



Bishop's Office Newsletter

Soto Zen Buddhism Hawaii Office

c/o Soto Mission of Hawaii 1708 Nuuanu Avenue, Honolulu HI 96817 U.S.A.

Tel & Fax: 808-538-6429

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

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Bishop's Message: **Bishop Shugen Komagata**

Happy New Year from the Bishop's Office! I hope 2017 was a year filled with good health, happiness, and prosperity for everyone. It seems like in the blink of an eye, the year flew right by. I pray that 2018 will be a good year for everyone.

2018 is the Year of the Dog (戌年). In Japanese, the kanji character for dog (*inu*) is 犬. The year of the dog, although read as "*inudoshi*," or "*inunotoshi*," uses a different kanji character 戌 for dog in the Japanese Zodiac. The dog is the eleventh symbol in the Japanese Zodiac. Much in the way we regard dogs to be "man's best friend," the dog in the Japanese Zodiac is considered to be the best companion, most loyal, and friendliest. Thus, those born in the year of the dog are believed to be the easiest to get along with, and make great lifelong partners. On the other hand, they are also said to be needy, stubborn, and do not like to admit their own faults. Dogs are most compatible with tigers, horses, and other dogs. They may have difficulties dealing with the dragon.



On November 18, 2017, Paia Mantokuji bid farewell to its resident minister, Rev. Koshin Cherin. Although her stay on Maui was short, I would like to thank her for her hard work and dedication to the temple and its members. Mahalo!

In March 2018, a group of women from various Soto-Shu Fujinkai in Japan, will travel to Hawaii. Members of the United Hawaii Soto-Shu Women's Association and the Jizoku (minister's spouses) who serve as advisors to the Fujinkai, will join the guests from Japan for activities and a fellowship dinner. I hope that this event will foster further interaction in the future!

On March 31, Rev. Ryosho Kokuzo will be retiring from his post of 18 years at Waipahu Taiyoji. I wish him continued good health and happy retirement! The Bishop's Office is currently working on assigning Rev. Ryohei Ishii of the Soto Mission of Hawaii to replace Rev. Kokuzo as resident minister at Taiyoji.

In November 2018, the Soto Mission of Aiea will celebrate its 100th Anniversary Celebration. Although it is the smallest of the Oahu temples, the hard work and dedication of its members and minister have positively impacted the Aiea and surrounding communities. Please join them in their celebration later this year.

In closing, I would like to thank all members, their families, and supporters of the Hawaii Soto Mission. I look forward to an exciting and memorable 2018 with all of you!



VISITING MINISTER FROM JAPAN

On October 27, 2017, Rev. Taizen Toyoda, minister from Sojiji, one of the two headquarter temples in Japan, embarked on a three month study abroad tour. His first one and a half months were spent on the mainland, with stops in Los Angeles, Sonoma County, and Oregon. In mid December, Rev. Toyoda traveled to Hawaii, and has been working at Betsuin as well as with the ministers and members of the other Oahu temples.

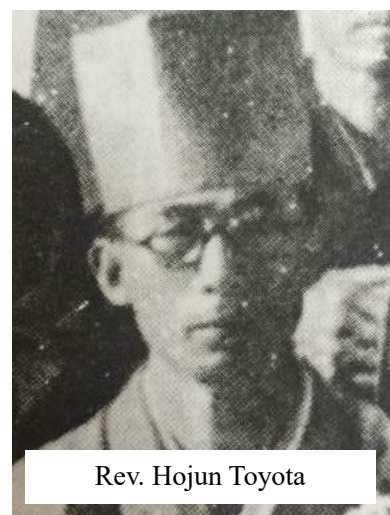
Rev. Toyoda is 29 years old, and is originally from Yamagata Prefecture in Japan. He had been training and working at Sojiji for the last five years before getting this opportunity to travel to the United States in Sojiji's "Kensanso" Program.

Rev. Toyoda has a very special connection to Hawaii. His great-granduncle, Rev. Hojun Toyota (Toyoda), was the fifth resident minister at Kauai Soto Zen Temple Zenshuji. The elder Toyota served the temple from April 1926 to July 1936, when Zenshuji was located in the Wahiawa Sugar Plantation Camp outside of Hanapepe. The younger Rev. Toyoda is looking forward to the opportunity to visit Kauai on January 21, when he accompanies Rev. Shuji Komagata to assist in Zenshuji's New Year's Blessing Service.

Rev. Toyoda is also spending four days at Hilo Taishoji and another four days at Kona Daifukuji. He will return to Japan on January 22, bringing his three month travels to an end. A special mahalo goes out to Rev. Toyoda, for his hard work and eagerness to learn about the unique Soto-Shu practices in Hawaii. Also, thank you to all the ministers and members for making his stay in Hawaii special.



Rev. Taizen Toyoda visiting Punchbowl Cemetery



Rev. Hojun Toyota

HAWAII SOTO MISSION ASSOCIATION SPRING CONFERENCE

The Hawaii Soto Mission Association (HSMA) Spring Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 25, 2018, and is hosted by the Soto Mission of Hawaii Betsuin. The HSMA meets twice a year to discuss current events, projects, and issues pertaining to our Hawaii Soto Zen temples. It is made up by the HSMA executive board and delegates selected from each Hawaii Soto Zen temple. Over forty delegates, officers, ministers, and observers will meet at the Pagoda Hotel for the HSMA Spring Meeting. Please contact your minister if you are interested in attending this event as a delegate or even as an observer!

