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WHEEL OF DHARMA

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Message on 'Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching'

Monshu Kojun Ohtani

On April 15, Monshu Kojun Ohtani delivered his Message on Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching during the "Haru no Hoyo" (Spring Service) in conjunction with the Commemorative Service of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching.

In his message, Gomonshu-sama shared with us his thoughts in a passage titled "Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching."

The Hongwanji-ha International Department has shared with us the original Japanese version of the message together with the English translation.

The following is the passage "Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching" taken from Gomonshu-sama's message:

"Gratitude for the Jodo Shinshu Teaching"

Namo Amida Butsu.

"Entrust yourself to me. I will liberate you just as you are." This is the calling voice of Amida.

My blind passions are embraced in the Buddha's awakening,

So the Buddha calls to me "I will liberate you just as you are."

Gratefully responding to the Buddha's call,

I find that I am already on the path that leads to the Pure Land.

And the Nembutsu flows freely from my thankful heart.

Living with the Dharma as my guide

Softens my rigid heart and mind.

Gratitude for the gift of life I have received

Frees me from becoming lost in greed and anger,

And allows me to share a warm smile and speak gentle words.

Sharing in the joy and sadness of others,

I shall strive to live each day to its fullest.

It is Gomonshu-sama's hope that this passage, together with the "Our Pledge" that he shared with us in his message at the 2018 Perpetual Memorial and Autumn Service, will be recited and shared by everyone on various occasions, particularly by young people and those who are not familiar with Buddhism or Jodo Shinshu so that it can lead to a closer connection to the teaching.

The Enduring Buddhist Legacy of Jane Imamura

She and Rev. Kanmo Imamura Were Pioneers in Spreading Dharma in U.S. from 1940s to 1970s

Jane Imamura with her husband, Rev. Kanmo Imamura, pose in the 1950s at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple's minister's residence with the piano that played a key role in Jane Imamura's musical legacy. At top left, the Imamuras are in the center with members of the 1951 Berkeley Buddhist Temple choir. (Courtesy of Hiro Imamura David and Berkeley Buddhist Temple)

Editor's Note: This article pays tribute to Jane Imamura, the iconic BCA figure who, along with her husband, Rev. Kanmo Imamura, were pioneers in spreading Buddhism in the United States, especially from the 1940s through the 1970s.

Through countless causes and conditions, the Imamuras engaged the efforts of an international community of scholars and artists and influenced the interest in Buddhism far beyond Berkeley, where Rev. Imamura was the minister and Jane was the Bomori.

Jane Imamura, the eldest daughter of Mrs. Shinobu Matsuura, a major BCA figure herself, continued her mother's tradition in building a music tradition and was a key contributor to many BCA gathas that continue to be sung today. The article was written by the couple's eldest daughter, Hiro Imamura David, on behalf of the BCA Music History Subcommittee.

Jane Imamura's legacy continues today through her many gathas, the Institute of Buddhist Studies and musical programs that she inspired.

Jane Imamura's parents, Issei and Shinobu Matsuura, were Buddhist pioneers and their example helped to form Jane's development and outlook.

Jane was well-versed in her future role as Bomori from a very young age. Born in 1920, two years after her mother arrived as a young bride in America, she learned the art of selflessness, growing up in a temple, sharing her parents — not only with her siblings — but with the many children living in the Guadalupe Children's Home that was run by the Matsuuras.

She also developed an early appreciation of music and the Buddhist gathas. She and her siblings would gather around their mother as she played the piano and sang, teaching them songs and gathas.

The turmoil that enveloped the world during Jane's early years delayed her parents' many plans. It was not until 1931, when the Matsuura family returned to the United States after two years in Japan, that Jane began piano lessons.

She practiced on a piano that came with the Matsuura's rented accommodations in Fresno, where Rev. Matsuura was the minister. She progressed quickly and was soon able to master a Beethoven sonata of considerable difficulty. Shinobu splurged on a $100 piano during the hardships of the Great Depression.

Upon the family's return to Guadalupe in 1935, Jane began her music lessons with Muriel Fisk, a successful and well-respected teacher in the Santa Maria Valley. Jane's exemplary exam grades, given by the National Music Teachers Association, confirmed the promise

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FDSTL Focuses on Challenges Faced by DS Teachers, Students

Vaccinations. Educational Strategies, Mental Health Among Meeting Topics

By Jon Kawamoto
Wheel of Dharma Editor

Dharma School teachers and experts recently discussed the many challenges facing educators and students in the pandemic — from mental health concerns to classroom strategies to vaccinations.

The aim of the Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League (FDSTL) fifth online workshop on Aug. 14 wasn't on reopening Dharma School, especially in light of the delta variant surging nationwide and casting uncertainty in the near future about reopening for many temples and churches.

"We want to have this workshop to assist in the eventual return to in-person learning," said FDSTL Vice President Carl Yanari, who served as moderator for the Zoom meeting. "So the focus of the workshop is not on logistics like what to do to reopen. We realize that every chapter is unique — variations on facilities, student enrollment, teacher availability, even weather for holding outdoor classes — is different for each of our chapters.

FYI

To view the FDSTL workshop, go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=fljLWD5HBcU

"While the questions asked here will undoubt-

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Stacy Uyeda, an East Bay middle school teacher and superintendent of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple Dharma School, speaks during an Aug. 14 online meeting of the FDSTL. (Courtesy of Jon Kawamoto)

BISHOP'S MESSAGE

The Importance of the Right Starting Point

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

I recently listened to a wonderful lecture by Michael Conway, who teaches Shin Buddhism at Otani University, the Higashi Honganji University in Kyoto, Japan. In that lecture, he talked about the importance of having the right starting point in Buddhism.

He pointed out that in Shin Buddhism, if we have the right starting point, that we will inevitably reach our true destination, which is the awakening of truth or enlightenment. Dr. Nobuo Haneda has also spoken of this same topic before as well.

I recall that the great Zen Master, Dogen, also said something very similar. Dogen said that the goal of enlightenment, and the path, are intimately connected. He pointed out that the goal is not something far, far away, but the goal is also right here and now, if we are on the path.

The path and the goal are not two separate things, or two separate points on one line. Dogen emphasized the path, rather than the goal. In Zen as well, if we have the right starting point, meaning, if we are truly on the path, then inevitably we will reach the goal.

I would have to say that a crucial starting point for me occurred when I was in college, when my closest friend, who happened to be a devout Christian, always wanted to talk about religion.

I was a typical "YBA kid" who had never studied, listened, or thought seriously about Buddhism before. I couldn't answer any of his questions about Buddhism. It shook me up and made me realize that Buddhism was my family's religion, but it wasn't really mine.

My friend tried to convert me to Christianity, and in one sense, I was attracted to it. When I went with him to his church, people were very warm and friendly, and the atmosphere was very uplifting. I didn't feel that at my home temple, but I didn't know then that the whole approach to religion was quite different in Buddhism. There is an uplifting feeling in Buddhism, but it took me some time to find it.

Halfway through college I changed universities and majors, and began to study Buddhism at the University of Oregon. I had a wonderful professor, Professor Hee-Jin Kim, who taught classes on Buddhism and Eastern religions. From there, I went to IBS and met more wonderful teachers, like Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada. While at IBS, I met Professor Shigaraki, of Ryukoku University, who was there on sabbatical, and I resolved to go to Japan and study under him.

Before going to Japan, I spent nine months studying under Rev. Gy-

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Always Coming Back for More Buddha-Dharma

By Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji
Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church

Have you ever had this happen? You listen to a Dharma message and think, "Oh hey, that was a really good talk," but then as soon as you walk out of the Hondo and someone asks you what today's talk was about, you can't remember what the talk was about!

One time, a student explains to Rennyo Shonin that his mind is like pouring water in a basket, which slowly pours out. When he hears the talks, they are deeply moving, and he is grateful. However, as soon as he leaves the Hondo, he reverts to his old mind. What should he do about this? How does one make the mind a bucket where the water will remain?

Rennyo Shonin replies to him, "Throw the basket into the water. Keep your body soaked in the water of the Dharma." He explains that forgetting the Dharma message and everything one has learned through the talks is quite natural. He says to keep one's mind soaked in the water of the Dharma, or in other words, to keep listening. Keep coming to the temple; keep one's ears open to the nembutsu calling. There is nothing else for one to do.

Similarly, Shinran Shonin uses the phrase "zenkōnin" 染香人. The first character "zen" 染'means to soak through, like spilling shoyu on your dress shirt; it soaks through and bleeds through the fabric. The second character, "kō" 香' refers to fragrance. The last character, "nin" 人 refers to a person. Shinran explains that "zenkōnin" is a person whom the fragrance of the Buddha's wisdom has completely soaked through the individual.

My grandfather had many books in his collection. I remember cracking open a book of his that was not opened probably since he was alive. As soon as I opened the book, his scent came off the pages, and I instantly remembered ojichan. I remember his face, smell, voice, and the old days when I was a young boy. His scent was absorbed within the pages of the book. In much the same way, when we continue to come to the temple and listen to the teachings of Amida Buddha, the Buddha's wisdom slowly permeates in our hearts, and the beautiful fragrance of the Buddha-Dharma starts to seep into our very being.

In this way, we are being nurtured by the Buddha-Dharma, but we have to continue to listen to the teaching of Amida Buddha's Great Compassion. This won't work just by coming

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A Moment to Feel Happy

By Rev. Hibiki Murakami
Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

"What color do you like? Red! I like the color of red!
The red crayon is always gone first."
— "Donna Iro Ga Suki" ("What Color Do You Like?")

I introduced the Japanese song "Donna Iro Ga Suki" ("What Color Do You Like?") to the Dharma School kids in a class. The class was online, so I couldn't see their reactions through my speaker view. But I was sure that they were thinking about their favorite colors after listening to this song.

After the lyrics asking your favorite color, the following colors are mentioned: red, blue, yellow, and green. If you have someone next to you while reading my article, please try to pick your favorite color together at the same time. Three, two, one! Now pick a color! Did you choose the same color or different color? If you chose the same color, it might mean you have similar tastes.

Each of us has a color that characterizes our personality or can be considered our personal color. Based on your taste, your color emerges when you think about buying things such as a new smart phone case or new clothes. You may wonder which color you would choose. Days later, you might find out that your friend picked the same color smart phone case or piece of clothing. Realizing this might make you and your friend smile.

I recall a moment when I worked at a kindergarten. We had a craft class where we did origami (Japanese folding paper craft). Based on their favorite color, the kids picked a sheet of colored paper from a colorful pile. Sometimes, among friends, there was a quarrel for the sheet of a particular color. Today, that feels like such a long time ago.

I have my own particular taste or "color," but recently, it doesn't seem to overlap or coincide with someone. Yet, this seems normal in this country where I and many people of other races reside. Everyone has their own taste in food, drink, music, language, and fashion. I understand diversity is the source of many possibilities, and I am often excited about encountering something new. However, sometimes I find myself seeking someone to share something in common and enjoy it together.

Today, social media is a popular tool, which enables us to post what we want to share with people over other borders. I look at things being

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dharma Forward Donations Will Create Better World for Shin Buddhists

By Dr. Kent Matsuda
BCA President

During the 2018 BCA National Council Meeting in Sacramento, a proposal was made to sell the BCA headquarters building in San Francisco.

The proposal was made in light of the age of the building, the needed maintenance, the debt owed to the Endowment Foundation regarding building the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC), the diminishing BCA reserve accounts, and the possibility of getting up to $5 million for the building. The proposal was defeated.

The 2018 BCA National Council instructed then President Ken Tanimoto to form a committee of representatives from the Office of the Bishop, the BCA Ministers' Association, the Endowment Foundation, the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), the Buddhist Church of San Francisco, the eight BCA districts, and the BCA to recommend short- and long-term solutions to the BCA debt to the Endowment Foundation and the utilization of the BCA properties. I represented the Bay District and was the chair of that committee.

At the 2019 BCA National Council Meeting in Phoenix, the National Council approved the recommendations from that committee. Among the recommendations was a proposal to raise $1 million for five different projects. One of those projects was to give $25,000 to the Central California District so that Dharma talks could be livestreamed to the temples in the district, possibly from the Orange County Buddhist Church.

The other four projects dealt with fixing the elevator at BCA headquarters, fixing the upper level parking lot at the JSC, fixing the Bishop's parsonage in Belmont, and paying the 2019 debt service to the Endowment Foundation.

At the 2020 BCA National Council Meeting in Renton, Washington, the National Council voted to make the previously mentioned $1 million fundraising effort part of the new Dharma Forward campaign.

Exciting and great changes will come to the BCA and the IBS if we are successful in raising the $15 million for the Dharma Forward campaign. We are about a third of the way to our goal. Won't you join us?

Recently, the BCA sent a check for $25,000 to the Central California District. Although the money was originally earmarked for Central California temples receiving livestream feeds from the Orange County Buddhist Church, events at the Fresno Betsuin and the pandemic may have changed the needs of the Central California District.

Now, Dharma talks are coming from the Fresno Betsuin. Since most temples in the Central California District are not having in-person services, it may not make sense to provide the Central California temples with equipment to receive a signal from the Fresno Betsuin. At least, not now.

As for the other four projects, the BCA has done the work and will be reimbursed soon. Some of the projects, like the elevator at the headquarters building, ended up costing more than we expected. In fact, we have much more work to do on the elevator. Other projects, like the repair of the JSC upper level parking lot, did not cost as much as we anticipated. Fortunately, we included a large contingency fund in the 2019 recommendations to help with costs that exceeded our original estimates.

The Dharma Forward campaign has been able to raise the money to pay for the projects that were presented at the 2019 National Council meeting. Through donations large and small, we are trying to create a better world for Jodo Shinshu Buddhists. You will soon receive a brochure from the Dharma Forward campaign. In it, you will see how we are sharing the donations with the IBS. While the donations to BCA will help us improve the audio-visual services at the JSC, provide more scholarship money to ministerial aspirants at IBS, and help pay off the debt to the Endowment Foundation (among other things), the IBS will be able to fund their professorial chairs.

Exciting and great changes will come to the BCA and the IBS if we are successful in raising the $15 million for the Dharma Forward campaign. We are about a third of the way to our goal. Won't you join us?

Venice Hosts 'Dealing with Racism and Hate' Seminar

FYI

The "Dealing with Racism and Hate, a Jodo Shinshu Approach," can be seen on the Venice Hongwanji YouTube channel at https://tinyurl.com/SanghaSeries1.

By Michelle Orne
Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

A diverse group from nearly 20 BCA and Canadian temples attended a special livestream event titled "Dealing with Racism and Hate, a Jodo Shinshu Approach." (Courtesy of Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple)

The Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Sangha Initiative hosted a special livestream event on April 29 entitled, "Dealing with Racism and Hate, a Jodo Shinshu Approach" that attracted a diverse group of more than 100 people from nearly 20 temples in the BCA and Canada.

This was the first topic of the initiative's Sangha Speaker Series, featuring Rev. Matt Hamasaki of the Sacramento Betsuin, and was intended to bring attention to a serious and timely issue while showing how Jodo Shinshu teachings can help guide us in coping with emotions such as anger and revenge.

Rev. Hamasaki began his presentation with the history of discrimination and racism in the United States and how the concept of a "white race" began during colonial times. He then showed how the methods used to divide whites against Blacks were then used to divide the Japanese American community against itself during the incarceration of World War II. Attendees later commented on how this history lesson better helped them understand how racism has been "woven into the fabric of the United States."

The second part of the seminar focused on the Buddhist teachings and how discrimination and hate can be a product of how our minds are shaped by the systems in place that reinforce inequality. Rev. Hamasaki shared his opinion on how we can work to dismantle these systems.

The event was recorded and can be found on the Venice Hongwanji YouTube channel at https://tinyurl.com/SanghaSeries1.

The Sangha Series was made possible in part by a grant from the Southern District Buddhist Womens' Association and is being produced by the Sangha Initiative, a group of younger adults (aged 20-45) at VHBT that develops and hosts events and programs for the entire Sangha while focusing on engaging our younger adults and families.

The Sangha Series was led by the efforts of Monica Belli Haley and Michelle Orne, with the guidance of VHBT Resident Minister Rev. Kory Quon.

The next event is scheduled for June and is expected to discuss with how Jodo Shinshu teachings can help us cope with mental wellness and dealing with stress and anxiety as we return to a world out of quarantine.

The Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple is committed to helping to raise awareness of racism and hate issues through promoting a culture of diversity and inclusiveness. The temple has adopted the following hashtags that we will use as a constant reminder that everyone is welcome should be welcome at our temples and activities: #MinnaNakayoshi & #EveryoneTogether.

BUTSU BUTSU

Thoughts on Afghanistan's Buddhist History

Editor's Note: Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata returns with a special "Butsu Butsu" column with his thoughts about Afghanistan and its Buddhist history.

By Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata
Buddhist Church of Oakland

Our nation's longest war has finally come to an end. To all those who lost loved ones during this conflict, I extend my deepest sympathies and heartfelt compassion.

It is said that the Buddha-Dharma was first introduced to the region now known as Afghanistan by King Ashoka. An inscription about Buddhism dating back to 260 BC was found in the city of Kandahar.

The world's first Buddhist statuary done in a style which is now known as Gandharan originated in Afghanistan. The now famous and no longer existent Bamiyan Buddhas were erected in the 5th Century AD and were said to be located near an even larger reclining Buddha statue now long gone as well.

The famous Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang visited Afghanistan around 630 AD and, in his writings, he talked about great Buddhist monasteries, stupas and active Buddhist communities that were existent at that time in Afghanistan.

However, by the 11th century, the Buddha-Dharma was completely gone from Afghanistan. I wonder if this would have been a different world today if the Buddha-Dharma could have survived in Afghanistan?

The people of Afghanistan are in my thoughts. Gassho.

A VISION OF SHIN BUDDHISM FOR TODAY

Opening and Preface

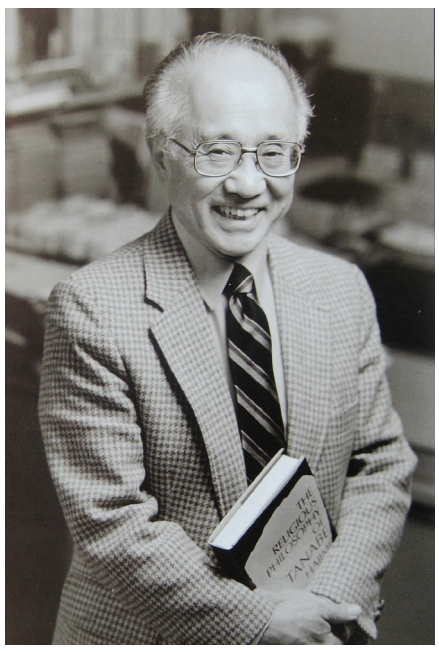
Editor's Note: The following is the first in a series and is an excerpt from "The Dr. Taitetsu Unno Memorial Lecture," delivered at the Institute of Buddhist Studies by Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka on March 19.

By Rev. Dr. Kenneth K. Tanaka
Former BCA Minister,
IBS Associate Professor
and Assistant Dean

All of us here today have been impacted enormously from what Dr. Taitetsu Unno contributed to our understanding and appreciation of the Dharma through his teachings, writings and mere presence. We, along with all who are unable to join us today, acknowledge and are grateful for Dr. Unno's contributions to Shin Buddhism in North America and beyond.

I am also deeply appreciative of what he has meant for me personally. In my early years of academic studies, he wrote me detailed handwritten replies to my questions. Dr. Unno gave me valuable advice, such as to study broadly in Mahayana Buddhism first in order to better understand Shin Buddhism. Of course, the final decision was mine, but it is noteworthy that I ended up doing my master's program at Tokyo University and writing my Ph.D. dissertation on Chinese Buddhism, following in the footsteps that Dr. Unno had walked a couple of decades earlier.

I, thus, felt a profound debt of gratitude to Dr. Unno, which motivated me to facilitate the publication of his unfinished translation of a text,



Rev. Dr. Taitestsu Unno (Courtesy of Unno family)

"A Treatise on Doctrinal Distinctions in the Huayan One Vehicle," the object of his Ph.D. dissertation. With his son, Mark, and his colleague making the finishing touches, I am happy to report that the translation by Dr. Unno of this important work in the Huayan tradition will be published within one year. It will be part of the English Tripitaka Translation Series of the Society for the Promotion of Buddhism, with which I am currently involved.

I also wish to dedicate my presentation to Dr. Unno and to the entire Unno family, and particularly to Mrs. Unno for her lifelong support of her husband, her role as Dharma teacher in her own right, and for her uplifting smile, and to Rev. Tetsuo Unno (Dr. Unno's younger brother), whose contributions to Shin Buddhism have been enormous as well and, in the area of humor, well, legendary! So, I am honored to be able to express my debt of gratitude to my sempais — my seniors — who preceded me and showed the way on this marvelous path.

Preface

I have entitled my talk, "Revisioning Shin Buddhist Teachings for Today: Thirteen Contributors to the Book, The Tide of Wisdom: Shinran's Wisdom, Authentic Individuality and Social Engagement (New Horizon Seen from Shinshū Theology)," published in Japanese in 2017. This anthology is the outcome of a research project that I organized and served as its editor.

We, the 13 contributors to the anthology, were quite clear of our aim from the outset. We wanted to seek a greater balance in the heavy tilt toward what we are calling "traditional scholarship" (dentō kyōgaku), which has influenced our contemporary understanding of the teachings in Japan and in the West.

In particular, we felt that not enough attention was being given to the three dimensions of Shinran's teachings. The three are: 1) wisdom (chi'e, prajñā); 2) authentic individuality embraced in wisdom and compassion (shutaisei); and 3) social engagement (shakaisei). Our hope is that our anthology will contribute in some small way toward a more balanced understanding of Shinran's teachings and, thus, of Shin Buddhism.

Next: "The Image of Shin Buddhism"

Bishop's Message

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omay Kubose of the Buddhist Temple of Chicago, who has influenced my ministry tremendously over the years. After spending five years in Japan, I was assigned to Orange County Buddhist Church, where the Sangha became my teachers.

One starting point in my life led me on a wonderful journey. As they say, "It's all about the journey. It's all about the path."

Michael Conway, in his recent lecture, also pointed out that when Buddhism was transmitted to China, the Chinese Buddhists translated the term "bodhi" or "enlightenment," as "the path," or "the way" (道). Normally, one would think that they would translate "bodhi" as "enlightenment," but they chose to translate it as "path." This is a most revealing translation.

The Chinese got it right. Bodhi, or enlightenment, doesn't mean a "thing" or an "event," but it means "the path." Here, too, it is all about the journey. Bodhi means the journey, the path to enlightenment. The most important thing about the path, is that one must truly be on it. In order to truly be on it, there must be a true starting point.

We must have a true starting point that propels us on the path. Once we are on the path, then the goal and the path become one, such that the path is the goal, and the goal is the path.

Rev. Miyaji

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to one temple service or sporadically taking an interest. We have to come and listen to the Buddha-Dharma continually. This teaching is not something that can provide any kind of instant gratification.

In addition to this, we cannot smell ourselves. A weird statement to make, admittedly, but allow me to explain. We can smell the fragrance of other people, but not of ourselves, oddly. We cannot smell ourselves; only others can smell us. In other words, we don't notice when we become true Nembutsu practicers, but others will take notice. We will never really know if we are truly authentic, but others will see this authenticity.

As such, when others see the Nembutsu alive and well within an individual, they can smell the sweet fragrance of the Nembutsu coming off that person, and they will aspire to be like that individual. But the Nembutsu person is not aware of that. This is true humility. I remember our esteemed former Bishop Rev. Umezu once saying, "No truly humble person says to others, 'Hey, I am a humble person!'" True humility is never recognized by the individual.

As we continue to listen to the Buddha-Dharma, the Nembutsu teaching and its benefits will slowly emanate from us. If we are honest in our approach, we will naturally — and unpretentiously — express great joy, humility, hope, and peace of the heart and mind. So let us continue to throw our basket minds in the water of the Buddha-Dharma, absorb the sweet fragrance of Amida Buddha's infinite wisdom and compassion and become "zenkōnin" 染香人 , and continually seek by listening to the Nembutsu teaching.

Rev. Murakami

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posted on SNS like a "message in a bottle" floating on the ocean hoping to be found by someone in order to let somebody know "I am here." I believe that when we share something on SNS (social networking sites), we do so not to isolate ourselves from others. Rather it is an expression or desire to maintain our identity. But in doing so, to find a connection to others in the world is not easy. Yet, how joyful it is when you and I can share something we both like.

Master Shinran mentions birth into the Pure Land quoting a sentence from Tanluan, saying "for they (beings) are the same in practicing the Nembutsu and follow no other way." I found a similar message in the lyrics of the song, "Minna Hana Ni Nare" ("Everyone Becomes a Flower"), which was composed as a memorial song for the upcoming joint celebration of the 850th anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and 800th anniversary of the establishment of the Jodo Shinshu teaching. The lyrics begin with "When you smile, you become a flower. Also, I become a flower when I see your smile."

I think "a flower" represents happiness. What makes you happy makes me happy as well. Not only do I receive happiness, but I become happiness itself. Our path to happiness sounds similar to that of those who recite the Nembutsu for they are eventually born in the Pure Land. Based on the Mahayana philosophy, your friend aligns next to you (we are one in the Dharma). Amida Buddha opened the Dharma storage house and presented the Nembutsu for the sake of all beings' smiles, not just my smile.

BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA
Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations
Virtual National Conference
Hosted by
Northern California District
October 14-16, 2022
Winds of Change
Jidai No Shinka Ni Kiku
時代の進化に聞く
FBWA 2022

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Faith & Science
Awakening Compassion for the Future
Saturday, October 30, 11am - 1pm PST on Zoom
We use energy everyday in many forms, usually without thinking, but it is important for us to consider the effects this has on us now and in the future. This event is meant to bring together the UN's Sustainable Development Goal #7, affordable and clean energy, with perspectives from science and various religions. By looking at this issue through the lenses of faith and science we can consider responsible and compassionate ways to create a viable future for everyone.
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Dr. Miriam Hinostroza
Head of the Global Climate Action Unit, in the Energy and Climate Branch at the Economy Division of the United Nations Environment Program
PANELISTS
Dr. Palitha Kohona
Ambassador of Sri Lanka to China and former Permanent Representative to the UN
Dr. Zachary Markwith
Education Director at Islamic Networks Group (ING)
Rev. Don Castro
Founder of EcoSangha and retired Buddhist Churches of America minister
Dr. George E. Griener, S.J., Th.D.
Professor Emeritus of Historical and Systematic Theology
Presented by the Jodo Shinshu International Office
To register, use QR code or visit https://bit.ly/3rcqm49

Jane Imamura

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she showed. Mrs. Fisk organized a choir at the Guadalupe temple, and Jane learned the art of choral training and conducting.

When Jane left Guadalupe to study music and composition at the University of California at Berkeley, Mrs. Fisk stayed in touch with her. In Jane's senior college year, Mrs. Fisk helped her transfer to the Chicago Musical College to study piano with the famous teacher and president of the school, Rudolf Ganz.

But Jane's formal musical education came to an abrupt halt with the mass relocation and detention of Japanese Americans that followed the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor.

She returned from Chicago to Guadalupe, and she watched as her father was arrested and carted off by FBI agents — one of thousands of Japanese community leaders arrested nationwide — on suspicion of being a possible security threat. Her father's parting words to her were: "Go to Berkeley and marry Rev. Imamura. Be happy!"

The esteemed educator and sage, Rev. Joen Ashikaga, had arranged a previous meeting between Rev. Kanmo Imamura and Jane. The first meetings were cordial and the two decided to continue a lively correspondence as Jane moved to Chicago and Rev. Imamura continued his duties as the new priest at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple.

But the relocation orders after Pearl Harbor changed their plans for a longer courtship. In 1942, with her father's words ringing in her ears, Jane defied a travel ban and took a bus to Berkeley to visit her older brother, who was studying there. Rev. Imamura and Jane were wed soon thereafter.

Rev. Imamura was spared arrest, though records showed he was under careful surveillance by authorities.

He and Jane joined the rest of the Matsuura family at the Tulare Assembly Center. At the center, displaced internees were fearful and in despair. Rev. Imamura was the lone Buddhist priest among the almost 3,000 internees.

He immediately formed a Sangha. Hundreds of internees participated in the services. Shinobu Matsuura taught Sunday School and gave lectures in Japanese. Jane, though feeling ill from her first pregnancy, gathered what would be the biggest choir she would ever conduct. She managed to also perform in spontaneously organized concerts.

The family's move to the federal internment camp in Gila River, Arizona, was a trying ordeal. Thankfully, Rev. Imamura was joined by three other Buddhist priests and they formed an active Sangha, complete with YBA, Sunday School, services for the Issei and even 500 mimeographed service books.

Every type of ceremony was held at Gila River, from Hanamatsuri, weddings, births, and sadly, funerals. Jane, in her growing role of Bomori, organized music for services and events. Two children, Hiro and Ryo, were born during those camp years.

In 1945, as the camps were gradually closed, the Imamuras moved to the Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles, the first Buddhist hostel. It was at the Senshin hostel, with soon to be ordained Arthur Takemoto, that they worked under difficult circumstances to help a steady stream of former internees as they left the camps, looking for a home and work. The hostel had been set up with the generous and tireless help of Rev. Julius Goldwater, a dedicated Buddhist who had kept in contact with the Imamuras throughout the internment. Takemoto's parents and his future wife, Kazumi Sanwo, joined the staff during this effort.

After a year, most temples in California had set up their own hostels, and the Imamuras, now a family of five, returned to the Berkeley temple.

The following years were vibrant and highly productive. Throughout the United States, Buddhist temples thrived with increased membership and activity.

The Berkeley Buddhist Temple had a small congregation, but being located nearby UC Berkeley, a major educational institution, the temple attracted many students from Buddhist families. The temple grounds were a complex of buildings that housed not only the priest and his growing family, but eventually, a women's and men's dorm for university students.

Jane would become house mother to the dorm members as well as tending to her many duties in the temple and to her family. Once the Imamuras moved from their one-bedroom accommodation in the back area of the temple into a modestly small, but comfortable house on the same property, Jane accepted a baby grand piano given to her by Mrs. Fisk.

That piano was used by Jane to teach a whole new generation of Buddhist pianists. Although the purpose of the piano lessons was to create a group that would be able to play at temple services, many of the students went on to become accomplished players and teachers.

Jane and Kanmo were of like mind and vision. As progressive activists, they welcomed the support they met among an energized post-internment community.

A Buddhist Study Center was initiated in 1949, holding lively seminars and classes on Buddhist thought from all sects and cultures. The temple publication, Berkeley Bussei, flourished, and included articles from prominent scholars and artists. Interest in Buddhism spread beyond the Japanese community. Iconic figures such as Alan Watts, Jack Kerouac, poets Philip Whalen and Gary

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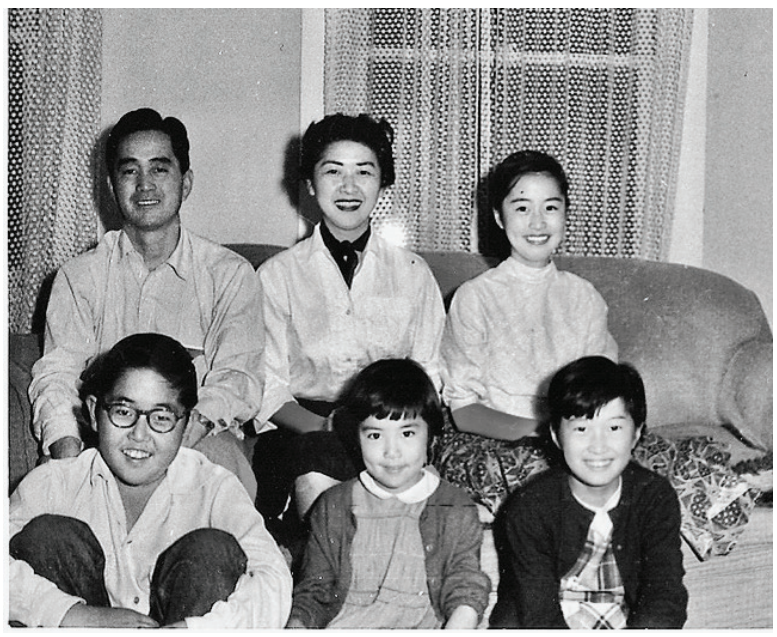
DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Shinji Eshima, the composer of the gatha "In a Quiet Valley," is also related to Jane Imamura? Shinji is Jane's nephew and has composed many large scale works including commissioned music while also a double bassist in the San Francisco Ballet and the San Francisco Opera Orchestras. This month's featured gathas on the BCA Chanting and Music webpage are "In a Quiet Valley" as well as "Metta" and "Returning Home" composed by Hiro Imamura David. https://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/chanting-music

— BCA Music Committee



In top photo, Jane and Rev. Kanmo Imamura are shown in a family portrait in their Berkeley home with their children. In front row are Ryo, Mari and Rae and seated next to Jane Imamura is daughter Hiro. In bottom photo, Jane and Rev. Imamura are shown with a group including Rev. Arthur Takemoto during the 1945 Hanamatsuri at the Senshin hostel in Los Angeles. (Courtesy of Berkeley Buddhist Temple)

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edly touch on the logistics, we wanted to focus on what to expect as we return to in-person learning. What challenges will we face as teachers? What impact has the pandemic had on children's mental health?" Yanari continued. "What are the facts about children and COVID? How do we keep children safe, given the lack of vaccines for elementary-aged children?"

The workshop presentation featured: Dr. Kathy Obana, an otolaryngologist (ear, nose and throat) physician; Dr. Serenity Serseción, a psychologist; Rev. Henry Adams, of the San Mateo Buddhist Temple and supervising minister of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco; Angie Lew, an elementary school reading specialist; Stacy Uyeda, a middle school teacher; Brian Tamekuni, an elementary school teacher; and Laurie Handa, an elementary school teacher.

The series of presentations were followed by a panel discussion.

Uyeda, who teaches eighth-graders at Albany Middle School and is the Dharma School superintendent for the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, kicked off the presentations by describing her in-person instruction at Albany and how she plans to incorporate her experiences with Dharma School.

Uyeda said she returned to her Albany classroom in April, teaching a hybrid model — with half of the students physically in class and the other half at home. She described the hybrid situation as "very challenging" and ultimately not a technique she and her fellow teachers liked.

She noted three student realities — physical, mental and emotional — and what actions teachers could take in response.

"They're not earth-shattering, but they're a good reminder of what's happening," she said. She noted physical realities such as students arriving tired or out of shape from being home so much during the pandemic and suggested that teachers build in structure and fun.

Uyeda said there were mental realities, including some students forgetting Dharma School basics or feeling disengaged from school and from a classroom. She suggested that teachers create lots of opportunities to work collaboratively and without ranking.

"I think that it's not a good time to do a lot of contests where somebody is the winner and somebody is a loser," she said. "It's really a great time to build back communities."

And, then there are emotional realities, she said, including the fact that some students might truly feel strange talking in person again or may feel disconnected from teachers or peers.

"This may be my most important point. A teacher can create many opportunities to see and hear each student to really give each student a chance to have a voice, even if it's not speaking," Uyeda said. "There may be something that they can show or draw or demonstrate ways to show that you see them and acknowledge them."

Dr. Serseción, a licensed clinical psychologist who is a member of the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, began by noting that it's common for pre-teens to start developing depression, anxiety and mental health issues that they may carry into adulthood. She said she's noticed an increase in depression among pre-teens, transitioning from childhood to adolescence.

"A lot of kids have just been sad at home that they can't see their friends, they can't talk to anyone," Dr. Serseción said. "Maybe they only have adults in their life. It's hard for families to find people to bubble with, and some people might not feel safe, so that's definitely been a problem. Also, keep in mind that friendships change over time.

"One thing I've noticed is that the kids who maybe are not as good or able to keep in contact online have lost some of their friends because it's kind of like — out of sight, out of mind," she continued. "And, for a child, a year is a very long time. So I've seen people struggling with that and some of the help I've been trying to give is to help them reconnect with their friends if possible or make a new one."

Dr. Serseción also noted that some people may have

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Jane Imamura

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Snyder joined the study classes and contributed articles to Berkeley Bussei.

Jane established a permanent choir in 1948. The choir performed new and traditional gathas. Jane encouraged the composition of new works to reflect the growing diversity of the Buddhist community.

Dorm members Kimi Yonemura (Hisatsune), Ricky Ito, and Hiroshi Kashiwagi wrote new lyrics for gathas. In the early 1950s, an Issei priest, Rev. Joshin Motoyoshi, chaired a committee to create the first service book entirely in English.

Jane formed the BCA Music Department with fellow Bomoris, Yumi Hojo and Chizu Iwanaga. Choirs flourished in many temples. At crowded annual Young Buddhist Association conventions, as many as nine choirs would participate. There was even a children's choir in Berkeley that recorded newly composed children's gathas.

After the new Berkeley temple was built in 1955, the social hall was often overfilled with audiences at lectures, concerts and for special performances such as that of Hiroshi Kashiwagi's play, "Kisa Gotami," which featured Mary Tagumi and young Cal student, George Takei.

Jane, who was fully engaged in her rewarding and challenging life as Bomori, did not return to college to complete her music degree. But she never lost her love of the piano repertoire. In her busy schedule at the temple and looking after her family of six, she made time to have occasional lessons with excellent teachers.

For a time, she met with a violinist from the San Francisco Symphony to play sonatas. Her daughter, Hiro, following Jane's musical path, performed throughout the United States and parts of Europe as a concert pianist. Hiro noted that the repertoire Jane easily mastered on the piano was so difficult, she herself struggled to play it. Jane had the gift of perfect pitch, which coupled with natural ability, allowed her to play anything by ear.

In 1957, the Imamuras retired from the Berkeley temple and moved to their new private home. Jane continued to meet with the temple choir and Rev. Imamura continued his work with the Buddhist Study Center.

Jane took a job at the UC

Jane Imamura is seated behind the Berkeley Buddhist Temple organ during this 1980s photo. (Courtesy of Berkeley Buddhist Temple)

Berkeley Music Department. She quickly became an indispensable coordinator of department activities, overseeing the practice rooms and student concerts, and hosting weekly teas where faculty and students mingled. She hosted many musical gatherings during those years. Talented students, many who eventually went on to international acclaim, gathered at the Imamura home to play music late into the night.

In 1967, Rev. Imamura was called to Hawaii to become Bishop of the large and active Hawaiian organization of Buddhist temples, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Jane and Kanmo moved to Honolulu, back to the Honpa Hongwanji that Kanmo remembered from his childhood and young bachelor days.

Jane became Bomori on a new, larger scale, with many official and public duties that she carried out in her innovative style. She naturally encouraged an active music program in the temple, not only as choir director, but in giving music lessons to the students of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii School.

The full-time school — the only established Buddhist school in the United States at the time — had a student body of 300 children from kindergarten through sixth grade, as well as English classes for foreign students.

Jane also taught Japanese songs as part of a program at the Fort Gakuen Japanese language classes and the Rakuen Club for senior citizens. Rev. Imamura promoted the establishment of a new Buddhist Study Center based on the Berkeley model. All of the programs thrived with Jane and Kanmo's active participation.

In 1974, because of Kanmo's increasing ill health, the Imamuras decided to retire and returned to Berkeley. After a long fight with a debilitating illness, Rev. Imamura passed away in 1986.

To honor her husband's remarkable life, Jane turned her devoted attention to writing a book, "Kaikyo." Temple music continued to engage her. In 1989, she joined the BCA's Ad Hoc Music Committee, whose purpose was to commission the composition and publication of new gathas. The response to this project was widespread and rewarding.

New gathas by American composers Lou Harrison and Shinji Eshima, along with Linda Castro, Dii Lewis, and others, joined standard works by Chizu Iwanaga, Yumi Hojo — and Jane's own compositions.

Eshima, a successful contemporary composer of moving, dramatic works, many with significant political, social import and some based on Buddhist chants, is Jane's nephew.

A new, revised BCA "Shin Buddhist Service Book" was published in 1994.

In her last private years, Jane gave way to dementia. But she miraculously remained able to sit at her piano and lovingly play complex works by Chopin.

She passed away in 2011, having touched and inspired multitudes.

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lost someone in their lives, either because of COVID-19 or not.

"I've seen a lot of people deal with loss, so when they come back, not only are they dealing with their stress and seeing people again, but they haven't really processed that loss, and so just understanding that might be what they're going through," she said.

She also said she's seen younger children go through an "existential crisis because their idea that they were immortal or that nothing bad would happen to them has changed because there's a global pandemic. So they're dealing with things that you wouldn't expect to see until they were older."

Dr. Serseción also pointed out the importance of mental health of Dharma School teachers, and urged them to take a break and to "do your own self-care."

Dr. Katherine Obana, an otolaryngologist and former Dharma School teacher for 10 years and a member of the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, described the COVID-19 statistics on children.

As of early August, she noted that there were 4.3 million total cases of COVID-19 in the United States and that children represent 14.3 percent of the total COVID-19 cases. In early August, there were only approximately 360 COVID-19 related deaths of children compared with more than 600,000 deaths of adults in the nation.

"Kids get much milder forms of COVID if they get it," Dr. Obana said, saying the symptoms are mild, such as a runny nose, congestion, coughing and fever. Many children, she said, are suspected to be asymptomatic.

She noted a rise of nearly 100,000 COVID-19 infections among children the week ending Aug. 5 because of the delta variant and lower vaccination rates.

Dr. Obana said the best way to prevent COVID-19 in young children is to vaccinate all eligible people interacting with them — anybody over 12 years of age — and by wearing masks in indoor settings and socially distancing as much as possible.

The presentations were followed by a panel discussion moderated by Rev. Adams, who began by asking the teachers for strategies to keep students engaged in a distance learning format.

Angie Lew, a reading specialist and member of Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, said that some of her students didn't know how to talk on Zoom or how to interact and respond with other students. She found that coaching and practicing with the children and having visible things like pictures to talk about helped improve their skills.

Uyeda, who is the mother of two teenagers, said that for tweens and teens, a good strategy is to use the chat function to get them engaged and paying attention "and then find ways for them to verbalize and use their voice."

Handa, a fifth-grade charter school teacher and a member of San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, added that chatting with an individual student at first and then sharing that chat with other students serves to acknowledge that student. Using breakout rooms helped, too, she said.

Tamekuni, who teaches at the Campbell Unified School District and is a member of San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, suggested an activity like an interactive game where students don't have to worry about doing an assignment incorrectly.

He said a lot of students have preferences on how they want to communicate on Zoom. He said some would ask not to appear on camera or use the speaker function, but would chat with him "which was fine because I knew they were paying attention." Others would use the speaker function a lot, he said.

Dr. Serseción cautioned that placing restrictions based on who's vaccinated or not may result in pushback. "I think no matter what community you're in, you're going to have some people who respond badly and will see it as a threat to their freedom and ability to choose," she said.

Dr. Obana addressed the medical side of reopening, particularly the issue of vaccination.

"The interesting thing is that when they actually look at when kids do get COVID or unvaccinated people do get COVID, it's actually not usually in structured situations like school," she said. "It's usually when they go home, and then there's a family gathering and everybody's at home without masks, and there's no monitoring. It's probably the best thing to do is to wear masks, when you're in a group situation and especially inside."

She also pointed out that outdoor activities are about 90 percent safer than indoors, even without masks.

In his concluding remarks, Rev. Adams said: "Dr. Serseción suggested that people are going to have different ways of thinking about this (vaccination) and my thinking is we want to include everyone. That really needs to be the heart of our Sangha, but not necessarily in a way that puts anyone at risk.

"Our wish is to keep everybody together and to create this refuge in our hearts and minds in this continuing stressful time for people of all different perspectives, all different levels of vaccine eligibility, all ages," Rev. Adams said.

BCA Center for Buddhist Education Every Day Buddhism Committee Presents:

"The Three Poisons in our Life"

A Shin Buddhist approach to dealing with the three poisons

Lecture and Discussion

By Rev. Marvin Harada

Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

October 30, 2021

11:00 am – 1:00pm (PT) Zoom

GREED, ANGER, IGNORANCE

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今月の法話

「未曽有の疫癘に遭逢した今だからこそできる事、そこから気づかされた事」

中加教区　開教使　中田和朗

Rev. Kaz Nakata

みなさま、ご無沙汰しております。前回法輪にわたしの記事を掲載していただいたのは2020年の正月号でした。二年足らずですが、ずいぶん昔のように感じます。みなさまは、2020年のお正月、どのように過ごされたか覚えておられますでしょうか？　2019年の年末はお寺で除夜の鐘を撞き、年越しそばをいただかれたかもしれませんね。

私の住む、加州中部教区（中加）は直線距離で約170マイル幅60マイル、広さにすると1万平方マイル、広島県3つ分にもなる範囲に対して2人の開教使が日々の法務につかせていただいています。ご法事先が60マイル100マイル先のご自宅ということも珍しくありません。距離的に例えるならば、広島市中心部から車で岡山との県境にある福山市までドライブする感覚と似ています。昨年の3月までは、日々あちらこちらへ赴いてご法事をさせていただいておりましたが、ワクチン接種が進んだ今年の4月ごろまでは、ズームなどを用いたリモートによるご法事を頼まれることが多くなりました。車を運転する時間が少なくなったことで、今までできなかったことをやってみたいな、と思うようになりました。それは第二次世界大戦中に建設された日系人強制収容所の跡地で法要をお勤めする、ということでした。私は渡米後、自分の研究のために北米に点在する全10か所の収容所跡地を訪れ、当時収容所に住む日系人の人たちと交流・交易のあった現地の人たちにインタビューを行ったり、跡地の清掃（一部は雑草に覆われてしまっていたり、落書きがされているため）を手伝ったりしました。跡地にある共同墓地で、個人的に読経をすることはありましたが、教区として正式に跡地で法要を勤めるということはありませんでした。

収容所跡地での法要について教区会議で提案したところ、みなさまから温かい賛同を得られ、実際に現地へ行って法要をお勤めするという計画を立てることとなりました。最初の候補地はカリフォルニア州マンザナー強制収容所、昨年9月の秋季彼岸会として、国立公園に特別許可を頂きマンザナー慰霊碑の前で勤修させていただきました。マンザナーでの法要を皮切りに、今年の3月の春季彼岸会としてアリゾナ州ポストン強制収容所跡地で、夏のお盆特別法要としてユタ州トパーズ強制収容所跡地、ワイオミング州ハートマウンテン強制収容所跡地、そして去る9月の秋季彼岸会のご縁としてカリフォルニア州最北端にあるトゥリーレーク強制刑務所跡地でお勤めをして参ります。先に書かせていただいたように、広島県3つ分の開教区を毎日のようにドライブしていた生活では決してできなかったことだと思います。法要後さまざまな方から、「パソコンで法要の中継をみました。訪問させていただきました。また、中加の日曜学校に参加する生徒たちの教材として取り上げていただき、第二次世界大戦中の日系社会の混乱について深く学ぶご縁となったことにありがたく思います。

この記事を読まれるみなさんは戦後に渡米されてきた新一世と呼ばれる世代かもしれません。また私のように渡米して20年足らずというかたもおられるでしょう。ある三世の方に「あなたは日本から来たのに、どうして大昔の収容所の事を調べているのですか？」と聞かれたことがありました。その時私は、「北米開教区にあるほとんどのお寺は第二次世界大戦前に、南無阿弥陀仏を拠り所とされた一世（日本人）二世（日系米国人）の方々がなけなしの蓄えを持ち寄り、右を向いても左を向いてもキリスト教という社会のなかで、お念仏に生かされることを互いに喜び合える場所としてお寺を建てられました。そんな無垢の人々の人権が踏みにじられ、その上、たくさんの家族が家や土地まで奪われ、文字通り着の身着のまま収容所に送られていきました。戦後、それぞれの収容所から帰還された人たちはまた、一生懸命お寺を盛り立てられました。今あるお寺はそういった厳しい境遇を乗り越えてこられた方々がおられたからこそ、いまの時代にまで残されているということに気づかされた時、どのような生活を収容所で送られたのだろう、どんな天気で、どんな地形で、どんな建物にすまわされたのだろう、と。当時にタイムスリップすることは叶いませんが、せめてその跡地に行って、70数年前に収容所で見た景色を、自分も見てみたいと、調べているわけです」と答えました。

いくつかの収容所跡には、居住用の小屋（バラック）が取り壊されずに残されています。その小屋のところどころに、文字が書かれています。「どうか、家への帰り方を教えてください。（Please show me how to go home.）」と。当時を思えば、悲痛という言葉では表しきれない言葉がたくさん残されています。収容所は、隔離施設という目的で作られているため、第二次世界大戦開始当時、収容所から逃げ出そうとした人たちが守衛の銃弾に倒れました。まさに命がけの生活でした。そんな抑圧された収容所生活の中でも、お寺を作り、日曜学校を再開し、わら半紙に礼拝聖典（らいはいせいてん・お経や浄土真宗のみ教えについて書かれた本）を印刷し、南無阿弥陀仏のお念仏を次世代に伝えようと大切に守られました。わたしの手元にはコロラド州にあったアマチ収容所は三年ほどで閉じられましたが、虫食いもない保存状態の良いはずの聖典の中ほどのページが、手垢とめくり跡でよれよれになり、ページの一部がすり減って穴が開いています。収容所生活で行われた日曜礼拝は数えられるほどでしたが、わたしの手元の聖典が日曜礼拝の回数をはるかに超える回数分何度も繰り返し読まれていたことを物語っています。

本願寺第八代を継職された蓮如上人（しょうにん）のお言行録の中に、「本尊は掛けやぶれ、聖教はよみやぶれ」という有名な言葉が残されています。当時、蓮如上人のもとでお念仏のみ教えを学んでいた道西（どうさい）は、ある時上人から教えの書かれた一幅の書を受け取りました。喜んだ道西は家宝にしようと、書に掛け軸のように装飾を施し、傷んでは困ると、箱にしまってしまいました。そのことを聞いた上人は右に書いた言葉を道西にかけられたと、伝えられています。お仏壇の扉が閉まったまま、あるいは開けたまま、ほこりが積もっていませんか？　礼拝聖典に大事にカバーをかけたまま、本棚の奥で眠っていませんか？　蓮如上人は、ご本尊の掛け軸や、聖典を大事にしまっておくのではなく、ご本尊や聖典を通して何度も何度もみ教えに触れることが大事と諭されました。

私にとって、アマチ収容所で手垢がついて穴まで開いてしまった聖典を見返すたびに、緊急事態・都市封鎖と言われお寺やレストランに気軽に行けなくなった今でさえ、強制移住させられたわけでもなく、電話やインターネットの注文一つでなんでも手に入る生活を送ることのできる自分を内省してみると、自分はなんとぬるい世界に安住して、偉そうに振舞っているのか、ということに気づかされます。今回、強制収容所跡を再びめぐるというご縁をいただきました。収容所跡は、何度訪れても、毎回違った角度からの学びがあります。未曽有の疫癘に遭逢した今だからこそ、「終戦」のその日まで先の見えないトンネルの中のような生活を、強制収容所で耐え忍ばれた念仏者の姿に私たちは学ばねばなりません。合掌。

Central Cal ministers and members visited Tule Lake

（前ページ、総長メッセージ続き）

人生のある出発点が、私を素晴らしい旅に導いてくれました。「人生は旅であり、道こそが大事である」ということなのです。

コンウェイ教授は先日の講演で、仏教がインドから中国に伝わったとき、中国の仏教徒は「Bodhi」や「enlightenment」という言葉を「道」と訳したことについて話されていました。普通に考えれば、「菩提」や「悟り」と訳すだけでよいはずなのに、「道」だとも訳したのです。これは本質を表した、優れた訳だと思います。

菩提や悟りは、「物」や「出来事」を意味するのではなく、「道」を意味するのです。菩提とは、悟りへの旅であり、悟りへの道という意味です。道について最も重要なことは、歩む者が本当にその道にいなければならないということです。

道を進むためには、私たちを道に向かわせる真の出発点がなければなりません。そしてひとたび道を歩めば、目標と道が一体となり、道が目標であり、目標が道であるようになるのです。

法輪

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二〇二一年度教化標語

「仏法をバーチャルで シェア～次元を超えて、 おうちで聞法～」

あの記事をもう一度!

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「浄土真宗のみ教え」についての親教

本年も、皆さまと共に立教開宗記念法要のご勝縁に遇わせていただきました。立教開宗とは親鸞聖人が『教行信証』を著して他力の念仏を体系的にお示しになり、浄土真宗のみ教えを確立されたことをいいます。この法要をご縁として、私たちに浄土真宗のみ教えが伝わっていることをあらためて味わわせていただきましょう。

さて、仏教を説かれたお釈迦さまは、諸行無常や諸法無我という言葉でこの世界のありのままの真実を明らかにされました。この真実を身をもって受け入れることのできない私たちは、日々「苦しみ」を感じて生きていますが、その代表的なものが「生老病死」の「四苦」であるとお釈迦様は表されました。むさぼり・いかり・おろかさなどの煩悩を抱えた私たちは、いのち終わるその瞬間まで、苦しみから逃れることはできません。

このように真実をありのままに受け入れられない私たちのことを、親鸞聖人は「煩悩具足の凡夫」と言われました。そして、阿弥陀如来は煩悩の闇に沈む私たちをそのままに救い取りたいと願われ、そのお慈悲のお心を「南無阿弥陀仏」のお念仏に込めてはたらき続けてくださっています。ご和讃に「罪業もとよりかたちなし 妄想顛倒のなせるなり」「煩悩・菩提体無二」とありますように、人間の分別がはたらき出す前のありのままの真実に基づく如来のお慈悲ですから、いのちあるものすべてに平等にそそがれ、誰一人として見捨てられることなく、そのままの姿で摂め取ってくださいます。

親鸞聖人は「念仏成仏これ真宗」（『浄土和讃』）、「信は願より生ずれば、念仏成仏自然なり自然はすなはち報土なり 証大涅槃うたがはず」（『高僧和讃』）とお示しになっています。浄土真宗とは、「われにまかせよ そのまま救う」という「南無阿弥陀仏」に込められた阿弥陀如来のご本願のお心を疑いなく受け入れる信心ただ一つで、「自然の浄土」（『高僧和讃』）でかたちを超えたこの上ないさとりを開いて仏に成るというみ教えです。

阿弥陀如来に願われたいのちと知らされ、その温かなお慈悲に触れる時、大きな安心とともに生きていく力が与えられ、人と喜びや悲しみを分かち合い、お互いに敬い支え合う世界が開かれてきます。如来のお慈悲に救われていく安心と喜びのうえから、仏恩報謝の道を歩まれたのが親鸞聖人でした。私たちも聖人の生き方に学び、次の世代の方々にご法義をわかりやすく伝わるよう、ここにその肝要を「浄土真宗のみ教え」として味わいたいと思います。

浄土真宗のみ教え

南無阿弥陀仏
「われにまかせよ そのまま救う」の 弥陀のよび声
私の煩悩と仏のさとりは 本来一つゆえ
「そのまま救う」が 弥陀のよび声
ありがとう といただいて
この愚身をまかす このままで
救い取られる 自然の浄土
仏恩報謝の お念仏
み教えを依りどころに生きる者 となり
少しずつ 執われの心を 離れます
生かされていることに 感謝して
むさぼり いかりに 流されず
穏やかな顔と 優しい言葉
喜びも 悲しみも 分かち合い
日々に 精一杯 つとめます

総長メッセージ

「真の出発点」

Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

米国仏教団　総長
原田　マービン

先日、京都の大谷大学で真宗学を教えているマイケル・コンウェイ教授の素晴らしい講義を聞きました。コンウェイ教授は、仏教における正しい出発点の重要性について話され、真宗では、正しい出発点があれば、必ず真の目的地である悟りに到達することができる、と言われていました。

以前、バークレーの毎田センター所長、羽田信夫先生が同じようなトピックで講義されていましたし、日本の曹洞宗の開祖、道元禅師も同様のことを述べられていたように思います。道元禅師は 悟りという目標と悟りに至る道は密接に関連していると言われています。悟りというゴールとそれに至る道は二つの別々のものではなく、一本の線上の二つの点でもありません。悟りは遠くにあるものではなく、道を歩んでいれば、今ここにあるものだと言われるのです。

禅の世界でも、出発点が正しければ、つまり本当に道を歩んでいれば、必然的にゴールにたどり着くことができるということです。

私にとって重要な出発点となったのは、大学生の時、最も親しかった友人が敬虔なクリスチャンとなり、彼が私に仏教についてたずねてきたことでした。

私は、それまで仏教について勉強したことも真剣に考えたこともない、典型的な「YBAのキッズ」でした。ですから彼が私に仏教に関する質問をしても、何も答えることができませんでした。そのことで私はショックを受け、仏教は私の家族の宗教ではあっても、私が実践する宗教にはなってなかったことに気づかされました。

友人は私をキリスト教に改宗させようとしていました。そして実際に私はキリスト教に惹かれていたのです。彼と一緒に教会に行くと、人々がとても温かくフレンドリーで、高揚感を得られるような雰囲気がありました。私がJr.YBAの時に行っていたお寺ではそのような雰囲気は感じられませんでしたが、仏教では宗教に対する考え方が全く違うことを当時は知りませんでした。また、仏教にも高揚感が得られるようなこともあるのですが、それをわかるまで時間がかかりました。

そのことがきっかけとなって、大学の途中で転校し、専攻を変えることにしたのです。私はオレゴン大学で仏教を学び始めました。そこで仏教と東洋宗教の授業を担当していたキム・ヒジン教授という素晴らしい教授に出会い、そこからIBSに行き、草田春好師のような尊敬すべき先生方に出会うことになったのです。またIBSでは、当時サバティカルで滞在していた龍谷大学の信楽教授に出会いました。そこで私は日本に留学して信楽教授に師事しようと決意したのです。

日本に行く前の9カ月間は、シカゴ仏教会の久保瀬暁明師に師事し、久保瀬師から学んだ経験は長年にわたって私の開教活動に大きな影響を与えてくれました。日本で5年間過ごした後、私はオレンジカウンティー仏教教会に配属され、それからオレンジカウンティーのサンガが私の師となったのです。（次ページへ続く）

2021（令和）年4月15日
浄土真宗本願寺派門主 大谷光淳

来る2023（令和5）年には親鸞聖人御誕生850年・立教開宗800年慶讃法要をお迎えいたします。聖人が御誕生され、浄土真宗のみ教えを私たちに説き示してくださったことに感謝して、この「浄土真宗のみ教え」を共に唱和し、共につとめ、み教えが広く伝わるようお念仏申す人生を歩ませていただきましょう。なお、2018（平成30）年の秋の法要（全国門徒総追悼法要）の親教において述べました「私たちのちかい」は、中学生や高校生、大学生をはじめとして、これまで仏教や浄土真宗にあまり親しみのなかった方々にも、さまざまな機会で引き続き唱和していただき、み教えにつながっていくご縁にしていただきたいと願っております。

今年4月に京都の本願寺で勤修された立教開宗記念法要（春の法要）においてご門主さまが述べられた「『浄土真宗のみ教え』についてのご親教」が英訳された。ご門主は次の世代の方々にこ法義がわかりやすく伝わるよう、「浄土真宗のみ教え」としてみ教えの肝要をお示しくださっている。英訳がなされたことで、BCA寺院でも日曜礼拝などで唱和することができるようになった。
（英訳は英語欄にあります。）