

WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

VOLUME 41 • ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2019

Monshu Kojun Ohtani's made his first visit to the Buddhist Churches of America. He began the trip by attending the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention in San Francisco over Labor Day weekend. Later, he visited 15 BCA churches and temples before leaving Sept. 11.

In the Southern District, the Gomonshu visited: Buddhist Temple of San Diego; Vista Buddhist Temple; Orange County Buddhist Church; Senshin Buddhist Temple; Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple; Pasadena Buddhist Temple; Oxnard Buddhist Temple; San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple; West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple; Gardena Buddhist Church; and Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple.

In the Northwest District, he visited: Oregon Buddhist Temple; Tacoma Buddhist Temple; White River Buddhist Temple; and Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple.

In the above right photo, the Gomonshu is shown giving his opening address at the WBWC Aug. 31. In the photo at right, he is greeted Aug. 30 at San Francisco International Airport by members of the World Buddhist Women's Federation cabinet and Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu and Janet Umezu. Shown, from left, are: Terrie Masuda, Janice Doi, Peggy Okabayashi, Susan Bottari, Monshu Kojun Ohtani, Rev. Keiichi Abe (Governor), BCA Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu, Janet Umezu and Karen Suyama. (Photos courtesy of Mark Shigenaga)



Gomonshu Visits BCA for First Time West Coast Trip Includes Tours of 15 Churches, Temples



Jodo Shinshu International Office Established in S.F.

Goal Is to Spread Nembutsu Teaching to People Worldwide

The Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto has established the Jodo Shinshu International Office (JSIO) in San Francisco with the goal of providing people worldwide with greater opportunities to encounter the Nembutsu teaching.

On Sept. 1, Monshu Kojun Ohtani, head of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, took part in the official opening of the JSIO at the BCA headquarters in San Francisco. The formal event was held after the conclusion of the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention.

The JSIO's slogan is "The World Is Waiting for Shinran Shonin" and Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, supervising minister of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, was named as

manager of the international office.

"I will do my best," Rev. Kuwahara said. "It is truly an honor. I am humbled and grateful to be appointed as office manager to the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha's goal of spreading the Nembutsu teachings around the world."

The JSIO represents a further development and restructuring of the Hongwanji Office, which currently coordinates the International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP) and the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course (JSCC) at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, according to a news release from the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

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BCA Leader, Nisei Icon Hiroshi Kashiwagi Passes Away at 96

Executive Secretary Was Editor of The American Buddhist and Acclaimed Poet, Actor, Writer, Activist

By Jon Kawamoto
Managing Editor, Wheel of Dharma

Hiroshi Kashiwagi, who served as the BCA's Executive Secretary and first editor of the organization's *The American Bud-*

dhist in the 1950s, passed away Oct. 29 at the age of 96 in Berkeley.

In his lifetime, Kashiwagi reached iconic status in the Nikkei community and beyond as a poet, playwright, actor, writer, activist, and as the recognized poet laureate of the Tule Lake internment camp.

Kashiwagi was sent to Tule Lake during World War II and refused to answer the U.S. government's controversial "loyalty questionnaire" in 1943 because he had

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Hiroshi Kashiwagi, who served as BCA Executive Secretary and as the editor of the BCA's *The American Buddhist* monthly publication from 1957 to 1967, is shown at the 2007 Buddhist Church of San Francisco's Obon. Kashiwagi passed away Oct. 29. He was 96. (Courtesy of Mark Shigenaga)

Senshin's Kinnara Gagaku Celebrates 50th Anniversary with Full Moon Concert



Bugaku members perform "Engiraku," a dance that originated in ninth century Japan, in military costumes Nov. 10 at the Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles. The Kinnara Gagaku orchestra is shown in the background, accompanying the dancers. (Courtesy of Emily Ushijima)

By David Ushijima
Berkeley Buddhist Temple

More than 50 years ago, a serendipitous discovery of two ancient Japanese gagaku musical instruments planted the seed that formed Senshin Buddhist Temple's Kinnara Gagaku in Los Angeles.

Fast forward to a clear, crisp night on Nov. 10 in Los Angeles — and Kinnara Gagaku celebrated its golden anniversary with a magical, full moon concert that showcased the unique sounds of Japanese ancient music with

dance.

The moon itself played an integral role and was a dramatic backdrop to the memorable concert at the Senshin Buddhist Temple courtyard.

The day began with a special morning service led by guest speaker Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki, Rinban of the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple. He led the Senshin Sangha in a 50-minute chant from Part 1 of the "Larger Sutra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life."

The festivities continued into the evening with a performance of "Samsara," one of the

signature taiko compositions by Senshin's Kinnara Taiko — the first Buddhist temple taiko group in the United States.

As the full moon rose in the night sky, the audience was treated to a rare Shomyo recitation of "Juseige" in the Ritsukyoku style by Rev. Sala Sekiya, a resident minister of the Gardena Buddhist Temple.

"It was a wonderful evening filled with a richness in culture, history and community that Senshin has come to embody," Senshin Sangha member Victor

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

2019 — A Milestone Year for the BCA



By Rev. Kodo Umezu
BCA Bishop

As the year comes to a close, I would like to share some of the memorable events that took place during 2019.

The first noteworthy event occurred in July, when 10 people from the Buddhist Churches of America went to Kyoto to join 10 other international participants in the Hongwanji Tokudo session for overseas aspirants.

These 20 people from four countries were granted to enter

into the Hongwanji ministerial Sangha by the current Gomonshu, or head priest of the Hongwanji, Sennyō Monshu, on July 15.

Now, they are actively engaged at their own temples and churches, assisting their head ministers to help create conditions to share the Nembutsu teaching.

The second big event occurred during Labor Day weekend — the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention in San Francisco.

There were approximately 1,700 participants, including 900 members from the BCA. Everyone, including many O-baachans, worked so hard to prepare for this once-in-a-lifetime event. Those who participated in this conference were all inspired by the speakers and enjoyed the programs offered by our members. Many of the attendees expressed their excitement for the next World Convention, which will be held in Kyoto in 2023.

After the official convention program ended, another



Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu shares a laugh with his wife, Janet Umezu, in reaction to a joke by keynote speaker Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi during the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention on Aug. 31 in San Francisco. (Courtesy of Mark Shigenaga)

historic event took place in San Francisco on Sept. 1.

It was the official opening of a new organization called the Jodo Shinshu International Office. The ceremony was officiated by the Sennyō Monshu, and witnessed by the Hongwanji overseas districts delegates.

The Jodo Shinshu Interna-

tional Office will take over the programs that the Hongwanji Office that has already been offering such as the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course, the International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP) and the Staff of Hongwanji Advanced Research and Educa-

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Look Within Yourself for Right Path to Happiness

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Orange County Buddhist Church

The Dalai Lama, in his book, "The Art of Happiness," writes, "I believe that the very purpose of our life is to seek happiness."

All beings seek happiness. But why is it that the happiness we seek seems to slip away as soon as we think we have it? Why does it disappear like a mirage in the desert as soon as we approach it, or have it in the palm of our hand?

First of all, Buddhism teaches us that

our search for happiness is misdirected. We are looking for it in the wrong places. Normally, we seek happiness in things that are external to us. We seek happiness in more money, a bigger home, a new car, or in the love of our life. We might achieve many or even all of those things, but we somehow feel unsatisfied.

More money is still not enough. A bigger house brings more repairs and headaches. A new car is nice for a while,

until the next model comes out and our new car is already outdated. Even finding the love of our life can lead to heartache and sorrow if the relationship dissolves or if we lose our loved one tragically. With any of those things, our happiness disappears. What happened? Where did it go?

If you have ever felt the futility of searching for happiness in any of those external things, then you are ready to turn your search for happiness in the right direction.

Rather than looking outside of ourselves for happiness, we need to look within ourselves. We need to find in our life, a sense of inner fulfillment, a life of inner purpose, and an inner meaning to our life. When we turn the direction inward, we enter the right path to happiness. Once we enter the path, then in a sense, we have already arrived at our

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The history of the Mahāyāna schools of Buddhism is one that is intertwined with a variety of cultures and cultural influences.

Buddhism, having come from India, traveled through various countries on its path to Japan. During that migration, and as a result of an oral tradition, Buddhism adapted to its surroundings and picked up cultural components, rituals, symbols, ideas, that were not original to the Śākyamuni's message. While the message broadened in appeal, it created confusion and at times diverged from the Buddha's true teachings.

The Jōdo Shinshū tradition came to Japan by way of China's Tiantai school. Two major areas of mutual influence in medieval Chinese Buddhism that are recently being revealed occurred with



Translation Project Seeks to Rectify Mahāyāna Buddhism, Clarify Shinran

By Rev. Kakei Nakagawa
BCA Central California District Minister
Fresno Betsuin Rinban

Daoism and with Christianity (especially Nestorianism and Arianism).

Especially in the tradition of Jōdo Shinshū, the mutual influences with Christianity are important. The relationship dates back to the rise of Christianity in the first century, and was most prominent during the third to eighth centuries in various regions of Central Asia and China. For this reason, various Buddhist symbols, particularly from the middle ages and ancient times, retain a Christian heritage. The influence of Buddhism in early Christian thought cannot be ignored either, but that will not be the topic of this project.

Another influence to modern Japanese Buddhism broadly was the influx of theological concepts from German idealism (for example, a Christian methodology), predominantly from Immanuel Kant's school of thought. These concepts were accepted into Japanese Buddhist academia in the middle of the 19th century without criticism (perhaps because the learning of Western Civilization in the academic and political elite was an urgent issue during the Meiji period from 1867-1912). As such, many ancient documents were translated into modern Japanese

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Wheel
of Dharma

(USPS 017-700)
Official Publication of the
Buddhist Churches of America

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1710 Octavia Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Tel: (415) 776-5600
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Wheel of Dharma (USPS 017-700) is published monthly by Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109-4341. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to WHEEL OF DHARMA, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109-4341. Subscription free to BCA temple members; \$12.00 annual subscription for nonmembers.

Submission Guidelines:

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

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

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

'Hidden Treasure' at the EBL Conference



By Richard A. Stambul
BCA President

On Oct. 10, I was wearing shorts and a T-shirt while running the air conditioner full blast in our home in Southern California.

The next day, Oct. 11, I arrived in Minneapolis to 30-degree weather with snow flurries on the way. I was there to attend my second Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) Conference, hosted this year by BCA's Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha. The theme, "Social Awareness: Living the Nembutsu," had immediately attracted my attention.

Since taking office as BCA President almost two years ago, I've written many

times in this column about social consciousness, urging greater engagement by our temples and churches in the social fabric of our society. Reflecting on the Gomonshu's articulation of BCA's purpose, namely, a peaceful society in which everyone can live life to its fullest, I believe this is the right path forward.

In one article, I wondered whether many of our temples have grown a little too inwardly oriented. Wouldn't BCA temples benefit from being infected a bit by the religious and global spirit of new Buddhist groups engaged in issues of social consciousness?

Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, President of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, explains that such groups "... place the Dharma and its impact upon the lives and hearts of persons in the world at the forefront of their religious concerns."

The EBL conference in Minnesota offered both an intellectual and physical embrace of social engagement. It was exciting.

Rev. Earl Ikeda, resident minister of New York Buddhist Church, eloquently described

Jodo Shinshu as our "hidden treasure." I unearthed bits of that treasure in Minneapolis.

On the evening of Oct. 11, I attended a riveting program described as "an intra-Buddhist Dialogue" with speakers from different schools of Buddhism. A leader of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center, Donen Ted O'Toole, captured my attention when he movingly described his religious experience as a search for the human heart. I've heard some Shin Buddhists describe our Primal Vow in that way. He also suggested that it was the duty of Buddhists from every discipline to stretch themselves, emotionally and intellectually, to join the crusade for a more peaceful society.

The next morning, Rev. Matt Hamasaki, resident minister of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, gave a keynote speech about the direct link between awakening compassion and taking action in our communities.

I've heard Rev. Hamasaki provide Dharma talks several times and have always found his presentations compelling. The conference heard from



During the Eastern Buddhist League Conference, more than 45 people learned how to properly pack and tag food to be shipped to feed hungry children on Oct. 12 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Shown, clockwise from left, are: Cynthia Mee (Midwest Buddhist Temple); Jeanne Toguri (Midwest Buddhist Temple); Arlene Suekama (Midwest Buddhist Temple); Susan Jacques (Seabrook); and Joy Aso (Ekoji). Missing but also part of "The Labeling Team" were BCA President Rick Stambul and Kiku Taura (Midwest Buddhist Temple). (Courtesy of Rick Stambul)

another speaker that day, but it was the afternoon journey to work for the nonprofit organization, Feed My Starving Children, that was so inspiring.

Feed My Starving Children packs and ships food to feed needy children in 70 countries worldwide.

On that afternoon of Oct. 12, more than 45 of us learned how to properly pack and tag

food to be shipped to feed hungry children. The photo accompanying this column shows just one of the groups of volunteer workers that was dubbed "The Labeling Team." I was part of that volunteer group. We pasted date labels to each package into which a carefully prepared protein and vitamin enriched rice formula

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Dinuba Buddhist Church, Which Began in 1924, Holds Final Service



The Dinuba Buddhist Church, which began in 1924, held its final service Nov. 2 with a special ceremony. The service and ceremony was officiated by Rev. Marvin Harada, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, on behalf of Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu, an Rev. Kakei Nakagawa and Rev. Kazuaki Nakata of the Central California District. In the above photo, attendees pose for a group photo inside the church. The church's exterior is shown in the other photo. (Courtesy of Rev. Kazuaki Nakata and Rev. Marvin Harada)

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Executive Assistant to the Bishop

The Dinuba Buddhist Church, which began in 1924 as a branch of the Fresno Buddhist Church, held its final service Nov. 2 with a special ceremony.

The service and ceremony was officiated by Rev. Marvin Harada, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, on behalf of Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu, and Rev. Kakei Nakagawa and Rev. Kazuaki Nakata of the Central California District. The event was attended by about 50 people.

They were assisted by Minister's Assistants Rev. Midori Nakagawa of Fresno, Revs. Yuki and Toshi Mori of Parlier, and Rev. Karen Mukai of Fowler. Serving as chairperson for the service was Lyle Ogata, president of the Dinuba Buddhist Church.

Rev. Midori Nakagawa began the service by reading the temple's Eitaikyo list of past, deceased members, and also included in the service were the Shotsuki Hoyo names for the months of September, October, November and December. Incense offering was given by all the Central California District temples.

Rev. Harada gave the Dharma message in which he shared how on one hand, the church was closing. But, he pointed out that members who grew up at the Dinuba Buddhist Church have gone on to other BCA churches and temples and have continued to make vital contributions through their active participation.

He cited one member in particular — Orange County Buddhist Church Sangha member Teri Yamamoto Tanimoto. She was married to Dick Tanimoto at the Dinuba church.

She shared with Rev. Harada her memories of growing up at the Dinuba church and how on her wedding day, the cows in the nearby pasture all came close to the church as if to see what was going on.

Rev. Harada acknowledged the many pioneering and past members who worked hard to build and maintain the Dinuba Buddhist Church. Because of the church's decreased membership, it was impossible to continue the activities at the church.

The Dinuba Buddhist Church was established in 1924 as Bukkyo Shuyokai, a branch of the Fresno Buddhist Church, according to

the book "Buddhist Churches of America: A Legacy of the First 100 Years."

Members first met at several homes, and then the Bukkyo Shuyokai purchased and remodeled a garage on South N Street in 1927. Later that year, the building was dedicated as the Dinuba Buddhist Church, the book stated.

During World War II, the church closed because of the U.S. government's mass detention of Japanese Americans. The church, like many BCA churches and temples, served as a hostel for families returning from the internment camps in 1945-46.

According to the book, the majority of the church's Sangha members were sent to Poston camp III in Arizona.

In 1946, the church reopened for service with Rev. Zesei Kawasaki.

In 1957, the American Legion Hall and three acres of property at 655 South Alta Ave. was purchased. In July 1963, a groundbreaking ceremony was held and the church building was dedicated on Nov. 8, 1964, according to the book.

Following the special service, a luncheon was held for the attendees to share memories and thoughts of the Dinuba Buddhist Church.



Arigato Obaachan (Thank You Grandmother) Campaign Donors, Honorees

The Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations (FBWA) received special donations in support of the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention, which was held from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1 in San Francisco.

The Arigato Obaachan (Thank You Grandmother) Campaign will continue through the remainder of the year.

The names below represent women being recognized and honored for their sacrifice, hard work,

dedication, generosity, pursuit of the Buddha-Dharma, and help in the propagation of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

In recognizing your Obaachan, mother, aunt, sister, or group of women, you are also honoring them for the very special role they have played in your life.

To donate and honor the special women in your life, please go to the wbwconvention.org website and click on the "Donation" button to download the form.

For information or questions,

please contact Terrie Masuda at terriemasuda@wbwconvention.org.

Donors are listed first, followed by the honoree's name(s) in bold print. Thank you to all of the donors, and Arigato Obaachan and all honorees!

December 2019 Wheel of Dharma Arigato Obaachan Donors & Honorees

Maya Murashima & Paul Yonemura - **Sumiko Murashima, Toshiko Yonemura, Mitsue Kamikawa Hurlbert**

Thank You for Supporting BCA Programs

As 2019 comes to a close, we want to thank our members and friends for their generous contributions to BCA programs throughout the year.

Dana Program donations received until Jan. 31 will be budgeted directly into Buddhist Education programs for 2020.

This includes Center for Buddhist Education initiatives to connect temples through member events and seminars, new digital communications being developed

for public outreach, and ministerial training programs.

The Social Welfare Fund recently sent out its annual giving notice, and recent disasters remind us that humanitarian needs will continue.

Your dana has assisted relief efforts in Japan, Hawaii, and the Bahamas, with the fund now accepting applications for 2020.

Finally, we thank donors for their continued support of the Jodo Shinshu Center. As home of the

Institute of Buddhist Studies and a growing campus of scholarship, the JSC remains a shining example of the generosity and vision of our donors.

In appreciation for the influence of the Shin Buddhist teachings on our lives, members continue to provide for our future, and we are grateful to have your support.

To learn more about BCA giving programs or to donate today, please visit buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/donate.

Giving to IBS at Workplace Is Easy, Simple

The Institute of Buddhist Studies had a momentous year in 2019.

Ten IBS ministerial students went to Japan, completed intensive training, and received their Tokudo (initial ordination).

They returned to the United States and continue to serve their sanghas as Jodo Shinshu Buddhist priests.

This is one of the largest groups to go for ordination from America, and enrollment in our Shin Buddhist certificate program has been increasing.

It is now easier than ever to donate to the IBS through your company's corporate matching gift program to the IBS Annual Giving Program.

Corporate matching gifts do just that: You pledge a donation to a nonprofit of your choice, and your company matches the donation, with no additional cost to you.

The IRS recently approved IBS as an NTEE Code B50 nonprofit, under the category: Education — Graduate, Professional School.

Most corporate matching pro-

grams allow giving to nonprofit educational institutions, so check with your Human Resources (HR) contact to confirm how gift matching can work for you.

The IBS owes a debt of gratitude to all the individuals who have given so much to date. Any gift — no matter the amount — helps the IBS achieve its educational mission.

For more information, contact Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka, Vice President of Development at IBS, at s.yamaoka@shin-ibs.edu or 510-809-1447.

Bishop's Message

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tion (SHARE) program.

Through this new office, Hongwanji hopes to continue its international propagation of Jodo Shinshu.

This event coincided with the 120th anniversary date of the BCA's founding.

The BCA was established because Japanese immigrants in the United States requested it. Now, people throughout the world are calling for the teachings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism founder Shinran Shonin. Responding to their call, the Jodo Shinshu International Office was established. I hope that this organization will be able to successfully share the Nembutsu teaching to more people throughout the world.

The fourth event was the first official visit of the current Gomonshu, Monshu Kojun Ohtani, to the BCA. And it was his initial tour of BCA temples and churches.

After the World Convention in San Francisco, he and his entourage extended their stay to visit 16 churches and temples. Among the stops on the tour was the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji, also known as the Los Angeles Betsuin, which celebrated the temple's 50th anniversary at its current site.

I accompanied him on the tour and was able to visit the BCA churches and temples. This visit opened my eyes. At each place, the minister shared what they are doing for their members and communities.

The Gomonshu and I were so impressed and amazed by the number of activities and programs that are being offered at all of our churches and temples. Our churches and temples are living examples of the Buddha's activities. I would like to express my deepest respect to all of our ministers and leaders for their commitment and dedication.

The last event was not an official BCA event. However, it is still noteworthy.

It was the personal visitation of

the Zen-mon and Zen-O-Urakata (the former Gomonshu and his wife, O-urakata) to Canada and the United States in October. It was their sincere wish and desire to meet with our retired ministers and their spouses so that they can express their appreciation to their lifetime dedication of sharing the Nembutsu Dharma.

Throughout the year, I got the feeling that we are not here by ourselves.

We are here with people in the past as well as with everyone currently living throughout the world. The Infinite World, which is surrounding all of us, is constantly sending a warm message to each and everyone of us — We are always being thought of by others.

Let us pause for a moment to reflect on our lives and realize that we are part of this Infinite Life. I would like to again thank each and everyone of you for your support and dedication throughout the year. May the New Year be a wonderful one under the guiding light of Amida Buddha. Namo Amida Butsu.

Rev. Harada

Continued from Page 2

destination. The goal is the journey. That is why a person can dramatically change the situation of their life, even overnight.

It all depends on our perspective in life. A life of misery can turn into a life of meaning and fulfillment. A life of greed, anger and ignorance can be transformed into a life of wisdom and compassion. A life of self-pity, jealousy, and envy can turn into a life of philanthropy, generosity and kindness. A life in which we never get any breaks can become a life in which life itself is our biggest break, our biggest gift.

So how do we make that change? How do we unlock the key to a life of happiness?

First, we have to see that for our entire life, we have been looking at the world from a self-centered perspective, a "filtered" perspective, a view of life from the ego self. Life viewed from the ego self always falls short. There is never enough money or material happiness in the life of the ego self. Buddhism first points to our mistaken view of our ego self as not only a hindrance to a life of happiness, but it is the main source of the problem. It is the problem.

Naturally we react to such a teaching defensively. "Naw, I can't be the cause of my problems. My problems are because of other people. It's because of my boss, or my irritating neighbor, or this or that, ad nauseam."

We might come to accept some responsibilities for our problems. "Well, maybe sometimes I am the one who is wrong." "Maybe sometimes I am the one who is self-centered, but not all the time." We can easily point out someone in our life who is selfish all the time. "What about that guy," our ego self asserts. But even there, Buddhism challenges us to look within even deeper.

We then come back to ourselves, the one and only culprit, the source of our suffering and misery. Not anyone else. Not anything else. Just us. Just me.

But if we can come to accept that we are the culprit, we are the problem, then our transformation begins. Now we open ourselves up to the teachings. We open ourselves up to truly listening and learning. The more we listen and learn, the more we want to listen and learn. We begin to soak up the Dharma like a sponge, and then we realize that we are the sponge submerged in the water of the Dharma.

From our listening and learning, an inner happiness begins to emerge.

Every insight, every realization, every little "aha" moment brings an inner sense of happiness and fulfillment that far exceeds any happiness we used to know from external things. We find that the inner happiness is more lasting, more consistent in our life. It doesn't just come and go like a flash in the pan. It stays with us in our hearts and minds. It builds. It grows. Eventually, it becomes fathomless.

Namuamidabutsu.

WINTER PACIFIC SEMINAR - 21ST CENTURY

"Fushidan Sekkyo"

DHARMA TALKS & STORY-TELLING IN JODO SHINSHU

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Dr. Mark Blum

Dr. Mark L. Blum is a Buddhist Studies Professor and Shirjo Ito Distinguished Chair in Japanese Studies in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *The Origins and Development of Pure Land Buddhism* (2002), co-editor of *Renno and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism* (2008) and *Cultivating Spirituality: a modern Shin Buddhist anthology* (2011) and author of other works. He is currently working on completing *Think Buddha, Say Buddha: a history of nembutsu thought, practice and culture*.

DHARMATHON:
Southern District Ministers

— Presented in English and Japanese —

REGISTRATION: \$40
(includes lunch)
SO. DISTRICT: PLEASE REGISTER WITH TEMPLES

DEADLINE: 1/11/20
Contact: Rev. Koho Takata at NishiDharmaCenter@gmail.com or call (213) 680-9130

In Japan, Jodo Shinshu priests often delivered Dharma messages in the form of fushidan sekkyo, which featured musical, often comical, forms of story-telling. Dr. Mark Blum will discuss this style of preaching and explain how, like rakugo ("fallen words"), a similar form of Japanese performance art, it is gaining in popularity today.

SATURDAY,
JANUARY 25, 2020
9:30 am - 3:30 pm
Doors open at 9 am

LOS ANGELES HOMPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
815 E. First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Download registration forms and schedule at www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies & BCA Center for Buddhist Education
Hosted by the BCA Southern District Ministers Association & Buddhist Education Committee



Kashiwagi

Continued from Front Page

long felt the sting of racism — and as a result, became one of the “No-No Boys” in camp.

In his later years, Kashiwagi became a living symbol of wartime resistance who spoke out frequently about the injustice of the mass detention of Japanese Americans during World War II.

“To me, Hiroshi Kashiwagi was the epitome of the ‘quiet’ Nisei who faced challenges that we Sansei cannot imagine, but met them with dignity,” said Rev. Ronald Kobata of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco in an email statement. “He, however, was unique in his ability and creativity to express his thoughts and convictions with insightful penetrating words and speech. I can recall from his farewell remarks at the last service he and (wife) Sadako attended before moving to Berkeley, ‘Live the Nembutsu.’ He was a living treasure of the BCSF community.”

Kashiwagi’s many talents and contributions were acknowledged far and wide — including a recognition by U.S. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama. The Obamas invited Kashiwagi to participate in “An Evening of Poetry & Prose” in 2011.

Kashiwagi was born in a boarding house on Nov. 8, 1922, in Sacramento, Calif., and grew up in the small rural town of Loomis in California’s Placer County, where his parents ran a fish market and made fresh tofu.

During his senior year in high school, his father brought him to Los Angeles, where he enrolled at Dorsey High School, according to the Rafu Shimpo. Soon after graduating from Dorsey High, Kashiwagi,

his mother and two siblings were sent to the mass detention center in Tule Lake. His father never entered camp — he was hospitalized with tuberculosis.

In February 1943, the government asked all male and female internees 17 years and older to answer a “loyalty questionnaire.” The questionnaire was a joint order by the U.S. Army and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) to help the Army recruit volunteers and the WRA, which sought to begin the process of moving the detainees out of camp.

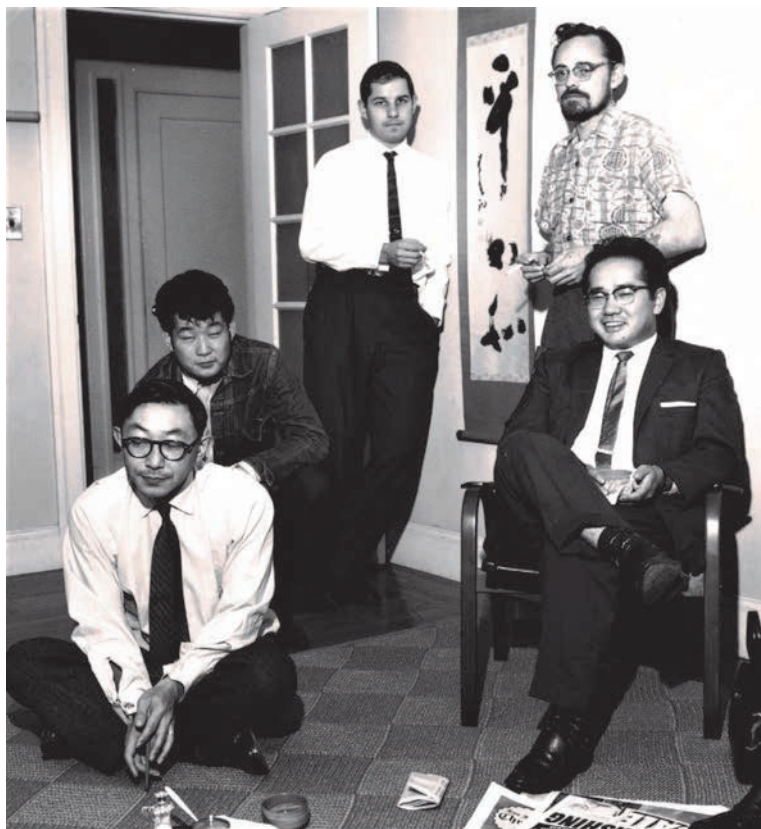
The key questions were No. 27 and No. 28.

Question No. 27 asked: “Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty wherever ordered?” Question No. 28 asked: “Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign and domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese Emperor, to any other foreign government, power or organization?”

“My position was this — why was I, an American citizen, thrown into prison, without cause, without due process?” Kashiwagi wrote in his 2005 book, “Swimming in the American: A Memoir and Selected Writings.”

“Why were they questioning my loyalty? I was an American, a loyal American. If they restored my status as a rightful citizen, let me go free, out of this prison, I would do anything required of me. Why should I answer the ambiguous questions? I would follow my conscience and refuse to register,” he continued.

Those like Kashiwagi who refused to answer the loyal questionnaire became known as the “No-No Boys” in camp.



The staff of the BCA’s *The American Buddhist* is shown in this undated photograph. Shown, from left, are: Editor Hiroshi Kashiwagi, Yukio Sugimoto, Robert Jackson, Elson Snow and Rev. Dr. Taitetsu Unno. (Courtesy of Berkeley Buddhist Temple)

They renounced their U.S. citizenship — but Kashiwagi and his family remained in Tule Lake.

His citizenship was restored — but not until 1959, with the help of American Civil Liberties Union attorney Wayne Collins.

After his release from Tule Lake in 1946, Kashiwagi returned to Loomis and worked two years as a farm laborer before returning to Los Angeles. He enrolled at Los Angeles City College as an English major.

In 1949, he wrote his first play for the Nisei Experimental Group, a theater group that he co-founded with Hirotaka Okubo.

In 1952, Kashiwagi graduated from the University of California at Los Angeles with a bachelor’s degree in Oriental languages, and soon after, enrolled at UC Berkeley as an art history graduate student while pursuing his dream of becoming an actor.

His 1954 play, “Laughter and False Teeth,” was reportedly the first produced play set in the Japanese American concentration camps, according to an article in the *Nichi Bei Weekly*.

In 1957, he married Sadako Nimura at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple and the couple had three sons, Toshihiro, Soji and Hiroshi.

Kashiwagi wrote several plays for the Berkeley Buddhist Temple. One of the plays he wrote at the request of Jane Imamura, the dynamic wife of Rev. Kanmo Imamura, was titled “Kisa Gotami,” a retelling of the Buddhist Jataka tale “The Parable of the Mustard Seed.” It was presented at the temple in July 1956.

“The most notable thing about the play is that it marked the beginning of George Takei’s acting career when he played the part of the Buddha in the original production,” Kashiwagi wrote in his book,

“Shoe Box Plays.” At the time, Takei was a student at UC Berkeley and attended services at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple.

“George, of course, is most famous as Sulu in the television series ‘Star Trek.’ Soon after doing ‘Kisa Gotami,’ I remember George coming to me and he asked me what I thought of his decision to transfer to UCLA to study acting,” Kashiwagi wrote. “Whatever I told George, I’m glad it did not deter him from becoming an accomplished actor with an illustrious career in Hollywood.”

It was also during this period that Kashiwagi worked at the BCA headquarters in San Francisco as a translator, interpreter and English secretary, according to an article in the *Nichi Bei Weekly*.

Kashiwagi was the editor of the BCA’s *The American Buddhist* from 1957 to 1967, writing articles, poems and short prose. The *American Buddhist* was a monthly publication that ran for 18 years.

“Let us look back to the history of publication of ‘The American Buddhist’ and see what took place so that we can understand the beginning of the news media,” Rev. Shoko Masunaga wrote in *The American Buddhist*’s final issue on March 1, 1974.

“This publication was the brainchild of Mr. Hiroshi Kashiwagi, then the Executive Secretary of the Buddhist Churches of America, and being involved with the working of the headquarters, became the first editor of the publication,” Rev. Masunaga continued. “The first volume and number one became history and he was to be assisted by Bishop Enryo Shigefuji and Reverend Kenryo Kumata as advisors.”

In 1974, the BCA decided to combine three publications — *Jiho* in Japanese, the *BCA Newsletter* and *The American*

Buddhist — into one official BCA publication called the *Wheel of Dharma*.

In 1966, Kashiwagi was hired by the San Francisco Public Library, becoming one of the few minority librarians employed in that system. When he was at the Western Addition Branch, near San Francisco’s Japantown, he began what is now considered the largest Japanese-language book collection on the West Coast, according to the *Nichi Bei Weekly*.

He retired in 1987. In 2010, Kashiwagi was recognized for his efforts as a librarian by the San Francisco Public Library Commission with a plaque at the Western Addition Branch.

During the 1980s redress movement, Kashiwagi testified before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in San Francisco in 1981. The commission hearings led to an official government apology to Japanese Americans and \$20,000 redress payments to each surviving internee in 1988.

When the younger generation started organizing pilgrimages to the former Tule Lake camp site, Kashiwagi was among the early Nisei to agree to return. Kashiwagi and his wife were fixtures at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage, where he gave numerous readings of his poetry and was recognized as the unofficial poet laureate of Tule Lake.

“Hiroshi was respected as one of the first Japanese American survivors to speak out against the injustice of the loyalty questionnaire and segregation, and he was resolute in his effort to prevent a mass incarceration from happening again,” the Tule Lake Committee wrote in an email to the *Nichi Bei Weekly*.

At the age of 64, Kashiwagi revived his acting career when he co-starred with Nobu McCarthy in the play “The Wash” by Philip Kan Gotanda at the Eureka Theater in San Francisco, according to the *Nichi Bei Weekly*. He also performed in productions of the Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco.

He went on to appear in numerous other theater and movie productions, including “Black Rain,” directed by Ridley Scott; “Hot Summer Winds” and “Rabbit in the Moon,” directed by Emiko Omori; “Hito Hata: Raise the Banner” by Visual Communications; and “Resistance at Tule Lake” by Konrad Aderer.

His recent film credits have included “The Virtues of Corned Beef Hash,” “Infinity and Chashu Ramen” and “Kikan: The Homecoming,” all directed by Kerwin Berk.

Kashiwagi is survived by his wife, Sadako; three sons, Toshihiro, Soji, Hiroshi; and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held Nov. 23 at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco.

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JSIO

Continued from Front Page

By reinforcing cooperation between the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha and the overseas districts and subdistricts, the JSIO will strive to nurture active Nembutsu practitioners, including Kaikyoshi ministers and lay members, in various parts of the world, the news release said. The JSIO will also aim to provide people who have no connection to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism with opportunities to encounter the Nembutsu teaching and deepen their understanding of Buddhism.

“The JSIO further strives to contribute to the establishment of a society where people live a life of compassion together with others, based on the values of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, by developing propagation methods and transmitting the Jodo Shinshu teaching to the world,” the release stated.

With that worldwide goal in mind, the JSIO will develop new and existing programs for English-language regions, including the United States, Canada, Hawaii and Europe.

In the future, the JSIO will develop programs in languages other than in English.

The office, based on a 10-year and 20-year visionary plan, will develop Buddhist leaders who can further spread the teaching of Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu around the world.

In addition to IMOP, the JSIO will also plan and coordinate training programs for non-Japanese ministerial candidates and Kaikyoshi ministers, in cooperation with the English language



Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, the office manager of the newly established Jodo Shinshu International Office at BCA Headquarters in San Francisco, is shown at left in the office with Rev. Anan Hatanaka. (Courtesy of Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara).

overseas districts and the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS). These programs cover doctrine, rituals and practical matters, including trainings for the Tokudo ordination and the Kyoshi certification.

The JSIO will also further develop the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course so it will be able to increase the number of students. The JSIO will encourage activities by the graduates and support the establishment of sangha groups in various areas.

In other matters, the JSIO will:

- Create materials to ministers and assistants for study of the doctrine and practical applications (propagation, rituals, social activities, etc.);
- Publish a quarterly journal to spread the values of Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu within the

English-language regions;

- Create a website to share the voices of people in the world who appreciate the Nembutsu teaching and to introduce Jodo Shinshu Buddhism with an emphasis on the teaching; and

- Publish and distribute existing materials in English, the translation of Japanese materials into English, and the digitalization of out-of-print books.

The JSIO will be formed as a U.S. nonprofit with a strong system of cooperation from the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha (Board of Governors and the International Department of Temple Affairs). A board of directors will be formed as the executive body. An administrative office will run the business. An advisory committee will be formed to provide input and advice on discussion items.

that had deviated significantly. The translation that should be done from now on must shift to external reality with the times and clarify how the Dharma has been adapted, rather than introducing the later stereotyped Śākyamuni Buddha or Shinran Shōnin.

First, in order to understand the true meaning of the terms adopted from Christianity, which has been neglected so far, and to grow out of the Christian substitutes in the American cultural context, we must do the following:

- Re-examine the descriptions that have been inherent to dualist grammars such as Sanskrit and European languages. The Buddha knew that language would inherently distort his meaning, and the main cause is that language is a

human creation filled with human errors such as the distinction between subject and object or self and other.

Review the Christian theological research methods that scholars have applied to Buddhist interpretation. By understanding what thinking was applied, we can reverse the methods to properly reflect the true meaning of the texts.

These translations are only a first step: We hold our own biases and there immeasurable scriptures in Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition. Hopefully, these interpretations may act as a foundation from which new translations of Shin Buddhist texts free from Christian symbology and philosophical interpretation might grow.

graphy project, and a discussion group. Sunday, Oct. 13, included an in-depth discussion of wisdom and compassion that left everyone experiencing the joy of the weekend.

Deep appreciation should be offered to those who organized, led, and inspired the conference. This includes Buddhist leaders Todd Tsuchiya, Cheral Tsuchiya, Connie Tsuchiya, Gail Wong, Shirley Ochi-Watson and Chiemi Onikura Bly. My personal thanks to Shirley's Dana of not only picking me up from the airport on the evening of Oct. 11 but also bringing me the gift of dinner.

We were all fortunate to be joined that weekend by: Rev. Ron Miyamura, Eastern District Kyokucho and resident minister of Midwest Buddhist Temple; Rev. Earl Ikeda, resident minister of New York Buddhist Church; Rev. Nariaki Hayashi of Ekoji Buddhist Temple; Rev. Patti Nakai of the Buddhist Temple of Chicago; Rev. Matt Hamasaki of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento; and Rev. Yoshimichi Ouchi of the Toronto Buddhist Church.

This was what I would call a Namō Amida Butsu weekend for all of us.

Kinnara Gagaku

Continued from Front Page

Huey said. “There was pure joyfulness as if we were villagers in awe of the moon as it rose slowly in the evening sky. It was pure magic!”

The main portion of the program opened with “Nasori,” a bugaku dance piece performed by two dancers in dragon costumes. The piece was introduced to Japan from Korea in the eighth century Nara period.

This was followed by two Kangen (orchestral) gagaku pieces: “Keitoku,” originating in the seventh century Tang Dynasty, and “Bairo,” a Rinyugaku piece originating in the ancient Rin-yu kingdom in Hue, which is now central Vietnam. The evening closed with “Engiraku,” a bugaku dance originating in the time of Imperial Prince Shinno in the ninth century and was performed by four dancers in ancient military costumes.

Gagaku is widely considered the oldest form of orchestral music being performed — and is rarely heard outside of Japan.

Gagaku can sound ethereal and otherworldly. Differing from the Western concept of music where the chords underlie the melody, gagaku is structured so that chords are draped over the melody. And the sense of musical time is suspended, leading to a feeling of timeless existence.

“For me, gagaku is a perfect Buddhist meditative expression — it just is, or rather, it is just ‘ising,’” said Rev. Masao Kodani, the former head minister at Senshin Buddhist Temple who helped to create Kinnara Gagaku. “It doesn’t come from anywhere, nor does it go anywhere, it is just forever ‘ising.’ That being the case, it is just about participation and enjoyment.”

Were it not for the accidental discovery in December 1968 of two ancient gagaku instruments in the basement of the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple during its move to its current site at 815 East First St. — Kinnara Gagaku may never have been created.

At the urging of Rinban Ryuei Masuoka, Rev. Kodani began to explore reviving gagaku into the temple liturgy.

Coincidentally, Imperial Court musician Suenobu Togi had recently moved to Los Angeles from Japan to begin teaching in the newly formed Department of Ethnomusicology at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Togi-Sensei, who came from a long line of Imperial Court musicians in the Japanese emperor’s household back to ancient times, began teaching gagaku and bugaku at the Senshin temple.

A few years later, Togi-Sensei was also invited to teach at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) in Berkeley by the late Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada, the founding director of IBS.

In addition to Kinnara Gagaku, the other groups are at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple (Northern California Gagaku) and the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple.

“With this concert, we are fulfilling a longstanding promise made to Togi-Sensei before his passing that we would continue the tradition of performing gagaku and bugaku during the autumn full moon,” Rev. Kodani said. “Tonight, we once again kept that promise.”

Rev. Masao Kodani, John Mori and Pamela Matsuo-ka contributed to this article.



After the Nov. 10 special 50th anniversary concert by the Kinnara Gagaku at Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles, attendees point to the full moon that created a dramatic backdrop to the festivities. (Courtesy of Emily Ushijima)

Rev. Nakagawa

Continued from Page 2

under the context of theological substance theory. Many of these theological translations have become a foundation of translations in America of Japanese Buddhism as well.

In the series of translations currently being done in the Central California District, we seek to rectify these historical aberrations to the original message of Mahāyāna Buddhism and clarify our founder Shinran Shōnin’s message that has been misinterpreted by theological substance theory.

Shinran was brilliant: He was able to identify the Śākyamuni Buddha’s true message from texts

President’s Message

Continued from Page 3

would then be packed by our other BCA worker bees, and then shipped to Haiti.

The most impressive facts of the afternoon, in addition to the camaraderie we all quickly developed, included the following: We packed 28,512 meals that will feed 78 children for an entire year. Pretty impressive.

There were other programs during the weekend conference: building an obutsudan, a callig-

今月の法話

「死後の生とは？」



Rev. Doei Fujii

南アフリカ群仏教会

開教使 藤井道栄

法話が終わり質疑応答に入ったときのこと。ある男性が次のように問うた。

「先ほど先生が『三帰依文』

（さんきえもん）を読みました。その中に『この身今生に向かつて度せずんば、さらばいずれの生に向かつてかこの身を度せん』という部分がありました。その部分は輪廻転生（りんね・てんじょう）ということでしょうか？」「はい、そうです」と私。「では、仏教での輪廻転生とはどのようなものですか？」「と彼。「仏教での輪廻転生とは、迷いの命から覚りの命へとなることです。また阿弥陀仏の教えは、煩惱に満ちたこの生が、清浄なる新しい生へと生まれること」と答えた。すると彼は「では、この命から、清浄の命へと転ずるものは何んでしょうか？浄土へはなにが生まれるのですか？私の記憶ででしょうか、それとも今生の私の業ででしょうか？」と続けた。

さて、この輪廻転生の問いは彼や私だけではなく過去にも多くの人々が関心を寄せていた問題です。例えば、聖徳太子と同じころに中国には道綽禪師（どうしゃく・ぜんじ）という方がいた。以前は禪師であったがミタ仏の教えに帰依し『仏説観無量寿経』を生涯にわたり二百回も講義したと伝えられています。道綽禪師（562-645）という方は当初『涅槃經（ねはんぎょう）』に打ち込んで奥義を究めたと言われるが、609年36歳にして曇鸞大師（どんらん・だいし）の碑文に出会い自覚するところがあり、ミタ仏の教えに帰依し70歳ころには日々7万回も念仏申していたという。道綽禪師はまた多くの人々を念仏者へと育てた。そのような人々がある日禪師のもとにきて「禪師は念仏申す者は浄土へと生まれると教えますが、一体私たちの何が浄土に生まれるのでしょうか？」と問うた。その禪師の答えは『略安楽浄土義（りやく・あんらく・じょうどぎ）』という書物に出ていて、禪師の答えは「それは私自身である」と示されていますが、何のことだろうかと思っただが、この禪師の答えが後日正解だと知ったものです。

輪廻転生に関する言葉は聖人の言葉にも出てきます。そこで輪廻転生に関する言葉がありますのでその内の二例ほど聖人の言葉を引用いたします。

最初の例は『歎異抄』第9条にある聖人の言葉です。「娑婆の縁つきて、ちからなへしておわるべきに、かの浄土へはまいるべきなり」と唯円坊との会話の中に出てきます。「はて？」と私は思った。聖人は、死ぬるときは「この世の縁（縁）がつきるとき」という。だが「命の『因』がつきて」とは聖人はどこも言っていない。命の因がつきないのであればその命の因とはなんだろうか？。浄土へまいる因とは何か？

次の例は『教行信証』に出てきます。「人としてこの世に生まれたということは、過去世にそれなりの善根を積んだからこそ、その善根の働きにより、人としてこの世に生まれ出た」と聖人はいう。この部分はやはり輪廻転生にかんする言葉です。過去世にそれなりの善根を積んだからこそ、その功德（はたらき）により今生に餓鬼や畜生の境涯にも落ちず、人間界に生まれ出たと聖人はいう。

言い換えれば、過去世にそれなりの善根を積んだからこそ、今生に人として生まれることが出来た。しかし、過去世に積んだ善根は、悲しいかな、今生で仏陀と成るには不十分な善根だったのだ。人間界どまりだ。つまりは、仏法をきける身と成ってこの世に生まれ出たということ。来世で仏陀と成るための善根・往生の因を今の生のある内にはつぎのさせることなのだと解釈できまいか。これが今の命の意味ではなからうか。

そんなある日曜日、お参りが終わると一人の薬剤師が来て次のように言う。「先生が今日話した浄土だとか・悟りだとかは脳内で起きている現象ですし、人間の喜怒哀楽（きどあいらく）なども薬物で作ります。例えば、強い麻薬物質、LSDなどを使えば、悟りと同じような心境を得られます。人間の存在は脳内での化学反応・物質が作り出す電気反応として説明ができます」という。

確かに彼の説明には一理あると思っただが、私の歩んできた仏道は彼の人間理解とは大きく違っていた。ところが悲しいかな私には反論できなかった。そこで「俺はいよいよ物事を知らない。この程度では私の今まで歩んできた仏道が有象無象（うしやうむせう）になる」との念から私はその寺を去り、勉強するために次の寺で心理学の薬物と脳みその関係をおもに学んでみた。その結果はその薬剤師が言うように「人間という存在は化学反応の存在である」というものだった。もうガッカリでした。しかし、その説明には何か大切なものが欠落していると感じていた。

人間の人生や命は薬物で何とでもなるようなものではないはずだ。たとえ強い麻薬物質を使って覚りの境地に近いような心境を得ようが、薬が切れれば元の木阿弥ではないか。死の解決や輪廻転生の問題はそんな小手先の方法で解決されるような小さな問題ではないと私は思っていた。このような疑念が、しかし、解けるときが来た。

ここ十年前後のことだが、アメリカの脳外科医の権威・高名な物理学者・ジャーナリストなどが「来世は厳然として存在する」と言い出している。また、アメリカでは2・7歳の子供の中に過去世の記憶を持つケースが三千前後も実在していると実例を紹介している。それらのケースのいくつかを読んでみたが、一つ一つのケ

スが実証的・分析的で十分な説得力を持っているように感じた。これらの報告は「輪廻転生はある」と。

また、ある物理学者が脳みそを研究している時に脳の中心部に今まで見たこともない反応を感じた。私もその映像を見た。その働きは青い粒の光の一群で、彼は「この活動は物質による働きではなく、エネルギーそのもので、量と判明した」と報告している。「物質はいずれ消滅するがエネルギー（量子）は不滅であるからこそ、今生の量子が次の命へと輪廻転生するのである。だからこそ死後の世界は存在する」と彼は結論づけている。読んでみて実に面白かった。

だが、それらの報告の中に一つ欠落していることがある。その欠落しているものは「次の命がまた苦悩の命となるのであれば、今生で何をすれば来世の苦悩から逃れられるのだろうか？」という具体的な方法が示されていないことだった。来世はある・無いではたんなる報告にすぎない。輪廻転生についての大切な事は、どのような来世にするのかということではないか。

「死ねば全てが終わる。無に帰す」とか「死ねば人間、ゴミとなる」と多くの人は思っている。もし、死が全ての終わりならば、私達がこの世限りの存在ならば、この生だけを生きるに必要な倫理・道徳・法律などだけで良いはずだ。仏法などは要らないではないか。「死後、浄土に生まれる」などの言葉は「たわごと」となる。覚りも浄土もいらないが、はたしてそうなのだろうか？

この問いを念仏者にきくと「生と死とは連続している。丁度、この部屋からふすまを開けて次の部屋へ入るようなものだ」という。「この部屋」とは今生のことであり、「ふすま」とは死のことであり、新しい生とは「次の部屋」のこと。死んだら終わりではなく、死の瞬間に新しい生が始まることだと念仏者はいう。聖人も、私が死ぬその瞬間こそが、私が無上法の中へと入る瞬間なのである、という。新しい命はこのようにして完成する。

仏陀としてではなく、私は人間界に生まれ出たということは、私に最初から真実など持ち合わせていなく、しかも何をしても苦悩の流転（るてん）を避けられないということ。つまり、犬はどんなに賢くても、どこまでも犬は犬だ。人間はどこまでも人間であり、どんなに賢くとも仏ではない。凡夫の内には最初から真実などはないということ。この聖人の言葉は本願を讀むと心底うなずける。たとえば、私は丁度冷たい水みたいなものだ。この冷水（私）が己の力量・才覚でお湯（アミタ）になるのは無理な話ではないか。そのような力量は最初から私は持ち合わせていない。だが、お湯に成りたければ大量のお湯（アミタ）に己をゆだねるしかないではないか。真実は真実でない者を、真実にするからである。

計り知れない量のお湯の中に己を投げ込めれば、私も同じお湯とされる。その投げ入れる具体的な方法とは、「南無阿弥陀仏とその人に念仏もうさせて、その人を浄土へと導き入れるとの働きにまかせよ」と「自然法爾（じねん・ほうに）章」は示している。喜んで

で我が世界に來れとは言っていない。聞き学んだものを忘れずにみな抱えて我が国に來たれともいっていない。示されていることは「わが名を称えて我が国に來たれ」と示されているではないか。輪廻転生が私たちに教えることは、今生で「来世の清浄なる生」を得る因縁を明らかにすることではないだろうか。それが称名念仏ではないのか。次の生で暗闇に落ちるのか、光の中に生まれるのか。なんとも仏法を聴聞せぬことはこの世で一番恐ろしいことのように思っている。

テキサスに念仏の音が響く

10月30日にテキサス州ダラス市近郊のマッキニー市で法話会が営まれた。北米トヨタ自動車北米本社がカリフォルニア州トランス市よりテキサス州へ移転していたことを受け、同社や関連会社に勤務するカーテナン教会やオレンジカウティン教会などのメンバーもテキサスへ移住したが、同地に聴聞の場がなく、法話会開催の要望が高まっていた。法話会はオレンジカウティン教会メンバーのハヤタ・ケビン、キャロル夫妻の自宅で開かれ、同教会開教使でCBE共同ディレクターの原田マービン師を招いた。原田開教使は「初めての法話会に約30名集まり、一緒に法要ができて皆喜んでいました。これを縁に念仏の輪が広まって開教の拠点ができたらいいます。」と抱負を語った。テキサスでの法話会は年に数回開催される予定となっている。テキサス州での法話会の情報はCBEまで。



Rev. Harada gave a Dharma message at the Sangha gathering in Texas

法輪

2019年12月号

発行所
米国仏教団
Buddhist Churches of America
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San Francisco, CA 94109
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FAX (415) 771-6293
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二〇一九年度教化標語

「ありがとう
おばあちゃん」

あの記事をもう一度!

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ご門主が二教区の寺院をご巡回

九月に行われた婦人会世界大会終了後、大谷光淳ご門主が西北部教区と南部教区の各寺院をご巡回された。ご巡回された寺院はオレゴン仏教会、タコマ仏教会、ホワイトリバー仏教会、シアトル別院(西北部教区)、南部教区はサンディエゴ仏教会、ビスタ仏教会、オレンジ郡仏教会、洗心仏教会、パサデナ仏教会、ロサンゼルス別院、オックスナード仏教会、サンフェルナ

Gomonshu at West LA Temple



ンドバレー本願寺、ウエストLA仏教会、ベニス仏教会、ガーデナ仏教会。各寺院の開教使と門信徒はご門主をお迎えするにあたり、境内の掃除など心を込めて準備し、サンガシツプが育まれた。「ご門主の優しいお人柄にふれることができると嬉し



Gomonshu at Seattle Betsuin

浄土真宗センターでのセミナー

10月25日、26日にエブリデイブツデイズムセミナーが行われ各寺院から主に壮年会の世代の門信徒役35名が集った。今回は、門信徒や新しく会員となったメンバーを寺院のアクティビティーに参加するように促すための方法を話し合った。ディナーでは、インドからアメリカまで仏教が辿ってきた国々の料理を提供し、参加者が仏教がアメリカまで来た歴史に思いをはせつつ、舌鼓をうった。

そして10月30日、31日にはIMOP



IMOP seminar at JSC

総長コラム

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

今年も幕を閉じようとしています。年末にあたりこの一年を振り返って見たいと思います。

主な出来事の一つが七月に米国仏教団から十名京都本願寺での得度習礼を終え、専ら門主から得度を許可され、正式に仏門に入れたことです。この習礼は特に外国人用に準備され、世界四方国から計二十名が参加し、七月十五日に式を受け、現在それぞれの出身で活躍されています。

第二番目にあげたいのが、レイバーデーの週末にサンフランシスコで開かれた第十六回世界仏教婦人会大会であります。およそ千七百名の参加があり、米国仏教団からも九百名の方々が参加し、大会を盛り上げていただきました。この大会では「ありがとうおばあちゃん」という協力が助った人が現れ、全米の仏教会員が一丸となって素晴らしい大会にさせていただきました。千七百名の参加者が、ご門主さまと一緒に記念写真をお撮りし、基調法話のご講師方のお話を聞き、各種の興味深い分科会に参加し、大いに喜んでくださいました。次に二〇二三年に京都で開催される大会にも是非参加したいという声を多くの人たちから聞き、大変嬉しく思いました。

(International Ministerial Orientation Program) を修了し、BCA開教使となった僧侶の研修会が行われた。研修会では、読経の練習や日本からアメリカにきた開教使の直面するさまざまな問題や今後の課題などについて話し合われた。



Everyday Buddhism Seminar at JSC

本願寺新報に世界仏婦大会とご巡回の記事

浄土真宗本願寺派が月3回発行している「本願寺新報」が、毎月本山より各仏教会に届けられている。10月に発行された同紙には9月にサンフランシスコで行われた世界仏教婦人会大会、ご門主様のご巡教、本願寺インターナショナルオフィス開所式をはじめ、各仏教会とメンバーを紹介する記事が3号にわたって特集されている。(本願寺新報は所属寺院に行けば読むことができるので所属寺院の開教使に問い合わせください。)

とこれで、この大会が終わった日の九月一日にサンフランシスコの本部で歴史的な行事が行われました。それは、ご門主さまのご臨席された『浄土真宗インターナショナルオフィス(TSIO)』の開所式です。この式には全開教使と各開教区からの代表も参加し、ご門主さまからのお言葉をいただき、新しい組織の船出をお祝いしました。このオフィスは、今までの『本願寺オフィス』が独立し、今までの活動を続けながら、主に英語圏の世界を対象に、新しいプログラムを行い、親鸞聖人の声を発信し、伝道の輪を広げていくための核となるものです。

この九月一日と言うのは北米開教記念日で、ちょうど百二十年という節目の年でした。一八九九年に、在米の門信徒の願いにより二人の僧侶が派遣されました。今度は、世界の人たちからの願いにより、このオフィスが設立されました。これからますます多くの人たちにお念仏の教えが広まることを期待されています。

第四番目はご門主さまの初めての北米開教区のご巡回です。世界仏婦大会の後、ご門主さまは西海岸の十六の仏教会をご訪問されました。オレゴン仏教会とシアトル別院、それにロサンゼルス別院では帰敬式を行われ、二百一名の方々が新しく仏弟子となられご門主さまより法名をいただきました。また、ロサンゼルス別院では寺基移転五十周年の慶讃法要をお勧めされました。

パシフィックセミナーが

ロサンゼルスで開催

2020年1月25日(土)にIBSとCBEの共催で冬のパシフィックセミナーが開催される。今回のテーマは節談説教で、浄土真宗でお取次ぎされてきた節付きの法話を紹介する。講師はマーク・ブラム博士(カリフォルニア大学バークレー校、東洋言語文化学教授)。南部教区の開教使による法話リレー(日英)も行われる。参加費は40ドル(昼食込み)で2020年1月11日が締め切り。参加希望者は所属寺院の開教使がロサンゼルス別院(213-680-9130)に連絡。

冬季パシフィックセミナー

“節談説教”
浄土真宗における節付き説教と語りもの

講師
マーク・ブラム博士

日本では浄土真宗の僧侶がしばしば浪曲、講談、物語の語り手など話芸の母体となった節談説教という形で御法儀をお取次ぎされる。マーク・ブラム氏は、最近、日本芸能で人気を得ている話芸のような節付き説教について、その布教手段やスタイルを紹介されます。

2020年1月25日(土)
午前9時半 - 午後3時半
(開場 午前9時)
ロサンゼルス別院
(西本願寺)
815 E. First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

南加教区開教使による法話リレー
参加費: \$40 (昼食込み)
申込締切日: 2020年1月11日
お申込・お支払い、は各所属寺院で。
お問い合わせは、高田 典芳 開教使
(ロサンゼルス別院、下記連絡先まで)
NishiDharmaCenter@gmail.com
電話: (213) 680-9130

主催: 米国仏教大学院、米国仏教団仏教教育部
協賛: 米国仏教団南加教区開教使、米国仏教団南加教区仏教教育部

私もご門主さまと一緒に各地を回らせていただきましたが、各地の活発な活動を知らせていただき驚きと感動を新たにいたしました。会員の方だけではなく、その地域の中で縁作りをして下さっている姿に、頭が下がりました。開教使の皆さまとリーダーの方々の努力に心より感謝申し上げます。

最後に、公式の行事ではありませんでしたが、引退された開教使ご夫妻に感謝の気持ちを表したいと言った。十月に前門さまと前お裏方さまがカナダとアメリカを訪れました。三ヶ所でお食事され、お一人おひとりにあたたかいお言葉をかけて感謝の思いを表されておられました。

この一年、色々なことがありました。これらの行事を通じて感じたのは、私たちはつながりの中にあるということです。過去からの流れの中にいて、世界の人たちとお念仏で繋がり、支援され、願われ、思われているということです。

今年の最後の月にあたり、私たちのいのちは無量寿の中のいのちであることを思い起こしましょう。そして、この一年を通じて皆さまからいただいた厚情に心よりお礼を申し上げますと共に、来たる年も、み仏さまの教えと共に、皆さまにとって良い年でありますよう念じ申し上げます。

南無阿彌陀仏