



# IZUMO TAISHA NEWSLETTER

IZUMO TAISHAKYO MISSION OF HAWAII

AUTUMN 2025 VOL. N18 ISSUE 2

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## FACILITY CONSTRUCTION STARTED IN SPRING 2025; NEW TWO-STORY BUILDING FOR RESTROOMS, KITCHEN AND MEETING ROOM

After years and years of waiting, it has finally happened! Planning for this project began in 2018 and endured the social distance regulations of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 - 2022. We even waited two years after the City's approval of our construction permit.

Construction actually started on April 14, following a Shinto service offering prayers for safe and secure demolition and construction on the site. The old restrooms and cottage building were completely demolished on June 2. We officiated a groundbreaking service on the vacant land on June 8. The foundation of the new building was prepared with pouring of concrete in July. The two-story building frame and its shingles came up near the end of August.

**Due to the construction continuing through the end of this year, our parking area is all**

**fenced in, and the back entrance is also closed. We only have portable toilets for visitors. Please look for parking on nearby streets and public parking lots. We are very sorry for the inconvenience, but we are still open every day and you can visit the Shrine and *omamori* / *ofuda* office, entering from the main *torii* gate!**



## CELEBRATE OUR ANNUAL AUTUMN THANKSGIVING FESTIVAL!



Moonlight purified  
by the autumn wind

Words and illustration by Hideko Usami  
Instructor of Japanese Calligraphy

On October 5, at the Hawaii Izumo Taisha Shrine, we will celebrate the Annual Autumn Thanksgiving Festival. In Shinto, this celebration is one of the most significant occasions held to express our appreciation and gratitude for a bountiful harvest for the year.

A Shinto worship service will be observed starting at 1:00 pm by Bishop Daiya Amano and other priests and a Shrine maiden (*miko*). The new harvest and other farm products will be dedicated at the altar. The priests will observe short blessings for any visitors and worshipers.

After the service, there will be some speeches from representatives and celebratory local *mochi* and *bento* will be served. This is for sharing the blessings with attendees.

*Continued on Page 2*



## THANKSGIVING FESTIVAL (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, there will be no entertainment again this year due to our on-going property construction. However, we will reserve free parking at the neighboring Kukui Center that day. Anyone visiting the Shrine is invited to this festival to get blessed. Please celebrate and enjoy our autumn thanksgiving.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR OUR MAJOR EVENTS!!

Your *kokua* is needed for the Autumn Thanksgiving Festival and New Year's 2026! Training and introduction to Shinto and Izumo Taisha are provided to new volunteers. All volunteers are invited to enjoy event refreshments and meals. Contact the Shrine office for volunteer opportunities and other activities for school credit or community service.

### 2025 Autumn Thanksgiving Festival:

Volunteers needed **October 3, 4, 5**

Set-up / Clean-up  
Service Assistance

### 2026 New Year's Blessings & Celebration:

Volunteers needed **December 26-31, 2025**

**January 1-18, 2026**

Kitchen Help  
Set-up / Clean-up  
*Omamori* Distribution  
Service Assistance

## 80 YEARS AFTER THE WAR: HIROSHIMA COMMEMORATION & PEACE SERVICE

On August 6, 2025, Hawaii Izumo Taisha, YMCA Honolulu and the Hiroshima *Kenjinkai* held the annual commemoration ceremony on College Walk in front of the Shrine. This was the 36th commemoration ceremony since the Hiroshima Peace Bell was placed next to our property. This year also marked the 80th year after the end of World War II, which ended in 1945 with the Hiroshima and Nagasaki tragedies.

The keynote speech was given by Ms. Melinda Clarke, author of *"Waymakers for Peace: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Survivors Speak"*, featuring interviews with bomb survivors (*hibakusha*).

To commemorate the disaster and pray for world peace, Bishop Daiya Amano conducted a Shinto service and the Honorable Sylvia Luke, the State's Lieutenant Governor, delivered a message of peace at her first time attending this event. A Buddhist message was provided by Rev. Steven Toyoshima of Higashi Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and a Christian message was delivered by Pastor Shinji Seki of Honolulu Christian Church. The closing *hula* performance to "Aloha Oe" was by a group of dancers from various Hawaii Japanese Christian churches. About 40 people, including current and former State legislators and a group of exchange students from Hiroshima participated.





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**ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2025 - 2026**

Oct. 1 First Day of the Month Blessing

Oct. 3-4 Preparation for the Festival

**Oct. 5 Autumn Thanksgiving Festival**

Nov. 1 First Day of the Month Blessing

Nov. 8 Children's Blessing at JCCH

Nov. 10 Monthly Worship Service

Dec. 1 First Day of the Month Blessing

Dec. 10 Monthly Worship Service with  
Great Purification Ceremony

Dec. 13-14 Honolulu Marathon Blessing

Dec. 21 Clean-up for New Year's

Dec. 26 -31 New Year's Preparation

**Jan. 1-4 New Year's Blessing & Celebration  
(Hatsumoude)**

**BUDDHIST PEACE EVENT HELD AT CHINATOWN  
CULTURAL PLAZA**



*Photo courtesy of Gabe De Liso*

by the Chinatown Business & Community Association. There was a Buddhist service followed by lots of entertainment and featured booths from various organizations. Although we are not a Buddhist organization, we attended this celebration to pay respect to them as a Chinatown neighbor and a local community member.

On August 16, 2025, Bishop Daiya Amano, Rev. Jun Miyasaka and some of our Board members participated in the Hawaii Buddha Peace Festival, representing Hawaii Izumo Taisha. This is a Chinese and Vietnamese Buddhist celebration held at the Chinatown Cultural Plaza, organized



## BLESSINGS EVERY MORNING OR ON EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH

Every morning, Hawaii Izumo Taisha offers daily offerings to the *Kami* (Gods) and recites a daily prayer. This is a public prayer for the safety and happiness of Hawaii, the U.S. and the world, as well as worshipers, visitors and their friends. This Daily Worship Service is usually officiated from 8:15 am, right before our office opens at 8:30 am. You are welcome to join this service and you can receive short blessings at that time. Sometimes this service is conducted together with a personal blessing service at 9:00 am, so please confirm the schedule of the day with the office beforehand if you plan to enjoy a brief service and breathe the morning air!

Also, a long-held custom at our Shrine is to offer short blessings on the first day of the month. This is a tradition known as “*tsukimairi* (first day worship of the month).” A priest is at the Shrine from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm to bless dozens of walk-in worshipers for their physical and spiritual well-being.

## CONDUCTING TRADITIONAL SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS YEAR-ROUND

Hawaii Izumo Taisha conducts various traditional Japanese or East Asian seasonal celebrations almost every other month. The bean-throwing ceremony (*mame-maki*) in February, Girl’s Day in March, Boy’s Day in May, the Star Festival (*tanabata*) in July, the Chrysanthemum Festival and Moon Festival in September. You may see these festive decorations or observances in the Shrine or *omamori/ofuda* office. These seasonal celebrations are based on the celestial cycle and natural seasonal climate in East Asia. It was part of the healthy lifestyle of our ancestors, indicating the traditional agricultural cycle for farm products.

Here in Hawaii, we celebrate these together with our monthly worship services held on every 10th of the month in the evening. It is a good chance to learn about our old-time customs, passed down from generation to generation. To find out the future schedule, check our official Facebook or Instagram pages!

## URGENT NEED FOR OMAMORI AND OFUDA PREPARATIONS!

Because of the increased numbers of New Year’s worshipers, visitors and foreign tourists, we anticipate the need for more than two hundred thousand *omamori* (amulet), *ofuda* (talisman) and other religious articles. However, we are having difficulty distributing enough religious articles in recent years. Since these articles are all hand-prepared by volunteers and blessed by the priests at the Shrine, according to strict Shinto courtesy, if we only have a few volunteers to prepare this enormous amount of articles, we may not be able to distribute them sufficiently in the future.

As the Shrine is open every day from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, we welcome all volunteer helpers, not only our members, but also any visitors – anyone who respects and is interested in our activities. Please contact our office as soon as possible!

## WELCOMING LEI FOR OUR CHINESE LION GUARDIANS

Let us show our ALOHA with Hawaiian lei for Izumo Taisha Hawaii’s guardian lions! Our Chinese lion statues in front of the Shrine building are the guardian animals of the sacred precinct as well as our friendly mascots. According to Shinto Shrine tradition, the right-side one is the lion that indicates Yang, the positive, the male and heaven. The left-side one is the unicorn that indicates Yin, the passive, the female and the earth. Following the ancient East Asian cosmology, they symbolize the relative principles of the entire universe. We have been decorating these statues with lei every month to produce a Hawaiian atmosphere. We welcome your donation of such lei for our guardians. There are even some visitors who donate handmade ribbon lei every time they visit. Please check them out when you stop by!

English Editor: Rev. Jun Miyasaka

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Photographers: Hiroshi Ikeda, Tomoko Takumi,  
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Printer: Service Printers Hawaii, Inc.



## **Celebrating 250 Years of Religious Freedom: A 2025 Reflection on Religion and Heritage from the Izumo Taishakyo Mission of Hawaii**

**By Ken Kiyohara, MA, MBA, PhD  
PhD in Education (Learning Design & Technology)  
Board Member, Izumo Taishakyo Mission of Hawaii**

On July 4, 2026, the United States will celebrate its 250th anniversary—its Semiquincentennial—marking the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This historic milestone serves as a timely reminder of the core values that define the American experience, including one of its most vital constitutional protections: the freedom of religion.

The Puritans who fled religious persecution in England laid the foundation for what would eventually become the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. While those early architects of religious freedom could hardly have imagined the spiritual diversity that defines the nation today, their vision planted the seeds for a society where people of all faiths, or none, can coexist with dignity.

In 1791, when the First Amendment was ratified, the prevailing understanding of religion among the drafters and the general public was primarily centered on various denominations of Christianity, with limited awareness or inclusion of other world religions such as Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, or Shintoism. Shintoism and Buddhism, deeply rooted in Japanese culture, were not yet part of the American religious tapestry. At the time – during Japan's Edo Period – the country was under the Tokugawa Shogunate's isolationist policy, limiting cultural exchange with the West.



### **Right to Freedom of Religion**

Today, however, the landscape has dramatically changed. The First Amendment now holds even more significance in a globalized and interconnected society. Religious freedom not only guarantees individual autonomy but also fosters diversity and inclusion. It helps preserve the dignity of communities like ours—Japanese and Japanese-American—who have faced cultural erosion, particularly during and after World War II.

During World War II, Japanese-American communities on the U.S. mainland and in Hawaii faced great hardship, including internment and the loss of homes, businesses, and places of worship. More than 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry were forcibly incarcerated in government camps, and spiritual leaders in both Hawaii and the mainland were among the first to be detained, as documented by the Densho Encyclopedia and the National Park Service.

Among those affected was Rev. Shigemaru Miyao, then head priest of Hawaii Izumo Taisha, who was arrested on December 7, 1941 and later interned in multiple mainland camps. His wife Yuki was also detained, and their three young children, Richard, Florence and Masanori, were left behind in Hawaii without custodial parents, and placed in the care of a distant relative. The Miyao family



endured a year of separation and relocation before reuniting in Texas. Upon returning to Hawaii in 1945, they found the shrine shuttered and their home gone. Rev. Miyao's journey reflects the profound disruption faced by Japanese spiritual leaders and the enduring strength required to rebuild.

The Japanese population in the United States continues to decline, and as fewer immigrants arrive from Japan, there is a growing concern that Japanese culture, language, and spiritual traditions may be lost in the mainstreaming of Japanese-Americans. In this context, institutions like Hawaii Izumo Taisha serve as vital cultural anchors.

In parallel, Japan itself is undergoing a profound demographic transformation. The country is experiencing a significant population decline due to a rapidly aging population and historically low birth rates. In 2024, fewer than 700,000 babies were born in Japan—a historic low, according to Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare—underscoring the urgency of the situation. This demographic shift contributes to the decreasing number of Japanese nationals emigrating abroad, which in turn affects the transmission and preservation of Japanese culture and religious traditions outside of Japan.

The importance of Hawaii Izumo Taisha will become even more pronounced in the coming years, as it continues to serve not only as a shrine, but as a living testament to the resilience and continuity of Japanese heritage in America. For local residents, as well as visitors from the mainland and abroad, the shrine offers a sacred sanctuary where faith, tradition, and community converge. It provides a spiritual and cultural space for worship, reflection, and celebration—through seasonal festivals, weddings, memorial services, and a variety of cultural activities.

In an age marked by increasing secularism, rapid technological change, and fragmented identities, sacred spaces like Hawaii Izumo Taisha carry a renewed sense of purpose. They stand as havens of stability and reflection in a world that often overlooks the spiritual and cultural foundations of community life. The shrine not only fosters continuity with ancestral values but also offers a tangible counterbalance to the fast pace and the growing disconnect from cultural roots in modern society. By engaging younger generations through educational outreach, language preservation programs, and interfaith dialogue, institutions like Izumo Taisha can bridge generational divides and ensure that heritage remains a living, breathing part of community identity.

As we approach America's 250th anniversary, let us also celebrate the diverse spiritual traditions that make this country unique. Hawaii Izumo Taisha embodies the spirit of religious freedom, cross-cultural understanding, and peaceful coexistence. It is a place where Shinto traditions thrive amidst the multicultural fabric of Hawaii, offering not only spiritual guidance but also cultural preservation for generations to come.

We invite you to visit Hawaii Izumo Taisha—whether for worship, a festival, or quiet reflection—and join us in honoring tradition, protecting religious freedom, and sustaining the cultural heartbeat of our community.





# 鎮座 119 年 謝恩大祭

2025 年 10 月 5 日 (日)  
午後 1 時 例大祭 神事&祝賀式

現在、予てより老朽化が進んでいた、参拝者用のトイレと職舎の新築工事により、駐車場が使用できません。このため奉納余興はありません。

来年は、1906年にハワイに鎮座より120年の記念すべき祝祭の年になりますので、盛大な奉祝行事を計画しております。今後共、皆様の御理解と御協力をお願い申し上げます。

**神恩に感謝し、世界平和、日米親善、ハワイ繁栄、家内安全、霊魂平安を祈願いたします。**

## ● ● ● 建築工事の進捗状況 ● ● ●

待ちに待っていた建築工事が始まりました。古い建物も重機を駆使してあっという間に解体し、その廃材も再利用可能かどうかを上手に区分分類して搬送処理致しました。更地にしてから、地鎮祭、竣工祈願祭を斎行し、期日通りの工事の安全を祈りました。以来、日供祭（朝のお祈り）に併せて、工事安全を祈願しています。そして、ショベルカーで掘り進め、基礎造りの際に地鎮祭の鎮め物を地中に埋めました。基礎固めが終わったら、ビニールシートを掛け、その上からコンクリートを流し込み、縁の下が完成しました。その基礎部分に1階の柱を建て、壁を巡らせ、1階の天井つまり2階の床部分を張り、引き続き2階の柱と壁を取り付け、屋根も出来上がり、建物も全体像が把握できるようになりました。

この様に工事が順調に推移していることは喜ばしい限りであり、このまま予定通りに進捗し、駐車場も整備され、新年の初詣行事がつつがなく推進出来ることを祈ります。

これひとえに工事関係者の熱誠と素晴らしい匠の業を含めて、神様の御神恩によるものと、謹んで感謝申し上げます次第です。

## <工事期間中のご参拝>

### 1, 参拝時間

午前8時～午後5時まで、通常通りお参りいただけます。正面鳥居口から御参拝ください。

### 2, 特別祈願のご予約

御祈願は通常通りご予約をお受けいたします。また、家清め、レストラン開店、会社繁栄等、出張御祈願も通常通り受付ます。

### 3, お守り所

お守り・御朱印等の授与は、通常通り、午前8時30分～午後5時まで行います。参拝後、鳥居横からの案内路をお進みください。

### 4, 駐車場

期間中、境内駐車場は使用できません。ストリートパーキング（平日・土曜日は有料、日曜日・祝日は無料）または、周辺の有料駐車場をご利用ください。出雲大社に隣接している大駐車場、Kukui Centerは使用できませんので、駐車されない様に願います。ご予約による「車・交通安全の御祈願」の場合は、特別のスペースを御案内しますので、お問い合わせください。

### 5, お手洗いの利用

ポータブルトイレ（Chemi-Toi）3基のみの設置となり、男女別等ありません。ご利用ご希望の際は、お守り所にお問い合わせください。

**大変ご迷惑をお掛け致しますが、御理解と御協力をお願い致します。**



# Izumo Taishakyo Mission of Hawaii

Serving the Community since 1906

## 119TH ANNUAL AUTUMN THANKSGIVING FESTIVAL

Sunday, October 5, 2025

1:00 p.m. SHINTO SERVICE & PROGRAM

According to Shinto tradition, the Autumn Thanksgiving Festival is one of the most significant occasions to express our appreciation and gratitude for the bountiful harvest of the year. It is a sincere expression of "Thank you" to Kami.

However, since our construction started in April 2025, the parking lot at the shrine property is temporarily unavailable. So, this year, only special representatives of organizations can attend our religious ceremony. There will also be no entertainment.

Izumo Taisha will celebrate its 120th year anniversary next year. We are planning a large celebration and activities. We appreciate your understanding and continued support.

### Information about Visiting During Construction

#### 1. Hours **YOU CAN VISIT AS USUAL!**

We are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Please enter from the main Torii gate.

#### 2. Reservations for Special Blessings

We will accept appointments for blessings as usual. We will also accept on-site services as usual, such as for House Blessings, Restaurant Openings, and Company Prosperity.

#### 3. Omamori Shop

Ofuda/Omamori and Goshuin will be available as usual from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After worship, please follow the path next to the Torii gate.

#### 4. Parking

During construction, the parking lot on the Shrine property will be unavailable. Please use street parking (paid on weekdays and Saturdays, free on Sundays and holidays) or a nearby paid parking lot.

The large parking lot adjacent to Izumo Taisha, at Kukui Center, is unavailable, so please do not park there. If you would like to make an appointment for a Special Blessing for "Car and Traffic Safety," please contact us and we will direct you to a special space for your car.

#### 5. Restrooms

There are only three portable toilets (Chemi-Toi) and they are not separated by gender. If you would like to use them, please visit the Omamori Shop for keys.

**We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your cooperation.**