Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha
Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu

September 2025

Shubun no Hi or the Autumn Equinox is a day to honor, respect and express gratitude to our ancestors and the departed.

In Japanese culture, ritual care for our ancestors is both a social obligation and religious practice.

Shunbun no Hi is a day to visit ancestral graves and to eat *Ohagi* - a red bean paste covered *mochi* rice ball.

Shunbun no Hi falls on 9/22 this year. A memorial service was performed on 9/20 for all those whose memorial tablets are kept at the shrine.

DONATIONS

Hideki & Akari Daimon
Bill & Keiko Doughty
Anthony Fujii
James Fujino
Miyoko Hanahara
Art Isa
Arthur & Becky Isa
Rodney & Sharon Isa
Fujisan - Komitake Jinja
Daniel & Maggie Matsuo
Yae Miko
Steve Miwa
Shinken & Marilyn Naitoh
Craig & Diane Nishida
Akiko Sanai
Dennis San Mateo
Gary & Linda Shinsato
Anne Shirai
Robert Stallings
Naomi Teramoto

MAHALO for your donation of food and beverages for the Taisai

Bryson & Reiko Goda
Mitsuru & Pam Igarashi
Art Isa
Craig & Diane Nishida
Gary & Linda Shinsato
Takenoko Sushi

Shichigosan - 3, 5, 7 year olds
Totose no Oiwai - 10 year olds
Jusan Mairi - 13 year olds

Oct 26 - Nov 16
9:30 am - 3:00 pm

Blessing includes:
Blessing, Omamori, Goodie Bag, complimentary kimono rental and dressing Donation $65

Online reservations at www.jinja.us

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

19 **10:00 am**
Shichigosan Cleanup & Prep

26 **9:30 am - 3:00 pm**
Shichigosan

NOVEMBER

1 - 16 **9:30 am - 3:30 pm**
Shichigosan

16 **12:00 pm**
Shichigosan Cleanup

DECEMBER

7 **2:00 pm**
Tsukinamisai Monthly Service

21 **3:00 pm**
Cleanup & move into Hall

AUTUMN THANKSGIVING FESTIVAL

The Autumn Thanksgiving Festival is meant to remember the things we have to be grateful for.

It's a special time to give thanks... not just for the food we partake, but for the thousands of fortunate moments and the multitude of blessings that we receive everyday of our lives.

The 105th Autumn Thanksgiving Festival commenced at 2:00 pm on Sunday, September 7, in the presence of Directors and Officers.

Autumn in Japan is celebrated with vibrant festivals and traditions surrounding the harvest of rice.

Autumn is associated with abundance and gratitude. It is also the best season to experience Japan's natural beauty and culture depth.

Autumn brings ancient festivals like *Niinamesai,* which celebrates the first rice harvest of the year.

Rice plays a vital role in Japan, since it's arrival over 2,000 years ago. The labor intensive farming process only serves to make the Japanese more grateful for a successful harvest.

Japan is currently experiencing a significant rice shortage.

Many factors such as a poor harvest in 2023 due to a heatwave, long-term government policies that discouraged rice production and increased demands contributed to the issues within the agricultural sector.

Rice is now being released from emergency stockpiles and farmers are being encouraged to produce more rice.

GOKITO - Private Blessings

A House blessing was performed for a condo unit on Keeaumoku.

The Park on Keeaumoku is a mixed-use 44-story twin tower residential building with commercial spaces on the street level.

Keeaumoku was once home to rice cultivation with numerous rice paddies which supported year-round rice cultivation due to Hawaii's mild weather and year-round warm temperatures.

During the 1860s and 1870s, rice production increased substantially on Oahu and Kauai.

In 1862, the first rice mill was constructed in Honolulu. Prior to the opening of the rice mill, unhulled and uncleaned rice was sent to San Francisco to be milled and processed.

In addition to the rice paddies, there were piggeries on Keeaumoku where the WalMArt parking lot is today.

Rice Paddy on Keeeaumoku - circa 1860s

Much of the area makai of King street was used to grow taro and rice, dotted with fish and duck ponds.

The Keeaumoku area has been undergoing a major transformation with the recent completion of The Park on Keeaumoku.

The area has been branded "Midtown Ala Moana" with thousands of new residential condo units - all within minutes of Ala Moana Center and the future Ala Moana rail station.

Keeaumoku is seeing rapid, dramatic modernization and densification with wider, landscaped sidewalks and greater mix of commercial and residential use, giving it a more urban look.

Gokito - Private Blessings

A Funeral was performed on August 31st for Taeko Okura Fujino, daughter- in-law of Rev. Shigeo Fujino, the 6th Chief Priest of the shrine.

Taeko was the daughter of Rev. Seido Okura, a Buddhist priest that served as Bishop of Honohina Hongwanji, near Pepeekeo on the Big Island from 1920 - 1941. He was also principal of the Honohina Hongwanji Japanese language school.

Rev. Okura was arrested in 1941 by the FBI as part of Proclamation 2525 - just days after the attack on Pearl Harbor and sent to the Kilauea Military Camp on the Big island. He was then transferred to Sand Island Internment Camp and sent on the second transfer ship to Angel Island in California.

Rev. Okura was sent to Fort Still Camp in Oklahoma, Camp Livingston in Louisiana, Fort Missoula Camp in Montana, Santa Fe Camp in New Mexico and finally Crystal City Family Internment Camp in Texas where he was reunited with his wife, Kuniko.

Taeko was born in Texas during their family's internment at the Crystal City Family Internment Camp about 100 miles south of San Antonio.

The Crystal City camp held families of Japanese, German and Italian descent and was the largest internment camp housing families in the US.

The Okuras were eventually deported to Japan but returned to Hawaii after the war.

In 1974, Taeko married Clifford Harunobu Fujino, a cabinetmaker and Master instructor of Kyudo archery.

Clifford was Rev. Shigeo Fujino's son, who along with Taeko, lived at the shrine until Rev. Fujino's retirement in 1988.

Taeko passed away on June 17, 2025 in Honolulu. Taeko was blessed with two children and three grandchildren.

GOKITO Private Blessings

An interment ceremony was held at Mililani Memorial Park on 9/2.

Every religion has specific and meaningful traditions and customs around death. Here are some traditions on cremation.

CATHOLICS - Historically, the Catholic Church does not support cremation. However, in recent years, it is acceptable to be cremated if the body is present for the Funeral Mass. Ashes should be buried in the ground or in a niche and not scattered.

PROTESTANTS - The preference is for burials, especially in the conservative denominations. There are many denominations and different ways to interpret the Bible and practices surrounding death. These days, Protestant churches are more neutral towards cremation.

BUDDHISTS - Cremation is quite common in Buddhism as Buddha was cremated, however burial is also accepted. Ashes may be kept by the family, enshrined in a niche, or scattered.

JEWISH - For Orthodox Jews, cremation is not acceptable. For Reform Jews, cremation is becoming an increasingly popular practice.

LATTER DAY SAINTS/MORMONS - While cremation is not prohibited for Mormons, it is not encouraged and the Church prefers that bodies be buried.

MUSLIMS - Cremation is forbidden for Muslims as it is considered to be an unclean practice that is a desecration of the deceased.

HINDU - All Hindus, except babies, children and saints are cremated.

Hindu cremations traditionally take place on the Ganges River in India. For Hindus living outside of India, there are businesses that will arrange for the shipment of the body to India to hold a traditional cremation.

LABOR DAY

Four virtual *gokito* blessings were performed - one individual who resides on another island and two who are in ICU. One elderly individual was homebound and opted for a Facetime *gokito* blessing.

Even if homebound, your spiritual needs and wishes can be imparted through technology. Internet Live streaming or recorded videos can be arranged instead of home visits.

Labor Day, the first Monday in September is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers.

This Labor Day, the nation celebrated 250 years of the contributions of immigrant and American workers that built this country.

Labor Day affords us an opportunity to reflect on the blessings of fruitful labor by so many hard working men and women.

Hawaii welcomed thousands of Asian and European immigrants in the late 19th century to toil in sugar and pineapple fields.

The over 180,000 Japanese contract laborers who arrived from 1885 to 1924 gave birth to US-born Japanese Americans who continue to contribute to the strength, prosperity and well-being of our islands.

MAINTENANCE

The *Shide* papers were changed on 8/27 in preparation of the Autumn Thanksgiving Festival

Shide papers are the zig-zag shaped paper streamers seen attached to the rope of the torii gate, doorways, shrine buildings and *kamidana*.

They are used to demarcate holy spaces and also used in Shinto rituals.

Shide is first mentioned in the *Kojiki* however, it is thought that shide were used in Shinto rituals from the Nara Period (710 AD - 794 AD).

Shide is said to have been taken from lightning. In Japanese agriculture, clouds, rain and thunder were thought to be essential elements that supported crop growth. Lightning was thought to be a sacred source of energy that enhanced soil nutrients

The spiritual powers of the full moon has been revered since ancient times in Japan.

Chushu no Meigetsu or the Harvest Moon is said to be the brightest moon of the year and it is also the day that the Mid-Autumn Festival is celebrated in Chinese culture to celebrate the end of the Autumn harvest.

On September 19, 15 *dango mochi* balls were made and placed under the moon along with some sake.