

# WHEEL OF DHARMA

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*Primal Vow (Hongan) 18th Vow: If, when I attain Buddhahood, sentient beings in the lands of the ten quarters who sincerely and joyfully entrust themselves to me, desire to be born in my land, and call my Name, even ten times, should not be born there, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment. Excluded, however, are those who commit the five gravest offences and abuse the right Dharma.*

## Executive Orders and the Primal Vow

By Rev. Jerry K. Hirano, Salt Lake Buddhist Temple

As a result of Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, approximately 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were forcibly moved off the West Coast of the United States into concentration camps, mostly to remote areas of the country. Of those 120,000 individuals, roughly two thirds were American citizens. In one of those concentration camps, called Topaz, in a desert area near Delta, Utah, near the Nevada border, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) was formed.

BCA was formed not to organize our temples into a formal legal religious organization; BCA was formed out of fear that the United States government would begin attacking our Sanghas. The name Buddhist "Churches" was intentionally chosen, even though in Japanese the name "Hongwanji" translates to "Temple of the Primal Vow" and not "Church of the Primal Vow." The leadership of our original organization founded in 1899 was formed by ministers (*Kaikyoshi*), and the lay membership provided the financial support for the organization. In the 1940s, the majority of *Kaikyoshi* were not U.S. citizens, but the *Nisei* (second generation) membership were all American citizens. It was during this period that lay members were included into the leadership of BCA.

The United States has had a history of immigration exclusion acts directed at Asian countries. There was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Immigration Act of 1917, and the Immigration Act of 1924. These legal restrictions were based upon the fear that Asians were coming to the United States for nefarious reasons. On Friday afternoon [January 27, 2017], President Donald Trump issued a new executive order titled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." During World War II Executive Order 9066 was aimed at Japanese Americans on the West Coast, while not very many Italian or German Americans were

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## Winter Pacific Seminar in LA: East Meets West Dharmathon



The culmination of the day were the panel discussions: in Japanese, (left photo) with Rev. Ryuta Furumoto (Senshin Buddhist Temple), Rev. Kodo Umezu (BCA Bishop), and a Rev. Ryoko Osa (Higashi Honganji USA Headquarters); and in English, (right photo, left to right) with Rev. Patricia Usuki (San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (SFVHBT)), Rev. Noriaki Ito (Bishop, Higashi Honganji North America District), and Rev. Bill Briones (Rimban, Nishi Betsuin). Photos by Glen Tao. Watch the YouTube videos! Go to YouTube.com and search for BCA Center for Buddhist Education.

By Priscilla Mui, San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

After all the rain, January 28 greeted us with a breezy, clear, sunny morning at the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (a.k.a. Nishi Betsuin), where the 2017 Winter Pacific Seminar was held. Thanks to the Institute of Buddhist Studies, Buddhist Churches of America Center for Buddhist Education (BCA CBE), and the Shinshu Center of America, the 240 attendees to this one-day "East Meets West" seminar were treated to a "Dharmathon" (a series of short Dharma talks), and panels presented by ministers from both Southern District Nishi (west) and Higashi (east) temples throughout the morning and afternoon. The popular Dharmathon for-

mat has been adopted in the last few years at many CBE events because it's a very efficient and entertaining way for us to hear a variety of Dharma talks. There were English and Japanese sessions, with over 20 ministers in all. Topics in English ranged from the implications in the use of the words "Thank you" and "Please"; when to say the *Nembutsu*; how to listen to a Dharma message; Buddhist vows; accepting one's actions; *mudras*; Gamelan music of Indonesia; the role of Buddhism in the current state of our country; and how Buddhist chaplains in the armed services can help soldiers cope with their situation and suffering.

When I spoke to peers at my temple, it was interesting to hear the variety of what messages resonated with each person and how two people can come away with different

messages from the same speaker. Overall, based on the Dharma messages and the panel discussion, a lay person like me could not tell the two schools apart. However, all three panelists wished to expand membership beyond the Japanese American community. My friends were wondering if Higashi followers were more politically active, but Rev. Ito stated that whenever he appeared at a political gathering, it was as himself and not as a Higashi minister. In the end, we could see that there was great cooperation and respect for each other.

Thank you to the BCA Southern District Ministers' Association and Southern District Buddhist Education Committee, which hosted the event, as well as the hard-working volunteers at Nishi who made all the creature comforts possible.

## 360 "Wake Up" at Northwest Buddhist Convention in Tukwila, Washington

By June Akita and John Inge, Northwest Convention Co-chairs

The Tacoma Buddhist Temple hosted 360 attendees at the 70th Northwest Buddhist Convention on February 17-19. Rev. Marvin Harada, resident minister of Orange County Buddhist Church, captured the attention of attendees, saying we need to "wake up" our minds and bodies to appreciate our daily lives. Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, reminded us that this was *not* a ping pong tournament. But the convention sure was full of intense and fun activity throughout the weekend!

The central goal of our convention was to involve as many of our students as possible in whichever workshops they felt comfortable in. The students all proved to be confident and poised in their missions and were vital to our weekend agenda.

Workshops ranged from "Making Incense" to "Internment" to "Millennials" to "Waking Up!!" We were fortunate to pull Rev. Kosho Yukawa and Rev. Don Castro out of retirement, and were able to hear Rev. Sala Sekiya before she leaves our district. The NW Convention ended with Rev. Harada and his puppet, Fred, giving a Dharma Talk with Rev. Kojo Kakihara and his puppet, Freddie (see photo on page 8). A good time was had by all, with many looking forward to our next NW Convention in Spokane, Washington in February, 2018.

Clockwise from top, left: Shinran skit, "Kindness Rocks," sumi-e painting, making butter, learning "Be Happy" on ukeleles, youth workshop.





## Is This World Getting Better or Worse?

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

I was surprised when I found out that one of our new ministers from Japan did not know what a mimeograph machine was. It was only thirty-some years ago when we were cutting stencils and printing our newsletters using a mimeograph machine. I still remember not long ago, I was sending handwritten letters to my parents and friends via air mail. It used to take a week for the letter to get to Japan and another week to hear from them.

When I was serving as the Executive Assistant to Bishop Watanabe 20 years ago, I was in charge of the Japanese *Wheel of Dharma (Horin)*. I used to use a modern technology called a word processor. Even then, I still had to *literally* cut and paste the articles onto layout boards and send them to a printing company. It used to take days and days to prepare the *Wheel of Dharma* for publication.

Today, we enjoy new technologies and live in a very advanced world with many high-tech gadgets around us. For example, a smart phone can replace and/or do the work of all of the following: a landline phone, still and movie cameras, snail mail, maps, dictionaries, voice recorders, compasses, GPS (locator), tickets, books, CDs, DVDs, boarding passes, and more. We can even listen to Dharma messages on a smart phone.

We are always connected through many apps using the worldwide Internet. I don't think we can go back to a time without technology.

Much of human history is about making our lives easier by developing machines, devices, and technologies. It is a history of pursuing happiness by removing difficulties from our lives. But have we really come close to the world that we dreamed of?

Shakyamuni Buddha predicted that the human world would eventually degenerate. It would get worse and worse. Shinran Shonin strongly agreed with him. I would like to quote his poems:

*As the time of kalpa-defilement advances,  
The bodies of sentient beings gradually  
grow smaller;  
Their evil and wrongdoing amid the five  
defilements increase,  
So that their minds are like poisonous  
snakes and evil dragons.*

*Ignorance and blind passions abound,  
Pervading everywhere like innumerable  
particles of dust.  
Desire and hatred arising out of conflict  
and accord  
Are like high peaks and mountain ridges.  
(Collected Works of Shinran, p. 400)*

When I read these poems, I have to think of the conditions surrounding us today. Anger and hatred are burning the entire world. Each of us, not knowing the True and Real World of Suchness, participates in the process of criticizing each other.

The sincere heart and mind of the Realm of Enlightenment, the Realm of *Higan\**, has been urging us to return to our true home and find the world of bliss. We live in the world of self-power; the world of delusion. The True and Real World is awakening us to the fact that we are living in the world of delusion. The mind and heart of Enlightenment seeks to save all beings from the realm of suffering. This mind appears in our world as the sincere calling of *Namo Amida Butsu* urging us to redirect our lives, and we acknowledge it by saying *Namo Amida Butsu*.

As we observe our Spring O-higan service, let us be mindful of the Buddha's wish for us to calm down and reflect on the Dharma that has been calling all of us from the timeless past to the present.

\**Higan* (or *O-higan*) literally means "other shore." It refers to nirvana, enlightenment, or the Pure Land. O-higan is observed twice a year, during the spring equinox and fall equinox.

## Borders



By Rev. Jay Shinseki, Monterey Peninsula Buddhist Temple

A border is defined as a line that separates something from something else, usually referring to a state or country. In the *Amidakyo* it is referred to as an obstruction. In the case of the quote above, it refers to no borders or obstructions. There is a reference to Amida's light reaching us despite the borders we have created in our world.

Both visible and invisible borders exist. In our gardens and yards, borders refer to bricks or hedges. In our homes, rooms are bordered by walls, our house is bordered by fences, then our city is bordered by city limits, expanding to county, state, and country borders. We are defined as a resident such and such street, in Monterey, in California, in the United States. And we have international date lines.

In our everyday lives, we

live with borders that define where we live and who we are. With these borders we define ourselves and label ourselves as Californians, Americans, Canadians, etc. These labels are some of the numerous unseen borders in our lives. However, on occasion these borders are dissolved. For example, every year at our national ministers' meeting we gather from Canada, Hawaii, and all over the Continental United States. Each morning we come together as one to chant the sutras and listen to the Dharma. As we chant together, one beautiful sound is created. At that moment, all borders disappear.

Borders have been created to supposedly keep us safe and defined, to keep us separated. As a result, we have created ideological borders that separate us, and some people are talking about building physical walls to separate us even more. Ideological borders can manifest themselves

into neighborhoods, states, and nations with defined characteristics. Ideological borders come about when we don't agree with other ways of life, religious views, and political views.

And yet there are the numerous ways in which life crosses those borders unimpeded. The sound of a wind chime in a garden, a cooling breeze on a hot night, the light of the sun and moon illuminating us all cross over the borders we have created. In the very same way, Amida reaches far beyond and touches us, illuminating and revealing to us the truth of our lives. The world of the free press, enlightening books, and the Dharma help to break down the ideological barriers and open up for us the true and real world.

Although I create all sorts of borders, life still comes to me. I am able to experience the wind, the sun, the sounds of life. I create borders of doubt and ignorance,

and yet Amida's compassion still comes to me, revealing my true nature. I am eternally grateful for the people who have come into and gone through my life and compassionately shown my true nature to me.

It is as the Buddha explained to his disciple Shariputra, "For all who hear this melody, their devotion to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha is spontaneously deepened. Shariputra, in this way the land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment so that whatever one hears will bring about awakening. Shariputra, why do you suppose this Buddha is called Amitabha? Shariputra, this Buddha emits immeasurable light, shedding light upon all the worlds of the ten directions without obstruction."

<sup>1</sup> *The Amida Sutra* (Skt. Smaller Sukhavativyuha Sutra) Translated by Karen Mack, Journal of Jodo Shu Edification Studies, No. 14, 2003

*"Shariputra, in the land of Ultimate Bliss, a pleasant breeze wafts, swaying the rows of trees colored with various jewels and waving the gauze curtains with little bells, stirring an exquisite melody. This is just as though hundreds of thousands of musical instruments were being played in unison. For all who hear this melody, their devotion to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha is spontaneously deepened. Shariputra, in this way the land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment so that whatever one hears will bring about awakening. Shariputra, why do you suppose this Buddha is called Amitabha? Shariputra, this Buddha emits immeasurable light, shedding light upon all the worlds of the ten directions without obstruction."<sup>1</sup>*



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## Tacoma Buddhist Temple

The Tacoma Buddhist Temple was established by Japanese immigrants in 1915, with Rev. Hoshin Fujii of the Seattle Buddhist Church conducting services in the homes of the followers of Jodo Shinshu. The first resident minister was Rev. Danryu Motodani in 1918, and the Temple registered with the Buddhist Mission of North America (precursor of the Buddhist Churches of America) as Tacoma Buddhist Church in 1919. As the Sangha grew, the present Temple building was built in 1931.

The Temple was closed during World War II when members were sent to various relocation centers in California, Wyoming, and Idaho. Rev. Sunya Pratt, who was a British woman, devoted herself to the Temple. She led the English-speaking group in 1934. During the war, she looked after members' belongings stored in the temple basement and visited members in relocation centers.

The name was officially changed from "Church" to "Temple" in 1983. The Tacoma Buddhist Temple was designated as a historical landmark in 1995. We celebrated the centennial in 2015.



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By Ken Tanimoto  
BCA President  
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I have almost finished my first year as President of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). A reflection of the past year has brought back many moments that I will never forget. Through my travels near and far; through countless

## President's Message: Reflecting on My Past Year

meetings and hundreds of emails; through many seminars and conferences I have attended, I have come to realize even more the importance of the *Nembutsu* in our lives.

The *Nembutsu* has connected me with so many people in our Sangha who make me feel honored as well as humbled by their dedication to spread the Dharma and their closeness to our Jodo Shinshu practice. These connections make it worth the time and effort to head the BCA and to face the challenge of keeping the Dharma at the forefront of our organization.

I have seen from hundreds of different and diverse Sangha

members from coast to coast that the *Nembutsu* is the driving force behind a thriving temple. It is the only thing that remains constant and reflects the only truth in our lives.

The number one question I have been asked at so many temples is, "What can the BCA do to help our temple increase its membership?" Many temples are concerned that without increased membership and the financial support that comes with it, how can their temple exist in today's world?

My answer to that is, "How can you yourself help foster the growth of the *Nembutsu* in your commu-

nity?" One should take a look what the main purpose of our temples. The temple is our extended home in which we enjoy learning the teachings of Buddha, the guidance and comfort of the Dharma, and our connections to our extended Sangha family. These are the main ingredients for a thriving temple.

One may wonder how a temple can thrive with a small or even shrinking membership. I can only say that, even though membership numbers are important, I have seen members attend services time after time to hear the Dharma without being conscious of how many people are attending. That is how

absorbed they are in the Dharma; that is the real beauty of our *Nembutsu*. The *Nembutsu* is for me and me alone, to reflect on the importance of my life. Foster the idea that everyone who enters our temple doors needs the Dharma in their life, and our temples will thrive.

With this in mind, it is my mission to work even harder in my second year as BCA President to help keep our temples connected to the only thing that is important, which is the Dharma in all its rich diversity and inclusivity that we are to embrace.

*Namo Amida Butsu.*

## Ohigan – Gentle Persuasion



By Rev. Fumiaki Usuki  
West Los Angeles  
Buddhist Temple

being consumed by simply "making a living," then when is a good time to take advantage of what the temple has to offer, with opportunities for self-reflection and listening to the gentle persuasion of the dharma messages?

In our busy lives, what would we do without special services, holidays, vacations, and simple walks in the park to balance the tension, anxieties and challenges we face each and every day? If we are continuously

For hundreds of years, many have made the temple a significant part of their lives and have enjoyed its various rewards. Yet these days, many also overlook the important role that our teaching can play for them. *Ohigan* service, when the days and nights are of equal length and the weather is neither too warm nor too cold, is set perfectly for the human temperament. Isn't this like breakfast in bed? Short of taking away any reason to complain, are there better conditions to balance mind and body so they can operate in unison, allowing us to hear the most perfect wisdom?

The temple is not selling time-share condos or asking for anything except our attendance. It does not promise that our colds will go away and it will not help us to maintain our youthful features. The

Buddha-Dharma and the *Nembutsu* offer relief and solutions for the difficulties of our everyday existence. They do not sell something that we don't already have; they only bring to light what is hidden inside of us. Wisdom and a change of attitude will provide perfect inner harmony and balance that will allow our days to be more manageable and pleasant. Our teachings can help liberate us from a self-created prison of sorts. Of course, Perfect Wisdom comes from Amida and it enables us to recognize both our imperfections and the Great Compassion that we receive, for there is no Wisdom without Compassion, and both are embodied in *Nembutsu*.

This morning as I was ringing the *kansho* (bell) to begin the service, I was reminded of *Ohigan*. A perfect sound

already exists in this bell. It offers gentle persuasion for perfection by indicating the sweet spot to be struck in order to deliver the most balanced and consistent tone as listeners are putting their hands together in *gassho*. If it is struck anywhere else or on an angle, the sound will not resonate beautifully and the bell will swing, which makes it even harder to hit. It is as though the bell is swinging away from the imperfection of my ego.

So I always have to feel settled and put my body and mind in focus before proceeding. When we come to the temple, let's leave our preoccupations, biases, and ego-mind at the door and just listen. How else can we hear that perfect sound of the wisdom of enlightenment that awaits our visit?

## Notes of Mahalo to the Hawaii Kyodan Giseikai

By Richard Stambul, BCA President-Elect

The Giseikai is an annual meeting of representatives from the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. The following speech was given on February 11.

My name is Richard Stambul, and I am the President-Elect of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). I am honored to have been invited as a guest to your *Giseikai*; and the special events surrounding it. My special thanks to Pieper and Lois Toyama, to Bishop Eric Matsumoto and his wife, Tamayo, to the Bishop's Executive Assistant, Rev. Umitani and his wife, Yoshiko, and to Fred and Nancy Nonaka, all of whom graciously extended their Aloha spirit to me and to Jeff Matsuoka, our BCA Treasurer. My thanks also to [Rev. Kodo] Umezumi Sensei, Bishop of the BCA, and to Ken Tanimoto, BCA President, for allowing me to attend. *Mahalo* to all of you.

We at BCA confront many of the same issues as your temples. Declining membership; aging temple sanghas; children not returning to re-join their temples; ministers' abilities to effectively communicate with their members; and the difficulty of developing a real understanding and appreciation of the needs of our ministers.

However, I would like to share an outsider's view of your *kyodan*\*, even if only for a moment. In the few days we have been here on Oahu we have been surrounded by a spirit of kindness, love, and friendship that has been both unexpected and a bit overwhelming. Speaking

personally for myself, these special moments have embraced me with an authenticity that comes only from the Buddha. When we feel love and friendship from others, where does it come from? Do we decide "I'm having love?" Do we decide "I'm having friendship?" No. Everything comes from the Buddha. Everything comes from enlightened activity. I have felt grasped by Amida Buddha and pulled along the white path.

You have shared some of your special gifts with us. The mutual respect demonstrated by and between Bishop Matsumoto and your President, Pieper Toyama, should serve as beacons of hope shining a light for new beginnings in Hawaii. Cooperation with one vision by your President and your Bishop is heartwarming.

Your members live the *Nembutsu* by their actions. An old African saying reminds me of the attitude of your members:

If you want to go fast, go alone;

If you want to go far, go together.

We share much in common as fellow travelers of the Shin Buddhist path. I have come to appreciate that what is more important than even the health of our institutions is to ensure that our Teachings are nourished and survive for our children, grandchildren, and for future generations. Each of us brings our own life experiences and our own personal beliefs about Jodo Shinshu to our everyday lives.

For me, Jodo Shinshu is



BCA officers, Rick Stambul (seated, 3rd from left) and Jeff Matsuoka (seated, 3rd from right) were guests at the Giseikai on February 11th. Hawaii Kyodan's bishop, Rev. Eric Matsumoto, and president, Pieper Toyama, are seated at center. Photo by Alan Kubota

not only about the Four Noble Truths; the ending of suffering, stress, or craving. Shin is also about compassion. Wisdom becomes compassion. It is about developing our full potential as beings who have art, literature, music, history, etc., as parts of our cultures. Jodo Shinshu is also about love and kindness. From a different context, I would like to talk for a brief moment about the power of love in the face of hatred and cruelty.

Current political events have forced me to recall harsh and important lessons I learned during my life. Lessons about hatred; and about equality. Forgive me for sharing a bit of my own life-story to illustrate a point.

I was politically active as a young man in the civil rights movement in the 1960s. I marched

with Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King; I worked in Mississippi to register African-Americans to vote, and I learned, for the first time, about hatred. I was beaten and hospitalized by men who spewed hate. My boyhood neighbor, Mickey Schwerner, was killed that summer. Yet I have always separated my politics from my love of and appreciation for Jodo Shinshu. I respect the differing opinions of others and I try to remember that we are all embraced under Amida's wings.

However, when some of the core teachings of Jodo Shinshu are under attack, I believe there is a moral imperative to speak out as a Buddhist. The Executive Order signed by our President has been causing serious concerns and suffering for many people, especially Muslims and immigrants. Yet, all of us are immigrants! That is

one of the great strengths of our American experiment. In the 1980s I worked as an attorney doing research on the legal team that brought the *Coram Nobis* Petition to the U.S. Supreme Court seeking redress for the 120,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans who were incarcerated during World War II. This was a powerful lesson for me in actively seeking equal treatment for all people regardless of their religion or ethnicity.

All people deserve to be respected and treated equally. Shinran taught that the 18th Vow and the Pure Land are for everyone, with no exceptions. Jodo Shinshu honors the notions of equality and equal treatment for every person. How do we relate to and deal with hatred when it is in our midst? What weapons can we use to fight against such hatred? We can use love. We can use *Namo Amida Butsu*. We can demonstrate our kindness to each other. Because...

As Nelson Mandela said so eloquently at the end of his life:

"I have walked a long walk to freedom. It has been a long road, and it is not over yet. I know that my country was not made to be a land of hatred. No one is born hating another person because of the color of her skin, or the place of their birth. People learn to hate. They can be taught to love. For love comes more naturally to the human heart."

*Namo Amida Butsu. Thank you.*

\**Kyodan: an overseas district of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan*



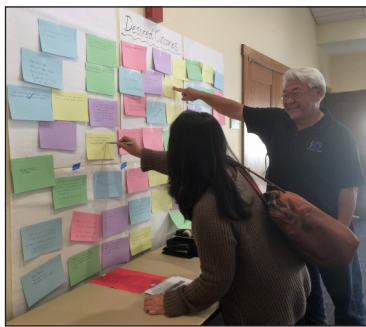
## BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

### CBE Temple Leadership Workshop: You Can Do It!

By Darlene Bagshaw, Buddhist Church of Stockton

As I sit before my computer composing this article, I listen to the rain hitting the roof and cascading through the downspout. Residing in Manteca, California, the local news is filled with local flash flood warnings, levee breaches, and overflowing reservoirs. From calming to stressful, this is life. You must at least smile, as you find a parallel within the trials and tribulations that face your own temple.

At the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) Temple Leadership Workshop, the leaders in attendance did just that. We experienced the calming words of the Dharma, created a new network of Sangha friends, learned about the flow of leadership in the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), and broached the subjects of eroding membership, the strain of minister shortages, and overflowing financial burdens. But, just like all times of stress, we found unconditional support from Bishop Kodo Umezu, BCA President Ken Tanimoto, several ministers, and the CBE staff. And like evacuees, we were treated to warm and comforting accommodations at the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC), complete with exceptional meals! (Thank you, Reverend Harada!)



(Upper photo:) At the start of the event, participants posted their "Desired Outcomes" on a wall. They checked them off as they were achieved. (Lower:) Darlene Bagshaw and husband Charles try something new at the Technology Workshop led by Rev. Harry Bridge.

At this point you may be tempted to stop reading, thinking, "I'm out. I'm not a leader. I just joined my temple." or "My plate is overflowing! I don't have time for another workshop!" The CBE Temple Leadership Workshop brought together over 30 leaders ranging from new members set to join the temple board, to "recycled" presidents, to the BCA President and Bishop. Everyone came with an open mind, eager to obtain new knowledge regardless of his or her level of experience. The format provided a venue for all of us to escape daily life and relax so we could share challenges, personal experiences, successful ideas, and most importantly, remember that all of this is centered around the Dharma.

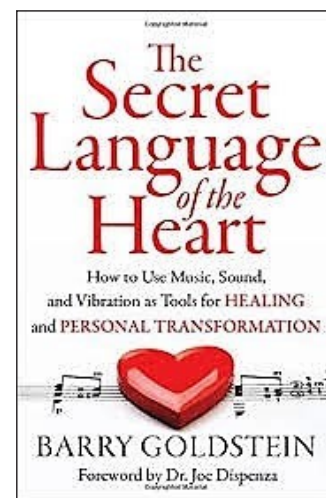
Dharma-centered leadership was the theme introduced by Bishop Umezu. When different ideas are shared they will be as diverse as the colors on Doppler radar, that is, ranging from beautiful to chaotic. The only "foolish" view is our own limited view. As we lead we must put our "foolishness" aside as the Dharma challenges us to become aware of our own limits and to open our hearts and minds to oneness and interdependence. As Rev. Jerry Hirano stated, to be a good Dharma-centered leader, *live* the Dharma!

Rev. Henry Adams presented Jodo Shinshu 101, bringing us back to basics. The title made you fear a boring history lecture...NOT! Though we read texts from Prince Siddhartha to Shinran Shonin's pilgrimage, each step of the journey became our steps on the path of leadership. History became present-day life. Rev. Harry Bridge took us even farther into the realm of time with his technology workshop. Did you know 30+ laptops can overload the JSC Wi-Fi? We even discovered a challenge for the JSC! There is so much supportive information on the BCA website and there are so many reverends on Facebook. With technology, no matter where we reside, we are never isolated from the rest of the BCA Sangha. There is nowhere to hide from the Dharma, so as Rev. Harada said, connect to it! CBE plans to present this program again next year, so when this opportunity crosses your path, live it! Connect to it! Just do it!

### BCA Bookstore News by Gayle Noguchi

Now available: *The Secret Language of the Heart: How to Use Music, Sound, and Vibration as Tools for Healing and Personal Transformation* by Barry Goldstein, Foreword by Dr. Joe Dispenza. Paperback, 17.95.

Award-winning composer and producer Barry Goldstein asserts that music, sound, and vibration are more than just art and entertainment. They are the secret language of the heart, conveying the divine and serving as a powerful vehicle for transforming us at the deepest level of our being. This book is not just for those with musical "talent." Goldstein begins by discussing the music that is within all of us – our heartbeat, our breath, and our sigh. He goes on to share how music and sound can affect both the body and the brain, citing research that shows how we benefit physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Ultimately, we become more compassionate to ourselves, to others, and to the world.



Goldstein stresses the importance of having a daily music practice and offers tips, exercises, and techniques to assist you. One of his suggestions is to chant. He uses the example of *om*, but chanting *Na man da bu* would work effectively as well, moving you into a relaxed state and beyond intellectual thought.

Goldstein concludes with a section titled "Musical Prescriptions for Health." Though not intended to replace medications or treatment plans, Goldstein shares some extraordinary findings utilizing music for improving specific conditions such as dementia and stroke. He also provides sample playlists to help get you started.

To purchase, go to [buddhistchurchesofamerica.org](http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org) and click on the BCA Bookstore link or contact [gnoguchi@bcahq.org](mailto:gnoguchi@bcahq.org) or 510-809-1435. This publication will also be available at the Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League (FDSTL) Conference "Music: A Path to the Dharma," held on Saturday, April 22, 2017 at the Fresno Buddhist Temple Family Dharma Center.

### OUR JODO SHINSHU TRADITIONS

#### The Central Figure (Gohonzon)

The Jodo Shinshu shrine is dedicated to Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Wisdom and Unbounded Compassion. An image of the Amida Buddha is housed in the central shrine in the form of either a statue or a picture scroll. Alternatively, a *Myogo* scroll with the Chinese characters *Na Mo A Mi Da Butsu* may be enshrined.

The golden statue depicts a standing figure of the Amida Buddha, whose right hand is held up, with the palm facing forward and the thumb and forefinger forming a circle. The left arm hangs downward, with the palm facing forward and the thumb and forefinger forming a circle.



The picture scroll shows an image of the Amida Buddha on a background of forty-eight radiating lines. These symbolize the Forty-eight Vows pledged by the bodhisattva Dharmakara, who later became Amida Buddha.

The *Myogo* scroll of Chinese characters, which is read *Na Mo A Mi Da Butsu*, represents the Name of the Amida Buddha.

(Excerpted from the pamphlet "The Jodo Shinshu Najin Shrine" by Rev. C. Myokai Himaka, published by the Buddhist Churches of America Southern District Ministers' Association with funding from the Southern District Council.)



### 2017 BCA Educational Events

Programs subject to change. Events at the Jodo Shinshu Center unless otherwise noted.

March 1-4 ~ Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Ministers Association and BCA National Council Meetings (NCM) in San Jose, CA.

March 2 ~ Center for Buddhist Education Symposium "Buddha at Work" at San Jose Betsuin, 1-5 pm. Featured speakers: Franz Metcalf and B.J. Gallagher (*Being Buddha at Work*), Dr. Richard Payne (*How Much is Enough?*) and Brian Nagata (on Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata). Free and open to the public. In conjunction with BCA NCM.

March 3 & 4 ~ Chanting and Dharmathon at San Jose Betsuin, Friday 3:30-5 pm. Chanting of *Shoshinge*; speakers Rev. Nariaki Hayashi and Rick Stambul. Dharmathon at San Jose Marriott Hotel, Saturday 3-4 pm. Speakers include Rev. Jay Shinseki, Sumi Tanabe, Gary Mukai, Nick San Juan, and a youth from the Youth Minister's Assistant Program sponsored by the Youth Advocacy Committee (YAC).

March 9-11 ~ Spring Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. Dr. Mark Blum will continue the lectures on *Tannisho*.

April 22-23 ~ Central California Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League (FDSTL) Conference: "Music: A Path to the Dharma" in Fresno. See page 5.

April 28-30 ~ 10th Annual TechnoBuddha Conference. "The Gray Area: Wrongfully Right." Keynote speaker: Rev. Matt Hamasaki. Registration: \$55 until March 19. Late Registration: \$70 March 20-April 9. Contact: [facebook.com/technobuddha.conference](https://www.facebook.com/technobuddha.conference)

[BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org](http://BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org) Email: [cbe@bcahq.org](mailto:cbe@bcahq.org) Phone: (510) 809-1460



Coming this summer!

A new documentary film project by Kento Sugao

#### TRES JOIAS (THREE JEWELS)

A film trilogy on Buddhism in Brazil

Reverend Sugao is back! The Brazil-based Hongwanji priest/filmmaker/director of *Streams of Light: Shin Buddhism in America* (2013)

continues his cinematic explorations of the Buddhist diaspora with a new project, *Tres Joias* (*Three Jewels*), scheduled for release this summer. *Tres Joias* is an unprecedented look at the development of Buddhism in Brazil, revealing the Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, through its Buddhist teachers, teachings, and communities. As the project nears completion, donations are deeply appreciated to ensure its release on schedule.

View trailer and donation opportunities online  
[www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org](http://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org) click on *Tres Joias*



**BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!**

Every two years, the Buddhist Churches of America Bay District Buddhist Women's League and the Hoppo-Fukuoka Fujinkai participate in an exchange program where four delegates, alternately from the US or Japan, are hosted by their sister organizations.

**Thirty Years of Friendship**

By JoAnne Hayashida, Buddhist Church of Oakland

I was fortunate to participate in the Hoppo/Fukuoka Exchange Program from October 17-27, 2016. It was very exciting to be able to meet fellow Buddhists halfway around the world. I can't believe the program started back in 1986 and we were able to celebrate its 30-year anniversary.



We were met at the airport by reverends and a group of ladies who were to be our hosts/friends throughout our stay in Japan for the 10 days, except for the two days of homestay.

Our trip started in Kyoto where we were able to witness the ascension of the new *Gomonshu*.\* It was an awe-inspiring ceremony. We had a guided tour of the Nishi Hongwanji Temple and the surrounding grounds, hearing about the long history of the Gomonshu Family.

Our hosts/friends accompanied us to the 6 a.m. service the following morning, another new experience!

Above: A visit to the Fukuoka District Headquarters. Seated, left to right: Yasuko Fukuda, Sadako Kashiwagi, Rev. Jibou Kikuchi, head of the Fukuoka District Headquarters, Jun Hamamoto, and JoAnne Hayashida. Standing, left to right: Rev. Oyamada, Yumiko Noguchi, Kuniko Ito, and Rev. Kei.



Lower photo: Delegates and their hosts enjoying a tour of the Yanagawa River.

After three nights in Kyoto, we left for Fukuoka to meet our homestay families. Sadako Kashiwagi and Yasuko Fukuda got off the *Shinkansen* (bullet train) at the Kokura station where they were met by a group of *Fujinkai* (Buddhist women's association) ladies. Jun Hamamoto and I continued on to Hakata Station where we were met by Mrs. Nogita and Mr. Tomo Nogita. They drove us to Shunyuji Temple in the Kafuri area where we were greeted by Reverend and Mrs. Hata, a group of *Fujinkai* ladies, and several men. Before dinner, we were escorted to the main *bondo* for a service. During our homestay we were able to witness the *Fujinkai* ladies prepare food for our dinner, we learned how to make *tamago yaki* (a Japanese rolled omelet), Jun showed us how to make origami butterflies, and Tomosan and Kanasan made a wooden trivet for us. Even though our language was limited, we somehow were able to get our message across.

After the two-night stay at the Temple, it was time to meet everyone in Fukuoka where a welcome/farewell dinner was planned. During the dinner, we were entertained by the Hoppo/Fukuoka *Fujinkai*s singing. The four of us got up to introduce ourselves (Yasuko and Sadako spoke in Japanese but Jun and I in English) and then we sang "*Yuyake Koyake*." At the end of the party, we all got up and danced "*Tanko Bushi*" around the room.

Even though the exchange program was for only 10 days, I will always remember and cherish the friendship and experience of a lifetime. If ever you get a chance to go on the program, I highly recommend that you go. *Namo Amida Butsu*

\**Gomonshu*: the religious leader of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

**10th Annual TechnoBuddha Conference**



**The Gray Area: Wrongfully Right**

April 28-30, 2017 @ Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, CA

Registration: Now - Mar 19, \$55 Late Registration: Mar 20 - April 9, \$70

**Keynote Speaker: Reverend Matt Hamasaki**



TechnoBuddha Conference is for adults ages 21-39 who

want to get back in touch with the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist tradition, learn more about the religion, or simply want to meet new people.

Join us as we explore neither good nor evil, but the Gray Area.

Workshops to be Included (subject to change)

- Jodo Shinshu Buddhism 101/201
- General Buddhism with Prof. Mark Blum
- Sushi Making
- Presentation by Kirk Akahoshi
- Taiko
- Art / Design

Check out TechnoBuddha on Facebook for registration information, announcements, and more! [facebook.com/technobuddha.conference](https://facebook.com/technobuddha.conference)

**YouTube Enjoy CBE programs online at YouTube.com**

Go to YouTube and search for the "BCA Center for Buddhist Education Channel" to view over 50 talks and lectures presented by the CBE and its educational partners.

See the recent lecture by Institute of Buddhist Studies Provost, Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto (right) on the *Tannisbo*: Overview and Sections 11 & 12; speakers from the January 2017 Winter Pacific Seminar: "East Meets West Dharmathon" in Los Angeles; and many more.



Contact CBE at [cbe@bcahq.org](mailto:cbe@bcahq.org) or (510) 809-1460

**BCA YAC SUMMER RETREAT**

**July 3-9, 2017**

**Hosted by the Sacramento Betsuin**

This week-long retreat, sponsored by the Buddhist Churches of America Youth Advocacy Committee, is designed for students 15-18 years of age. It will be an interesting and innovative introduction to the teachings and traditions of the Buddha Dharma and will give our students an opportunity to learn and experience the Dharma teachings and rituals, understand their influence on Japanese culture and, hopefully, develop an awareness of its relevance in relation to issues we face growing up in America today.

Questions? Contact Rev. Patti Oshita, [poshita@comcast.net](mailto:poshita@comcast.net)

Revs. Tim & Carol Castle, [teamcastle@comcast.net](mailto:teamcastle@comcast.net)

Sensei Grace Hatano, [bghat1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bghat1@sbcglobal.net)

Sensei Koichi Mizushima, [bkmizu@gmail.com](mailto:bkmizu@gmail.com)

Sensei Kelvin Mark, [273kmark@sbcglobal.net](mailto:273kmark@sbcglobal.net)

Sensei Keith Kato, [kmasamikato@gmail.com](mailto:kmasamikato@gmail.com)



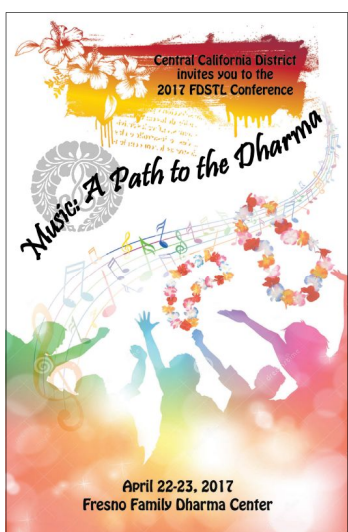
**Central California District Council FDSTL Conference**  
**MUSIC: A PATH TO THE DHARMA**

**Fresno Betsuin Dharma Center**  
2697 E. Alluvial Avenue, Fresno, California  
**April 22-23, 2017**

**Guest Speaker: Rev. Peter Hata**

Central California District Council Federation of Dharma School Teachers League (FDSTL) would like to welcome all FDSTL members and friends to the 2017 FDSTL Conference in Fresno.

It is our pleasure to have Rev. Peter Hata as our guest speaker. He is a minister at the Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles and a former member of the Asian-American jazz-fusion band Hiroshima. Rev. Hata will share the Dharma with his musical talent. We hope that everyone will join us to learn, enjoy the different types of music, and have fun too!



For details and registration, visit: [bcadharmaschool.wikispaces.com](http://bcadharmaschool.wikispaces.com)



Institute of Buddhist Studies

2017  
RYŪKOKU LECTURES

## The Ohtani Kozui Expedition

~ its contribution to the field of  
Buddhist Studies ~

Prof. Mazumi Mitani  
Graduate School of Intercultural Communications  
Ryūkoku University

Lecture One ~ March 20 (M)  
Lecture Two ~ March 22 (W)  
Both lectures ~ 6:00 to 9:00 pm

Jodo Shinshu Center  
2140 Durant Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94704

Free and open to the public  
Telephone: 510.809.1444  
Website: <http://www.shin-ibs.edu>

On the evenings of Monday, March 20 and Wednesday, March 22, 2017, from 6 - 9 pm, the Institute of Buddhist Studies presents its Annual Ryukoku Lecture with guest speaker, Prof. Mazumi Mitani, who will discuss "The Ohtani Kozui Expeditions and their Impact of Buddhist Studies." This takes place at the Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA.

Prof. Mitani will speak on the Ohtani Kozui Expedition of 1902 during which Ohtani Kozui and other Buddhists, including many from the Hongwanji, traveled around Asia to explore Buddhist sites. The discoveries made on the expedition have played very important roles in scholarly understanding of the Buddhist tradition and its transmission.

These lectures will be given in Japanese with English translation. Prof. Mitani plans to show many slides of relics uncovered during the expedition. The event is free and open to the public.

## IBS Symposium: *Interdependence/Intersectionality*

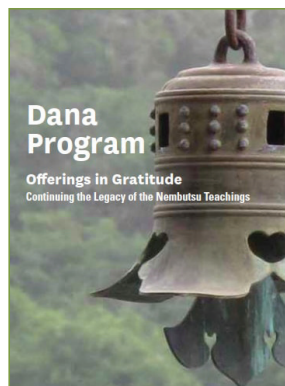
On April 14, 2017, 3 - 5 pm, the Institute of Buddhist Studies will present a Symposium on "Interdependence/Intersectionality," at the Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA.

Buddhist scholars, teachers, and activists gather to discuss issues of marginalization and oppression related to race, gender, and sexuality both inside and outside American Buddhist communities, historically and in the present.

Please visit the IBS website for more program updates: [shin-ibs.edu](http://shin-ibs.edu)

Topics of discussion include: How did the racialization of Japanese American Buddhists relate to World War II internment? How are Asian and white Buddhist communities in conversation or at odds? How have new Buddhist communities developed or responded to historical or contemporary exclusion related to gender or sexual orientation? How might Buddhists respond to the current US political climate?

Speakers include: Ann Gleig, *Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Central Florida*; Funie Hsu, *Assistant Professor of American Studies, San Jose State University*; Natalie Quli, *Research Fellow, Institute of Buddhist Studies*; and Harry Bridge, *Resident Minister, Buddhist Church of Oakland*.



## BCA Dana Program Update

Dana Program donations received in the Fiscal Year 2016-17 to date (April 2016 - January 2017), have totalled \$130,784.

Thank you for your generous support.  
For information and online donation options:  
Visit: [buddhistchurchesofamerica.org](http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org)  
Email: [donate@bcabq.org](mailto:donate@bcabq.org) Phone:  
(415) 776-5600 x311

## Pacific World

*Spreading the spirit of  
compassion among the  
peoples of the world.*



*"My efforts to spread the Buddha's teachings began in 1925, while I was a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley. This beginning took the form of publishing the Pacific World, on a bi-monthly basis in 1925 and 1926, and then on a monthly basis in 1927 and 1928... Included in the mailing list of the early issues were such addresses as the Cabinet members of the U.S. Government, Chambers of Commerce, political leaders, libraries, publishing houses, labor unions, and foreign cultural institutions... I wish to thank the staff of the Institute of Buddhist Studies for helping me to advance my dream to spread the spirit of compassion among the peoples of the world through the publication of the Pacific World."*

-- Excerpt from "History and Remembrance" by the late Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata Founder, Mitutoyo Corporation and Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK). Read entire essay online.

Learn more about Pacific World, its history, and how to subscribe and read online at: [shin-ibs.edu/publications/pacific-world/](http://shin-ibs.edu/publications/pacific-world/)

## BCA Endowment Foundation President's Letter - 2016 Annual Report

Charles Ozaki,  
President,  
BCA  
Endowment  
Foundation



Dear BCA Members and Friends:

On behalf of donors, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), and numerous affiliated groups, the Buddhist Churches of America Endowment Foundation invests funds in equities, real assets, and bonds to generate income and grow assets. Funds are typically invested long term in order to benefit from the growth of the economy, which ebbs and flows over time but grows overall. The financial market was negative in 2015 but the growth in 2016 has resulted in the Dow Jones Industrial Average reaching 20,000. The Dow was at 12,622 ten years ago and at 12,633 five years ago. During these periods of growth, the market experienced major swings up and down.

The BCA Endowment Foundation places its investments with a financial advisor, Angeles Investment Advisors. Angeles' strategy is to manage the risk of investing through selecting investments managed by

knowledgeable groups of professionals that have shown the ability to mitigate market risks. While this strategy does not provide returns at the highest levels, it does minimize losses during downward swings in the market. This moderate approach has resulted in Angeles exceeding its benchmarks since it was retained, and has achieved returns in 2016 of 6.9% in the Growth Fund, 6.5% in the Growth and Income Fund and 4.5% in the Income Fund.

Over the last eight years, 23 affiliated groups have chosen to establish custodial investment accounts with the BCA Endowment Foundation, which has resulted in more investment earnings for them than in prior years. The BCA Endowment Foundation charges an annual administrative fee to manage investment deposits, but as total deposits grow, the fee goes down as costs are shared over a larger base of invested funds. If your group or temple is looking for investment alternatives, please consider the BCA Endowment Foundation.

The BCA Endowment Foundation received a total of \$563,252 in donations in 2016, disbursed \$1,324,041 to BCA and IBS for programs, and experienced a net gain of \$1,909,535 on investments. Of the donations received, \$51,100 was contributed towards permanent income-producing endowments, and \$487,322 was distributed for programs.

The BCA, IBS, and BCA Endowment Foundation are continuing to work together in a joint effort to raise funds. The BCA Joint Development Committee has initiated several coordinated fundraising efforts.

The BCA Endowment Foundation respectfully asks that all members and friends consider supporting the important work of the BCA and IBS. Please contribute when you have an opportunity to do so. If you need assistance, contact Hideaki Mizuno, Executive Director of the BCA Endowment Foundation.

In Gassho,  
Charles Ozaki, President,  
BCA Endowment Foundation

## Rev. Hirano

Continued from Front Page

arrested or incarcerated. It was later proven that Executive Order 9066 was a targeted assault against the successful Japanese American farmers on the West Coast to force them to sell their farms and property for pennies on the dollar. It's certainly curious how the seven Islamic nations in the current executive order excludes countries such as Saudi Arabia where President Trump's family has many business interests.

As American citizens, it is our duty to question what our leaders present to us as "law." This is the basis for democracy that we hold dearly in these United States of America.

In Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, there is also an "Executive Order": it is the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha. I began with the translation of this Primal Vow, or *hongan*—the 18th vow of Dharmakara Bodhisattva, who became Amida Buddha upon fulfillment of all his 48 vows. Within these vows, he explains who will be allowed into his country, the Pure Land, "Jodo." In the 18th vow, there is an exclusion clause that specifies the five deadly transgressions. They are listed, not to exclude anyone, but

to bring to mindful attention that we are all capable of these transgressions. In the *Kyogyoshinsho*, on page 38 of the *Collected Works of Shinran*, vol. I, Shinran explains the meaning of *Namo Amida Butsu*:

From these passages we see that the word *Namu* means to take refuge. In the term to take refuge (*kimyo*), *ki* means to arrive at. Further, it is used in compounds to mean to yield joyfully to (*kietsu*), and to take shelter in (*kisai*). *Myo* means to act, to invite, to command, to teach, path, message, to devise, to summon. Thus, *kimyo* is the command of the Primal Vow calling to and summoning us.

This call of the Infinite could be considered the "executive order" of Amida Buddha. It is an executive order regarding immigration into the Pure Land. Shinran Shonin in *Tannisho*, chapter II explains to us why he accepts this order (*chokumei*). However, even this executive order is something that we should not blindly accept. If we are told to question the executive order of Amida Buddha, should we not question the executive order of the President of the United States? Given our history as a predominantly Japanese American organization that has suffered through past executive orders; given that we have suffered as a result of

legislation based upon religion, have we not had enough experience of painful and dire consequences that we should not question these types of laws? I personally reject all laws based upon discrimination of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. To stand silent at this time is to accept, if not acquiesce to, this bigoted agenda. Have we forgotten that as Japanese American Buddhists in 2017, that our history is deeply rooted in previous generations who spoke up in our defense, who fought courageously in World War II because they believed in democracy, equality, and justice for all? My personal beliefs are based upon my understanding of the teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. This is now up to you, and this generation, for serious reconsideration, to accept or reject.

On August 10, 1988, The Civil Liberties Act was signed into law: The US Government issued an official apology to the Japanese American community for its unlawful transgressions. This apology is much appreciated, but this does not mean blind acceptance of blatant discrimination against the seven countries that Trump administration has imposed. I believe this teaches us how we must not forget, or history will repeat itself.



# 法輪

2017年3月号

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forWOD:WODeditor@bcahq.org

二〇一七年度教化標語

「まことの人生を  
歩もう」

あの記事をもう一度!

法輪のバックナンバーがBCA  
ウェブサイトにて読めます。  
<http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/about-us/wheel-of-dharma>

## イーストミッドウェスト

1月25日(土)にロサンゼルス別院において、IBS、仏教教育部、南部教区、真宗センターの共催による、冬季パシフィックセミナーが行われた。テーマは昨年引き続き「East meets West」で、参加者が西本願寺と東本願寺の教えの相違点を学び、お互いの真宗理解を深めることを目的としている。昨年は同テーマで、東西本願寺の僧侶や研究者による講義が行われ好評を博した。今回は約250名の参加があり、南部教区の開教使と東本願寺の開教使らによる法話大会、ダルマソンが行われた。オープニング



Winter Pacific Seminar



Dharmathon for Japanese speakers at L.A Betsuin

サーピスでは、梅津総長と大谷派北米開教監督およびロサンゼルス東本願寺別院輪番の伊東憲昭師が挨拶をした。サーピス後、日本語と英語とにわかれ、計21名の僧侶による法話がなされた。日本語法話をつとめた開教使は「みなさん熱心にお聴

聞されてました。1月なのでお堂は寒かったですが、熱気がありました。」と、法話にもおのずと熱がこもった。参加者は「こんなに多くのご法話を聞いたのは初めてです。いろんな先生がおられて、いろんなお話を聞けるのはとても楽しいです。おもわずお念仏がでてるのでとてもありがたいです。またぜひ開催してほしいです。」と聞法のご縁を喜んだ。セミナーでの法話はYou Tube (BCA Center for Buddhist Education) で視聴できます。

## ウエイクアップー西北部教区

2月17日から19日の三日間、トゥクウィラのダブルトゥリーホテルにおいて、第七十回西北部教区仏教徒大会が行われた。タコマ仏教会のホストにより、テーマは「ウエイクアップ」ゲストスピーカーにオレンジ郡仏教会の原田マーヴィン開教使をむかえ、約360名の参加があった。

Rev. Kakihara and Rev. Harada



17日にはピンゴ、卓球大会、ウクレレ教室などで、門徒同士が親睦を深めた。18日は午前中に原田開教使による基調講演があり、午後からは分科会が開かれ、現役、引退開教使らがそれぞれワークショップや講義を行った。19日の閉会のサーピスでは、原田開教使とタコマ仏教会の柿原開教使が二人でパペットを使っての法話をし、

## 総長メッセージ

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

最近若い開教使と話していたら、謄写版(とうしゃばん)をしらないというのを聞いてびっくりしました。たった三十年ほど前ですが、仏教会の会報は鉄筆を使って、ワックスペーパーに手書きで記事を書いて、ミミオグラフという謄写版で印刷していたのを覚えています。その頃は手紙も郵便で送っていましたし、日本への航空便は往復二週間ほどかかっていたました。

私が渡辺総長の下で『法輪』を担当していた時には、ワープロというのがあり、それで記事を書き、印刷し、それを切り取り原板に貼り付けていたのがつい先日のように思い起こされます。

今は本当に便利になりました。スマートフォンというものが出てきて今年で十年になるそうです。このおかげで、どこにいても電話をかけられるし、カメラも不要となりました。それだけではなく、地図帳や本、百科事典も買う必要がなくなりました。音楽も聴けるし、映画も観ることができるようになりました。世界中のニュースが瞬時に手許にとけられる時代です。インターネットでみんながつながり、国体体制まで変えていくことができるようになりました。中には信用できない情報も多くあって、気をつけなければな

りませんが、科学技術の進歩には驚かされるばかりです。

振り返ってみますと、どうしたら幸せになるだろうかというのを追いついてきたのが私たちの歩みではないでしょうか。便利に、楽に、そしてできるだけ自分の思い通りになるようにと、周りを変えてきたのが私たちの歴史です。しかし、本当に今がいい時代なのでしょうか。私たちが夢見たことが実現しているのでしょうか。

お釈迦さまは、世の中は時代を経るにつれてだんだん悪くなるからおっしゃっておられます。そのことについては親鸞聖人も同じように考えておられたようです。私たちは、自分の愚かさに気づかず、自分の思いと違う人を批判し、家庭でまた社会や国の中で、争いが絶えないようになるのです。

自分にとって都合のよいことは善であり、都合の悪いことは悪であるというのがその元にあります。私たちの思いや判断はあてになるものではありません。「生きている」という思いも、本当は「生かされている」というべきでありましょう。そういう世界があり、そういう世界からの呼びかけに耳を傾けなければ、本当のいのちを生きていくことができないと、

多くの人が教えてくたさるのです。その呼びかけが南無阿彌陀仏ではないでしょうか。

三月には各地でお彼岸の法要が勤められます。是非、仏さまの世界、すなわち彼岸からの呼びかけを一緒に聞かせていただきましょう。



タイ人僧侶の従軍チャプレンと。Rev. Umezu and Buddhist chaplains