

WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

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2018 BCA National Council Meeting Convenes in Sacramento



Left photo: The 2018-2019 Buddhist Churches of America Executive Committee members are (left to right): Jeffery Matsuoka, Treasurer; Terri Omori, Vice President; Richard Stambul, President; Dr. Kent Matsuda, President-elect; Nancy Okada, Secretary; and Steven Terusaki, Vice President. Photo by Cathy Fujimori. Right photo: Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop (left) and Nancy Kimura, FBWA President (right) presented gifts of appreciation to recently retired ministers, Rev. Zuikei Taniguchi (second from right) and Rev. Nobuo Miyaji. Photo by Steve Ogata.



“Together in Gassho” was the theme of this year’s Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Ministers Association and National Council Meetings (NCM), hosted by the BCA Northern District at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Sacramento, CA from February 21-25. BCA delegates passed the annual budget, installed the Executive Committee, and resolved other BCA organizational business.

As in previous years, the NCM included Dharma-focused activities as well: a special chanting ritual and a Dharmathon (series of short Dharma talks) by BCA ministers; and a symposium sponsored by the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Center for Buddhist Education on “Religiosity and Social Consciousness in the BCA” with Dr. Tetsuden Kashima as the keynote speaker. More NCM coverage will appear in the April Wheel of Dharma.

220 Attend NW District Convention



Rev. Henry Adams (at the podium) delivers the keynote speech at the 71st NW District Buddhist Convention. Photo by Sophi Mosbrucker.

By Mari Haworth
Spokane Buddhist Temple

On February 16-18, 2018, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) 71st Northwest District Buddhist Convention was held in Spokane, Washington, with 220 people attending from NW District temples, Canada, and California. The attendees participated in 12 workshops given by NW District ministers and lay people, went to two services, and enjoyed a banquet with entertainment by Spokane Taiko. The Spokane Buddhist Temple sponsored the weekend, and 65 of their sangha members were enthusiastic volunteers at the Convention.

The theme for the Convention was “Coming Down The Mountain.” Rev. Kodo Umezu,

BCA Bishop, stated, “The theme for this year’s convention suggests that we should learn from the spiritual path of Shinran Shonin. After 20 years of intense monastic practice, Shinran Shonin realized his inability to become free of *bonno* (afflictions) and came down from Mt. Hiei to search for spiritual guidance. These were his first steps towards the *Nembutsu* way.

“This theme asks each of us to find out where we might be in our spiritual quest. It is our responsibility to discover the true meaning of our lives by turning to the teachings left for us to follow.”

During the closing service on the final day of the Conference, Rev. Kodo Umezu certified Eric Kerkove, a Spokane Buddhist Temple Sangha member, as a Minister’s Assistant.

Affirmation Ceremony at Ekoji Buddhist Temple



Buddhist Churches of America Bishop, Rev. Kodo Umezu (back row, fourth from left), performed a Kieshiki Affirmation Ceremony at Ekoji Buddhist Temple on Sunday, January 7, 2018. He was assisted by Resident Minister, Rev. Nariaki Hayashi (on his right), and Ken Nakamura (back row, far right). A diverse group of 21 sangha members received their Buddhist names, including Bob Shimokaji (left of Rev. Umezu), who was also certified as a minister’s assistant by Rev. Umezu on the same day.

BCA Representatives at Hawaii Giseikai

BCA Administrative Officer Gayle Noguchi and BCA Vice President, Steven Terusaki represented the Buddhist Churches of America at the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) 106th Giseikai Legislative Assembly held on February 9-10, 2018. Pictured from left to right are HHMH President Pieper Toyama, Steven Terusaki, Gayle Noguchi, and HHMH Bishop Eric Matsumoto. Photo by Robert Noguchi.





“Which is more important; your belongings or you?”

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

There are many Buddhist stories that we can share with people. I would like to share one of them with you this month.

One day, some young men and women were playing in a pool. A thief came from outside, took all of their clothes and jewelry and ran away. Seeing this, some of the young men got out of the pool and ran after the thief, but they lost him.

It so happened that Shakyamuni Buddha was nearby. They stopped and asked him if he saw a man running away with a bundle of clothes. They explained what had happened and asked him if he had seen the thief.

Shakyamuni Buddha, looking at these young men, asked them, “Which is more important; your belongings or your own lives?” They looked at each other and replied, “Our lives, of course!” Shakyamuni Buddha said to them, “Then, sit down here.” He continued, explaining how we pay a lot of attention to things that are not very important or crucial and hardly any attention to our lives. The men listened intently to what he had to say and became his disciples.

This story makes me think about my own life. I personally spend too much of



BCA Bishop, Rev. Kodo Umezu, performed a *Kieshiki Affirmation Ceremony* during the *Bodhi Day Service* at the *Spokane Buddhist Temple* on December 10, 2017. Seventeen sangha members received their Buddhist names. Photo by Mari Haworth.

my time watching TV, talking about political issues, thinking about the Buddhist Churches of America’s organizational issues, and other nonsense.

We pay too much attention to things that are not crucial to our true wellness. The Dharma urges us to pause and think about our lives: our lives, meaning our selves. Who are we? What is the purpose of our lives? Where are we going? Without

contemplating these fundamental issues of our lives, we cannot truly live.

What was it that Shakyamuni Buddha and Shinran Shonin wanted to share with us? Let us find it out by listening to the nembutsu teaching. During the O-Higan season, let us pay a little more attention to our lives, which are precious and irreplaceable. By doing so, we will be able to live with fulfillment and joy.

Are You An Evil Person?

By Rev. Yushi Mukojima, Mountain View Buddhist Temple



never run into anything. The fact that we bump into things all the time indicates that we are in darkness; namely, we live in the world of delusion and cannot see what is really in front of us. We have a tendency to believe without any doubt that, “I alone can see everything.” Because we walk assuredly everywhere as if we own the place, we who cannot actually see anything often bump into each other.

In Buddhism, the “world of darkness” refers to the foolishness which prevents us from seeing our true selves, which are full of self-centeredness. Selfishness can be divided into three minds. First, there is the mind of believing, which is certain that “I alone am always right.” Second, there is the mind that wants to have its own way in everything. And third is the mind that loves

only itself.

All of us are constantly confused by our selfish minds. Even if we are wrong, we cannot apologize. We take for granted the kindness of others, so we cannot show our thanks. And because we cannot forgive the faults of others, we always complain about them. It is our sad nature that when we accuse others, we brush aside our own shortcomings. We unconsciously see ourselves as the standard of justice, and this situation makes us angry.

In contrast, from the Jodo Shinshu point of view, an evil person refers to a humble person illumined by the light of wisdom who is aware that his or her true self is filled with self-centeredness and arrogance. An evil person in Jodo Shinshu is one who can reflect deeply on his foolish way of living that is ruled by selfishness. He lives cultivating the humble mind and the mind that respects others.

Because we are living in darkness, we tend to believe,

“I am a good person.” But a society established by good people can only be hellish.

A society which embraces the Nembutsu teaching is not a world full of arrogant good people who only judge other people and criticize other people’s faults. We need to become evil people—namely, those who are able to feel shame—who acknowledge our shortcomings and mistakes and are able to apologize to one another.

The Nembutsu teaching is the light of wisdom. Please remember that those who always try to see and reflect on their mistakes can visualize world peace; and those who always believe that they alone are right, are actually creating hell. Let us try to realize the precious world which is established by evil people; namely, a community and families filled with peace and harmony who rejoice in the light of Nembutsu!

Are you a good person? Or an evil person?

Refurbishing the Enmanji Buddhist Temple *Naijin*

The *naijin* (altar) at the Enmanji Buddhist Temple has served its Sangha for nearly 85 years. It has a beautiful, large shrine building and throne enshrining an image of Amida Buddha, with implements and adornments donated by devout members through the years. In late February 2018, staff from Kyoto’s Wakabayashi Buddhist Altar Company came to disassemble the altar with the help of Enmanji members so that it can be refurbished and have time to “rest and relax” for a few months in Kyoto, Japan.

Enmanji Buddhist Temple in Sebastopol, CA has a very unusual history. The 1933 Chicago World’s Fair Japanese exhibition included a unique building, built by the South Manchurian Railway Company, designed to resemble a 12th century Japanese Buddhist temple. At the

conclusion of the World’s Fair, through the efforts of the late Bishop Kenju Masuyama and Revs. Tansai Terakawa and Tokio Yamamori of the Buddhist Mission of North America (forerunner of the Buddhist Churches of America), the Manchurian Pavilion was offered to the BMNA and eventually became the *hondo* (main hall) for the Enmanji Buddhist Temple.

BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Hiroshi Abiko stated at the “Temporary Farewell Service” for the *naijin*, “It is time for a vacation for the ‘parent’ (*oya*) of the Enmanji Buddhist Temple.” The members gratefully decided to have the *naijin* refurbished so that it can continue to serve the Enmanji Sangha for many more years to come. Rededication of the altar is scheduled to take place in December of this year.



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Like the Buddhist
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President's Message: My 3 A.M. Meetings with Taiko and Shinran

By Ken Tanimoto, BCA President

Being the BCA President the last two years has been a rewarding as well as interesting journey. It has taken me to places I would have never gone to, and I have met many Sangha members who made me feel humbled by their dedication to the Dharma. I will never forget their generously taking time to talk to me about issues they felt were important. As BCA President, I felt my number one responsibility was to listen to the opinions of our Sangha members, new and old, of all ages.

The other day I was asked at a district council meeting what was the most important achievement I had accomplished as president. The question was hard to answer because I had never really thought about it. The truth of the matter is, it is very difficult to achieve anything great in

two short years.

What would I love to have achieved? I would have liked to solve the financial issues that BCA is constantly facing. I would have loved to find a way to increase all the temples' membership, offer full scholarships to those interested in entering the BCA ministry, hire more BCA staff to better operate the organization, hire a BCA youth director to develop our youth programs, and bring in a marketing specialist to help us spread the word of the Buddha's wish for peace and compassion.

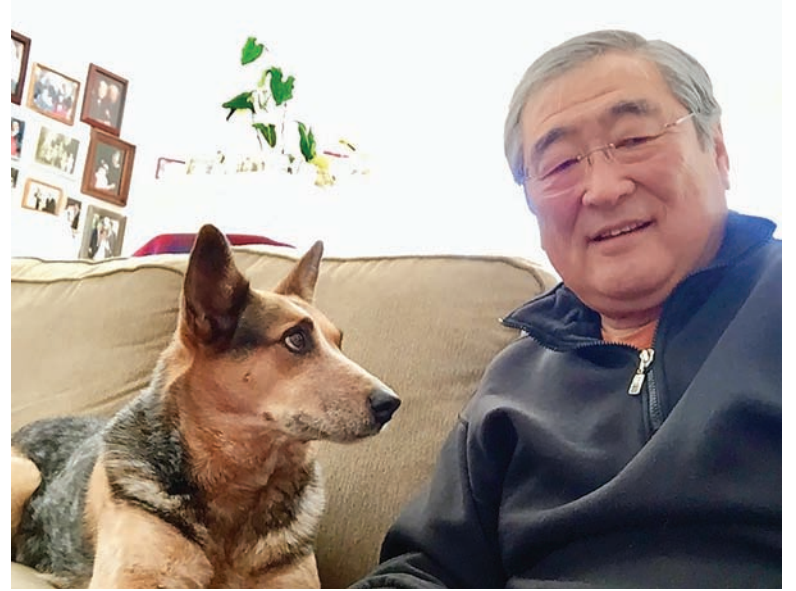
Through my travels to many temples I found that listening to what our members have to say, and sometimes addressing their needs, was my greatest achievement. I have always said BCA's most valuable assets are the "grass-roots" Sangha members who have committed much of their lives to the Teachings of the Dharma. My goal was to reach

out and hear their stories and to thank them for helping support their temples and the BCA.

But as you can imagine, two years was not enough time and I could not visit all of the BCA temples and members. Being president was sometimes a daunting mission that woke me up in the middle of the night many times, wishing and pondering how to help our temples and ministers. In the middle of the night, who could I turn to and talk about the issues that needed addressing?

This was when I would go to my best advisors. These two advisors have been a statue of Shinran given to me years ago by my father when we traveled together to Kyoto, and my dog, Taiko.

It may seem rather simplistic to think that a statue of Shinran and a dog could help me resolve my concerns; concerns that were all brought on by my own ego and selfish



desires. But for past two years, Shinran and Taiko have been my most patient supporters. Because neither talks to me, I have to work hard to find what is true. They sit patiently accepting me until eventually I find my own truths.

This past January when I traveled with Bishop Umezu for a once-in-a-lifetime experi-

ence of the Hoonko Service at the Nishi Hongwanji, I bought a similar statue of Shinran and gave it to our next BCA President, Rick Stambul. I know Shinran will also guide Rick to listen to Buddha's wisdom and guidance in helping you and your temple find joy within the Nembutsu.

In gratitude to everyone.

Do You Have a Home Altar?



By Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara,
Berkeley Buddhist Temple



which we usually overlook. When we realize this reality of our lives, we could come to live more gratefully or appreciatively, couldn't we?

Facing a home altar enshrining the Buddha's image, we might remember our loved ones who passed away before us. According to the Jodo Shinshu teaching, they are now Buddhas and bodhisattvas who are guiding and embracing us from the realm of nirvana. Although it is hard to notice their guidance in our busy everyday lives, the home altar space allows us to do so. When you quietly sit there and mindfully say the *Nembustu*, "*Namo Amidabustu*," you are listening to their voices.

For those who already have a home altar, please take good care of it, especially if you inherited it from your parents or grandparents. It must have been a special place for them. As parents or grandparents, they might have even thought of you, putting their hands together toward the same *obutsudan*. It is not just a mysterious box, but it is an important thing that enriches your inner and spiritual life at home, inherited from your ancestors.

For those who do not have a home altar yet, I strongly recommend getting one because of those benefits. The good thing is that you don't need to get a permit from the city to add this special space to your home!

I have three sons: Takato, Eight and Hiroto. At home they know where to go when they are hungry. They usually open the refrigerator or pantry to find food. When they get sleepy at night, they know where to go. They go to their beds to sleep. In our homes, there are places for specific purposes. Is there a place in your house that provides spiritual enrichment or fulfillment?

In the tradition of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, it is encouraged to have a home altar (Jpn. *butsudan* or *obutsudan*). Sitting in front of a statue or image of Amida Buddha, we reflect upon ourselves. It is okay to just sit there quietly. In the Light of Amida Buddha, especially in the evening time, we can also check in on what we have done or how we have lived that day. When we humbly and honestly look at ourselves, illumined by the Light, we might discover "shadows" of ourselves; that is, our own greed, anger and ignorance. These shadows make us suffer and give trouble to others. Such discoveries could lead us to more humble and harmonious lives, couldn't they? Or with the help of the Light of Amida Buddha, we might discover many things directly and indirectly supporting our lives

A Dana Lesson

By Igor Makasyuk, Chuck Dene, and Rev. Dean Koyama, Palo Alto Buddhist Temple

"But the true compassion of the Pure Land path consists in calling the Nembutsu, thereby quickly attaining buddhahood, and then benefiting all sentient beings with the heart of great compassion and kindness as fully as possible."

Shinran Shonin, *Tannisho*, IV.

Dana – the act of selfless giving – is an important Buddhist practice. Our Palo Alto Buddhist Temple recently had the opportunity to practice *dana*. We hosted families from the Home & Hope program during the week of December 10-17, 2017. This program provides a safe haven for families with children that have recently become homeless, while helping them regain long-term self-sufficiency. The Home & Hope program provides case management and mentorship including employment and educational support, financial literacy, housing search and placement support. They have a day center with home-style living areas, computers, kitchen, laundry, and shower facilities. Volunteer congregations and/or sanghas house the families for a week, providing dinner, breakfast and a "to go" lunch, as well as overnight sleeping accommodations.

A core group of Temple volunteers started learning how the program works half a year in advance by helping other host congregations. There was a lot to take care of before we could host. There were Board and Sangha presentations, discussions within the Temple groups and signing up for the different shifts and duties. Although the Home & Hope program provided cots for the guests to sleep on, we had to supply blankets, sheets and pillows, as well as toys and games for the kids. Normally the guests are housed in a big com-



Hosted family members enjoyed Temple activities, including taiko and crafts.

mon room like a gym where the individual families sleep in tents, but our facilities allowed them to use separate classrooms, giving them privacy which they really appreciated.

It was truly heartwarming to see how our sangha responded to this initiative. We are so grateful to our members who stepped up and took on all segments of work – from preparation to day-to-day operation. More than sixty Temple members enthusiastically came together to collect everything needed for the week. Cooking was taken on by the organizations of the Temple – the Dharma School, Buddhist Education and Religion Coordination Committee, *Yuwakai*, Buddhist Women's Association, and Junior Young Buddhists' Association. *Yuwakai* Helping Hands made lovely blankets, hats, and scarves to give as gifts to our guests.

We hosted four families with eight kids ranging in age from two to 14 years. We had meals together and it was wonderful to see how quickly our guests felt at home. They appreciated the opportunity to observe and experience some of the Temple activities like taiko and crafts.

We enjoyed watching the children play just as children do – without a worry in the world, despite their circumstances. Hopefully the parents felt somewhat at ease knowing that their children were being safely cared for and that they did not have to worry about their next meal, and most importantly, knowing that they were not alone.

Imagine how it would feel if life changed in an instant and your world crumbled around you. Our eyes were opened to a reality that we hopefully will

Continued on Page 6



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

This is part one of a two-part article written by Tenkei Roshi, founder of the Zen River Monastery in the Netherlands. Tenkei Roshi and Rev. Jerry Hirano met over 20 years ago in Salt Lake City, and they have maintained a Dharma friendship ever since. In his article, Tenkei Roshi talks about *jiriki* (self-power) and *tariki* (Other-power) as they relate to Zen practice and Jodo Shinshu. Part two will appear in the April issue.

Faith from Within and Without

By Roshi Tenkei Coppins, Zen River Temple, Netherlands

At Zen River, we often talk about Zen practice as a way to find one's specific function in life. According to the Mahayana tradition, we all have something to offer to this world, even though we may be confused about what that could be. Everyone has buddha-nature, which means that each one of us



Tenkei Roshi and Rev. Jerry Hirano

is endowed with excellent bodhisattva qualities. But those qualities are not always apparent or wisely used, and they can flourish only if we are willing to let go of the highly conditioned narratives we have of ourselves and others. This process involves challenging and unexpected yet enlightening transformations that over time allow for more flexibility, giving us a better sense of how to navigate life with wisdom and compassion. It's no wonder Buddhist practitioners are called "Followers of The Way."

The Western approach to Zen usually emphasizes individual responsibility: "Nobody is going to practice for me; I have to do it. I have to sit many hours a day, make bows, recite sutras, follow the precepts, and realize The Way for myself. Ultimately, it's all up to me." However true this may be, there is a lot of 'I' and 'me' in this approach, and that can become a hindrance in itself. Jodo Shinshu, a form of Pure Land Buddhism that is also known as Shin Buddhism, refers to this as *jiriki*, or 'self-power', and contrasts it to *tariki*, or other-power – meaning the reliance on Amida Buddha. It emphasizes the basic Mahayana tenet that, indeed, each one of us may someday experience enlightenment, but only if we are willing to ask for help. *Shin* means 'faith', and Shinran (1173-1263), the founder of Shin Buddhism, made faith the foundation of his teaching. According to him, we live in a degenerate age of the dharma, far removed from Shakyamuni's life, and are therefore unable to realize the Way all by ourselves. Fortunately, we can call upon Amida Buddha, who is happy to welcome us into his Western Paradise where conditions are much more beneficial for attaining realization. That is why Shin Buddhism has a strong devotional character and relying on *jiriki* is seen as a form of pride.

This approach has more in common with the Zen teaching of Dogen Zenji than many of us may realize. In *Genjo-koan*, he clearly states that the 'I' we usually identify with is not the one who can become enlightened; in fact, it is the one we are supposed to forget! What is required is a leap of faith into the unknown. Interestingly, Dogen was a contemporary of Shinran and both had a Tendai background. Some scholars even believe that they may have met.

It is indeed fruitful to compare the approaches of Zen and Shin Buddhism, as I have often noticed in conversation with Rev. Jerry Hirano, the head priest of the Shin Buddhist Temple in Salt Lake City. He became a close friend when Myoho Sensei and I lived there in the nineties, and since then we've maintained an ongoing discussion on exactly this topic. I saw him again last September after the inauguration of the new zendo of Senseis Musho and Mugaku in Southern Utah. Even though Rev. Jerry and I often talk about the same thing, it is always exciting because we approach it from very different, almost opposite directions. I tend to emphasize the importance of *jiriki*, taking it as our individual responsibility to practice, while he relies more on *tariki*, and often expresses his faith in Amida Buddha. But we always end up finding a dynamic common ground that honors and clarifies the need for both aspects.

Perhaps Zen is for intense people; for those who are determined to try the impossible. We are encouraged to do everything we can to get enlightened – the *Sandokai* tells us not to waste any time by night or day – until the self is totally exhausted and gives up. That seems to be our policy. It may take a long time, but one day you simply run out of steam and throw in the towel. In a way, the 'I' destroys the 'I'. Yet, in my experience, if you follow through on the instructions of an experienced master, you don't end up feeling diminished or depressed, but actually fulfilled, as if you are suddenly blessed with immense grace, joy, and appreciation. In Shin Buddhism, those qualities are seen as coming directly from Amida Buddha. So we might ask, "Why not put all of one's faith in him from the very beginning? It would save a lot of trouble!" Rev. Jerry is one of the happiest and open-minded people I have ever met; and in terms of faith, he is definitely my great example. But he is also very energetic and works hard for his community. He actually seems to have a lot of positive *jiriki*. So I always wonder how our practice can be inspired by faith from within *as well as* by faith from without. Where can we find Amida Buddha in Zen? He is said to radiate light that can be found in everything and everyone. The question is do we see it? Where is our *tariki*?

"I tend to emphasize the importance of *jiriki*, taking it as our individual responsibility to practice, while [Rev. Hirano] relies more on *tariki*, and often expresses his faith in Amida Buddha. But we always end up finding a dynamic common ground that honors and clarifies the need for both aspects."

– Tenkei Roshi

Rev. Jerry visited Zen River with his wife Carmela last summer on the day of *Hossenshiki* for Joost Fushin Blom. He told me after the ceremony that he was very impressed and deeply moved by not only the sincerity of Fushin's presentation, but also by the wholehearted support he received from the sangha. He called that support a good example of *tariki*. Perhaps Zen indeed has more in common with Shin Buddhism than we may have thought. Obviously, our environment has great influence on our practice; the place and the people around us can be an inspiration or a turn-off. Each place has its own character, too. Buildings and rooms are like faces; they can be hospitable or forbidding. Ideally speaking, a zendo is designed so that you really feel invited to sit down. And in the zendo of Zen River, you are actually never alone. Even if you would enter just by yourself, the beautiful statue of Manjushri happily welcomes you in. It has a strong presence, and is full of secrets. The statue is hollow, with a small opening and a lid on the bottom. Hojo-san (Junyu Kuroda Roshi) donated this Manjushri at the inauguration of our zendo in 2012. He, and the two Chinese masters who conducted the Eye-Opening ceremony, brought tightly-rolled little scrolls inscribed with special messages in calligraphy. These were inserted into the statue beforehand. This may explain some of the magic that one can feel upon entering our zendo. We are reminded that we are not the first ones, nor the only ones, who sit down and turn our light inward. All the buddhas and bodhisattvas are there to support us.

To be continued

Let's Meet at "Intersections!"

By Stacy Uyeda, 2018 FDSTL Conference Chairperson



The Federation of Dharma School Teachers League (FDSTL) has planned an exciting agenda for the 2018 Conference, which will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Foster City, California, from April 27 to 29. This year's annual conference is hosted by the Bay District Dharma School Teachers League.

The Conference Committee is thrilled to have Rev. Henry Adams of San Mateo Buddhist Temple opening the event on Saturday, April 28. His keynote address will connect to the day's workshops, presentations, and discussions.

During the day, conference participants will have the opportunity to think about shifting identities and our particular roles in our own temple communities. The workshop will introduce the concept of "intersectionality," which proposes that people can be at a social disadvantage from multiple sources of oppression, or suffering. Participants also will get an overview of the concept of implicit bias by Ms. Camille Pating of Buddhist Church of San Francisco and Ms. Joyce Oishi of Berkeley Buddhist Temple, and how the Buddhist concepts of mindfulness and compassion can help us cut through that bias. Finally, attendees will have a chance to discuss connections between Shinran Shonin's life and our Dharma School students' daily experiences.

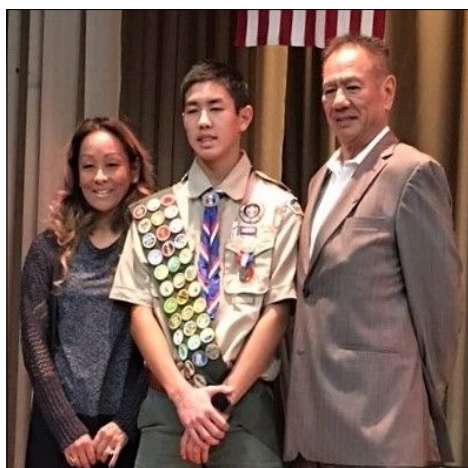
After a buffet dinner, conference participants will have the opportunity to re-connect with old friends and make new ones during the evening workshops, which will include bon odori dancing, haiku writing, karaoke, and more!

The FDSTL 2018 Conference is open to everyone, not just Dharma School teachers! All sangha members are invited to learn how to share the Dharma with children of all ages. For more information, please contact Mr. Carl Yanari, FDSTL President, at: fdstl2018conference@gmail.com. Registration material (which includes the schedule and hotel information) can be found online at: bcadharmaschool.wikispaces.com/FDSTL+2018+Conference or visit buddhistchurchesofamerica.org and scroll down to the "Intersections" banner.

Chad Masashi Wong Earns Eagle Scout Award

By Bobby Tanaka, Buddhist Church of Sacramento

On January 7, 2018, Chad Masashi Wong of Boy Scout Troop 50, sponsored by the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, was awarded the Eagle Scout Award at a special court of honor. To earn the highest rank in Boy Scouts, Chad completed 34 merit badges, served as Den Chief for two years and Patrol Leader for one year, and organized and led an Eagle Scout service project, which was refurbishing storage cabinets in four classrooms at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento. His project logged a total of 305 hours. After graduating from high school in June 2018, Chad plans to attend college and study business and marketing. Chad is the son of Stan and Florence Wong and grandson of Molly Oto.



Chad Masashi Wong at the special Court of Honor with parents Stan and Florence Wong.



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

TECHNOBUDDHA CONFERENCE SYMPATHY & EMPATHY March 9-11, 2018



The 11th Annual TechnoBuddha Conference at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley is quickly approaching! On March 9-11, attendees can explore sympathy and empathy with our keynote speaker, Rev. Candice Shibata; attend practical workshops on nutrition, meditation, calligraphy, and tea etiquette; or dive into some of our more Buddhist-focused workshops including *The Joy of Impermanence*, *Buddhism in Prisons*, and a presentation from Buddhist Global Relief. And don't miss a special writing workshop on the Angry Asian Buddhist blog dedicated to our fellow TechnoBuddha attendee, the late Aaron Lee. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Registration officially closed on February 23. For inquiries on the conference, please contact chairs@technobuddhaconference.org. For more information please visit our website at technobuddhaconference.org or our Facebook page at facebook.com/technobuddha.conference.

2018 BCA Educational Events

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

March 9-11 ~ 11th Annual TechnoBuddha Conference: "Sympathy & Empathy." Keynote speaker: Rev. Candice Shibata. For ages 21-39.

March 24 ~ Bay District Buddhist Women's League Ecology Workshop: "Mottainai," at Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, 2751 Louis Road, Palo Alto, CA, 8:30 am-3 pm, \$30 includes continental breakfast and lunch. *Mottainai* means "don't be wasteful." Visit pabt.org and register by March 10.

March 26-30 ~ Gathering to Read *Thirty Verses of Vasabandu*. A five-day seminar on "consciousness only" thought in the Mahayana tradition. Presented in Japanese by Professor Koitsu Yokoyama, professor emeritus, Rikkyo University. **Registrants must be fluent in Japanese.** Registration: \$300, includes lectures and meals. Register online at buddhistchurchesofamerica.org.

April 5-7 ~ Spring Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. Talks include *Tannisho* with Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto; Seven Patriarchs: Vasubandhu with Rev. Kiyu Kuwahara, and Chanting with Rev. Anan Hatanaka.

April 20 ~ International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP) begins. Three ministers from Japan, Rev. Etsuko Mikame, Rev. Hibiki Murakami, and Rev. Noritaka Imada will begin a three-month training. Sponsored by the Hongwanji Office.

April 25-27 ~ Ministers' Continuing Education (MCE) Seminar. Dr. Mark Blum on Zendo and Shinran; Rev. Akinori Imai on his translation of *Pure Land Thought as Mahayana Buddhism*; and open discussion sessions.

April 27-29 ~ FDSTL Conference: "Intersections" in Foster City, CA. Contact Carl Yanari at fdstl2018conference@gmail.com. Registration and schedule available at buddhistchurchesofamerica.org; scroll down for flyer and links.

SAVE THE DATE:

July 20-21 ~ Summer Pacific Seminar, "What is Enlightenment?" Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Jerome Ducor, Shingyoji Temple, Geneva, Switzerland. More details to come. Co-sponsored by IBS and CBE.

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

All BCA High School Youth are invited to...

BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA

SUMMER YOUTH RETREAT

Dharma
Teachings

Sangha
Friends

When? July 1 - 7, 2018

Where? Jodo Shinshu Center, Berkeley CA

Who? BCA high school youth ages 15-18

Leadership
Buddha

Registration Fee: \$300 (Includes lodging & meals) Application by April 30, 2018
For more information, contact your local temple or go to:
www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org Email: cbe@bcahq.org Phone: (510) 809-1426

Living the dynamic life of the Nembutsu

Gardena Buddhist Church Holds Annual Seijinshiki Coming-of-Age Ceremony



Front row: Rev. Sala Sekiya, Kirstin Kita, Michelle Kozai, Samantha Omiya, Sonoma Saito, Rev. John Iwohara. Back row: Nicole Kozai, Morgan Gee, Morris Saito, and Katelyn Morimoto.

The Gardena Buddhist Church held their annual *Seijinshiki* on January 14, a coming-of-age ceremony typically held in Japan in the month of January. It is when a person verifies at the shrine or temple that they have become a full contributor to society.

This year's participants were Morgan Gee, Kristin Kita, Michelle Kozai, Nicole Kozai, Katelyn Morimoto, Samantha Omiya, Morris Saito, and Sonoma Saito.

Certificates and commemorative gifts from the church were presented during the ceremony, which was officiated by the head minister, Rev. John Iwohara, with assistance provided by Rev. Sala Sekiya, assistant minister of the church. Messages of congratulations were delivered by Rev. Iwohara and Church President Nadine Kakimoto. The Church chairperson for the ceremony was Ms. Zia Allen.

Following the ceremony, the participants and their families were presented with a brief history of the tea ceremony and instructed in the proper performance of the ceremony in the church's Japanese tea room. Participants from the Keiwakai Group of the Omotesenke School of Tea Ceremony were instructor Kay Sokei Inose, Chigusa Shibasaki, Maki Murakoshi with her daughter Momo Murakoshi, and Sharon Goto with her daughter Ella Kiriya. *Okashi* (confectionary) was served to each participant as well as a *chawan* (teacup) of *usucha* (matcha tea).

Local Temple Events

*Programs will be held at local venues listed in the program description.
See listings for contact information.*

March 10 ~ Wisdom & Compassion: Buddhism for Our Time. East Bay Tri-Temple Dharmanar. Saturdays, 2-4 pm, March 10 at Buddhist Church of Oakland (BCO), April 14 at Buddhist Temple of Alameda, May 5 at BCO. Are you interested in discussing how Buddhism relates to our current world and times? This series of four seminars (which began in February) will take place at three BCA temples with a short service before and three ministers speaking at each. Registration Fee: \$30 for all four sessions. Contact: Rev. Harry Bridge (Oakland) revharry3@gmail.com (510) 832-5988; Rev. Dennis Fujimoto (Alameda) revdjoshin@gmail.com (510) 522-5243; or Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara (Berkeley) kkuwahara@berkeleysangha.org (510) 841-1356.

April 29 ~ Seminar with Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka, 1-4:30 pm at Enmanji Buddhist Temple, 1200 Gravenstein Hwy S., Sebastopol, CA, (707) 823-2252. Intro to Shin Buddhism in America; The Nature of Shin Awakening; and The Way of Naturalness. Registration details at enmanjibuddhisttemple.org under "Events."



Letter from the BCA Endowment Foundation Board President

By Charles Ozaki, President, BCA Endowment Foundation

Dear BCA Members and Friends:

The Buddhist Churches of America Endowment Foundation (BCAEF) continues to invest funds in equities, real assets and bonds to generate income and grow assets for donors, BCA, Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), numerous affiliated groups and temples. Funds are invested long term in order to benefit from growth in the financial markets over time. The DOW Jones Industrial Average was around 20,000 a year ago and it now has reached over 26,000 in 2018. Although this type of growth cannot be depended on, it does come routinely over time and can only be enjoyed if funds are invested in the market when growth occurs.

BCAEF investments are placed with Angeles Investment Advisors who select investments managed by successful groups of professionals that have shown the ability to perform over time. Through a moderate approach, Angeles has exceeded all of their benchmarks in 2017 and achieved returns of 16.8% in the Growth Fund, 13.1% in the Growth and Income Fund and 5.9% in the Income Fund that are maintained by the Endowment for investments.

There are now 24 affiliated groups that have chosen to establish custodial investment accounts with the BCAEF. The BCAEF has provided these groups with an opportunity to participate in having their investments professionally managed. If your group or temple is looking for investment alternatives, please consider this service provided by the BCAEF.

The BCAEF received a total of \$628,161 in donations in 2017, disbursed \$1,614,064 to BCA and IBS for programs and collected a net gain of \$4,097,511 on investments, which is more than double the results of 2016. Of the donations received, \$100,000 was contributed towards permanent income producing endowments and \$528,161 was given for programs.

The efforts of the Joint Development Committee to conduct coordinated fundraising on behalf of BCA, IBS and BCAEF are continuing to bear fruit as opportunities for members and friends to contribute are created and implemented.

Please participate in any way that you can and if you need any assistance contact Hideaki Mizuno, Executive Director at the BCA Endowment Foundation. He can be reached at hmizuno@bcabq.org or phone (415) 776-5068.

Thank You to 2017 IBS Donors

The Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) wishes to extend its heartfelt appreciation for the generous support of the 2017 Friends of IBS Annual Giving Program from August 1 to December 31, 2017. (The initial listing from January 1 to July 31 was published in the October issue of the *Wheel of Dharma*.)

As IBS continues to move forward to become recognized

as an accredited educational institution of higher learning, the continued support received is deeply appreciated.

For 2017 we have received in gifts a total of \$256,736 in the following categories: IBS Ministerial Scholarships, Chaplaincy/Research Scholarships, Institutional Development, Accreditation, Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist

Women's Associations Eshinni/Kakushinni Jodo Shinshu Studies Chair at IBS, additions to existing endowments (scholarships, library, etc.), and General Donations.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following persons and organizations for their generous gifts. We apologize for any errors. Please contact s.yamaoka@shin-ibs.edu with any corrections.

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BUTSU BUTSU...

By Brian Kensho Nagata,
Managing Editor

The other day I was having a serious discussion with a close friend who was in a terrible bind. I was trying to share a different perspective of things to help him out. But no matter what I said, he kept responding "I know, I know..."

Our conversation then turned to his situation of having to listen to and deal with people who think they know it all. And that was *exactly* what I was trying to point out to my friend was his mistake!

But then both of us broke into laughter, realizing that this is *exactly* what the Buddha is trying to teach *us*—we, ourselves, are walking around with blindfolds over our eyes, and that we each live in our own little "I know, I know" delusional world...

I'd felt my friend didn't understand the real situation and so I had tried to impart *my* wisdom to him because I know I know... *but* then on the other hand, what makes *me* so sure that I know I know?

What I *do* know and truly wish is that I could grasp the infinite wisdom and compassion of the Amida which embraces this imperfect and foolish me who really doesn't know... *Nam Man Da...*

Dana Lesson

Continued from Page 3



Each family hosted by the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple slept in a separate classroom.

never face. But we were reminded that homelessness is a reality that occurs right in our own neighborhood. The families helped us that week by reminding us how fortunate we are to have things that we often take for granted. They let us be part of their lives in the moment when they were vulnerable. Hopefully one day they, too, will be able to repay their debt of kindness and pay it forward to others in need.

That week was meaningful. Our guests moved on – to their next congregation, or maybe to their new home. The Temple volunteers were left with the sense of fulfillment and a deeper understanding of dana, learning as much from our guests as we gave. We sensed that we had just experienced the power of the Sacred Vow in action. How grateful we should be for the limitless compassion of Amida, whose Vow allows us to use the time we have in this life to extend kindness to other sentient beings.



BCA Dana Program Update

Thank you!

Dana Program donations received in 2017 exceeded \$127,000.

After deducting expenses and temple share payments of \$9,600, over \$115,000 will be available for the Buddhist Churches of America's 2018-2019 budget.

Thank you once again for your generous donations!

For information and online donation options

Visit: buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

Email: donate@bcabq.org

Phone: (415) 776-5600 x311

今月の法話

「LIFE in an America、アメリカでの開教伝道生活」



Rev. Koshin Ogui

BCA名誉開教使
小杭 好臣

今年4月、アメリカ生活を終えて日本に転住することになりました。

10月に渡米して、56年の歳月が流れてしまった。9日間の船旅をへて、サンフランシスコに着いたのが、昨日のように思いだされる。22歳の若き年齢であった。九州、佐賀の、専念寺の信徒は、明治時代に渡米しようとして、連れ戻された祖父、願海の生まれ代わりといって私を送り出してくれた。確かに、私は、海の向こうのアメリカという大きな国に、不思議に、幼少の頃から興味をもって

パークレーン教会で、研修を受けた後、ロスアンゼルス別院に着任した。毎週の英語による法話は、思うように出来ないし、会話もスムーズに通じないし、神経質となり、自動車事故を起こして、上司と、喧嘩をしてしまった。「役に立たない奴、生意気な奴、」ということで、京都の西本願寺の海外担当総務に通知をされたらしく、デンワで呼び出された。「頭がおかしくなった、と連絡があったが、ほんとか？」と聞かれた。「生まれた時から可笑しいです！」と応えたら、大声で笑われ、「大丈夫、短気と女には、気を着けろよ！」と言われて、デンワは終わった。

そのときの総務、湯川汝助師、現在、ワシントン州タコマで引退されている湯川孝紹師の父親、この人の受け取りが無かったら、今の私はアメリカには存在し得なかったといえよう。

その後、花山信勝、九代目総長の監督下におかれ、米国佛教団本部のブックストアで働く事となった。ここで、鈴木俊隆老師と出会った。当時、老師は、サンフランシスコ禅宗、桑港寺の住職であった。

情けない私の姿をみて、座禅に誘ってくださいました。「元氣になれば、如来さまも喜ばれるだろう」といわれた。不安な状態より立ち上がれない、情けない私は、自殺することばかりを考えていた。老師に相談すると、「急がなくても、必ず死ぬ、その時に死ねばよい！浄土真宗では、如来さんの命に生かされるといふのではないか！勝手に

自分の命と思うのは、思い上がりではないか！」と、一喝なっている。その声は、今も、私の中に生きています。老師と、座禅と、そして、ヒッピー族との体験談は、傑作で、尽きない話だが、他の機会に譲ろう。

1965年4月、オックスナード仏教会に赴任辞令を受けた。仏教会の信徒数は80余名、信徒の40パーセントは農業を営む農場主で、日系アメリカ人であった。聖堂の裏には鉄道線路が敷かれて居て、貨車が通過する度に、開教使住宅は揺れた。寝室の天井からは、時々、ゴミが落ちて来た。独身でよかったと思ってしまう。

同じ通りにメキシコ人用のレストランやバーが並んでいて、葬儀の最中にマリヤッチのトランペットが響いて、泣き笑いとなったこともあった。

3年過ぎて、仏教会も大きくなり、キリスト教会を購入し、新天地に移転した。アメリカで、アメリカ人に開教伝道をするなら、アメリカ東部で勉強しなさいという、日系二世の助言を得て、コネチカット州、エール大学神学部で修士、キリスト教を専攻した。

在学中に、友達になった神学部の生徒であり、カトリックの神父であった友人が恋に落ちた、悩んだ上に神父を止めて、大学の教授への道を選んだ。二人の結婚の儀式を依頼されたことは、いまでも記憶に新しい。仏教の教えは素晴らしいと感動してくれた神父であった。

大学の休みに、ニューヨークの町に出て、ニューヨーク仏教会を尋ね、関 法善先生にお会いする事が楽しみとなった。ニューハンプンの大学町からは2時間半のドライブであった。マンハッタンのタイムスクエアにたつと、道行く人々から世界の言葉が聞こえた。ニューヨーク市はまさしく世界の大キャピタルであった。関先生は、アリゾナ仏教会設立後、1936年、日系二世の運転する単発飛行機で、ロッキー山脈を越え、ニューヨークに飛来された。そのとき、懐に持参されたものが南無阿弥陀仏の六字の名号であったという。

1968年の夏休みに、シカゴから、中西部仏教会の創設者、河野行道先生、デンバーから、ロッキー山脈の親鸞聖人と称された、玉井好孝先生の3人の大先輩が揃い、同席する機会をえた。

河野先生が、「アメリカは、大きい！」と、いわれると、関先生が、「いや、世界は大きい！」。そして、「いや、阿弥陀如来の世界は、無限である！」と、玉井先生が笑われた。親鸞聖人や蓮如上人を伝統という檻の中から解放し、今、アメリカに、英語を話す宗祖として生きていられたら、何をされるのであろうか、と考えるなければいけないと、3人は同意された。仏教の教えも、念仏の教えも、大きく、広く、すべての人が納得し、感動するように説かなければならないと、同和される3人の姿に28歳の私は感動し、感激した。今も、強く印象に残って、私の試練と

1970年7月、辻 顕隆総長の辞令によってサンフランシスコ仏教会に着任し、7年間駐在した。禅宗、桑港寺の森山大行禅師、日蓮宗、法華寺の菅原隆岳上人、そして、浄土真宗の私は、3人の傑僧と評されて、よく飲んで、よく話した。宗派の違う3人が一緒に活躍できたことは大衆の敬意を得ることとなった。3人、其々、違っていたが、不思議にも仏法の中に一つになったといえよう。

サンフランシスコに在任中、離婚の体験をした。愛が怒りに変わる体験をした私は、深く反省し、初心に戻って、開教伝道に情熱を燃やす事にした。

辻総長に依頼して、1977年1月、オハイオ州クリーブランド仏教会に転任する事が出来た。37歳の時であった。日系アメリカ人を中心とした20余名の会員で、暖かく迎えてもらった。大半の日系人は、カリフォルニアに転住してしまっただけの事であった。

酷寒の冬を迎えていたクリーブランド、まずは、防寒のコートと長靴を買い、シャベルで、寺の回りの、雪かきから始めた。九州生まれの私にとって、雪かきは初めての体験であった。日曜日の礼拝は、14、5人の参拝者であった。

1年間は静かにして、何から始めていいのか思案することにした。10年続ければ、人は集まる、と、いう鈴木老師の声を心に聞いた。如来さまの命に生きる私の命と一喝され私には、酷寒の寒さも暖かかった。

10回のデンワの内、6回は仏教のメデイテイションについての問い合わせであった。始めは、浄土真宗では、メデイテイションはしなないと応えていたが、10人中、6人がこないとなれば、商売は、成り立たないと気づくことができた。

鈴木老師に手ほどきを受けた座禅を簡略にし、南無阿弥陀仏を公案として、私流のメデイテイションを始めた。不安と情熱に燃えたチャレンジであった。2年立った頃には、30余人の集まりとなった。

「暗中に模索することを生き甲斐とし、試行錯誤を恐れず！」という智慧ある言葉が私の指針となって勇気づけてくれた。「阿弥陀さんとは、誰なのか?」、「ChineseかJapaneseか、発音もできない言葉、ナモアミダブツを唱えて、悟りが開けるとか、佛に成るとか、お浄土に生まれるとか、冗談だろうか?」、「悟りなんか開けない煩惱だらけの人間だなんて、実に、ネガティブな理解のしかたで、情けない!」、「仏教は悟りへの教え、ポジティブで、勇気づけてくれる教えではないのか?」、「仏教は目覚める教えで、信ずる教えではないはずだ、」等々が問われた。

5年位経ったころには、70余名の集まりとなし、Zen-shin Sanghaという名前まで出来あがった。Junior Dharma Assistant, Senior Dharma Assistantというポジションの指導者が出来上がった。後日、BCA教団

兼任地のクリーブランドから、コロンバスまでは2時間半、コロンバスからミシガン州、デトロイトまでは3時間、そして、クリーブランドまでの帰りは3時間半、一ヶ月一回のドライブは危険を伴うときもあった。冬場は毛布持参のドライブであった。しかし、開教伝道が、心身で実感された15年であった。

1992年9月、イリノイ州、シカゴの中西部仏教会に転任、12年後、2004年4月、米国佛教団、13代開教総長として選出された。

「暗中に模索することを生き甲斐とし、試行錯誤をおそれず」を指針とし、大先輩、玉井好孝、関 法善、河野行道先生達が同意された、「親鸞聖人、蓮如上人を伝統の檻からだして、今、アメリカの地に生きていられたら、なにをされるのであろうか!」と、夢をもち、不安のなかにも情熱の中に突き進んだ8年間の総長職であった。引退後も、ワシントン州、ホワイト仏教会に6年駐在した。人の犠牲と、親切と、思いやりと、我慢にいかされた56年の開教使生活は終わりを迎えた。有難く、意義深いもので、合掌の他にみぢはない。

合掌

婦人会世界大会のポスター

2019年夏に第十六回浄土真宗本願寺派世界仏教婦人会大会がサンフランシスコで開催されるにあたり、ポスターやフライヤーが各仏教会に配布される。サンフランシスコ仏教会メンバーによって、サンフランシスコ各地に親鸞聖人が来られたことをイメージしたプロモーションビデオも製作され、大会への参加を呼びかけている。ビデオはYouTubeで見ることが出来る。
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IkhfC3wAh6w>

大会は2019年8月30日から9月1日に開催される。

第16回世界仏教婦人会大会
2019年8月30日-9月1日
カリフォルニア州・サンフランシスコ市
サンフランシスコ マリノット マーキー ホテル

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主催: 米国仏教団 仏教婦人会連盟

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二〇一八年度教化標語

「平和と調和」

あの記事をもう一度!

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2018年度総会が開催される

去る二月二十一日より二十五日までカリフォルニア州サクラメント市で米国仏教団開教使と年次総会が開催された。開教使では『開教使アシスタントプログラム』の新しいガイドラインが承認され、また任期満了に依り宇宿パトリシア師が平野ジェリー師に代わり議長に選出された。

続く総会では多くの議題が討議されたが、予算を除く主な争点はサンフランシスコ仏教団に隣接する本部の建物が古くなり、その改修に多くの費用がかかることから、浄土真宗セクターにその機能を移すという案が提示され、その是非が問われた。討議の結果、新しく委員会を結成し、教団のこれからの方向性を来年の総会までに示すということが決定された。

この会議の期間中、多くのプログラムも用意されて、二百名の参加者が多くのことを学ぶことができ喜ばれていた。晩餐会では、谷口瑞深開教使と宮地信雄開教使の二人が表彰され、長年の開教生活に感謝の気持ちがおくられた。また、新しく開教のチームに加わったタコマ仏教団の宮地崇師とオレンジ郡仏教団のジョン・ターナー師の二人にも同じく教団と仏教婦人会連盟より『お衣』用にとギフトが贈られた。



National Council Meeting



Ministers Association Meeting

最終日には教団総永代経法要が厳修され、谷口瑞深名誉開教使による熱のこもったお取次がなされ、五十年を超え長い開教生活の思い出や、本願の真髓、これからの教団の将来への希望が語られた。そして最後に、リチャード・スタンプル会長をはじめとする新幹部の就任式が執り行われ、諸行事を成功裏に終了することができた。これらの行事の準備に力を注いだ北カリフォルニア教団の関係者に感謝決議が行われた。また、来年はアリゾナで総会が行われると南部教団の代表者から招待のアナウンスがなされた。

写真提供、Cathy Fujimori

教師を目指して

2月9日、10日に教師資格取得のための研修会が浄土真宗セクターで行われた。同研修会は得度を持った開教使アシスタントや将来開教使を志すIBSの生徒らが受講し、勅式作法や宗門法規、住職としての僧侶の心得など、教師資格を得るために必要な知識やスキルを習得する。IBSからの参加者は「ご法話の講義がとてもためになりました。お聴聞のときは、初めて聞くように聞く、自分だけに話されているように聞く、今生最後だと思ってしまうと聴聞の心得を教わりました。そして、ご法話をさせていたるときは、聴聞される方がそういう思いを持って聞いておられることを忘れないように。」と指導を受け、法話の大切さを深く心に刻んだ。同研修会は、昨年11月に第一回目が開催され、今回が二回目となる。今年9月にもう一度研修会を受講した後、11月に京都へ行き教師研修を受ける予定にしている。

お願い ～ダーナプログラム～

「ダーナ」という言葉をご存知ですか。元々はインドのパーリ語で「与える」とか「施す」ということです。仏さまに感謝の気持ちを表すのに「お布施」という言葉を使いますが、その元となる語が「ダーナ」です。

この言葉を冠した新しいプログラムが米国仏教団維持財団によって行なわれている「ダーナプログラム」です。これは数年前から実施されているプログラムですが、まだご存知でない方が多いので説明させていただきます。

従来教団の運営は各地の仏教会からの割り当て金と維持財団よりの支援で行われていました。それとは別に、個人個人が毎年25ドル以上を寄付する「サステイニング会員制度」や、仏教教育部の運営を援助する「500クラブ」があり、それぞれお願い状を各仏教会の会員に送り、それからの収入を教団の運営の一部としていました。

ところが、本部からいろいろな依頼状が送られ、わかりにくいということもあり、二つを一つにして「ダーナプログラム」という新しい形で、会員のみならず

総長コラム

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

お釈迦さまの時代のできごとを伝える説話が多くあります。今月は、その中の一つを紹介させていただきます。ある日、若い男女がプール遊んでいると、そこらへんに



脱ぎ捨てていた衣類やネックレスのような貴重品を持ち逃げしようとしている男がいました。それを見た若者数人が、すぐにプールから飛び出て、その男を追いかけつかまえようとしたが、途中で見失ってしまいました。そこにたまたまおられたのがお釈迦さまでした。若者たちはお釈迦さまに、怪しい人を見なかったかとたずねました。お釈迦さまは、興奮している若者たちに、「ちょっと待て、お

有縁の方のサポートをお願いすることになったのです。これによる収入は年次予算に組み込まれ、仏教教育部を含む、教団全体の活動を支援することになります。ちなみに今までは毎年10万ドル以上のご支援をいただき、仏教会への負担を減らしています。

このプログラムの特徴は、ご寄付される方が教団だけではなく、寄付金の半分を、援助したい仏教会を指定することで、その仏教会をも援助できるということです。例えば、クレジットカードもしくは銀行口座から毎月20ドル寄付するとしますと、全部を教団に寄付する場合は、240ドルが教団に行きますが、もしその半分をご自分の所属する仏教会か、またはサポートしたい仏教会に寄付する場合は、教団に120ドル、その指定された仏教会に120ドルが振り分けられます。教団と各仏教会がお互いに助け合える仕組みとなっています。

詳しくは、開教使または会長にお問い合わせください。コンピュータで米国仏教団のホームページから申し込むこともできます。どうか是非、ご協力、ご支援をお願いいたします。

ホームページのアドレス、<http://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/bca-dana-program/>

前たちは失った衣類や宝飾品と自分のどちらが大切かとたずねました。若者たちはお互いに顔を見合わせて異口同音に「それは自分のほうが大切だ」と答えたのです。お釈迦さまは、「では、お前たちはここに座りなさい。そして、なによりも大切な自分を探すのだ」とおっしゃって、教えを説かれたのです。もちろん、この若者たちはそれを機会に仏弟子とされたということですが。この話は昔の話ではありません。今の時代にも通じる話です。自分の毎日の生活を考えても、大して大事でもないことに一喜一憂しているのが現実です。スポーツのスコアがどうのこうの、トランプ大統領がこう言ったああ言った、株が上がった下がった、米国仏教団がどうした、人のうわさ、健康の心配、いろいろなことに心を巡らせていますが、後生の一大事にどれだけ私たちはここがけていられるのでしょうか。

お釈迦さまや親鸞さまが私たちに語りかけていてくださることは一体何でしょうか。人生で何が一番大切なことでしょうか。ちょうどお彼岸の季節です。一緒に仏さまの教えに耳をかたむけ、悔いのない一生をすごさせていただきます。