

WHEEL OF DHARMA

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LIVING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

Temples Share Innovations, Successes

BCA Executive Committee Hears Ideas, Ways Sanghas Are Adapting

By Jon Kawamoto
Editor, Wheel of Dharma

As life with COVID-19 becomes the new normal, BCA temples are learning how to not only adjust — and to thrive — with the virtual reality of Obon and bazaar festivals, fundraisers, funerals and Sunday services.

At a BCA Executive Committee meeting held via

Zoom on Sept. 27, more than 150 participants heard several innovative ideas and ways that temples, churches and Sanghas are adapting — and succeeding — in the current shelter-in-place environment.

“There may be something here, some nuggets that you take back to your own temple to think about in a way that could help Sangha engagement, of ways to think about putting together fundraising activities,” said BCA Vice President Steven Terusaki at the beginning of the two-hour meeting.

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Participants gathered for a group photo during the 70th Annual Southern District Jr. YBL Conference held Sept. 6 on Zoom. The virtual conference took the place of the in-person event that would have been staged in Phoenix, Arizona over the Labor Day weekend. (Courtesy of Kellie Yada).

SD Jr. YBL Holds Virtual Conference

Event Draws 150 Young Buddhists Throughout the West and Hawaii

By Hale Chiba, Emi Matsumoto
and Emily Sarashina
2020 Southern District
Jr. YBL Conference Co-chairs

The 2019-20 term for the Southern District Junior Young Buddhist League (SD Jr.

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Conference Renews Faith in Our Youth

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

On Sept. 6, I participated in the annual Southern District Jr. YBL conference. I have attended this conference for the past 34 years as a minister. And when I was a minister at



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Venice Is Creating Its Own 'Virtual Sangha'

Like MLB's Fan Cutouts, Temple 'Members' Sit, Lifelike, in Hondo

“Although we are physically apart for now, we will continue to practice compassion and stay connected together.”

— Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Resident Minister Rev. Kory Quon's Obon Dharma message to Keiro members

By Jerry Iseda
Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

The Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple continues to look for creative ways to keep its Sangha and community engaged during the pandemic.

The temple's latest venture is the creation of a “virtual Sangha” — custom cutouts (produced by sports merchandiser Fathead) of temple members and friends



Rev. Kory Quon of the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, in above photo, sits in a crowd of the “virtual Sangha” lifelike cutouts of temple members and friends, also shown in the photo below. The cutouts are similar to Major League Baseball's virtual fans in the stands for the 2020 season because of the pandemic. (Photos courtesy of Ron Gee)

in Dharma that are placed in the temple's Hondo. It is providing a means for people to “attend” services while the shelter in place remains in effect.

The idea for the virtual



Sangha came shortly after the temple began holding live-streaming services.

Rev. Kory Quon said he missed seeing actual faces in the Hondo, especially

during the Sutra chanting and Dharma message.

Coincidentally, Major League Baseball resumed its

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New BCA Music Committee Organizing

By Kemi Nakabayashi
Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple

The BCA Northwest District accepted a request earlier this summer from Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada to organize a new BCA Ad Hoc Music Committee.

This new effort is aimed at increasing and enhancing all types of music in temples and dis-

tricts and involving Sangha members of all ages.

Kemi Nakabayashi, service music coordinator at Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple, agreed to be the committee chairperson. Rinban Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki from the Seattle



Kemi Nakabayashi

Betsuin and Rev. Yuki Sugahara from Oregon Buddhist Temple are the ministerial advisers. Ex-officio members are Rev. Harada; Rev. Harry Bridge, chair of the BCA Ministers Association; and BCA President Dr. Kent Matsuda.

Reaching out to all BCA districts, the Music Committee has held two sizable Zoom meetings with more than 60 par-

ticipants each, including Dharma School representatives. This organizing group has prepared a BCA Ad Hoc Music Committee charter to present to the BCA National Board in December. Meanwhile, the subcommittees are brainstorming ideas and tasks for the future.

The stated purpose and functions of the Music

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A Proud Teacher

Marrie Yamashita of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple beams with pride over one of her former students — U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris, who she taught in second- and third-grade at Thousand Oaks Elementary in Berkeley. Yamashita is the daughter of the late Rev. Taigan Hata and her late husband was Rev. Kiyoshi Seishin Yamashita, of the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research in Berkeley. (Courtesy of Jon Kawamoto)



We Need to Wake Up and Do the Right Thing



By Rev. Matt Hamasaki
Buddhist Church of Sacramento

A little over a year ago, climate change activist Greta Thunberg wrote, “When haters go after your looks and differences, it means they have nowhere left to go. And then you know you’re winning! I have Asperger’s and that means I’m sometimes a bit different from the norm. And — given the right circumstances — being different is a superpower.” I look at the world around me today and I could not agree

more that right now we need something different. We need a change. And not only in how we treat our planet, our home, but in just about every aspect of our lives. For too long as a society we have been driven by selfishness, ignorance, and hate and it has eroded us to where we are now. While this may seem like an onerous task and a bleak outlook, from the Jodo Shinshu perspective, this sort of scenario is exactly what we needed to wake up and do the right thing. The most clichéd way of putting it might be like a phoenix rising from the ashes. From a less popular standpoint but still clichéd in the Jodo Shinshu circles, it is like ice melting into water: the more the ice, the more the water. Our failure to address our inadequacies has been built up so large over time that we are

now in a position not to just see the holes in our society but exasperated enough to demand something better. When I say demand, I do not mean to pass the buck to someone else. More than one issue has been perpetuated with that kind of thinking. I mean that we must demand it of ourselves. Perhaps if we were all Buddha, we could connect all the dots and recognize what we would have to do to create a better world. But alas, we are human and the only thing we are barely even capable of changing is our own actions.

Are we holding ourselves accountable for our choices, whether it is our activity or our indifference? Are we educating ourselves or making excuses for distracting ourselves from the suffering around us? Are we holding the people who represent us in leadership positions in every community we belong to or blindly following? These questions are difficult, and the answers are not absolute. But by asking them, we are finally stepping into the light. Amida Buddha exists as

We need a change. And not only in how we treat our planet, our home, but in just about every aspect of our lives. For too long as a society we have been driven by selfishness, ignorance, and hate and it has eroded us to where we are now.

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What Is the Meaning of ‘Legacy’?

One Definition: Anything Handed Down From the Past. as From an Ancestor or Predecessor; the Legacy of Ancient Rome



By Rev. John Iwohara
Gardena Buddhist Church

The above is one of the definitions for the term “legacy” as defined for us by Random House through its Dictionary.com website. I wanted to quote this definition because of how it seems to me that we have recently been changing the way that we use words like “legacy.” Although the sample sentence given in the definition is “the legacy of ancient Rome,” and more or less describes what we — the future — received from our past, the way that we tend to use the word legacy today is, “What will you do to establish your legacy?” or “What legacy do you hope to create?” Whereas the use of the word legacy in this context appears to

focus on what can be done in the present, it is probably more accurate to say that it is focused on the individual. If legacy, used in this way, is about the person, then the focus of legacy has changed. Instead of being focused on what has been handed down from a previous generation or culture, it is more focused on the potential future status of a particular person. In the original use of the word, individuals received and then participated in a legacy. It was not something that one consciously worked to create. A person can contribute toward a legacy, and there are certainly accomplishments that one can achieve within a legacy, but the focus was always on what was received. It was never something that an individual purposely created in the hopes of being remembered by the future. I wanted to share this because Shinran Shonin, the

founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, does speak about legacy. He frequently expresses his joy in being able to participate in the legacy of the Buddha-Dharma. He states, for example: *How joyous I am, Gutoku Shinran, disciple of Sakyamuni. Rare is it to come upon the sacred scriptures from the westward land of India and the commentaries of the masters of China and Japan, but now I have been able to encounter them. Rare is it to hear them, but already I have been able to hear. Reverently entrusting myself to the teaching, practice, and realization that are the true essence of the Pure Land way, I am especially aware of the profundity of the Tathagata’s benevolence. Here I rejoice in what I have heard and extol what I have attained.* — “CWS,” Page 4 (Passage from General Preface of the Ky-

ogyoshinsho) Further, in the concluding line of the “Shoshin Nenbutsu-ge,” Shinran Shonin writes: *With the same mind, all people of the present, whether monk or lay, Should rely wholly on the teachings of these venerable masters.* — “CWS,” Page 74 From the time Rennyo Shonin made the “Shoshin Nenbutsu-ge” part of the daily morning ritual at the Hongwanji, every time we chant it at any of our BCA temples we are reminding ourselves that right here and right now we are participating in and contributing toward the legacy of the Nenbutsu or Namo Amida Butsu. We, like Shinran Shonin, are able to “rejoice in what we have heard, and extol what we have attained.”

Rev. Kakuyei Tada, a 44-Year BCA Minister, Passes Away



Rev. Kakuyei Tada, who served 44 years as a minister with the BCA with several temples and churches, passed away on Sept. 27 at the age of 90 in Gardena, California. Because of the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic, a family service was held on Oct. 9.

Rev. Tada was born in Vancouver, Canada, the son of Rev. Kakuya Tada, a minister with the Buddhist Churches of Canada. His home temple Shogakuji is in Hyogo, Japan. He graduated from Ryukoku University in 1952. He also attended Toronto University, graduated from Sir George Williams University in Montreal (now Concordia University), and attended DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois. Rev. Tada received his Tokudo ordination in 1951 and his Kyoshi in 1955. He served the following churches and temples in the BCA: Midwest Buddhist Church; Seattle

Betsuin Buddhist Temple; Reedley Buddhist Church; Palo Alto Buddhist Temple; Buddhist Temple of San Diego; San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple; Oregon Buddhist Temple; and Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple. He retired from the BCA ministry in 2003. Before his service to the BCA,

Rev. Tada served the Buddhist Churches of Canada (currently Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temple of Canada) at the Toronto Buddhist Temple and Montreal Buddhist Temple. Rev. Tada is survived by his wife, Mrs. Tamiko Tada; a son, Stewart Tada; and a daughter, Santi Tada.

Correction

The Page 1 article in the October Wheel of Dharma titled, “Two Rivers and White Path’ Is Relevant in Time of Two Pandemics” by Rosalyn Dong stated that nearly 200,000 people in the United States have fallen victim to COVID-19. To date, more than 200,000 people have passed away.



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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The Recent BCA Zoom Meeting and Increasing BCA Membership



By Dr. Kent Matsuda
BCA President

On Sept. 27, the BCA Executive Committee held another Zoom meeting for temple leaders that dealt with innovative ways that temples were conducting funeral services, holding fundraisers, and helping community causes. We focused on how Seabrook Buddhist Temple in New Jersey held “drive- in” services for members. We showed how the Orange County Buddhist Church conducted a virtual funeral. We had representatives from the Sacramento Betsuin tell us how they conducted a telethon as a fundraiser in conjunction

with their Obon. Representatives from the Mountain View Buddhist Temple demonstrated what they did for their “Obon in a Box” concept. We saw the Midwest Buddhist Temple’s “Virtual Ginza Bazaar” in Chicago. We heard that the Oregon Buddhist Temple was planning on holding a virtual concert on Zoom as a fundraiser. Both the Buddhist Temple of San Diego and the Buddhist Church of Oakland held fundraisers to help bring food to their communities. If you missed this Zoom meeting, please contact Gayle Noguchi at BCA headquarters and get the link to the recorded session. It is extremely heartwarming and impressive to see our temples take the pandemic and the concept of sheltering in place and still be able to bring their sanghas together in an effort to help their members and the community at large. As the above temples demonstrated, it is possible to raise money this way. I know that the Buddhist Temple of Alameda has held outdoor services for their members and Ekoji is also planning a fundraiser.

FYI

A special category for new members under the age of 30 is being proposed and will be considered at the 2021 National Council meeting. Individual members under 30 would be charged \$50. Rick Stambul, immediate past BCA President, suggested the BCA waive the fee in the first year of this special membership. If you have any thoughts about this special member proposal, please contact BCA President Kent Matsuda at kmm.matsuda@sbcglobal.net or Gayle Noguchi at gnoguchi@bcahq.org. We would especially like to hear from those interested individuals under 30.

In November, the BCA Executive Committee is planning on holding a Zoom meeting on ways that temples can try to build their memberships during this pandemic. This will take place on Nov. 22, right before Thanksgiving. I know that this is a subject that is very dear to Rev. Harada, Bishop of the BCA. He has used very successful methods to help build the Orange County Buddhist Church into one of our larger BCA temples. Thus far, our Individual membership to the BCA has been growing. At the time I am writing this, we have 16 members who have joined. Each new individual member gets a copy of the Wheel of Dharma and Rev. Harada’s book, “Buddhism in Everyday Life.”

We have new members from the Twin Cities, Las Vegas, and Texas areas. Remember, member dues that come in through the Individual member program help to decrease the per member dues assessment that BCA uses for all other BCA members. As of the time that I am writing this, Jeff Matsuoka, our BCA treasurer, is working with his Budget and Finance Committee to try to get the 2021-2022 per member dues assessment to be less than what we passed at the 2020 BCA National Council Meeting in Renton, Washington. The Propagation and Membership Committee, under the leadership of Gary Mukai, will be bringing the concept of a special category for new members under the age of 30

to the 2021 National Council. This is the proposal to charge members who want to join the BCA as an Individual member \$50 a year if they are under 30 years old. Rick Stambul, our immediate past BCA President, suggested that we consider making the first year of this special membership class free. I would be interested if anyone under or near the age of 30 would be interested in such a concept. If you have thoughts about this special member category, please contact me at kmm.matsuda@sbcglobal.net or talk to Gayle Noguchi at BCA headquarters. Let me know if you would be interested in joining BCA if we had this special member category. I would be particularly interested in hearing from those who are under or near the age of 30. We want our temple memberships to grow, and we know that having younger members not only helps the temple, but keeps our thoughts closer to knowing what is important to the younger members. They will help shape what our temples will look like in our future.

What We Don’t Talk About



Editor’s Note: We often walk through our daily lives without realizing just how Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is working for us every second of each day. Sometimes it takes a student essay to rejuvenate the realization of just how intertwined Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is in our body and soul. Taylor Kawate of the Oxnard Buddhist Temple submitted the following essay. During the essay reading, Rev. Candice Shibata was touched by the depth and honesty of Taylor’s essay. Therefore, we would like to present his essay in its entirety. An accomplished Buddhist, scholar and karate competitor, Taylor is attending UCLA this fall to pursue studies in electrical engineering.

By Taylor Kawate
Oxnard Buddhist Temple

Twelve years. Even after 12 years of being a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, I have so many questions. While Buddhism is fasci-

nating, it isn’t the sutra chanting, glorious onajin, oshoko offerings, or even the Dharma talks that keep me going to the temple (and no, it’s not my parents either). I stick with this religion because I know that deep down, at the core of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, there is a truth. I feel it. This truth is what I not only want to study, but learn about and ultimately understand — shinjin. To be brutally honest, I feel like shinjin is a forbidden topic in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. It is almost never mentioned or explained, only hinted at or indirectly alluded to. In the summer of 2018, I had the pleasure of attending the Buddhist Youth Retreat (BYR) pilot program. The weeklong retreat was an unforgettable experience as I made a lot of new friends and learned a lot about Buddhism. But an interesting moment during the retreat was when one of my fellow attendees mentioned the word “shinjin” in a Dharma talk. It almost came out of nowhere, even surprising the ministers. However, what could have been an interesting conversation about this mysterious “shinjin” was cut short with a blunt, “we don’t really talk about that (shinjin)”. And just like that, the word was never mentioned again. When I go to the Oxnard Buddhist Temple every Sunday, or even when I attend

Jr. YBA events or Buddhist seminars, I typically hear the same concepts being repeated. Concepts like gratitude. Mindfulness. Living in the moment. But never shinjin. However, a few years ago, our temple received a new minister — Rev. Masanori Watanabe —from Japan. One interesting practice he introduced to our regular services was the recitation of “Gobunsho,” a letter by Rennyō Shōnin. Despite being in Japanese, the English translation was always read after the original Japanese text was recited. Among the numerous lines, one stood out. This line simply stated, “the essence of Jodo Shinshu is shinjin.” The essence. If shinjin is the essence of Jodo Shinshu, why is it not talked about more? Rather, why is it avoided? Take karate for example. Despite all of the branching aspects of the martial art such as kata (forms), kumite (sparring), and kobudo (weapons), the essence of karate is self-defense. This essence is always explained when karate is being taught, because without the understanding of why something is being done, the meaning behind it is lost. Without explaining that karate is for self-defense, students may be led wayward and begin thinking of karate as a



The Central California District Ministers held a special fall Ohigan service Sept. 27 at Manzanar National Historic Site. Shown in the photo are, from left, Rev. Kaz Nakata, Rinban Rev. Kaikai Nakagawa, and Rev. Nakata’s wife and children, who offered paper flowers on behalf of all the CC churches at the service. (Courtesy of Rev. Kaz Nakata)

Special Fall Ohigan Service
Is Held at Manzanar
Central California District Ministers
Mark 75th Year of Internees’ Release

By Rev. Kaz Nakata
Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple

The year of 2020 marks the 75th year when all of the Japanese American internees were released from U.S. detention camps. The Central California Ministers’ Association was discussing how we can make this 75th year more memorable and meaningful while many special services and events are canceled at various internment camp sites because of the pandemic. We negotiated with the National Park Service and the service generously gave us permission to conduct a service in front of the Irei-to (a stone statue for consoling our loved ones who



SEVEN PHASES OF A DROWNING SAILOR:
A SHIN BUDDHIST PATH

Phase 6:
Swimming With Ease
and Assurance

Introduction: This is the continuation of the article from the October issue, the sixth in a series of seven segments.

By Rev. Dr. Kenneth Kenshin Tanaka
Professor Emeritus,
Musashino University, Tokyo
Former BCA minister and
IBS Associate Professor

The sailor begins to swim again toward the island, but with one important difference. He now trusts the ocean as he would a caring and protecting loved one. He knows that whenever he becomes tired, he can let go, and the ocean will support him just as he is.

Continuing to swim with ease and assurance symbolizes living a life rooted in shinjin. As the sailor now feels safe in the arms of the embracing sea, he finds more room in his heart to make use of his nautical knowledge.

He studies the positions of the stars and the moon and the direction of the wind. He then determines with greater certainty the location of the island and swims confidently and energetically toward it. Furthermore, because he is less caught up with concern for his own survival, he is better able to look around him for his sailor buddies. Now, with greater room in his heart, he desires to help by sharing with them his experience of letting go.

In 1207, Honen and some of his disciples, including Shinran, were exiled from the capital city of Kyoto by the emperor, mainly in response to the charges of the monastic establishment of the time. They claimed that Honen’s emphasis on the single practice of “Nembutsu” (recitation of Amida’s name, “Namo Amida Butsu”) appeared to them to ignore or deny the usefulness of essential aspects of Mahayana Buddhism, such as the generating of the aspiration for awakening (“bodhicitta”).

They also charged that because Honen taught that all were equally embraced by Amida’s compassion, the categorical difference between monk and layperson was undermined. Following exile and being defrocked, Shinran led a life of naturalness and ordinariness, which included getting married and having children.

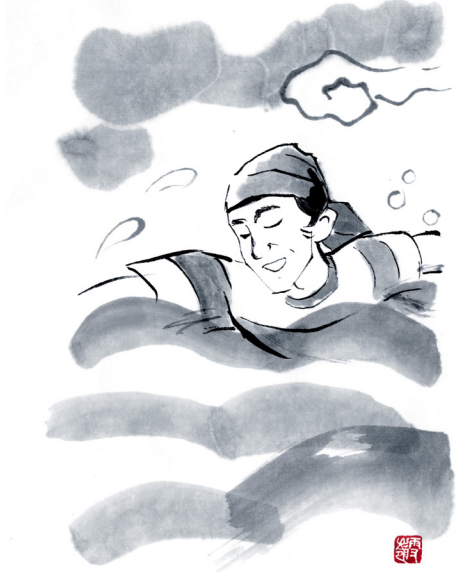
At the same time, he continued to practice and teach others with the dedication of a monk, which led him to describe himself as “neither monk nor layman” (“hiso hizoku”).

In my view, Shinran’s life of naturalness transcended and encompassed both those categories. Even when he was pardoned and allowed to return to the familiarity and comfort of Kyoto, he headed to a region north of Tokyo, a hinterland with far less Buddhist presence.

After some 20 years, he returned to Kyoto. All this time, and until his death at 90, he devoted himself to the propagation and practice of his Pure Land teaching. He taught those of high and low status, rich and poor, priests and laypersons, those educated and those not. He taught those who were generally considered unfit for Buddhist practice, including women, fishermen, samurai, and even criminals. For Shinran, no one was beyond the reach of Amida’s workings.

Next: Phase 7: Liberation

Editor’s note: This article originally appeared in the quarterly magazine *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review* in its Spring 2019 issue. The illustrations were drawn specifically for the *Wheel of Dharma*.



Courtesy of Hiroshi Tarui

BCA

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Terusaki moderated the meeting with BCA President-Elect Terri Omori and BCA Endowment Foundation Director of Development Michiko Inanaga.

The meeting covered the following:

- drive-in Sunday services and a drive-through Obon festival held by the Seabrook Buddhist Temple in New Jersey;

- a virtual funeral held by the Orange County Buddhist Church;

- a five-hour live and prerecorded Obon and bazaar telethon organized by the Buddhist Church of Sacramento;

- reimagining Obon and offering “Obon in a box” by the Mountain View Buddhist Temple;

- transforming the three-day Ginza Holiday into a reflective, 2.5-hour event with stories about what Ginza means to people by the Midwest Buddhist Temple;

- a plan for an upcoming live Zoom musical concert event by the Oregon Buddhist Temple;

- supporting Yasukoshi Farms in Oceanside by selling boxes of produce for a successful fundraiser by the San Diego Buddhist Temple; and

- helping to raise approximately \$30,000 in food supplies for the Alameda County Community Food Bank through a virtual food drive by the Buddhist Church of Oakland. The BCA Social Welfare matching grant has helped by doubling the amount the drive raised.

Since late May, Seabrook Buddhist Temple has been holding drive-in services on its seven-acre lot because its elderly Sangha members don’t have access to computers, according to Seabrook President Susan Jacques.

The Sunday services usually draw about 20 cars and the Onajin is set up on the front porch of the temple, with speakers around the parking lot. With the coming fall and winter, Jacques said the temple board will consider holding indoor services — currently permitted in New Jersey at 25% capacity.

The Orange County Buddhist Church held a May funeral for one of its longtime members. A Zoom funeral was held at the family’s request because family members didn’t want to wait. Rev. Dr. Mutsumi Wondra, who officiated the service, prerecorded the Dharma message, the Dharma Homyo name, as well as the sutra chanting and recitation of “White Ashes.”

Approximately 150 people attended the service — with some friends in Japan — and a video and remembrance was shown.

OCBC’s 1st Vice President Jo Ann Tanioka said there



The Seabrook Buddhist Temple is offering drive-in services on its seven-acre lot. The Onajin is set up on the front porch of the temple with speakers around the parking lot. (Courtesy of Seabrook Buddhist Temple)

were “minimal issues — we felt it went really well.” Rev. Dr. Wondra, who said she was honored to conduct the service, praised the teamwork by the OCBC Sangha and said she was “very, very happy” with how the service turned out.

For the Sacramento Betsuin’s successful five-hour telethon, Koichi Mizushima got the idea after watching Sacramento’s Big Day of Giving event on May 7.

He approached Karen Adachi, Sacramento Betsuin Fundraising Committee chair, and Sacramento Betsuin President Stuart Ito. The betsuin’s numerous organizations were contacted and provided videos. The prerecorded videos that ranged from interviews to musical performances ran on Facebook Live with the live telethon hosted by Mizushima and former Sacramento TV broadcaster and temple member Sharon Ito.

“Don’t be afraid to try this,” Stuart Ito said. “Even though it’s a lot of effort, it was definitely worth it.”

Ito said “a very small team” of about 10 people were involved in the telethon. “To generate the income that we generated with a very small handful of people was, to me, a very successful event,” he said. “Go ahead, give it a try, just get out there — engage your Sangha.”

He said the Sacramento Betsuin “far exceeded” its initial goal of raising \$100,000 and “we did better than any bazaar we ever had.”

For the Mountain View Buddhist Temple’s Obon at Home, Sterling Makashima pointed out the “most important thing” from the event.

“It brought us all closer together and it really showed how successful our event was,” he said, noting that the Obon at Home not only reached the Sangha but local businesses that have supported the temple during past Obons.

The Midwest Buddhist Temple’s Sangha decided to showcase its famed Ginza Festival — which usually runs three days — into a virtual event with a 2.5-hour video with “people stories” about what Ginza meant, according to Jason Matsumoto. This

year’s Ginza Festival marked the 65th anniversary of the event.

“I was so surprised at how people found the storytelling aspect, the reflective nature of the event, so valuable to them — that was across the board, whether they were a 10-year-old Dharma School kid or somebody who’s been coming to the temple for 50, 60 years or even somebody who just comes to Ginza and is not in any way connected,” Matsumoto said.

In the future, Matsumoto said, a “hybrid model” of the virtual festival is viable.

Angie Hughes said the Oregon Buddhist Temple’s Zoom music festival was originally set for Aug. 21, but was postponed because the temple’s Obon was just held and because organizers needed to upgrade tech and internet services for the event.

In all, seven musicians and groups, most of whom are temple members, are scheduled to perform in prerecorded segments. A historical telling of the temple will be shown and the Dharma School will recite the “Golden Chain,” and the temple is offering a lifetime membership to those donating \$10,000 or more. Hughes said the event is now set for mid-November.

The San Diego Buddhist Temple sold boxes of produce from the famed Yasukochi Farms in Oceanside, and also sold handmade masks for \$5 each. The first time the event was held in July, the temple sold 112 boxes of produce and 105 masks for a profit of more than \$2,600. A second Yasukochi Farms fundraising event was held Sept. 26, and a third event is planned by the end of the year.

The Buddhist Church of Oakland usually holds a food drive for the Alameda County Community Food Bank, but because of the pandemic, it switched to a virtual food drive with donations. The church set a goal of \$1,500 and raised \$2,200. And for every \$1 donated, about \$7 of food can be given out, meaning the food bank could purchase about \$15,000 of food for the needy.



Virtual Sangha

Continued from Page 1

2020 season, and teams filled their stadiums with virtual fans.

We asked, “If baseball can do it, why can’t we?” and from there, the plan took off. Fathead was selected given its reputation in producing wall-sized images of professional athletes, and their responsive customer service.

It turned out to be a simple process of submitting digital photos to Fathead — and Fathead did the rest.



Jerry Iseda poses next to his cutout at the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. (Courtesy of Jerry Iseda)

To date, the response has been tremendous and temple members and friends in Dharma — ranging in age from 19 months to 102 years — have joined.

The cost for a cutout is \$75 per adult and \$50 for each child under the age of 12.

The first cutouts arrived in early September and are now displayed during the live-streamed services each Sunday morning. And the temple has about 60 cutouts to date and expects to have more in the future.

“Their eyes seem to follow you,” temple member Gail Sharp said.

Many viewing via

Zoom have expressed surprise at how lifelike everyone’s cutouts look. Even Rev. Quon was taken aback as he looked at his Sangha for the first time, saying it was funny to see all these “people” in the Hondo.

Our virtual Sangha posts on Facebook have received the most reactions by far, and Fathead even shared our pictures and Rev. Quon’s quote on its own Facebook page. We are even starting to receive inquiries from a few other temples who we hope will consider following suit.

Anyone can join by making a recommended

donation (to cover costs and a small addition for the Onaijin Fund), and we are close to filling the Hondo. While most participants are using the suggested pose of hands together in Gassho while wearing a Monto Shiki Sho with their heads up (to see faces), a few have gotten creative, such as using their wedding photo, or an Obon photo in yukata.

This is just another way we are working to keep our temple members and friends upbeat and engaged. Once the temple reopens, donors can reclaim their virtual selves.

Rev. Hamasaki

Continued from Page 2

Infinite Wisdom and Compassion. For too long have we been living ignorant and apathetic. To be on this new path will be unusual and, honestly, quite arduous. It is tiresome to learn something new and stumbling along the way can be discouraging. However, I have faith in the people around me and I have faith in the future. Oftentimes, people have equated Shinjin to faith to much debate. Perhaps some of this faith is the Shinjin directed to me by Amida Buddha.

But recently I have interpreted another aspect of the Shinjin that

may not have been so deeply discussed; that a requisite facet of Shinjin is dedication. No matter what faculties a person may have, all people are capable of being dedicated to something. Sometimes, it becomes their superpower. In my own experience, the people who I am convinced have Shinjin are undoubtedly the most dedicated.

So, I ask of you, reader of this article, dedicate yourself to a less selfish, more compassionate world. In the face of unfavorable circumstances, reject the idea that life must be this way, deny the lazy tendency to lean toward the status quo and create something unfamiliar. Doubt the way you think and question

your elected officials. Push yourself to uncomfortable situations that will move the needle towards understanding and kindness. And if you are already doing so, keep on going. Obviously, if we were able to see a payoff, that would be ideal, but it will be slow and if we cannot witness the end, do not give up.

I will close with one of my favorite proverbs: “a society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.”

Because of the greed in our society, right now we are sitting in the scorching sun. I’ll ask one final question: We may not be old, but what trees are you planting?

Senshin’s Hongwanji Place to Offer Oseibo Extravaganza Nov. 15-30

For more than 35 years, Hongwanji Place at Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles has offered Jodo Shins-hu-themed books, religious items and gifts.

The store is managed by members of Southern District Temples. Hongwanji Place sold its items at BCA National Council meetings and BWA and Dharma School conferences.

Since Covid-19 is preventing people from meeting in person, Hongwanji Place is offering an online Oseibo Extravaganza from Nov. 15-30. The bookstore will offer a variety of gift items for auction or purchase.

In addition to the usual fare will be themed gift collections (for example, the Bon Odori gift box), along with our trademark Nenju and Udenenju, Japanese gift items such as furoshiki and pottery, and the ever popular Paso Almonds.

“We miss seeing everyone at conferences, but this is one way we can come together during these challenging times. We hope you all will visit our site this November,” said Bessie Tanaka, Hongwanji Place president.



This Dharma mask will be on sale during the online Hongwanji Place’s Oseibo Extravaganza from Nov. 15-30. (Courtesy of Jerry Iseda)

Hongwanji Place has some new items for 2020, such as our “Spread the Dharma/Teachings, not Germs” face masks, “Sangha Strong” hand sanitizer keychains, and “Impermanence” transformational mugs. Expect to see some new offerings during the Oseibo Extravaganza.

Beginning Nov. 15, people can join the Oseibo Extravaganza at www.32auctions.com/Oseibo2020. The recently updated online store and website is at www.hongwanjiplace.com.

BCA Music

Continued from Page 1

Committee are as follows:

- support the mission statement of the Buddhist Churches of America to promote Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as well as to propagate Jodo Shinshu teachings through music;
- explore, develop, and enhance all aspects of music at BCA churches and temples;
- create a community of harmony within BCA temples and districts, and across the BCA through involvement of ministers and Sangha members of all ages; and
- provide an organizational structure through which formal collaboration with regard to music may be undertaken and developed with Kyodans outside the mainland United States (for example, Hawaii Music Committee and the equivalent members in Canada).

The following subcommittees were created: Sutra, Gagaku, Service Music, New Gathas, Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Music History, Bon Odori/Taiko/Public Music, Technical Support, and Copyright & Publications. In addition, anticipated live events will be organized by a Performance and Community Outreach subcommittee after the pandemic is over.

The Music Committee has begun surveying temples and churches to provide an optimal way to communi-

cate and also to assess needs and solicit ideas for our working groups. The results of the survey of BCA ministers and temple presidents can be compiled soon to share with subcommittee leaders.

Initial BCA music committee plans include creating a page on the BCA website and making gatha recordings available to share. In addition, the Music History subcommittee has connected with the BCA Archives Committee. Two gatha collaborations have also already been produced across BCA districts through the wonders of technology and the new connections made through this Music Committee.

The “Time for Dharma School”

This new effort is aimed at increasing and enhancing all types of music in temples and districts.

Manzanar

Continued from Page 3

lost their lives during the internment) at the Manzanar National Historic Site in Independence, California.

With the great support of our Sangha, we live-streamed our Central California District’s six churches — Fowler, Fresno, Hanford, Parlier, Reedley and Visalia — combined Fall Ohigan Service on Sept. 27. My children offered paper flowers on behalf of all Central California churches at the service.

It was so windy. The wind reached 15 mph during the service. But it taught us how our ancestors in the internment camps had to endure severe weather, among other hardships, for years.

Under such circumstances, they kept their spirit strong with the wisdom and compassion of Amida Tathagata, and they restarted their church activities when they came back from the camps.

We sincerely appreciate their efforts and contributions to move forward our Dharma wheel to the present moment.

Palo Alto Buddhist Temple Dharma School
Nishi Hongwanji Pilgrimage Fundraiser

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Thank you for your support
Austin Eng & Sammie Kameda

Conference

Continued from Page 1

YBL) was unique and probably the most challenging in its 70-year history.

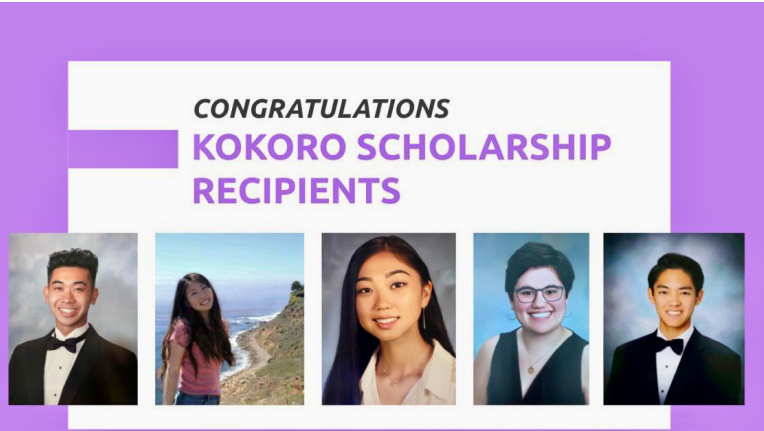
What started out to be a normal and active year, which began in September 2019, quickly changed when 2020 arrived. The effects of COVID-19 began to take its toll on activities in February and by mid-March, all the district’s and temple chapter’s activities were shut down.

Since May, the SD Jr. YBL members faced many challenges which led the Southern District cabinet to continue meeting online virtually. When the cabinet realized that all in-person activities would be canceled, cabinet members thought about how everyone could stay connected with the 13 chapters in the Southern District.

The cabinet planned a series of chapter outreach called “Zooming Together,” which included mini trivia games and social time with the YBA members during quarantine.

With the status of the annual in-person conference in doubt, we were all saddened when the 70th annual SD Jr. YBL Conference that was going to be hosted by the Arizona chapter was canceled.

This gave the SD cabinet the idea of hosting the first



Scholarship recipients, shown from left: Hale Chiba (San Fernando Jr. YBA), Melanie Oda (Gardena), Kellie Yada (Orange County), Katie Shue (Pasadena) and Taylor Kawate (Oxnard) were recognized for their achievements during the SD Jr. YBL virtual conference held Sept. 6 on Zoom. (Courtesy of Kellie Yada).

virtual conference. The cabinet chose the date of Sunday, Sept. 6 to host the annual gala. Traditionally, the Labor Day weekend is the time to celebrate a successful year with a conference overnighter at a temple and hotel.

Planning for the virtual gala was quite difficult, especially with a little more than two months of planning.

The nine cabinet members met over Zoom throughout June and into August discussing and planning the conference. We had to think about many things: How are we going to keep the participants engaged? What if the power or internet connection goes out? Will the Jr. YBA members enjoy what we present?

In addition to the district’s chapters, we decided to extend

the invitation to other YBA groups. We were very happy that chapters from Florin, Fresno, Hawaii Federation, Mountain View, Oakland, Sacramento, Salinas and San Jose participated in the conference and activities. It was so exciting to have so many people attend from all over! Thank you all for attending!

We began the conference with our last delegates meeting of the term on Aug. 30. The SD Cabinet introduced the theme: “Sharing the Dharma Virtually,” the five-day scavenger hunt (Aug. 31-Sept. 4), the conference program and introduced the incoming 2020-2021 cabinet.

For the scavenger hunt, we emailed a list of activities chapters/teams were to accomplish, take a photo and send it

to the SD cabinet. Our YBA members built amazing boats that floated on the water, cozy pillow forts, and even recreated famous Disney scenes. Each submission had an incredible incorporation of Buddhism.

The conference was held over Zoom and the attendance was close to 150 participants, including delegates, advisers and ministers. There were 32 from outside the district that participated.

Rev. William Briones, Rinban, and Rev. Hibiki Murakami from the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and Rev. Kory Quon, SD ministerial adviser, from the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple led the opening service.

Rinban Rev. Briones gave a welcome message, Rev. Murakami rang the kanzo (calling of the bell) and the ministers led the chanting of “Juseige.” The guest speaker was Rev. Jon Turner from the Orange County Buddhist Church, who gave a wonderful Dharma talk about various ways on how we can teach and learn the Dharma virtually.

We even had a special guest, Rev. Marvin Harada, Bishop of the BCA, to share some encouraging words.

The SD Cabinet was very excited to share our final product after weeks of planning, which included gathering photos, interviewing

Jr. YBA members for their reflections, rehearsing lines, the timing of the slideshows for the PowerPoint presentation and working on live and pre-recorded presentations.

The conference gala showcased Southern District events over the past year, the 2019-2020 Religious Award (winner: Nishi Jr. YBA), Chapter Sign contest (San Diego), Scavenger Hunt (Hawaii Federation) along with the teams/chapters that participated, commercials, recognition of the graduating seniors and installation of the 2020-21 SD Cabinet.

Five graduating seniors received the Chuck Matsumoto Kokoro Scholarship Award for their achievements throughout their Jr. YBA years. The recipients included Hale Chiba (San Fernando Valley), Taylor Kawate (Oxnard) Melanie Oda (Gardena), Katie Shue (Pasadena) and Kellie Yada (Orange County).

We wish to thank everyone who participated in this year’s virtual conference. It would not be possible without all of you. We hope that SD Cabinet opened the door to new opportunities to host more virtual activities. Thank you to the outgoing SD Cabinet for hosting such a successful conference.

Looking forward to the 2021 in-person event in Phoenix, Arizona!

Bishop’s Message

Continued from Page 2

the Orange County Buddhist Church, the OCBC hosted the conference a number of times.

The young people look forward to this conference because it is held at a hotel and we all get to stay overnight. The kids stay up till all hours of the night and there is a banquet and dance in which everyone gets dressed up and takes memorable pictures.

However, this year’s conference was different than all of the past 34 years that I have attended. It was different than all 69 previous years of the Southern District conferences. What made it different was that it was held “virtually” because of the coronavirus pandemic that we are all enduring.

The young people, especially the cabinet of the S.D. Jr. YBL, put this together, and we all met by Zoom over the internet. There were approximately 150 people attending, and some were Zooming in from Hawaii and other YBA chapters outside of the Southern District.

I was so impressed by our young people. They could have just totally cancelled the conference because of the virus. But these young people decided to make the best of the situation and they put it on virtually for the safety of everyone.

We had an opening service, a wonderful Dharma talk by Rev. Jon Turner, and there were videos and slide shows of the events of the past year. Nobody sulked about not being able to have an in-person conference. Nobody complained about all the fun they were missing out on because of the virus. They did their very best to put on a meaningful conference, despite the circumstances. We even had the installation of the new cabinet, all of whom are enthused and excited about another new year in Jr. YBA.

They chose a very appropriate theme, “Sharing the Dharma Virtually.” Actually, this could be a theme for the entire BCA. We have to find the most effective way to share the Dharma virtually during this pandemic crisis. If we can

find an effective way to do that, then we will have truly planted the seeds of the Nembutsu in this culture.

There is a lot that we can learn from these young people. We can learn from their optimism. We can learn from their enthusiasm. We can learn from their sincere desire to make new friends and to widen the circle of their Sangha. We can learn from their spirit and their spontaneity.

Sometimes we adults get a little bleak in look-

There is a lot that we can learn from these young people. We can learn from their optimism. We can learn from their enthusiasm. We can learn from their sincere desire to make new friends and to widen the circle of their Sangha.

ing at the future of the BCA and our churches and temples. We see declining membership. We see financial challenges. We see aging buildings that need repair. But what I saw and experienced obliterates any doubt or pessimism about our future. Our future is in good hands. Our young people are solid. They are grounded in the Dharma. They have a spiritual maturity way beyond what I was like when I was their age.

My hats off to the young people who put together the conference, but also to all of the young people at the local level that are involved in their YBA chapters and temples. They work hard at the Obons and the bazaars. They wash dishes. They take out the trash. They sweep the floor. They put away tables and chairs. Why do they do it? Because their temple means something to them. Because Buddhism means something to them. Because their Sangha means something to them.

May these outstanding young people continue on this path of the Nembutsu in earnest, and without a doubt, they will carry on the torch of the Dharma to future generations.

Bishop Announces Ministerial Assignments

The BCA Office of the Bishop has announced the following ministerial assignments:

Rev. Henry Adams of the San Mateo Buddhist Temple was assigned to be the supervising minister of the Buddhist Church

of San Francisco, effective Sept. 1.

Rev. Dennis Fujimoto, resident minister of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, was assigned to be the supervising minister of the Enmanji Buddhist Temple, effective Sept. 1.

Kawate

Continued from Page 3

sport, or viewing karate class as an exercise class. Teaching and explaining the essence, the purpose, of something, is vital because it answers the “why.” It keeps core values alive. So why should Jodo Shinshu Buddhism be any different?

As mentioned earlier, shinjin almost seems like a taboo word in Jodo Shinshu. Whenever ministers ask if anyone has questions, shinjin is almost never mentioned, and a sense of guilt befalls upon me whenever I begin thinking of asking about it. This should not be the case — shinjin needs to be explained. Or if it should not be explained for some reason, then the reason for withholding the information should be explained. Ignorance is not bliss.

I am not asking for ministers to teach the Sangha some secret recipe to attain shinjin — I don’t think that is possible. I simply want more light to be shed on shinjin; after all, it is the essence of Jodo Shinshu

To be brutally honest, I feel like shinjin is a forbidden topic in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

Buddhism.

I believe that if I, along with the entire Sangha, learned about and began to understand shinjin, it would be a major step forward in the current Jodo Shinshu scene, where it seems the essence, the core, the truth, of the religion has all but faded.

In gassho,
Taylor Kawate

今月の法話

「柿とゆず」



Rev. Ryuta Furumoto

洗心仏教会 古本竜太

柿は秋の果物として親しまれています。私は柿は世界どこでも食べられていると思っていたのですが、柿がないところもあるそうです。私の姪は、高校の三年間はバスコーシャという力ナタの最も東にある町に住んでいたのですが、そこには柿がなかったそうです。今、彼女はロサンゼルスに住んでいます。柿があるので喜んでいます。

アメリカでも日系の方は、自宅の裏庭に柿の木を植えておられる方が多いです。その中には甘い柿もあれば、渋い柿もあります。多くの1世や2世の方は渋柿を干し柿にされていました。3世や若い世代の方々はどうか？干し柿にする技術を受け継いでくださるとうれしいです。

干し柿は浄土真宗の教えを表す食べ物として真宗の念仏者から好かれています。「渋柿の渋がそのまま甘みかな」という法語があります。渋柿は渋すぎて、一口食べると数時間は口の中がしびれて麻酔を打ったようになります。けれども、その渋柿を屋根の下に数週間吊るして日光と秋風に晒しておく、なぜか甘い柿になるのです。ただほっておくだけでも甘くなる種類の渋柿もありますが、何れにせよ、渋味を取り除くのではなく、渋味が甘味に変わるのです。

渋味とは、食欲、怒り、妬み、そねみやエゴに根ざした欲、などの煩惱にたとえられます。思い出したくない経験や過去の失敗も柿の渋だといえます。けれども、太陽の光と秋風のおかげで、柿が甘くなるように、阿弥陀さまの本願力によ

て、嫌な経験が意味のある経験に変わることもあり、また 私たちの煩惱が、浄土に生まれて仏になる功德がはたらくようになるのです。

煩惱は、私たちが仏に成る道をさまたげてしまいうのですが、私たちの力では煩惱を取り除くことはできません。そのため阿弥陀仏がそういう者を救うとの願いを起され、その願いが成就し、その功德によって私たちが浄土に生まれ、仏に成ることができるのです。

親鸞聖人は、そのことを正信偈に

「煩惱を断ぜずして涅槃を得る」

と告示くださっていますし、蓮如上人は御文章の信心獲得章で

「されば無始以来つくりとつくる悪業煩惱を、残るところもなく願力不思議をもつて消滅するいはれあるがゆえに、正定聚不退の位に住すとなり。」

というのが、親鸞聖人が「煩惱を断ぜずして涅槃を得る」とおっしゃっていることの意味だと説いてくださっています。

煩惱があるままお浄土に生まれることができ、さらに仏となることができる、と聞いても、「ふーん」くらいにしか思わないかもしれませんが、これは、なぜか渋柿が甘くなるように、私たちの力や意思を超えた不思議で、ありがたいことなのです。

そして、親鸞聖人は、ご信心をいただいた念仏者はこの世に生きているときに十種の利益を受けると言われ、その一つが「転悪成善の益（てんあくじょうぜんのやく）」といい、仏の功德によって、煩惱が私たちに仏道を歩ませる力に転ぜられるとも示唆されています。

このようなものの考え方が身につくようになると、日常に起るトラブルにもうまく対処できるようになり、悪い出来事の中にポジティブな面があることに気づいたり、自分の自己中心性を反省

し、それが転じられて、できるだけ他の人とシェアして生きていく、と思うようになるのです。

その一例が因幡の源左さんのお話です。源左

さんは昔、因幡とよばれていた今の鳥取県の方で、約100年前まで生きておられました。源左さんは浄土真宗の篤信者、妙好人として知られ、その言動は、多くの人々に念仏の教えをいただいたものがどのような行動をするのかを教えてきました。

源左さんがあるとき突然の雨にあったそうです。傘がないのでずぶ濡れになったのですが、源左さんはそのことに文句を言わず、「鼻の穴が下に向いてついているのでありがたい」と感謝されたとい

います。鼻の穴が下についているのは当然なのですが、確かに、もし鼻が上下逆さまについていて、鼻の穴が上に向いていたら雨水が入ってきて苦しくなることでしょう。鼻の穴が下向きについているのは、ありがたいのです。それを源左さんは突然の雨にあったという、悪い状況を転じて、ありがたい気づきのご縁にしまったのです。これは日常生活における「転悪成善」の考え方だと味わうことができます。

源左さんには柿のお話もあります。

ある秋の日、源左さんの息子さんが庭の柿の木に、いばら（とげのある植物のつた）をまいていたそうです。源左さんが何をしているかとたずねると「誰かが柿を盗むから、柿の木に登れないようにしているのだ」と答えました。源左さんは「そんなことしたら、人が怪我するじゃないか。」といばらをとりはらい、それだけでなく、安全に柿がとれるようにはしごまでかけてあげたそうです。息子さんは「柿が盗まれ放題になってしまっ」と嘆くと、「どうせ家の者が全部の柿を食べられないのだから、ほかの人にあげてしまっほうがいいのだ」と言われたそうです。

源左さんの言うとおり、一本の木になる柿を自分で全部食べることはできないでしょう。それならばけちけちせずに、最初からほしい人にあ

げた方がいいのです。一説によると、源左さんがはしごをかけたら、柿を盗んでいた人が源左さんの寛大な心に触れて、自分の行為が恥ずかしくなり、柿を盗むのをやめたそうです。

数年前、私が駐在する洗心仏教会の前任開教使だった小谷先生からゆずの木をもらいました。ゆずの木は私の胸の高さで、その木を家のどこに植えるようかと考えました。一番日当たりのいいのは家のフロントヤードです。けれども、フロントヤードに植えてしまうと、ゆずの実ができたときに、

だれか散歩してる人が盗むんじゃないかと考えました。けれども、その時、源佐さんの柿をシェアするお話しを思い出し、源佐さんの考えと比べると、私の考えはたいへんあさましいものだと思反省させられました。ゆずは、自分が買ったものでなく小谷先生からもらったものですし、さらにまだゆずの実もなっていないのに、もう誰かが盗むんじゃないかと心配している。そういうあさましい者をこそ救うという阿弥陀さまのご本願がいよいよあ

おかれ、自分のけちさ、自己中心性を反省し、源左さんのように、シェアしていくようにと、思わせていただいたことです。結局、場所や手入れの利便さを考えてゆずは裏庭に植えることになったのですが、もしいつかゆずがたくさん実ったら、みなさんとシェアしますので、楽しみに待っていてください。

南無阿弥陀仏

第七回 ウーマンインブuddhism

今年で第七回となるシアトル別院の「Women in Buddhism」が10月3日4日にCBEの協力のもとオンライン上で開催された。女性の仏教徒に焦点を当てたセミナーで、今回は約140名が参加した。テーマは、「Tools of Spiritual Wellness (心の健康を保つ方法)」で、発表者は、ソルトレイク仏教会のミニスターアシスタントで精神科医のヒフノ カメラさん、テラバタ仏教の視点から慈悲と瞑想に着目したドゥラン ボニーさん、シアトル大学の教授でトラウマの治癒とメ

ディテーションの研究をするスーシャロンさん、食べることに、寝ることに、運動することに、瞑想することの関連性に詳しい、シアトル別院のメンバーで脳科学の専門家のミズモリ シェリーさん、同じくシアトル別院のメンバーで芸術家のタマリナチ タラさんの五名。「仏様の教えがそれぞれの専門分野の中でどのように生かされているかを発表してくださいました。」と別院輪番の楠開教使。多くの参加者が、「このコロナウィルスの状況下で心身ともに健康に生きるアイデアを頂いた」と喜んで

多田覚英師往生される

9月27日に多田覚英名誉開教使が往生の素懷を遂げられた。享年90歳。師はバンクーバー出身でご尊父の覚哉師も開教使。7歳で兵庫県龍野市の正覚寺に帰郷し、1952年に龍谷大学を卒業後、トロント大学、サー・ジョージウィリアム大学、デ・ポール大学などで学んだ。1959年にBCA開教使として中西部仏教会に赴任、その後、シアトル別院、リードレー仏教会、パロアルト仏教会、サンディエゴ仏教会、サンフェルナンドバレー本願寺仏教会、オレゴン仏教会、アイダホオレゴン仏教会に勤めた。2003年より、ガーデンナ市で引退生活を送られていた。葬儀は10月9日に原田総長が導師をつとめ、家族のみで行われた。

ダイヤルザダルマで

日本語法話

コロナウィルスの世界的な感染拡大を受けて、BCAでは電話をすれば5分間の法話を聞くことができる「ダイヤルザダルマ」プログラムがはじめられている。電話での聴聞は、コンピュータをあまり使わない門信徒の方をはじめ多くの聞法者から好評を得ている。(800) 817-7918に電話すると、原田総長の声で英語の方は1を日本語の方は2を押すように促される。2を押すと約5分間の日本語の法話を聞くことができる。法話は毎週水曜日午後11時に更新される予定。

法輪

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二〇二〇年度教化標語

「尊び敬つ心」

あの記事をもう一度!

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総長メッセージ

BCAの若者たちに学ぶ

米国仏教団 総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

9月6日に南部教区ジュニアYBA大会に参加しました。私はこの大会に34年間、毎年参加しています。オレンジカウンティ仏教会の開教使をしていた時には、大会を主催することもありました。

通常この大会はホテルで開催され、ジュニアYBAの高校生たちは参加するのを楽しみにしています。セミナーのほか、バンケットとダンスがあり、皆がドレスアップして思い出の写真撮りますし、ホテルに宿泊するので、皆夜遅くまで起きて友人たちとおしゃべりなどをしてエンジョイできるからです。

けれども、今年の大会は私が参加した過去34年間のものとは違っていました。過去69年に行われたすべての南部教区ジュニアYBA大会とも違いました。何が違っていたかというところ、コロナウイルス感染症の大流行のために「バーチャル」で「事実上」「仮想で」開催されたのです。

南部教区ジュニアYBAの高校生たちが大会開催のために話し合い、今回はインターネットを使ってZoomで集うことにしたのです。参加者は約150人で、中にはハワイをはじめ南部教区以外の教区のジュニアYBAからもZoomingしてきた人もいました。

私はこの若者たちの行動にたいへん感銘を受けました。コロナウイルスのため、大会を完全にキャンセルすることもできたのですが、この状況の中で、ベストなことができるよう思案し、皆の安全を考慮してバーチャルでの大会を開催したのです。

大会のオープニングサービスでは、ジョン・ターナー開教使による素晴らしい法話を聴聞し、またジュニアYBAたちの過去一年の活動のビデオやスライドショーを見ました。参加者は直接会うことができないことに不機嫌になる人はいませんでしたし、ウイルスのせいでバンケットやダンスなどを楽しめなかったことに不平を言う人もいませんでした。高校生たちは、このような状況にもかかわらず、有意義な大会を開催するために最善を尽くしたのです。また、ジュニアYBA新役員の就任式も行われ、役員たちは意欲を持って新しい年度に臨んでいます。

大会のテーマは「Sharing the Dharma Virtually (バーチャルで仏法をシェア)」ということでもタイムリーなもので、これはBCA全体のテーマになると思いました。私たちはこのコロナウイルス感染拡大の危機の中で、仏法を分かち合う最も効果的な方法を見つけなければなりません。もしその方法を見つけないことができれば、私たちはこの文化に、まことの念仏の種を蒔いたことになるでしょう。

この若者たちから学べることはたくさんあります。彼らの樂觀主義、彼らの熱意、彼らの新しい友人を作りサンガの輪を広げたいという真摯な思い、彼らの献身さ、彼らのスピリットと自主性、に私たち大人が学ぶべきことは多いです。

時々、私たちはBCAとお寺の将来を想像して、少し暗い気持ちになることがあります。会員数の減少、財政的な問題、修繕が必要な老朽化した建物を目の当たりにするからです。しかし今回のジュニアYBAの大会で見た若者の姿は、将来に対する疑念や悲観を消し去ってくれました。私たちの未来は、良い方向に向かっていきます。若い人たちはしっかりしています。彼らは仏法に基づいて考え、行動しているのです。私が高校生だった時よりも、彼らの方がはるかに高い精神的な成熟度を持っているように思いました。

この大会を企画、実行した若者たち、また各教区のジュニアYBAやお寺に関わっている高校生たちに脱帽します。彼らはお盆やバザーで一生懸命働いてくれています。皿洗いをし、ゴミを出し、床を掃除し、テーブルや椅子を片付けるのです。なぜ彼らはそれをするのでしょうか？ お寺、仏法、そしてサンガが彼らにとって大切だと感じているからです。

これらの素晴らしい若者たちが真剣にこの念仏の道を歩み続け、次世代に仏法の灯りを継いでいってくれることを期待しています。

米国に響く お念仏の声

⑤

マイケル・イシカワさん(57)は日系3世。週2回の腎臓病の透析治療を受ける日以外は毎朝、カリフォルニア州サンマテオ市内の自宅の仏間での正信偈のおつとめを欠かさない。そして、日曜はサンマテオ仏教会に参拝する。「正信偈は私が最も大切にしているおつとめ。最初の『帰命無量寿如来南無不可思議光』はとても意味深い。ここに親鸞聖人の阿弥陀如来への感謝の気持ちが入められていると思う。阿弥陀如来への感謝の気持ちを正信偈の最初に示された聖人のお心を深く味わわせていただいている」という。

キリスト教社会の中で仏教徒として生きる

「これが正しい」に違和感抱く

キリスト教信者の両親のもとに生まれ、幼い頃に洗礼を受けた。16歳まで教会に通ったが、キリスト教の教えにはなじめなかった。そんな時、和歌山出身で門徒の祖母の勧めで参加した本願寺派の仏教会のサマーキャンプで、開教使の法話を聞いて浄土真宗に目覚めた。人間として自らの至らなさ、不完全さに思い悩んでいたイシカワさんは「そんな凡夫の私を阿弥陀さまは見捨てられない」と説くのを聞き、何度もうなずいたそ



Mr. Michael Ishikawa



Mrs. Joyce Oishi

うだ。「自分のこれまでの生き方が法話で語られていた。これこそが自分の求めていた教えだと思った。あれから約40年、念仏者として人生を歩ませていただいたことに感謝したい」

パークレー仏教会(カリフォルニア州)のサンデースクール(日曜学校)の教師のジョイス・オオイシさん(61)は、カナダ生まれの日系3世。祖父母、両親はカナダのアルバータ州・レスブリッジ仏教会メンバー。オオイシさんも子どもの頃、仏教会に通ったが、開教使が日本語の法話はよくわからず、なじめなかつた。小学校ではキリスト教

のバイブルを読まされ、毎朝、神への誓いをさせられた。「『これが正しい』と価値観を押し付けるような姿勢」に違和感を抱いた。転機が訪れたのは高校生の時。「マイノリティとして生きていくために、そして日系人としての精神的な支えを見出したい」と家の宗旨である仏教、浄土真宗と改めて向き合った。「物事を固定的に見るのではなく、他の物事との関係性の中で見ていく縁起の思想がしっくりきた」という。そして、大学から米国に移り、結婚。子どもができる、わが子にも仏教的な物の見方、考え方を身につけてほしいと願い、パークレー仏教会のサンデースクールに通わせた。それが縁となり現在、スクールの教壇に立つ。「子どもたちは今はよくわからないまま合掌してお念仏を称えているかもしれない。でも、続けていくうちに、心の中に慈悲と感謝の心が育まれていくと思う」と、自らの経験を重ねていた。

(年齢は昨年9月取材時)