SCHEDULE

7	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 1
8	Sun	9:00 am	SS / Family Service (Deacon Juho & Deacon Jigaku)
		10:00 am	<b>Kyodan Meeting</b>
14	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 2
15	Sun	9:00 am	SS / Family Service (Deacon Juho & Deacon Jigaku)
21	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 3
22	Sun	9:00 am	SS / Family Service (Deacon Juho & Deacon Jigaku)
28	Sat	7:00 am	Temple Cleaning Group # 4
29	Sun	9:00 am	SS / Family Service (Deacon Juho & Deacon Jigaku)
	Sun	2:00 pm	<b>IRESAI SERVICE (Alae Cemetery)</b>

**LET'S WELCOME 2 NEW MEMBERS TO OUR TAISHOJI SANGHA TO JOIN US IN OUR SERVICES AND FUN ACTIVITIES**

**MR. KAI HANSEN**

&

**MS. JO ICHIHANA**