

WHEEL OF DHARMA

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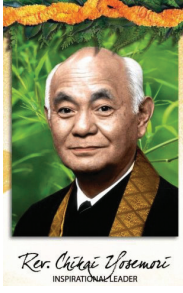
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JUNE 2016

A Special Tribute to a Great Spiritual Leader: Reverend Chikai Yosemori, 1932-2016

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

A great leader passed away on April 13, 2016 at the age of 84. He is Rev. Chikai Yosemori, the founder of the very first Hongwanji-affiliated Buddhist high school in Hawaii. He served as the 14th Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii from March 1976 to February 2007.



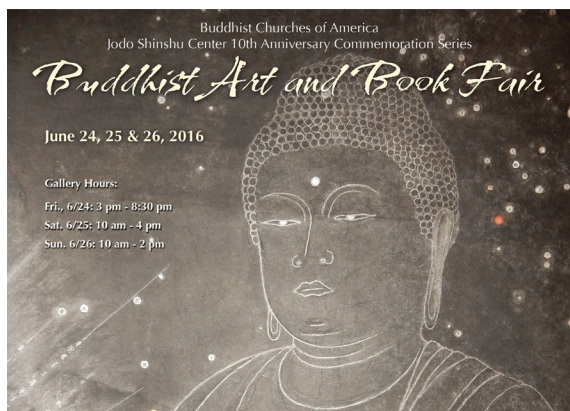
During his term, I served as the Executive Assistant to Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Bishop Hakubun Watanabe. I had many wonderful opportunities to work with Bishop Yosemori. He had a great dream of seeing youth bring peace to the world through Buddhist values and spirit. To make this happen, he wanted to create a Buddhist high school.

Whenever we were in Kyoto to meet with Hongwanji officials, Bishop Yosemori spoke with passion about the idea of a Buddhist high school in Hawaii, while Bishop Watanabe and I expressed our own wish for an educational center in Berkeley. We understood and supported each other's wishes and ideas.

According to the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin news release dated April 18, 2016, "Yosemori's dream was to develop graduates who had the courage to nurture peace and the ability to recognize the uniqueness of every person, culture, country, and religion."

His determination bore fruit in 2003, when the first students were welcomed at the newly created Pacific Buddhist Academy (PBA). Since then, the PBA has sent many students out into the world. They are realizing his dream.

Rev. Yosemori did not die. He continues to live on in the realization of the Pacific Buddhist Academy and in the hearts of its graduates. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Rev. Yosemori for his determination to plant seeds of peace in the world. I, too, strive to emulate his spirit and help nurture people, young and old, who come to the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley to attend a variety of educational programs and events.



The BCA Bookstore
Windows to the World of Jodo Shinshu



The BCA Bookstore, founded in 1959 by the late Bishop Kenryu Tsuji, began a new chapter with the opening of the Jodo Shinshu Center. Above, Mrs. Sakaye Tsuji, reflects on the BCA Bookstore's early years with daughter, Maya Lawrence, in the film, "Streams of Light - Shin Buddhism in America." See article on page 4 and calendar on page 5.

Jodo Shinshu Center 10th Anniversary Series

Congratulations to 2016 IBS Graduates!

Top row, left to right: Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, Dr. Richard K. Payne, Thomas R. Calobrisi, Master of Arts (MA), Kenneth L. Wilson, Buddhist Chaplaincy Certificate (BCC), Alistair Shanks (MA and BCC), Dr. Scott Mitchell, Dr. Daijaku Kinst, and Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka. Front row, left to right: Mr. Richard Endo (IBS Board of Trustees, Chair), Rev. Yoshinari Hemmi (Ryukoku Exchange Program), Joanne Laurence (MA and BCC), Todd Jordan (MA and BCC), Pitt "Toby" Visessuk (MA and BCC), Dr. Riess Potterveld (President, Graduate Theological Union), Rev. Kodo Umezu (President, IBS Board of Trustees and Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America).



On May 20, 2016, the Institute of Buddhist Studies Commencement took place at the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center. See page 6 for article.

2016 Vesak Greetings from President Obama

Editor's Note: This year, for the first time in history, Vesak has been acknowledged by President Barack Obama and other government officials including the governors of California, New York and Maryland. Various religious groups, including the White House Vesak 2016 Committee, have been working on this effort.

The White House - May 20, 2016

Statement by the President on the Celebration of Vesak

Michelle and I extend our warmest wishes to Buddhists in the United States and around the world in their celebration of Vesak, a day honoring the birth, enlightenment, and passing of Buddha. During this season, we reflect on Buddha's universal teachings of peace, service, and recognition of common humanity shared values that also bind us all as Americans. This occasion gives us an opportunity to commemorate the many contributions of Buddhists to our progress and to recommit ourselves to building a brighter future for all communities, cultures, and religions. As we come together in hope for wisdom, courage, and compassion, our family sends our best wishes during this season.

Buddhism & Scouting: 190 Seek Buddhist Awards

By Richard Odagawa, Los Angeles
Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Scouting in Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) temples has been around for as long as anyone can remember. Scouting brings families to our temples, offers outdoor experiences and leadership opportunities to our youth, and provides a valuable workforce at many of our functions. Presently we have 32 active scouting units in six districts throughout the Buddhist Churches of America. It's hard for many of us to imagine our temples without scouting.

The BCA Scouting Committee was originally created around 1954. It existed exclusively as a support committee for all of the BCA scouting units. For reasons we are not sure of, it disbanded for a few years and then was reorganized in 1983



Visit www.bcascouting.org

by Tak Obata and Roy Iwamoto. The responsibilities have since widened and now, as the National Buddhist Committee on Scouting, it is recognized as the official administrator of all Buddhist religious awards for the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), Girl Scouts of the United States of America, and the Camp Fire Organization.

The committee's religious awards programs have become a vehicle for national outreach for all Buddhist traditions in America. Hundreds of scouts and Camp Fire youth have completed

the courses and proudly wear the medals on their uniforms. Currently 190 boys and girls throughout the United States are actively participating in the Sangha Award (Boy Scouts), Metta Award (Cub Scouts), Padma Award (Girls Scouts), and Karuna Award (Camp Fire) programs. The committee also oversees the Bodhi Award (formerly the Wisteria Award), a special recognition that is presented to adults who have demonstrated the highest level of dedication, commitment and self-sacrifice to the spiritual development

Continued on Page 6

Metta Award Ceremony in English, Japanese & Spanish

By Rev. Kaz Nakata

On April 10, the Metta Award presentation was held during the Sunday Service at the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (a.k.a. Nishi Betsuin). Five "Nishi" Cub Scouts received their medals and certificates.

Although our temple is located in the Little Tokyo District which is the center of Japanese Culture, our Nishi Scout program is one of the model cases that integrate traditional Japanese American society with the fully diverse local community. The majority of our Metta Award recipients are from Mexican backgrounds, so the presentation was offered in English, Japanese, and Spanish. I am so grateful to provide youth with Buddhist education for the future of the Buddhist-based mixed-culture society. In Gassho.



Cub Scouts who received Metta Awards are (from left to right) Bradley Conlin, Daniel Martinez, Jose Davalos, Laurens Chao, and Liam Safranek. Rev. Kaz Nakata is at the far right. Photo by Glen Tao.



The Junk in My Garage

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

I don't know about your garage, but my garage is full of junk. Of course, there is no space for my car. Janet and I have stored our children's memorabilia, old clothes, and boxes and boxes of small items that we have accumulated over many decades in there. We tried to clean the garage several times but we still have a lot of stuff. It is so hard to part with things

that bring back memories. I think after we are gone, our children will clean up everything.

Over forty years ago when I arrived in this country to start a new life, I had just one suitcase and some books and personal items shipped separately in boxes. Since then, I have been accumulating things one by one. Now I can't even walk around inside my garage. I have tried to get rid of things by having several garage sales, yet I don't see a dent. If we had a BCA-wide garage sale, I guarantee that we could pay off our loan to the Endowment Foundation right now.

This reminds me of my karmic consciousness that I have been accumulating since the beginningless beginning of my life. I don't know when, but at some point in time my karmic consciousness started growing like the junk in my garage. The junk in my garage does not affect me much if I ignore it, but my karmic consciousness cannot be ignored because it is affecting me right now; how I live, how I see, how I react, how I think and feel and so on.

We don't usually pay attention to what we have deep inside, but Shinran Shonin di-

rects us to reflect on what is inside of us. He reflected on himself by listening to the Vow of Amida Buddha known as perfect wisdom. The true cause of our pain and afflictions has long been known, and the cure has already been identified and offered to all of us. The Buddha's wish is that all people would receive this wonderful remedy and live a new life with clarity and appreciation.

Shinran Shonin, with this awareness, lived life recognizing his "junk thoughts" which had accumulated from the timeless beginning. At the same time, he appreciated and rejoiced in Amida Buddha's compassionate Vow that was established for people like him. He realized that he couldn't get rid of all the junk he had deep inside. The more he heard the Vow, the more his appreciation of the Vow was deepened.

Like Shinran Shonin, let us continue our journey of listening to the true intent of the Vow of Amida Buddha.

And for the moment, even if I cannot get rid of all the junk in my garage, it is fine. I am sure that when the time comes, it will be taken care of.

The Spiritual Bond Between Parent and Child

This indicates without question that her spirit has been transformed into a butterfly, which has gone into the sky of dharma-nature, to the world of ultimate bliss—the city of nirvana.¹



By Rev. David Matsumoto, Provost, Institute of Buddhist Studies

Rennyō Shōnin (1415-1499) is known as the "Master who restored the Jōdo Shinshū tradition." Among his many accomplishments were his *Letters*, which transmitted the teaching of the nembutsu to people throughout Japan. One very poignant letter reveals Rennyō's own religious heart. It is a letter about his second daughter, Kengyoku. Rennyō writes tenderly of the hardships that his daughter faced, as well as her devotion to family and her profound faith. She passed away at a young age, and the letter tells of a grieving father's dream.

In his dream he could see the funeral grounds

where her body had vanished in the smoke of cremation, and there, arising out of the white ashes and bones that remained, he could observe three blue lotus blossoms. Within the blossoms he could see a golden Buddha, only one-inch tall, which sent forth rays of light. As he watched, it instantly turned into a butterfly and disappeared from sight. He thereupon awoke from his dream.

The late Reverend Jitsuen Kakehashi (1927-2014), another great Dharma Master, wrote of this letter and the dream that it relates.² I would like to share, and savor, with you Kakehashi-sensei's words.

Perhaps this image of death as a butterfly is something that lies deeply within the human consciousness and at the foundation of humanity itself. For Rennyō the image of the shining, golden butterfly flying off into the western sky must have symbolized both the pain of losing his daughter Kengyoku to death and the thought of her attainment of birth in the Pure Land.

Rennyō concludes his letter by stating that those who knew Kengyoku should think of her as their good teacher. He urged them to realize the same shinjin that she had herself realized so that they too would become assured of their births in the Pure Land. Rennyō considered

his own daughter to be his good teacher of the Dharma. Kengyoku, it is said, also thought of him as her good teacher.

Here we can see a father and a daughter, even though they are separated by death, actually walking together on the same path to the Pure Land. Those who are born before should lead those who come after them, while those who are born later should follow those who have gone on before. On this path they are guiding each other: each is the other's teacher; each is the student of the other. This sense of being "fellow good teachers" on the path to the Pure Land is the true meaning of the phrase "fellow practitioners."³

It is also the true meaning of parent and child, for in its most fundamental sense that relationship is not just of this world. Rennyō and his daughter, Kengyoku teach us that the nembutsu is the true expression of the eternal bond between parent and child.³

¹ From Rennyō's "Letter on Kengyoku-ni." For the entire letter, see: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/pwj3-1/03KEN.pdf>.

² See Jitsuen Kakehashi, *Bearer of the Light: The Life and Thought of Rennyō*, (Los Angeles, Pure Land Publications, 1999).

³ From "Rennyō and His Daughter, Kengyoku," a lecture by Jitsuen Kakehashi on Sept. 28, 1997 at the Gardena Buddhist Temple. For the entire lecture, see: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/pwj3-1/06KAK.pdf>.

Kieshiki Affirmation at Lodi and Walnut Grove



On April 17, 2016, Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop, conducted the Kieshiki Affirmation Ceremony. Four members of the Buddhist Church of Lodi (left) and three members of the Walnut Grove Buddhist Church (center) received their Buddhist names in conjunction with their respective Hanamatsuri services. Assisting Rev. Umezu was Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki, Resident Minister of Lodi and Supervising Minister of Walnut Grove. Right: **Minister's Assistant Certification:** On the same day, Rev. Umezu also certified Darcy Airiki Nishi of the Walnut Grove Buddhist Church as a Minister's Assistant. Also in photo: Rev. Kusunoki and Walnut Grove Minister's Assistant Roy Mayhugh.



San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church

Prior to the establishment of San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church (SLOBC) at its current location, the nearest temple was in Guadalupe, California. Traveling by horse and wagon, it was not a simple journey. In 1926 the Sangha of San Luis Obispo expressed a desire to have a place closer to home. Services were held in rented spaces, the Kurokawa's grocery store, and the Miyamoto barbershop. Traveling ministers would alternately make the journey every weekend to San Luis Obispo. Eventually a ten-acre property was bought on French Road (now known as Madonna Road), and San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church became the 28th temple of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA).

In 1961, the California State Division of Highways announced that Highway 101 was to be expanded. It would go directly through part of the SLOBC property. In July of 1961, negotiations were finalized and in October of the same year the French Road property was sold to the State Highway Department. In 1962 the temple on Ontario Road was built.

The temple sits on 15 acres. Through a generous donation, the Shimamoto house was erected for traveling ministers for overnight stays. In the '80s, through the request of various BCA youth organizations and other temples, a retreat center was built by SLOBC's members. The retreat center consists of four huts and a shower/bathroom facility. This area continues to host many retreat groups from various districts to enjoy fresh air and the beaches nearby, and to relax in a learning environment.

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www.slobuddhisttemple.org



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Submission Guidelines:

Articles should be around 500 words, typed, double-spaced in Microsoft Word. The editors may ask for longer articles, or split in multiple parts at the editors' discretion. Documents should be sent as an email attachment to WODeditor@bcahq.org. Please include the article's author or contact, temple, and suggested title. Images, preferably in color, must be submitted as 300 dpi JPEG or TIFF in separate attachments and never embedded in a Word document. PDF is not preferred. The editors reserve the right to crop images and to edit articles. Articles and news releases are reviewed for publication on the 10th of every month.

Change of address and subscription cancellations:

Individuals may mail, email, fax or phone in change of address requests and subscription cancellations to the BCA National Headquarters at the address above. Please include the following: Subscriber's name(as written on current subscription); address currently being used; New address and/or name changes; requested action (e.g. change of address, name, subscription cancellation, etc.); phone and/or email of person requesting the change; date of request. Please allow up to 8 weeks for changes to take effect. BCA local temples should send update requests as usual.

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True Nembutsu Followers

By Ken Tanimoto
BCA President
Watsonville Buddhist Temple

As President of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) I get the opportunity to visit many of our churches and temples. The real gift is that I get to know BCA members whom I otherwise would not have the chance to meet due to the distances involved. Last month I was privileged to meet with the leaders of the Eastern Buddhist Council at their annual meeting held at the Cleveland Buddhist Temple.

The Eastern District includes the New York Buddhist Church, Seabrook Buddhist Temple (NJ), Ekoji Buddhist Temple (VA), Cleveland Buddhist Temple (OH), Midwest Buddhist Temple (IL), and the Twin Cities Buddhist Association Sangha (MN) (an affiliated fellowship). The Eastern Buddhist League includes, in addition to the aforementioned, the

Toronto Buddhist Temple of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, and the Buddhist Temple of Chicago (independent).

I listened to the reports and realized that, like most BCA districts, the Eastern District temples have the same issues and conditions, both positive and negative, as temples on the “other side of the Sierras” as someone phrased it.

The most compelling issue expressed at the meeting was a general feeling that, like the Mountain States District, the Eastern District feels distant from the BCA. Their council meets only once a year while many other BCA Districts meet four to five times a year.

And yet they are able to organize a successful district conference each year. Additionally, only three full-time resident ministers (with the help of other BCA ministers) are able to cover the largest geographical area in the United States. The Eastern District has more minister’s assistants in



Ken Tanimoto with Amy Katahira of Midwest Buddhist Temple.

proportion to their members than any other district. And the Eastern District has the most ethnically diverse membership of all the BCA districts.

How does the Eastern District maintain such growth when it is the furthest district from BCA Headquarters? How does the Eastern District maintain such cohesiveness with such great distances between temples and only

one annual meeting? I feel that it is because their priorities are in the right place.

Even though small in numbers, the Sangha is very dedicated and involved in sharing the Dharma broadly in their community. Like many of our BCA Sangha members, the Eastern District Sangha realizes the importance of putting the Dharma first. Everything else comes in a distant second. The Eastern District members whom I have met exemplify the true meaning of Nembutsu followers.

As an example, one person I met at the Midwest Buddhist Temple touched my heart with her sincere desire to hear the Dharma and to help her Sangha. Amy Katahira has been playing the piano for the Midwest Buddhist Temple for as long as she can remember. In fact, it is estimated that she has been the temple pianist for over 65 years! Amy was the Religious Department Chair for many years and, for sure, has heard more

Dharma talks than anyone else at the temple. Rev. Ron Miyamura, resident minister, believes she has heard at least 6,000 Dharma talks due to her commitment to play piano at temple services.

Amy told me that playing the piano was her way of giving back to the Sangha and that she will play until she physically cannot. Her years of service and dedication to the temple humbled me. Amy is unassuming, but she is a pillar of her temple and community.

Amy Katahira, like many other BCA temple members, is really one of the true leaders of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America.

Thank you to the pianists, teachers, advisors, fundraisers, gardeners, janitors, and other dedicated Nembutsu followers. You are appreciated! I look forward to visiting more temples and learning from more Sangha members. I am honored to meet you and grateful that we are all together in the practice of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

Strength

By Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi,
Buddhist Church of Stockton

As I get older, I have to accept my deteriorating physical strength. I try to comfort myself by saying, “Well, all things are impermanent. It is a natural phenomenon. It is okay to be old and frail. You just have to accept it.” I can accept my deteriorating physical strength somewhat. However, I foolishly wish for my mental strength not to deteriorate.



In my life, especially as a minister, I have met many people who have inner strength. These people can overcome any misfortune and can bounce back from misfortune very quickly. My mother is one such person. She was separated from her parents and siblings at very young age. She was in Tokyo during America’s major attack on that city. She lost all of her possessions. On top of that, during WWII, she lost her husband and two children, and became an A-bomb victim in Hiroshima. When my parents got married, she was the one who actually dealt with the poverty they found themselves in. She has been the core of our family. I have never experienced any major hardships, but I hope that I will have strength like my mother had when I actually encounter difficulties.

Besides physical and mental strength, there is a third type of strength. When we make a serious mistake or commit an error, can we admit it without making any excuses? Or if someone else makes an error, can we show compassion and refrain ourselves from criticizing them?

I recall an incident that happened several decades ago. A man murdered a young boy. The boy’s mother was devastated, yet she did not show any hatred or anger toward the man who took her son’s life. Coincidentally, both the man and the mother were Buddhists. I don’t remember if she used the word “forgiveness,” but I remember she expressed sorrow and compassion toward the man. This compassion is another type strength. Where does this strength come from? I believe it comes from deep reflection on one’s self and acceptance of one’s true nature.

I believe that people who think they are superior to others cannot admit their own errors, nor can they be compassionate about others’ misconduct. Or if they can forgive others’ mistakes, it is because they think they are better than others.

Through the Wisdom Light of Amida Buddha, we become aware of our true nature: that is, we are not superior beings, but we are all mutually dependent on one another; and we are limited and self-centered beings. It is not easy to truly accept such notions. It is certainly frightening and depressing to accept such a weak, wicked, and arrogant “self.” But if one has real strength, one can crush such a “self.” The question is, “Can I do it?” Most of us probably cannot. But with the Compassion of Amida Buddha, we will be able to embrace ourselves just as we are. I believe this is true strength.

BCA Represented at JSBTC’s Annual General Meeting

By Gary Mukai,
BCA Vice-President

At the kind invitation of President David Ohori, Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) representatives Gary and Karen Mukai attended the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada (JSBTC) on April 22-24, 2016, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The AGM is the JSBTC’s equivalent to the BCA’s National Council Meeting. The Canada Ministers’ Association and Canada Women’s Federation were also holding their annual meetings at the same time. The meetings were held at the Winnipeg Delta Hotel and at the Manitoba Buddhist Temple only a few blocks away.

The JSBTC is an organization of 12 temples supervised by eight Kai-kyoshi ministers. Getting the temples together for a meeting is not an easy task with the vast expanse of distance across Canada from one temple to the next. The organization has recently been impacted by the unexpected passing away of Rev. Michael Hayashi of the Manitoba Buddhist Temple and the dismissal of another. Manitoba has just recently been assigned a new minister, Rev. Ouchi, from the Hongwanji.

Just as in the BCA, there are not enough ministers to adequately cover all the temples in the JSBTC. There are many other similar issues facing the Canadian temples, including an aging and diminishing temple membership and challenges in outreach and propagation. The JSBTC Bishop’s position is cur-



Above photo: Canadian Ministers’ Association, front row: Rev. Christina Yanko, Rev. Grant Ikuta, Rev. Yasuo Izumi. Back row: Rev. Yasuhiro Miyakawa, Rev. Yoshimichi Ouchi, Rev. James Martin, Bishop Tatsuo Aoki. Lower photo: Canada Buddhist Temples Annual General Meeting in session.

rently part time, meaning Bishop Aoki is a very busy man, serving both a temple and as the spiritual leader of the JSBTC. There is an active committee exploring resources to fund the position full time.

The Canadian Women’s Federation reported on the successful hosting of the World Buddhist Women’s Convention in Calgary in May, 2015, with more than 1,800 participants from all over the world. Susan Huntley was honored for chairing such an outstanding event.

The JSBTC is very proud of its Living Dharma Center, which is not a physical facility, but a special fund dedicated to furthering Buddhist education. Projects include developing social media sites to aid Dharma school teachers, helping de-

velop beginning Buddhism classes in various cities, helping fund the opening of a Buddhist bookstore in Kelowna, promoting a ministers’ assistant program, and providing help in subsidizing tuition for persons taking the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course as well as student tuition for a *kyoshi* ministerial candidate at the IBS.

After the business portion of the meeting, there was a lively session with temples sharing their successes. It was nice to see a spirit of each temple trying to help the others improve and grow, no matter how small or large the temple.

The meeting was capped off with a banquet held at the Winnipeg Japanese Cultural Center. Everyone was treated to a gourmet meal prepared by a local temple member who is also the executive chef for one of the larger hotels in Winnipeg. The banquet was held in conjunction with the Manitoba Buddhist Temple’s celebration of their 70th anniversary. Besides the usual recognitions given out to JSBTC members, several Manitoba Buddhist Temple *Nisei* members were honored for their many years of dedication during its 70 years of existence.

The warmth and friendliness of the enthusiastic Canadian Buddhists was very much appreciated by the BCA representatives. The closeness and familiarity we develop with all the Sanghas of the world will continue to be of great value to the BCA in its own future growth and development.

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: Director of Operations

The Buddhist Churches of America, a California non-profit corporation (BCA) is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Director of Operations in the BCA National Headquarters Office in San Francisco. The Director of Operations is responsible for the administration and implementation of the strategic vision of the BCA, including the on-going responsibility to recommend to the BCA President and the Executive Committee substantive administrative and related process improvements that promote increased efficiencies and responsiveness to members’ needs. To view the complete job posting, visit the BCA website: buddhistchurchesofamerica.org, under the “Contact Us” tab, or go to this link: buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/job-announcement



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

10th Anniversary of the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center: Realizing the Vision

This article is the fifth in a year-long series commemorating the Jodo Shinshu Center's Tenth Anniversary.

The BCA Bookstore: Windows to the World of Jodo Shinshu

By Gayle Noguchi, BCA Bookstore Manager



BCA Bookstore Manager Gayle Noguchi (left) and assistant Lia Noguchi at the 2016 Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League Conference in Sacramento.

The BCA Bookstore has been serving the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) since 1959, when it was officially established by the late Reverend Kenryu T. Tsuji, a former BCA Bishop. Reflections on those early years are recorded in the documentary film *Streams of Light: Shin Buddhism in America* in an interview with Mrs. Sakaye Tsuji and daughter Maya Lawrence. The interview was filmed in the Bookstore at the Jodo Shinshu Center.

With the opening of the Jodo Shinshu Center in 2006, the BCA Bookstore moved from the BCA National Headquarters in San Francisco into the

spacious corner area off the main lobby at the downtown Berkeley site. The building's floor-to-ceiling windows facing the busy intersection of Durant and Fulton, in close proximity to the U.C. Berkeley campus, provide tremendous exposure for the bookstore and the BCA.

The bookstore carries out the BCA's mission of sharing the BuddhaDharma and increasing awareness of Jodo Shinshu throughout the world. Visitors from all parts of the nation and the world enter the bookstore on a daily basis. Many of our customers are not affiliated with BCA. However, they buy from the BCA Bookstore because, given the choice, they prefer that their purchase support a non-profit organization. They leave the bookstore intrigued by Jodo Shinshu and with contact information for the BCA temple or church in their local area.

We strive to provide knowledgeable, professional, efficient, and personalized service to our customers. As the full-time manager, I run all aspects of the Berkeley store's daily operations as well as our two online stores. Lia Noguchi, part-time associate, helps on site one day a week and travels to assist with the four to five off-site BCA events we support each year. Both of us helped to open the store in its new Berkeley location and have been with the bookstore ever since. We serve the BCA churches/temples and fellowships throughout the nation, educational institutions (particularly the Institute of Buddhist Studies, or IBS), the Center for Buddhist Education, other Jodo Shinshu temples and fellowships internationally, as well as the general public. We have customers worldwide. Our home at the Jodo Shinshu Center has made this possible.

The BCA Bookstore has been a key service offered by BCA and is now in a position to play a significant role in helping to grow our sanghas. More BCA churches and temples are utilizing the bookstore to support their Buddhist education and outreach efforts. Our nationwide network of sanghas is in a position to contribute to the growth of the bookstore. Churches and temples are displaying BCA Bookstore marketing materials, promoting the bookstore at events open to the general public, and thinking in terms of other ways that they can promote the bookstore both at their locations and online. Through this partnership, the churches and temples and their local communities, the BCA Bookstore, and the BCA organization all benefit with a win-win outcome.

My position as BCA Bookstore Manager at the Jodo Shinshu Center allows me to interface regularly across the board with BCA staff, ministers, minister's assistants, sangha members, IBS staff, faculty, and students, and the general public. From this vantage point I see the strides we are making towards Jodo Shinshu becoming a major religious tradition in America, as well as opportunities we have yet to seize. As we celebrate this 10-year anniversary milestone, I would like to thank everyone who has generously offered support and encouragement over the years. It continues to be a pleasure and a privilege each day to share the *Nembutsu* teachings.

"East Meets West" Higashi and Nishi Conversations Continue with Scholars, Ministers and Students

The Ministers Continuing Education (MCE) Seminar and Advanced Training for Ministers' Assistants with Kyoshi took place from May 3-5. Three dozen participants shared views on the topic of last January's Winter Pacific Seminar: "East Meets West: Jodo Shinshu from the Higashi and Nishi Perspectives," with Dr. Mark Blum/UC Berkeley and Rev. David Matsumoto/Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) addressing that theme.

The seminar also included a talk via Skype by Dr. Jeff Wilson on "LGBTQ and Shin Buddhism," based on his 2015 lecture at the New York



Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto (left) and Dr. Mark Blum lectured and conversed with attendees on the history of Nishi and Higashi Jodo Shinshu branches.

Buddhist Church (available online on the YouTube CBE Channel) and a discussion with Elaine Donlin, Buddhist Church of San Francisco minister's assistant, on "How Welcoming is Your Sangha?" with many helpful resources for temples. In addition to BCA ministers, the seminar was attended by the Higashi Honganji Bishop and five Higashi ministers, several IBS students, and BCA ministers' assistants with Kyoshi certification.



(Above:) Higashi Honganji North America District Bishop, Rev. Noriaki Ito (left) and BCA Bishop, Rev. Kodo Umezū addressed the attendees. (Below left:) Dr. Jeff Wilson presented via Skype on the Buddhist LGBTQ perspective, and Elaine Donlin, Buddhist Church of San Francisco minister's assistant (right) shared resources for temples to encourage inclusiveness. See page 8 for a group photo of the participants.



44th Annual FBWA Conference: October 7-9, 2016 "Linked in the Nembutsu: Tsunagatte"



LINKED IN THE NEMBUTSU: TSUNAGATTE

Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations
October 7, 8, 9, 2016 FBWA 44th National Conference
Westin Bellevue, Bellevue, Washington
<http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/2016fbwaconference>

Do look us up and register for thoughtful presentations by keynote speakers as well as fun and interesting workshops. Registration is available now online at buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/2016fbwaconference.

Hurry! The deadline for registration is August 31, 2016.

The Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations (FBWA) will hold its biennial conference on October 7-9, 2016 at the Westin Bellevue, in Bellevue, Washington. Everyone is invited! You do not have to be a BWA member to attend.

The Northwest District BWA has been preparing a welcoming and exciting weekend under the theme "Linked in the Nembutsu: Tsunagatte." This conference is open to all seekers of the BuddhaDharma.

English and Japanese keynote speakers are, respectively, Dr. Sharon Suh, Chair and Associate Professor in Theology and Religious Studies at Seattle University, and Rev. Mutsumi Wondra, full-time minister at the Orange County Buddhist Church, who recently completed a three-year doctoral course at Ryukoku University in Kyoto, Japan.

Eastern Buddhist League Conference Come As You Are: Buddhism and Daily Life September 2-4, 2016

The 2016 Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) Conference takes place this year at Seabrook Buddhist Temple, 9 Northville Road, Bridgeton, New Jersey, over the Labor Day Weekend.

The theme of the conference is **Come As You Are**. Our special keynote speaker is Rev. Kenneth Tanaka, a Shin Buddhist minister and renowned scholar, author, and translator. It will be a great treat to spend some time with him.

The entire program, including conference meals (but excluding Friday and Saturday dinners), will be held at the Temple in its tranquil rural setting. The hotel, Fairfield Inn & Suites Millville-Vineland, is about 20 minutes away.

Plan to "Come As You Are" to Seabrook this Labor Day! The dress code for the entire conference is casual. More details to come. Please save the dates and plan to attend an informative and fun event.

Contact the EBL Conference co-chairs for further information or with questions: Susan Jacques, Seabrook Buddhist Temple, sjaquespt@verizon.net or Gary Jaskula, New York Buddhist Church, gjaskula@cloud9.net





BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

FDSTL 2016 Conference: Inspired by Rennyō Shonin

By Sharon Yokoi, President,
Northern California Dharma School Teachers' League

Where would you go to see a play, a rap performance, and a flash mob? If you answered New York or Los Angeles, think again. The correct answer was the 2016 Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League (FDSTL) Conference hosted by the Northern California Dharma School Teachers' League (NCDSTL) and held at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, on April 29 – May 1, 2016. The conference, "Dharma for Dummies III (End of the Trilogy)" was inspired by Rennyō Shonin who, in the 15th century, revived the slowly dying Hongwanji and came to be known as "The Great Restorer."



(Above:) Flash mob dances to "Happy" after the service. (Lower left:) Joanne Ishii of Orange County Buddhist Church (right) receives an award for teaching Dharma School for 25 years, presented by BCA Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezū (center), and FDSTL President Carl Yanari (left). Also awarded for 25 years of teaching (not pictured) was Sharon Kawakami (Gardena). Nancy Shibata (OCBC, also not pictured) was recognized for 50 years of dedicated teaching. (Lower right:) Three recipients of awards for 10 years of teaching Dharma School are (left to right) Donna Zumoto, (Seattle), Ron Hamakawa (Seattle), and Joyce Oishi (Berkeley). Also receiving 10 year awards but not pictured were Gail Harada (OCBC), Alyson Nakaue (Stockton), Audrey Seo (Sacramento), Jamie Shimizu (San Diego), and Leanne Yu (Stockton). (Bottom:) Pictured with Bishop Umezū on the left are the officers for the FDSTL 2016–2018 term. They are (from left to right): Corresponding Secretary, Bessie Tanaka (Los Angeles); Vice-President, Koichi Sayano (Los Angeles); Historian, JoAnn McLennan (Palo Alto); Recording Secretary, Maya Lawrence (Oakland); Treasurer, June Kondo (Los Angeles); and President, Carl Yanari (Palo Alto). Photos by Cathy Fujimori.



Cognizant of the fact that the Dharma School student rolls are declining, the NCDSTL focused on a program of events that inspired thoughtful consideration of making our Dharma classes more relevant and interesting to our students. The participants recognized ways of showing "Applied Buddhism" in dealing with everyday challenges facing both the teachers and the students.

Modeling "out of the box" thinking, Northern California ministers led a flash mob that catalyzed the upbeat tempo of the conference. In lieu of a guest speaker, the conference committee once again took Rennyō's lead and performed a play based on the lives of Siddhartha, Shinran, and Rennyō. Written and directed by Rinban Bob Oshita, the play received a standing ovation, with requests to "take it on the road."

"You can always count on the NCDSTL to provide an inspiring, empowering, and entertaining conference, and this year they did just that and more," said Carl Yanari, FDSTL President and Palo Alto Buddhist Temple member. "The NCDSTL has hosted the conference under the theme 'Dharma for Dummies.' Recognizing that we are all dummies (or ignorant beings as Shinran put it) goes a long way toward self-realization and provides a basis for our task as Dharma School teachers..."

"While we all left the conference with a renewed purpose and teaching strategies to take back to our chapters, the most significant strategy was the process itself. Workshops were filled with laughter and lively discussion. This is what we need to take back to the classroom. The students do learn more when they are engaged in class. If class is a fun and happy environment, the students will get more out of it. Thanks NCDSTL for hosting such a wonderful conference."

The NCDSTL would like to thank everyone who attended and hopes that the conference inspired Dharma School teachers to think out of the box and make their classes fun, dynamic, and relevant for our students.

Visit <https://bcadharmaschool.wikispaces.com> for Dharma school resources.

The Dharmakara Series: Our Lifelong Learning Challenge

This is the fourth part of a five-part guest series on the Juseige. We hope you enjoy it.

Reflections on the Juseige: The Eyes of Wisdom

By Rev. Henry Adams

A few years ago, shortly after our first son was born, my wife's mother, three aunts, and a close friend came to visit us from Japan. With the sense that this was a once-in-a-lifetime visit to the United States for many of our guests, we set out to make the most of each day. After a hectic week visiting iconic California sites like Hollywood, Santa Monica Pier, and Disneyland, we boarded a plane to Minnesota where my wife's relatives would have a chance to meet the family and friends I grew up with. Our initial plan was to continue with another round of visiting local attractions. However, when we arrived in Minnesota, the aunts preferred to spend their days relaxing in the country at my parents' house.

Our visitors from Japan seemed to be most excited about cooking in an American kitchen using vegetables from my parents' garden. My father prides himself on growing gigantic orange pumpkins for Halloween jack-o-lanterns and Thanksgiving decorations. Occasionally we will use one for a pumpkin pie at Thanksgiving, or roast the seeds as a Halloween snack, but we tend to view them more as decorations than as food. The pumpkins reach their prime in late October, so they were still small and green during that mid-September. Imagine our surprise when one of the aunts returned to the kitchen from the backyard with a little green pumpkin and set to work peeling and chopping it with the intention of using it as an ingredient in something she was cooking. When that little green pumpkin reappeared on the dining room table in a side dish to go with Japanese-style ginger pork, I began mentally preparing to politely choke down a few mouthfuls of bitter, stringy, unripe pumpkin. However, with the first bite I was astonished to discover that the pumpkin she cooked had a rich, creamy flavor that was a delightful complement to the rest of the meal.

Thinking back on that meal now, I realize that my wife's aunt has special eyes that were able to see the potential for delicious flavor where I only saw only bitterness and tough skin. Not only was she able to see that potential, but she was able to bring that deliciousness out in a way that even I—with my deep skepticism—could enjoy. Thinking back on that experience, I am reminded of the following verse from the *Juseige*:

KAI HI CHI E GEN
MES-SHI KON MO AN
HEI SOKU SHO AKU DO
TSU DATSU ZEN SHU MON

Having acquired the eye of wisdom,
I will remove the darkness of blind passions;
Blocking the path to evil realms,
I will open the gate to the good realms.

(*The Three Pure Land Sutras, Volume II: The Larger Sutra, p. 30*)

The *Juseige* is a section of verse from the *Sutra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life (Larger Sutra)* in which Bodhisattva Dharmakara reiterates the essence of the compassionate vows he established for the benefit of all beings; vows that were fulfilled when he realized enlightenment and became Amida Buddha.

In the verse above we are reminded that, viewed with the Buddha's eye of wisdom, our lives are immediately transformed. The tough bitterness of our greed, anger, and ignorance are transformed into the nourishing fruit of generosity, compassion, and wisdom. In my eyes that green pumpkin was bitter and tough, but in the eyes of my wife's aunt the exact same pumpkin was sweet and delicious. With my eyes of delusion my day-to-day experiences are marked with bitterness and difficulty. But in the Buddha's eyes of wisdom, those very same experiences are the stuff of awakening.

Namo Amida Butsu

View webcasts and videos online on the CBE YouTube Channel.

Visit YouTube.com. Search "BCA Center for Buddhist Education."

Enjoy a variety of Dharma talks and presentations.

2016 BCA Educational Events

*Programs subject to change. Events at the Jodo Shinshu Center unless otherwise noted.
This is a partial listing.*

June 9-11 ~ Tokudo Preparatory Training #3. This session precedes Tokudo training and ordination in Kyoto, Japan from July 6-16.

June 24-26 ~ Buddhist Art & Book Fair. Art Exhibit: "Seeing the Wisdom of Compassion" by the late Tsuneo Iwasaki and related lecture by Dr. Paula Arai, Sat. 11 am. Exhibit Fri. 3-8:30 pm, Sat. 10 am-4 pm, Sun. 10am-2 pm. Book discussion with author Caroline Brazier (*The Other Buddhism: Amida Comes West*), Fri. 6:30-8 pm.

August 19 ~ IBS Symposium: Shin Buddhism & Globalization. 1-5 pm.

August 19-21 ~ Summer Pacific Seminar: Jodo Shinshu Beyond Borders. Keynote speakers: Dr. Ugo Dessi and Dr. Elisabetta Porcu.

August 20-21 ~ Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course August Workshop will be held at Ekoji/Eko-Haus in Dusseldorf, Germany.

September 22-24 ~ Fall Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar: Eastern District at Midwest Buddhist Temple, Chicago, IL.

October 8 ~ Fall Japanese Seminar.

October 19-21 ~ Minister's Continuing Education Seminar (MCE). Speakers to be determined.

October 22 ~ Jodo Shinshu Center 10th Anniversary Celebration.

December 8-10 ~ Winter Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar.

BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org Email: cbe@bcahq.org Phone: (510) 809-1460



New Beginnings Celebrated at IBS' 50th Anniversary Commencement



Left: Commencement speaker, Dr. Riess Potterveld, with Rev. Dr. Matsumoto, IBS Provost. Center: Traditional IBS Graduation cake-cutting. Right: IBS President's Award recipient, Dr. Alfred Bloom's message shared by video.

In this 50th year since the founding of the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), five graduates were presented with Masters' of Arts Degrees under the leadership of a new Provost and Dean. The commencement ceremony was held on Friday, May 20, 2016 at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, California.

Rev. Marvin Harada, Vice Chair, IBS Board of Trustees, chaired the event. Rev. Kodo Umezu, President of IBS, and ministers of the IBS Board of Trustees conducted the opening service. Opening remarks were made by President Umezu and Dr. Scott A. Mitchell, IBS Dean.

Mr. Richard Endo, Chairman of the IBS Board of Trustees, presided over the Investiture of Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto as the first Provost and Dean of IBS.

Dr. Mitchell shared words of appreciation on behalf of IBS staff, board, and students, to Dr. Richard Payne, outgoing Dean, for his many years of dedication and leadership.

Dr. Matsumoto played a short video of his presentation of the third annual IBS President's Award to Dr. Alfred Bloom, former professor and Dean at IBS, in

Hawaii. Dr. Bloom is widely recognized for his important role in cultivating a broader appreciation of Shin Buddhism in America and advancing the field of Shin Buddhist studies around the world.

The commencement address was by Dr. Riess Potterveld, President of the Graduate Theological Union. He emphasized the importance of integrating the things we learn through our education into our very being, for it is that which develops our character and is the foundation of our future deliberations. Theological education is such that it will influence our ethical considerations as we go through life.

The awarding of graduate degrees and certificates was performed by Mr. Endo and Dr. Mitchell. The five graduates receiving joint IBS/Graduate Theological Union (GTU) Masters of Arts (MA) degrees were:

Thomas Calobrisi: Thesis: *On Mindful Civil Religion: A Study of the Rhetoric of Mindfulness Movement in the United States*. Committee: Dr. Mitchell and Dr. Matsumoto.

Todd T. Jordan: Thesis: *Narrative and Non-Narrative in Buddhist Pastoral Care*.

Committee: Rev. Daijaku Judith Kinst, Ph.D, and Rev. Seigen Yamaoka, Litt.D.

Joanne Laurence: Thesis: *Healing Through Death: Integrating Hospice Chaplaincy with Buddhist Healing Principles*. Committee: Dr. Kinst, Dr. Matsumoto, and Paula Arai, Ph.D.

Alistair Shanks: Thesis: *An Examination of the Zen Hospice Project Volunteer Training Program: Implications for the Practice of Buddhist Pastoral Care*. Committee: Dr. Kinst and Dr. Yamaoka.

Pitt Visessuk (Toby): Thesis: *Upekkha (Equanimity) in Definition of Thai Forest Theravada Buddhist Tradition: Applications in Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care*. Committee: Dr. Kinst and Dr. Yamaoka.

Receiving Buddhist Chaplaincy Certificates were: Jordan, Laurence, Shanks, Visessuk, and Kenneth L. Wilson. Advisor: Dr. Kinst, Director.

Yoshinari Hemmi was awarded a Certificate of Completion for one year of study at IBS, under the Ryukoku University and IBS Exchange Program.

For more information and photos, visit Shin-IBS.edu and follow the IBS on [Facebook.com/InstituteofBuddhistStudies](https://www.facebook.com/InstituteofBuddhistStudies).

Disaster Relief to the People of Kumamoto

The Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Social Welfare Committee has approved a grant to give \$25,000 to the Hongwanji's earthquake relief efforts in Kumamoto Prefecture.

Kumamoto Prefecture in Japan was struck by two devastating 7+ magnitude earthquakes and numerous aftershocks since April 14, 2016. The Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) extends our thoughts of concern and sincere condolences to those whose lives have been affected by this tragedy.

Immediately following the initial earthquake, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto initiated relief efforts, started a relief fund, and dispatched relief assistance to the affected areas. A Kumamoto Earthquake Emergency Headquarters at the Hongwanji headquarters in Kyoto, as well as an on-site disaster management office at the Hongwanji's Kumamoto district office, have been established to grasp a better understanding of the situation in the area so that we may be able to provide those affected with the appropriate support, both physically and emotionally.

The BCA would like to assist the Hongwanji-ha in their relief efforts for this disaster. As members of the BCA, you can help victims of this earthquake with a special contribution. All funds collected will be sent to the Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan to aid in this relief effort.

As we respond to the call from Hongwanji, we must remember that tragedies and natural disasters happen constantly all over the world. Let us remember that we are part of the world community and should be willing to help at all times and in all situations. We ask that your temple or church be mindful of people everywhere. We want to encourage you to support not only this effort, but to engage in social welfare efforts in your communities as well. Thank you for your kindness and consideration.

With palms together in Gassho,

Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop
Buddhist Churches of America

Ken Tanimoto, President
Buddhist Churches of America

Want to donate to Kumamoto? Ask your temple leadership for details, visit BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org/Disaster-Relief, or call 415-776-5600 x311.

Scouting

Continued from Front Page

of Buddhist members of the scouting programs.

The committee's most innovative program is the Metta Award online course, administered by Rev. Patti Oshita. This program allows Cub Scouts whose families are not members of a local temple to earn the Metta Award by completing the requirements under Rev. Oshita's supervision. The cub

scout and Rev. Oshita communicate via Facebook. Often, the scout's whole family works on the course together to start learning about Buddhism. In some cases, the course has motivated families to seek a local temple to learn more about the Dharma.

In addition to the religious awards, the committee offers two programs exclusively to the BCA temple units. The Obon Patch program offers scouts and Camp Fire youth the opportunity to earn a special patch when

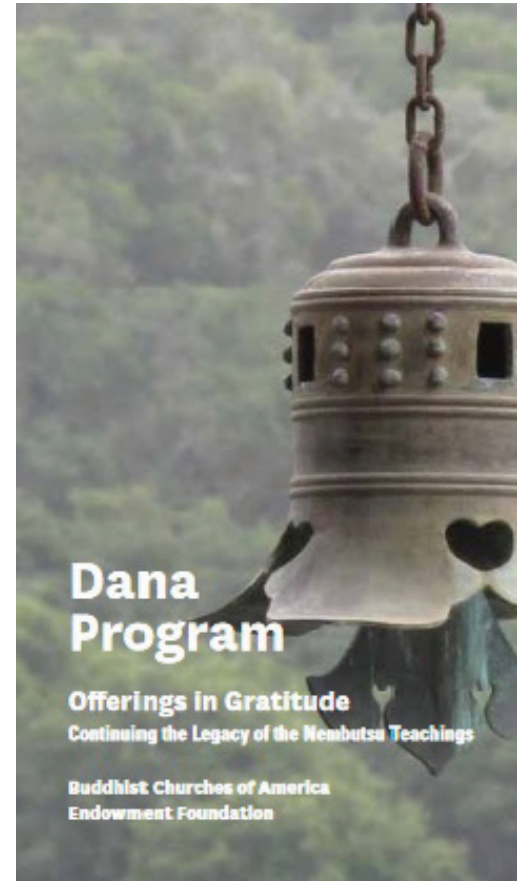
they learn about Obon and Bon Odori and dance in Bon Odori. The most recent program undertaken by the committee is the Scout and Camp Fire Sunday Patch program.

Youth who attend Boy Scout Sunday, Girl Scout Sunday or Camp Fire Sunday services at their temple earn this patch when they complete a grade level assignment about their experience.

The National Buddhist Committee on Scouting has nine members who represent

various BCA districts, as well as four ministerial advisors. The Committee is a member of the BSA National Religious Relationship Task Force and participates in Board of Director meetings in Dallas, Texas. Committee representatives also participate in the Boy Scout Jamboree every four years and the Girl Scout National Conference every three years.

For more information about the various Buddhist scouting awards, visit our newly launched website: bcascouting.org.



A Simple Way to Share the Dharma

The Dana Program: Offerings in Gratitude provides members and supporters a simple way to spread the Dharma and to give to the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and its member temples.

The Dana Program isn't a one-time fundraiser; it is a continuous method for donors to contribute every year to support all the activities of the BCA. Donors now have a simple option for providing ongoing support for the BCA, along with a temple partnership component.

Your participation in the Dana Program provides financial resources that are applied directly to the areas of greatest need in the BCA. The Dana Program also supports the increasing needs of the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and provides vital initiatives in Buddhist Education and Ministerial Support that maintain the growth and development of the 60 BCA temples and churches throughout the United States.

The Dana Program is an ongoing effort that relies on recurring offerings from all who wish to express their gratitude for the guidance that Shinran Shonin's Nembutsu teachings have provided in each of our lives.

Find out more from your temple leadership or by visiting BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org/BCA-Dana-Program. Online donations are now being accepted. Gassho.



An Important Reminder for Donors:

Please write all donations to BCA payable to: BCA Endowment Foundation

Since 2015, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) has instituted a change in its policy for receiving donations. Please make your donation checks payable to the "BCA ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION" and specify in the memo line where you would like the donation to go.

This applies to ALL donations, including gifts to the Dana Program, Center for Buddhist Education, Wheel of Dharma, Zaidan, Debt Relief (1000x1000x4), Disaster Relief, Social Welfare, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: Donation checks for the Institute of Buddhist Studies and Friends of the Institute of Buddhist Studies are payable to "Institute of Buddhist Studies."

Questions? Please call (415) 776-5600 Ext. 311 or email donate@bcahq.org

Thank you! Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

今月の法話

「今この世の救い」

オレンジ郡仏教会 ワンドラ 睦



昨年2015年9月からオレンジ郡仏教会でフルタイム・ミニスターとしてお勤めしています。

すワンドラ 睦です。私の実家は寺院ではありませんが、京都で生まれ育ち、浄土真宗本願寺派の宗門校である京都女子中学・高校・大学を卒業しました。30歳前に渡米して、その後20年間、コーポレートで働き、その後母の死を縁として、親鸞聖人のみ教えを深めることとなり、京都中央仏教学院通信教育専修コース、米国仏教大学院（IBS）修士取得の後、2010年から5年間、生まれ育った京都へ戻り、龍谷大学文学部真宗専攻修士・博士課程を終えて、昨年アメリカに戻って参りました。今後とも、よろしくお願ひ申し上げます。

今月の『法輪』日本語法話では、私がIBSおよび龍谷大学修士課程で執筆した修士論文の内容を分かり易くお話ししたいと思います。修めました二本の修士論文の内容は、親鸞聖人の発揮とされる「現生正定聚」に関するものです。IBSでの修士論文は、参考文献や論文の入手がアメリカ国内で困難であったため深い研究に及ぶことが出来なかつたのですが、龍大修士論文では龍大図書館にある膨大な資料のおかげで、その点をより深めることが出来ました。

親鸞聖人の「現生正定聚」の教えを初めて学んだとき、私はこの教えが数多い仏教の教えや他宗教に類を見ない浄土真宗の特殊性を表すものであり、現代社会に生きる私たちにとって意義深いものであると直観しました。「現生正定聚」とは、私たちがこの世（現世、あるいは現生）において、阿弥陀如来さまの願ひが完成された名号、南無阿弥陀仏を聞きいただくことによって、今、ここで、私の宗教的救いが成立するということなのです。親鸞聖人は、そのことを「信心定まるるとき往生また定まるなり。」（『親鸞聖人御消息』、『註釈版』735頁）

と示されています。要するに、現世における心の拠り所が充実してこそ、来世も必然的に充実すると理解され、現世から来世に向かう往生浄土の道を明かにされました。

聖人によるこの教えの根拠は、決して独自のなものではなく、あくまで浄土経典や菩薩による論に立脚したものです。法然聖人までの浄土教は命終以後の彼土（来生）における正定聚の思想を説くものでしたが、親鸞聖人はそれを命終以前の此土（現生）という構図に展開されたと言えましょう。

では、なぜ親鸞聖人はそのような主張をされたのでしょうか？ご存知のように、聖人は当時、天台宗の本山であった比叡山で20年の厳しい修行をされました。しかしながら、修行すればするほど、仏から遠ざかっていくご自分を認識され、29歳のときに法然聖人のもとへ行かれ、念仏往生の教えを聞かれることになりました。南無阿弥陀仏ひとつで救われていく教えを聞いて、それまで閉ざされていた救いの道が開かれ、親鸞聖人にとって新しい世界が広がったと考えられます。比叡山での厳しい修行も無駄ではなく、本願への誘因であったと肯定する志向の転換は、真実の教えに出遇うことよって起生したものと考えるでしょう。そして親鸞聖人は法然聖人の念仏往生の教えを深められ、この世において阿弥陀如来さまの誓いを疑いなく聞信することの重要性を説かれるのです。

このように「現生正定聚」とは、この世において名号、南無阿弥陀仏を聞いて称えて喜ぶ仲間に入ることで、また来世において必ず仏と成る身と定まったことと示されます。では、次に「現生正定聚」の仲間に入った何が起こるのでしょうか？『教行信証』には、「現生正定聚」として十種の利益が書かれています。それらはいずれも、念仏者としての限らない尊い宗教的生命の内容が並び出されたものと言えます。現代的に表現するならば、無明の世に煩惱をかえながら生きるこの私が、真実の教えに出遇うことよって、真の人生を生き抜くことができるといえることです。それは決して受け身の生き方ではなく、苦悩を超越して生きぬく智慧に恵まれて、自己の往生浄土への道を聞き開いていく肯定的な生き方であります。最後に、親鸞聖人は、このような人々のことを「弥陀と同じ」とか「如来と等し」とも表現されていますが、「同じ」と「等しい」という言葉の微妙な使い分けによつて、弥陀菩薩と如来（仏）に一線を引き、現生の信心一念において入

正定聚することは、この世で如来になることではないという聖人の厳格で謙虚な姿勢を窺い知ることが出来ます。

深く人間性に根差した親鸞聖人が示された「現生正定聚」の教えは、言語を超えて普遍的に受容される可能性は高いといえましょう。南無阿弥陀仏

門徒さんに聞く

河合紀子さん サンディエゴ仏教会

サンディエゴにはいつからお住まいですか？

1994年です。神戸の出身で、大学を卒業後、会社勤めをした後にこちらに来ました。日本に一時帰国したこともありましたが、通算で22年住んでいます。今は臨床宗教学士（チャプレン）になるべく、クレアモント神学校の修士過程で学んでいます。

お寺にはいつからお参りされているのですか？

2010年です。それまではあまりお寺にご縁がなく、お参りしなかつたのですが、仏教に興味を持ち、お参りするようになり、実家は浄土宗の信徒でしたので、お坊さんに自宅に来ていただくお参りしてもらって、意識的に自分が仏教徒だと思ふようになったのは、サンディエゴのお寺に来るようになってからです。

なぜ仏教に興味を持つようになったのですか？
チャプレンになりたかったこと、以前から人の役に立つことをしてみたいと思つてお

2010年頃にホスピスでボランティアをやり始めました。その時に、チャプレンという存在を知ったのですが、私はキリスト教徒ではないのでチャプレンになれないと思つていました。しかしどうしても死を目前にした方のお世話をしたいという思いが強く、またキリスト教徒以外でもチャプレンになれることが分かったので、チャプレンを目指すようになりました。

サンディエゴのお寺にお参りされたのは、仏教を学ぼうと思われたことがきっかけになったのですか？

ホスピスのボランティアをはじめたころから、仏教への興味が芽生え、お寺を訪れるようになりました。サンディエゴ仏教会に来る前は、いろいろなお寺を訪ねましたが、サンディエゴ仏教会が一番、居心地がよく感じました。メンバーの方はやさしいし、先生もいろいろと教えてくださつたので、お寺にお参りするようになったのです。やはり、自分が日本人なので日系の方や日本人の方がおられると安心するのだと思います。また、浄土真宗の教えが自分の求めていたものだとわかって、興味をもつたのです。

それは、どのようなところですか？

浄土真宗は聞くことを大切にすることです。チャプレンの仕事でも、聞くことが強調されます。その聞く姿勢は、阿弥陀さまのお木像が、前に傾いておられるお姿に重なるように思つたのです。精神的なささえを必要とされる方から自分からたずねて、「耳を傾けなさい、聞きなさい」と、教えていただいているように思えました。また、親鸞聖人の非僧非俗の精神も、感銘を受けました。自分が俗の場にいるからこそ、俗の人の痛みや不安がわかるのだと思います。

に帰国しました。ちょうど夏休みで三か月日本に居ることに決め、龍谷大学で仏教カウンスリングを教えておられる、吾勝（あかつ）先生からのご紹介で仙台別院でお世話になりました。日本にいる間に日本の仏教の勉強がしたいと思ひ大学で開講されているクラスを探していたところ、社会人向けのREC（龍谷大学カレッジ・リサーチ）で吾勝先生が「仏教とカウンスリング」のクラスをされていました。そのクラスを受講し、先生と知り合うご縁をいただき、それで仙台別院にボランティアに行くことになったのです。今夏も仙台にお邪魔し、東北大学で開催される臨床宗教師研修を見学させて頂くことになりました。

仙台別院ではどのような活動されたのですか？

僧侶の方たちがお茶会を開催して被災者の方のお話を聞く、という活動をされていたので、そのお手伝いをしました。お茶会では、すでに震災から三年経つていたこともありご家族や家を亡くされた悲しみよりも、まだまだ復興の目処が立たないことなどへの苛立ちや不満を多く耳にしました。また、ボランティアも震災直後は多く来たけど、三年も経つとめっきり人が来なくなつた、ともおっしゃっていました。継続してサポートすることが大切なんだと思ひました。不満の内容としては、市や地域によって対応が違うことなどです。私個人ではどうすることもできないことですが、その不満やその中で辛い気持ち、体験をしっかりと聞き取るのが私の仕事かな、と思ひ、傾聴に専念しました。東北の震災から「寄り添う」という言葉をよく耳にするように思ひますが、とてもいい言葉です。チャプレン（お坊さん）もそうだと思います。その仕事は、苦しんだり、悩んだりしている方のお辛い気持ちに寄り添うことだと思ひます。

これからの予定は？

チャプレンになるための勉強をつづけます。そして、浄土真宗の僧侶としてチャプレンになりたいので、お得度を受けられるように準備をすすめていきたいです。聞法と勉強を続けて、浄土真宗の教えを深く理解し、多くの方々とお念仏の教えやその精神をシェアできたいと思ひます。私に浄土真宗の教えをはじめて教えてくださった、向嶋先生、今のサンディエゴの開教使の赤星先生にご指導をいただき、たいへん感謝しています。



Ms. Noriko Kawai and Rev. Akahoshi

法輪

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開教使連続研修会の開催



Ministers' Continuing Education Seminar

本デイビッド開教使とカリフォルニア大学バークレー校のブラム・マーク教授が講師として招かれた。ブラム教授は清沢満之の著書に関連した講義をし、松本開教使は西本願寺の教学を学派や時代別に整理し、要点を述べた。梅津総長と伊東輪番によるパネルディスカッション、LGBTQに関しての講義や、開教使アシスタントのプログラムについての話し合いなどもあり、活発な意見交換がなされた。参加者は、「お東の先生方と交流したことで、親鸞聖人のみ教えを多面的に学べたように思います。往生の考えかたなど、すこし西本願寺とはちがった趣があるところもあり

春の花展 催される

5月14日(土)と15日(日)に、小原流いけばな北カリフォルニア支部による「春の花展」が浄土真宗センターで開催された。藤本ケン(サンノゼ別院輪番)、藤本デニス(アイダホオレゴン仏教会) 開教使兄弟のご母堂で、故藤本芳彦開教使夫人の藤本賀代子氏が小原流指導者として活躍されていることが縁となり、センターを会場とした生け花展が定期的に開催されている。今回は第4回目となり、関係者などをふくめ約300名が来場した。センターのロビーに45杯の作品がならび、はなやかな雰囲気誘われて、多数の近隣住民も足を運んだ。14日には藤本デニス開教使の導師で花供養の法要が勤められた。小原流北加支部長の丸山翠光師は「当支部を創立された藤本翠洋師(賀代子氏)と法要のためにお供えさされたお供えさだましました。浄土真宗センターの創立10周年を祝すと共に、花展を開催できた事を感謝いたしましたま

5月3日(火)から5日(木)の三日間、浄土真宗センターで春の開教使連続研修会が行われた。テーマは「西本願寺と東本願寺の教学の相違点」で、BCAからは開教使、引退開教使、開教使アシスタント、31名が参加。真宗大谷派からは、伊東憲昭東本願寺口サンセルス別院輪番(兼北米開教監督)をはじめ、5名が参加し、東西本願寺の僧侶が交流を深めた。教学の相違点の講義には、IBSの松



Ohara School - No. CA Chapter: Ikebana at JSC



Mrs. Fujimoto and Rev. Fujimoto

した。」と謝辞を述べた。藤本氏は生け花を通じた日米文化交流に寄与したことから、2010年に日本政府より旭日双光賞が授与されている。

総長メッセージ

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

皆さんの家のクローゼットの中はどうかわかりませんが、私の自宅の場合ももう目も当てられないほどいろいろなものがとろとろ狭しと積み上げられています。もちろん、車を入れることなどできません。子供たちの思い出の品や、古い衣服、役に立たないガラクタなどなど、よくもこれだけの物を持っているものだと思ってしまうほどです。何度も整理したり始末したりしたのですが、それでもだめです。特に思い出の品となるとなかなか捨てがたいものがあります。

例えば、四十数年前アメリカに一人で渡って来た時は、スーツケース一つと、別便で送った数箱の書籍だけが自分のものでしたのです。それが時がたつにつれて山となり、今では始末におえないような状態です。教団のメンバー全員が一斉にクローゼットを行ったら、教団の借金はすぐに返済できるのではないかと思ったりします。

これです。ガラクタの思いを通して物を見、判断し、行動をするからです。心の中がクリーンであれば、問題は無いのですが、実際はめちゃくちゃです。クローゼットの中はめちゃくちゃです。また、それを恥ずかしいとも思わない自分がいるのです。

いつも自分の心の奥にある思いなど気にもかけませんが、仏教、特に親鸞聖人の教えは、そこにも光を当てることの大切さを教えてください。いや、そこに光を当てなければならぬと教えてください。そうすることによって、自分がわかり、他人をも理解することができ

のです。親鸞聖人は仏さまの教えによって、ご自分がガラクタのどうしようもない思いをかかえて生きていくという真実に気づかされたのです。そして、生きていく間はそうしようもない考えや思いは捨てることもできず、かえってガラクタの思いがあるからこそ、お念仏を喜ぶことができるとおっしゃっておられるのです。

「MURDER」

南無阿彌陀仏

岩崎常夫氏作「石仏の墓所」。京都の嵯峨野にある化野念仏寺という浄土宗のお寺に「西院の河原」と呼ばれる一画があります。その一帯はかつて風葬が行なわれていたため、野ざらしになった遺骸を埋葬していましたが、その後土葬の習慣が行き渡り、人々がお墓に石仏や石塔を作っ



"Grave Yard of Stone Buddhas" by Tsuneo Iwasaki

お祀りするようになりまし。しかし、それらも何百年という年月を経て、無縁仏となったため、明治中期にこれらの風化した石仏を仏舎利のもとに集めて並べ、毎年八月に、一つ一つの石にろうそくをお捧げしてご供養しているそうです。(IBS職員、稲石さやか)

岩崎氏の作品は6月24、25、26日に浄土真宗センターで開催される、「仏教アートとブックフェア」で展示される。新井ポーラ博士の講演も予定されている。フェアの詳細は浄土真宗センターまで。