



# WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America



A large delegation from BCA temples and churches gathers for the Joint Celebration Service on May 10 at the Nishi Hongwanji Temple in Kyoto, Japan. (Courtesy of Hongwanji Press)

## BCA Sends Large Delegation to Japan

Total of 518 Members Attend Joint Celebration, WBWC in Kyoto

*Editor's note: Tabitha Kobata of the Hongwanji International Center wrote the following article on the English 850th/800th Joint Celebration in Kyoto on May 10. The article appeared in the Hongwanji Journal on June 10. The Wheel of Dharma is gratefully reprinting a translation of the Japanese version.*

**By Tabitha Kobata**  
Hongwanji International Center

A total of 780 members and ministers from the overseas districts — including the United States, Canada, South America, and Taiwan — attended the May 10 Joint Celebration of the 850th anniversary of Shinran Shonin's birth and the 800th anniversary of the Jodo Shinshu teaching in Kyoto.

Participants were delighted to have been able to attend an event that is held once every 50 years.

The largest delegation — 518 members — was from the Buddhist Churches of America, and students of the English correspondence course by the Jodo Shinshu International Office (JSIO), based at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, California.

In addition, 167 people from Hawaii, 36 from Canada, 19 from South America, and 40 from the regional district of Taiwan attended.

Simultaneous interpretations were provided, in English and Portuguese in

the morning, and English and Chinese in the afternoon. Participants listened to the interpretation through earphones and watched the monitor, as they were deeply moved by the atmosphere of the special observance.

"I was very impressed with my first visit to Honzan," said Jackie Henderson, a member of

Calgary Buddhist Church (Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada). "I was overwhelmed by the spectacle of people from all over the world, who share in the same Jodo Shinshu values and are gathered in the historic Founder's Hall taking part in the observance."

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## OCBC's Bill Sakahara Passes Away on BCA Japan Trip



Bill Sakahara, a key OCBC member, enjoys a matcha soft serve cone on May 13 in Japan. He passed away on May 18. (Courtesy of Sakahara family)

**By Rev. Dr. Mutsumi Wondra**  
Orange County Buddhist Church  
**and Jon Kawamoto**  
Wheel of Dharma Editor

Bill Sakahara lived a life of service, as BCA Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada so aptly put it.

He served his country in the U.S. Air Force, he served his family, and he served both the Las Vegas Buddhist Sangha, where he was the first president, and the Orange County Buddhist Church, where he was the

**Continued to Page 11**

## In a First for BCA, AI Generates Dharma Message at MVBT

Talk Covered 'Textbook' Issues in Shin, but Didn't Convey Concepts

**By Jon Kawamoto**  
Wheel of Dharma Editor

In the heart of Silicon Valley, a recent Dharma talk at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple (MVBT) became the first in the BCA to be generated by artificial intelligence (AI).

ChatGPT, which stands for Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer, was the AI chatbot used for the June 1

### FYI

For more information about Mountain View Buddhist Temple's ChatGPT Dharma talk, go to: [mvbuddhisttemple.org/chatbots-dharma-talk/](https://mvbuddhisttemple.org/chatbots-dharma-talk/)

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## Rev. Gary Jaskula Describes Closeted Past, Finding Shin Buddhism

NYBC MA Says 'Come as You Are' Resonated Deeply With Him

*Editor's note: This is the fourth article in a series about the Feb. 18 BCA National Council Meeting's Town Hall seminar, titled "The Benefits of Following the Shin Buddhist Path."*

**By Jon Kawamoto**  
Wheel of Dharma Editor

There's no questioning Rev. Gary Jaskula's devotion to Shin Buddhism — judging by the amount of time and expense he literally spends as a Minister's Assistant every Sunday at the New York Buddhist Church (NYBC).

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### DONOR APPRECIATION ISSUE

## With a Grateful Heart

**By Michiko Inanaga**  
BCA Endowment Foundation  
Director of Development



Michiko Inanaga

Through our Buddhist teachings we learn that we live together in community. We are part of an ecosystem that enhances our lives as demonstrated by the existence of the Buddhist Churches of America. Through our collective strength,

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## BISHOP'S MESSAGE

## Golf and Buddhism



By Rev. Marvin Harada  
Bishop of the BCA

One of my favorite recreations is to play golf.

I am not a good golfer by any means. I am more of a “hacker,” which means I struggle to break a 100 for a score. Still, I really enjoy it and even if I play terribly, usually in a round, there are a few good shots that I might make or a long putt maybe occasionally, which makes the whole round fun despite the score. There is also the camaraderie with the people you golf with, whether they are close friends or often people that you are meeting for the first time.

I always say that Buddhism is all around us. We can find the teachings in our everyday life. We just have to have the eyes to see it, the ears to hear it, and the heart and mind to feel, to sense it. The more you learn about Buddhism, the more you are able to see, hear, and sense it in your daily life

and in the world around you.

There is so much Buddhism in golf. Although it is a sport, golf is at least half mental as it is physical. You are always confronted by your ego when you play golf. When you think that you want to hit this great shot, you usually duff it. When you just relax and swing easy without trying to egotistically hit a great shot, it usually turns out better.

8 or 9 on the next hole.

If you try to hit the ball far on your tee shot, you usually mishit it. If you relax and trust your swing, it usually goes farther. In Shin Buddhism, when you exert too much of your “self-power, “or your “ego-centered power,” on the path, it gets in the way to truly receiving the teaching. You have to “let go” of your self-contrivance, self-calculation, and self-indulgence,”

bly, by the way). The lower the score, the better it is. In all other sports, you want to score higher, but not in golf. In Buddhism, there are many contradictions, like to become humble is to awaken to your arrogance.

Golf is a sport of integrity. There are no referees when you play golf. It's not like basketball or football, where if you break a rule but the ref doesn't see it you get away with it. In golf, you have to penalize yourself if you break a rule, like when you hit the ball in the water or hit it out of bounds. In Buddhism, we have to accept the karma that we create. We have to live with all of our actions, good, bad, and neutral.

In golf, you shouldn't get too down on yourself if you have a bad round, nor should you get a big head if you have a good round. Buddhism teaches us that life has its ups and downs. Life is never hopeless, even when things don't go our way or if we face tragedy or misfortune. At the same time, we don't have to get a big head about our successes. Success is always because of many others when we reflect on it. It is not just “our doing.”

I will continue to enjoy golf, even as terrible as I am at it, and continue to see the teachings even in the challenging, fun, and often frustrating game of golf.

*There is so much Buddhism in golf. Although it is a sport, golf is at least half mental as it is physical. You are always confronted by your ego when you play golf. When you think that you want to hit this great shot, you usually duff it. When you just relax and swing easy without trying to egotistically hit a great shot, it usually turns out better.*

In golf, you have to be in the present. If your mind is fixated on the terrible shot you just hit, you will hit another terrible shot. You have to put out of your mind that last terrible shot, and be in the present with the shot you have to now make. If you are too future oriented, thinking, “I have a great round going! If I can just shoot good these last two holes, I will have the lowest score of my life,” then you usually end up having an

and then you will find yourself immersed in the world of the Dharma, the world of the “other,” instead of the world of “me.”

There are puzzling contradictions in golf. For example, you have to aim left, if you want to curve the ball to the right. You have to aim right if you want to curve the ball to the left. When you hit your irons, you have to hit “down” on your irons to make the ball go “up.” (Which I do terri-

## Explaining ‘Bonno,’ or Blind Passions



By Rev. Kory Quon  
Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Light speed ahead! Do you feel that we are doing more things in person and that everything is going even more quickly than it did before? I do! It has been great to see so many of you in person.

I find that there is not enough time to actually catch up with people, especially when trying to say hello to everyone. Do you feel the same way?

I forget that the greatest gift is the intertwining of our life's journey for even an instant, but I always find myself in the trap of wanting more. Our tradition considers this as a type of “bonno,” or blind passions.

“Bonno” is a comprehensive term descriptive of all the forces, conscious and unconscious, that propel unenlightened persons to think, feel, act, and speak — whether in happiness or in sorrow — in such a way as to cause uneasiness, frustration, torment, pain, and sorrow mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and even physically for themselves and others.

nothing but blind passions. Thus, just to live, or wanting to live, as an unenlightened being is to manifest blind passions at all times, regardless of what we may appear to be.

One comes to know this, however, only through the illumination of great compassion. Hence, awakening to one's own nature is called the wisdom of shinjin, and

determination for the situation, we just do our best.

Think about being Buddhist. Have you analyzed what path works best for you? In this Jodo Shinshu tradition, we need to be mindful of who we are in this life, commit to a path, and receive the outcome as it is. By going back in my mind and analyzing how an event or conversation went, I am

*While Buddhism makes a detailed and subtle analysis of blind passions, employing such terms as craving, anger, delusion, arrogance, doubt, and wrong views, fundamentally, it is rooted in the fierce, stubborn clinging to the foolish and evil self that constitutes the basis of our existence.*

While Buddhism makes a detailed and subtle analysis of blind passions, employing such terms as craving, anger, delusion, arrogance, doubt, and wrong views, fundamentally, it is rooted in the fierce, stubborn clinging to the foolish and evil self that constitutes the basis of our existence.

When we realize the full implications of this truth about ourselves, we see that the human condition is itself

the person who realizes it has already been grasped by Amida's Primal Vow.

Like in many of life's examples, the simple truth is that we have to think about what would really give our lives meaning. In the case of the beginning example, it is the question of quantity versus quality. “Do I speak to as many people as possible or do I spend all my time with a few?” There is no real right answer. Once coming to a

just causing myself suffering that cannot be changed or was never in my control in the first place. Also, sometimes while in the moment, I find that I may not truly be committed to my efforts because I want more. I might just be spreading my attention too thin. Do you find yourself doing this, too?

Namo Amida Butsu is our mind being in the present

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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  
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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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Jon Kawamoto  
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Print Production:  
Jeffrey Kimoto



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Thank You to All for a Wonderful Obon Season at Temples, Churches



By Terri Omori  
BCA President

As we enter the month of August, Obon season is winding down for the BCA.

For many temples, this year marked a return to public Obon festivals. Many made modifications to accommodate the anticipation of having fewer volunteers than in 2019 and other logistical changes.

I would like to thank the ministers, leaders, and volunteers for their efforts in making the 2023 Obon festival season for temples and churches so memorable — and a great success. Planning for unknown variables is dif-

### BCA Leaders, Volunteers Have Been Busy With Several Projects Into 2024

ficult. I applaud your efforts and courage in planning what you felt was in the best interest for all, in making changes, and in welcoming back your community — which was thoroughly excited to return.

Even though my Vista temple's Obon festival was exhausting for me, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Working together again with my Vista Sangha was priceless! Having the opportunity to get to know the members, seeing the young, and young at heart working together to benefit the temple was wonderful.

We kept some of the traditional ways in preparing the delicious foods passed down to us, and also found innovative ways to make some foods easier to prepare. Knowing that everyone's efforts went to ensure the Dharma remains accessible to all was a great feeling. Of course, the highlight was ending the day with taiko and Bon Odori.

While all were busy helping at their temples/churches during this Obon season, your dedicated BCA leaders and

volunteers have been working on projects as well.

The BCA Budget and Finance Committee, led by BCA Treasurer Jeffrey Matsuoka has begun the process to prepare the 2024-2025 budget. It is a tedious process which involves working together with the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), the BCA Endowment Foundation, BCA staff and committee chairpersons.

and operations management.

The BCA Art Committee is busy preparing the 2023 Virtual Art Exhibit, a wonderful display presented by our talented members. The Archives-Historic Preservation and Music committees are working on projects for next year's BCA 125th anniversary celebration.

The Bylaws/Legal Committee is preparing recommended amendments to the

*Even though my Vista temple's Obon festival was exhausting for me, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Working together again with my Vista Sangha was priceless! Having the opportunity to get to know the members, seeing the young, and young at heart working together to benefit the temple was wonderful.*

With assistance from BCA Controller Kevin Arakaki, Matsuoka and the committee will diligently keep expenses down, but will also keep in mind not to jeopardize any programs, ministerial support

BCA bylaws which will be presented at the National Board meeting in December. The Ministerial Affairs Committee and the Ministers' Pension Fund/403B Retirement Plan continually inter-

act with Koichi Mizushima, the Ministers' BCA Group Benefits Coordinator.

There are 15 BCA standing committees and two ad hoc committees. The following are some of the items being addressed.

The 2024 BCA National Council Meeting Planning Committee has been meeting monthly. Led by Allan Yamashiro and Peggy Okabayashi, ministers and members from the Northern California district temples are planning a unique NCM which will be held at the Buddhist Church of Sacramento in February.

We are returning to an in-person NCM! However, the format will be different. The Ministers' Association meeting and BCA workshops will be held online the week before the NCM. The IBS Symposium and BCA National Eitaikyo service will be held as a hybrid format. The committee will be sharing more information in the coming months as well as sending registration materials to the temples, committee chairpersons, and affiliated organizations.

## Elyse Fujii of Stockton Is 2023 Fred Nitta Scholarship Recipient

By Darlene Bagshaw  
FDSTL Nitta Scholarship  
Chairperson

The BCA's Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League (FDSTL) has awarded the 2023 Fred and Helen Nitta Scholarship to Ms. Elyse Fujii from the Buddhist Church of Stockton.

Fred and Helen Nitta established the scholarship in honor of their 25th wedding anniversary, and the FDSTL has since been able to award scholarships to our outstanding young Buddhists. Fred Nitta was an avid supporter of the Watsonville temple youth who actively participated in temple and district activities.

Ms. Elyse Fujii has spent her life as a part of the Sangha of the Buddhist Church of Stockton. After learning about the Gardena Buddhist Church's Ichi-Mi efforts addressing LGBTQ+ issues in the BCA from Rev. Candice Shibata, Elyse became interested in the encompassing compassion and inclusion of the Buddhist teachings.

"The Golden Chain" is her favorite recitation as it embodies the concept of bringing everyone together in a positive realm. Through these teachings, Elyse wholeheartedly embraces her community through her amazing level of both temple and community service.

Not only is Elyse an exceptional volunteer, but she is



Elyse Fujii of the Buddhist Church of Stockton is the 2023 Fred and Helen Nitta Scholarship recipient. (Courtesy of Elyse Fujii)

also an accomplished academic student, receiving Lifetime CSF, the San Joaquin County Pinnacle Award and Seal of Bilitery.

Through her keen ability to combine academic prowess and genuine interest in the Buddhist teachings, Elyse expressed her understanding of

the LGBTQ+ community in a Buddhist context.

"Sexual identity and orientation have historically been heavily scrutinized topics affecting numerous aspects of society, ranging from politics to religion, that has only now, in current times, become accepted and integrated within

the world," Elyse wrote. "Even today, acceptance and rights are haphazardly thrown around with regulations against transgender individuals like those in the U.S. state of Florida, which are aimed at discounting the identity of citizens of all ages in favor of political and personal beliefs."

She stated the "rights and freedoms for the LGBTQ have only just been instituted in the past 20 years, and while commonly understood as law, they are still new in that they have yet to be as integrated in society as the freedom of speech. Even then, with these laws and legal understandings of the rights of the LGBTQ, those within this community are being persecuted in countries with laws against the LGBTQ and even in those with laws protecting the LGBTQ."

Elyse said "a big contributor to this relentless hatred is in part fueled by religion and culture, both of which are supposed to bring people together, but are instead regularly used to influence political and social movements against the LGBTQ and to spread misinformation and defamation against them.

"Buddhism is, therefore, unique in that its religious practices do not place an emphasis on the virtues of sexual identity or orientation, but rather the nature of these relationships and person themselves when validating those within the LGBTQ community," she said.

"Focusing solely on the core Buddhist principles, such as the five precepts, there is only one mention of anything relating to relationships and sexuality," she continued. "As a result, any relationships and identities that are solely derived from this value are valid and permitted so long as harm does not befall any individual involved, including relationships regarding the LGBTQ and sexual identities."

She noted additional Buddhist practices also put a focus on equality, treating all people and beings with the same basic respect everyone deserves.

"Under Buddhist principles, the LGBTQ community is not scrutinized or denied their identity; they are considered like everyone else, a being that is entitled to the same rights as other beings," Elyse said.

"While Buddhism does not cover every situation that may arise for a person regarding sexuality or sexual identity, Buddhist teachings relay that everyone deserves to exist and have the same rights as one another. Buddhism, at its core, welcomes all types of people from all walks of life, disregarding judgment based on looks, race, or sexual identity and orientation," she said.

The FDSTL wishes Ms. Elyse Fujii success in all her endeavors as she embarks on her studies at the University of California, Davis. Elyse plans to pursue a degree in medicine leading to her career choice as a forensic pathologist.



## Grace Hatano Recognized for 50 Years as Dharma School Teacher



Grace Hatano was honored on May 21 at the Sacramento Betsuin for her 50 years as a Dharma School Teacher. Above, she receives a certificate of appreciation from Rev. Matthew Hamasaki. (Courtesy of Bobby Tanaka and Sacramento Betsuin)

**By Sandy Kataoka-Fong**  
Buddhist Church of Sacramento

On May 21, the Sacramento Betsuin honored and recognized Sensei Grace Hatano for her 50 years of dedication as a Dharma School Teacher.

As a kindergarten teacher, she has helped young Dharma students begin their journey to learn and live the life of Nembutsu, a life of gratitude.

With her warm smile and heart of gold, she has nurtured more than 500 young Dharma students through the years who have grown

to be adults — who, in turn, have brought their children to Dharma School and Sensei Grace's kindergarten class.

Amazingly, she is able to recognize and call many of them by name years later.

In addition to serving as a teacher for five decades, she received her Tokudo ordination in Japan and for the past 20 years has worked as a minister's assistant.

Sensei Grace is a cornerstone of our Dharma School program and for that we are grateful.

Congratulations and thank you, Sensei Grace, for 50 years of teaching Dharma School.

## A Winning Pitch



Nisei Week Queen Kristine Yada, a member of the Orange County Buddhist Church, is all smiles after throwing the first pitch on June 28 as the Los Angeles Angels hosted Japanese Heritage Night. The Angels won the game by a score of 4-2 over the Chicago White Sox. Angels' superstar Shohei Ohtani put on a spectacular, two-sided performance. As the starting pitcher, Ohtani struck out 10 batters on his way to his seventh win of the season. At the plate, Ohtani belted a pair of home runs. (Courtesy of Jun Nagata/Rafu Shimpo)

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Join us for a screening of "A Profound Silence" a film produced by Gardena Buddhist Church Ichi-Mi.

Followed by stories and conversations with LGBTQ+ sangha friends to foster more inclusivity in our temples

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2023**  
9:30 - 4:30

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**SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY: A NISEI LIFE IN SONG**

Join us for this special show in tribute to our Nisei generation as the Grateful Crane Ensemble from Los Angeles takes you on a sentimental journey through the Nisei's life in America before, during and after WWII. Featuring over 20 of the Nisei's favorite Japanese and American songs, the show promises to bring back fond memories of their lives well-lived as we say "Thank you" to them for paving the way for the younger generations to follow.

Written by Soji Kashiwagi  
Featuring Jason Fong | Haruye Ioka | Keiko Kawashima | Merv Maruyama | Helen Ota  
Musicians Lisa Joe, Musical Director/Piano | Danny Yamamoto, Drums

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# DONOR APPRECIATION ISSUE



By **Rev. Marvin Harada**  
Bishop of the BCA

Once again, may I express my deepest appreciation to all who have contributed so generously to the BCA this past year, and especially to the Dharma Forward campaign.

Last year, we were at 40% toward our goal, and now we are at an amazing 56% with total donations of \$8.4 million. As we enter the final years of this campaign, may we continue to push forward

## Extending My Deepest Thanks for Dharma Forward Contributions

to complete our goal of \$15 million. I know that we can reach it, with the continued support of all of you, and your respective Sanghas.

Next year will be the 125th anniversary of our Buddhist Churches of America. We have come a long way in those 125 years, building churches and temples, a national headquarters, and a graduate school, the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

In more recent decades, we have established the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, California, which is a valuable facility for so many aspects of the BCA, from IBS, to our Center for Buddhist Education programs, which include training sessions for future

ministers, continuing education for present ministers, and outreach and educational programs for anyone. Where would we be without the JSC? Clearly it is an important asset for us.

One of the four “pillars” of the Dharma Forward campaign is the Facilities & Operations pillar, which will support the maintenance, upkeep, and future renovations of our JSC. As we all know, it costs to maintain our own homes and temples, and the JSC is no different. The Dharma Forward campaign will help to provide funds to be able to maintain and operate our wonderful JSC for decades into the future, which will greatly assist our annual BCA budget.

We are returning to in-person events again and the JSC is once again a busy place. Just in the past month, we have held: training sessions for those preparing for Tokudo ordination; a wonderful workshop on Buddhism and yoga; and our annual youth retreat for high school students.

Our other pillars, Buddhist Education & Programs, Outreach & Technology, and Ministerial Support & Scholarships, are all working on how to best utilize campaign funds for our future.

As we look to our anniversary next year, I would like to focus on our future. What will the future of the BCA look like? Will it con-

tinue to reflect diminishing membership and closure of churches and temples, or will it reflect growing and flourishing Sanghas that reach new people?

We are sitting on a wonderful treasure, the Dharma, that can help others in so many ways, from resolving life’s issues, to finding the most meaningful and fulfilling life to live. This treasure can and must be shared. The Dharma will not diminish as we share it with more people. The Dharma is inexhaustible in that sense. It does not weaken, decrease, or lose its value. It continues to flourish, to illuminate the hearts and minds of those who encounter it. That, to me, is our future.

## The Power of Many for Dharma Forward

Whether With Gifts, Panda Express Fundraisers or Jan Ken Po Game, Temples Have Contributed to Campaign

*Success happens when good people with good intentions cooperate and work together over a shared interest.*

— Anonymous

By **Michiko Inanaga**

BCA Endowment Foundation  
Director of Development  
and **Steven Terusaki**  
BCA President-Elect

Dharma Forward has been an example of the power of many.

From individual gifts, to trust gifts, temple, and district gifts, Dharma Forward has the support of many generous donors.

Dharma Forward was launched to ensure the future of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. There is no doubt that the Dharma needs to be shared and expressed to those who have not yet heard of the Dharma but also for those who have grown up in and around the tradition to truly experience



Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyake of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco (BCSF) is all smiles as BCSF won a “jan ken po” game that benefitted the Dharma Forward campaign. The game, which was held at lunch at the Bay District Joint Celebration service on March, raised nearly \$1,900 in five minutes. (Courtesy of Kevin Yoza)

the value of the Dharma.

The monies raised through the Campaign afford the BCA and IBS to make substantive

investments in long-term programs and capacity-building to ensure that the Dharma is available forever into the

future. Through investments in Buddhist Education, Ministerial Support, Scholarships, Technology, Outreach, and

care for our Facilities, the Campaign advances the robustness and vibrancy of our Jodo Shinshu tradition.

BCA is working towards these goals in many different areas and temples.

Districts have met the call for support! Coast District not only organized the successful National Council Meeting, but initiated and completed a fruitful silent auction among participants.

“(The auction) was a little different than just writing a check, and we saw an opportunity to bring awareness and funds for Dharma Forward and have fun doing it,” said NCM Chair Perry Yoshida. “Each temple built a basket that represented their temple, showcasing their community and members.”

In addition, Coast District donated the remaining funds from hosting the meeting to the Dharma Forward campaign.

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## BCAEF Manages Investments for BCA, IBS, Temples, Affiliates

By **Michiko Inanaga**

BCA Endowment Foundation  
Director of Development

The BCA Endowment Foundation manages the investments for the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and 26 temples and affiliated organizations.

The primary goal of the Of-

fice of Development is to secure financial resources for the Endowment Foundation. It works to develop and implement fundraising strategies to cultivate relationships and to secure gifts that can be used to support programming of the BCA and IBS. The BCA Endowment Foundation is actively securing the future of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America.

By building relationships,

we can be aware of what the Sangha, their respective temples, and affiliated organizations need and want.

The current Dharma Forward campaign was a result of the Sangha members saying that financial instability and scrambling from budget to budget was not a sustainable way to support the growth of Buddhism in America.

“Dharma Forward is our

vision to build the future of Buddhism in America,” said Endowment Foundation Board Chair Charles Ozaki. “It helps to provide the means for the continuous source of support for our Sangha by strengthening the pillars of Education and Programs, Outreach and Technology, Ministerial Support and Scholarships, and Facilities and Operations on which the Buddhist Churches of America

and the Institute of Buddhist Studies stand.”

To share effectively, we must be financially secure and use resources smartly to build for the future.

The BCA Endowment Foundation also understands that financial health at individual temples is a crucial part of a thriving BCA eco-

Continued on Page 9



# Thank You for Your Generous Offerings

Thank you for entrusting us with your gifts of time and financial support. With your support, we can provide a family and community-based connection to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for all. The following list includes offerings made by members and friends of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) that were processed by the BCA Endowment Foundation between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. Donation levels reflect cumulative amounts given across different programs and campaigns; please see notes for further details.

Donation levels reflect cumulative amounts directed to the following programs and campaigns received by the BCA Endowment Foundation: Dharma Forward (General, BCA initiatives, IBS Chairs, IBS Programs, Debt Relief), Jodo Shinshu Center, Dana Program, Center for Buddhist Education, Social Welfare Fund, Zaidan, WABL Koromo Fund, Music, Bishop's Expansion Fund, special programs and requests or unrestricted use.

Donors include individuals, foundations, trusts, and bequests. Gifts given directly to the IBS for their giving programs and gifts to BCA's Student Financial Assistance Program are managed separately and are not included in this list.

If you would like to receive a record of a specific donation, did not receive an acknowledgment for a recent donation, would like names listed differently, or have any other questions, please contact the BCA Endowment Foundation. Our intention is to honor your contribution, so we ask that you kindly allow us to correct any errors.

Contact the BCA Endowment Foundation at 415-776-5600 or [donate@bcahq.org](mailto:donate@bcahq.org) for further assistance and review. Corrections will be published as soon as possible.





# ngs to BCA Endowment Foundation





## Institute of Buddhist Studies Thanks Its Many Donors

Twice a year, the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) sends out its Annual Giving Program solicitation, and every year we receive many generous donations in response. In addition, gifts are received year round in response to special events, or in honor of loved ones.

Through the Dharma Forward campaign, we receive donations designated to IBS programs and to the IBS Professorial Chair Endowment funds. As a joint participant in the campaign, IBS also receives 50% of the undesignated donations.

Every donation is gratefully received and used to further the IBS mission to “provide graduate level education in the full breadth of the Buddhist tradition with specialized education supporting Pure Land and contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies, while advancing Jōdo Shinshū Buddhist ministry and Buddhist chaplaincy.”

To provide a “graduate level education in the breadth of the Buddhist tradition” requires many things.

- Knowledge — in the form of books, academic resources, and most important, teachers.
- Students — People pursuing their interest in Buddhism and perhaps a calling to share its compassionate wisdom.
- Facilities — the places and the means to gather, share, and learn.
- Staff — the people whose activities sustain all the above.

Last year’s donations helped us facilitate:

- The return to a “new normal” from three years of pandemic isolation, on-line-only instruction, and remote work.
- The ongoing transitions among core faculty and staff.

This year, we are laying the groundwork for the renovation of the 2717 Haste St. property. This strategically located building (next to the University of California campus) was purchased in the mid-1960s to house the BCA’s Buddhist Study Center, which, in 1969, became the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

In 1988, when IBS moved to a larger building, this Haste Street property became the dormitory for IBS students, affiliate exchange students, and visiting academics. This well-used building will be refreshed to welcome future generations of Buddhist scholars and ministerial and chaplaincy aspirants.

The list below acknowledges donors whose gifts were received between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. The IBS community (students, alumni, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees) thanks you for your partnership and support. Your gifts give us the flexibility and agility to stay on course and offer a sustainable and productive program of Buddhist education.

**IBS Donations Received - July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023: \$1,924,839**



Rev. Landon Yamaoka and Rev. Tadao Koyama are shown walking to their classes as former students of the BCA’s Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS). (Courtesy of IBS)



### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Orange County Buddhist Church has been offering an “All Music Service” in June since 2005 to celebrate all fathers and to honor graduates?

Please check out the OCBC You-

Tube channel livestream playlist to view the most recent All Music Service from June 18, 2023: <https://www.youtube.com/@OrangeCountyBuddhistChurch/streams>

— BCA Music Committee

## Inanaga

Continued from Page 1

each of us individually in common purpose, share the Dharma.

We do this by volunteering our time and energy, by being willing participants in our active Sanghas, and by financial support of various means. What we all have in common is a grateful heart and a sense of purpose.

BCA Endowment Foundation has an opportunity to annually print

our appreciation, recognizing your yearlong efforts, in this issue. We are grateful to everyone who reads our papers, who listens to our sermons, who visits and supports us physically and virtually, who guide and support our temples and our larger ecosystem — so that we can grow together.

Our largest effort — the Dharma Forward campaign — continues to make progress. We invite you to read the articles inside that share our structure, progress, and support. Thank you for joining us on the journey!





## Dharma Forward

Continued from Page 5

A month later, Bay District, initiated by the Minister's Association orchestrated by Rev. Dean Koyama, decided to donate all the *osaisen* (offerings) from the Bay District Joint Celebration Service in March to the campaign. The special Bay District service was held at the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple (PABT) creating an opportunity to gather in person reminding Sangha members of the importance of being a part of the temple and BCA communities.

"Early on, the support of the BCA helped me as I was becoming a minister," Rev. Koyama said. "The people I was meeting and those making an impression on my life were people around the temple. I've been enriched because of the people that I've met."

PABT President Eric Quock organized an ingenious game of "jan ken po" (rock, paper, scissors), generating support for Dharma Forward.

Sometimes, "they (individuals) are aware of the campaign and may even know a bit about the benefits, but they need a fun way to reach into their

purses and wallets," Quock said. "Normally, this (jan ken po) has been set up for individuals to participate, but at the celebration lunch, it became

## Dharma Forward Campaign

\$15,000,000



The Dharma Forward campaign has raised 56% of its goal of \$15 million to date, as the thermometer graphic shows. (Courtesy of Dharma Forward)

the perfect opportunity to set up a challenge between the Bay District temples and their representatives. (It) had a time aspect of making everyone hustle to get donations from their temple community who were present, and had the unknown of a random winner with the type of game it is."

The game, which lasted five minutes, raised almost \$1,900 for the campaign and generated a fun buzz.

"We are so happy that the game raised some unexpected funds, helped to raise awareness of the campaign, was a lot of fun, and had an unexpected winner who was made to feel good about the overall donation," Quock said.

Temples and affiliated organization boards from across the nation support the campaign, as do ministers.

Groups with gifts above \$5,000 each include: **BCA Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations, Tri-State Denver Buddhist Temple, Buddhist Church of Florin, Watsonville Buddhist Temple, West Los Angeles**

**Buddhist Temple, Stockton Buddhist Women's Association, Vista Buddhist Temple, Coast District Temples of BCA, Buddhist Temple of Alameda, and the Florin Buddhist Women Association.**

In addition, individuals continue to organize their districts and regions with special mailings while many more Sangha members have supported Dharma Forward through their participation with the Panda Express fundraisers. With the power of many, the campaign continues to gain momentum!

As Dharma Forward brings together important discussion about our shared interest, we look forward to the action generated by the programs at BCA and IBS to fully leverage the power of many.

Participate in the next **Panda Express fundraiser on Dec. 1.** We look forward to more fun ideas from temples and districts in support of Dharma Forward.

Please reach out to Michiko Inanaga [minanaga@bcahq.org](mailto:minanaga@bcahq.org) to publicize your events!

## Donor List

Continued from Page 7

## Endowment

Continued from Page 5

system. Temples can also take advantage of the investment opportunities afforded BCA and we all benefit. Pooling together funds allows for better

options and lower overall fees to invest with a community of like-minded investors who are looking closely at DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and other investment factors.

Through these programs, we

hope to bring about awareness and advocacy to goals that exist through national institutions, local temples, and districts, and to each family and to each individual Sangha member.

Together, we continue building family friendly religious institutions that are unique and

offer a way of thinking about our place in the world that empowers personal investment in our own well-being.

We love hearing from you! Please reach out to us at [donate@bcahq.org](mailto:donate@bcahq.org) with any questions or concerns.

Questions on investments

and custodial accounts or to get an account started (contact Hide Mizuno), on the campaigns, fundraising activities, or to make a gift to any of the Development programs (contact Michiko Inanaga), on donation processing (contact Hitomi Kuwahara).



## What Are the Four Groups of Buddhism?

*Editor's note: This is the third in a series of articles on the essay, "The Land of Many Dharmas: Buddhist Diversity in America," which appeared in the summer 2021 issue of "Tricycle: the Buddhist Review." It is being reprinted with the permission of Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka.*

**By Rev. Dr. Kenneth K. Tanaka**  
Professor Emeritus  
Musashino University, Tokyo

All Buddhist schools teach the path to awakening, seeing that we are all jewels. But different traditions present the teachings differently.

In America, where there are so many denominations, it can be hard to gain a full picture of what American Buddhism even looks like. To help understand this, I find it useful to categorize the various kinds of Buddhism into four main groups.

The first group consists of older Asian American Buddhist communities. They started their temples in the mid- to late 1800s and are mostly of Chinese and Japanese origin. Today, because they are mostly third-, fourth- and fifth-generation Americans,



(Graphic courtesy of Peter Arcie)

their temple activities and services are held in English.

Since the mid-1960s, newer Asian American Buddhist communities have formed in the United States as more people have immigrated from Cambodia, Korea, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and elsewhere. Because these communities still have a large percentage of first-generation members, temple activities and services are often held in their respective native

### FYI

"Jewels: An Introduction to American Buddhism for Youth, Scouts, and the Young at Heart (With a Bit of Humor)" by Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka is available from BDK America for free download at [www.bdkamerica.org/book/jewels-introduction-buddhism-youth-scouts-and-young-heart](http://www.bdkamerica.org/book/jewels-introduction-buddhism-youth-scouts-and-young-heart). Also, free print copies are available for temples and institutions upon request at: [webmaster@bdkamerica.org](mailto:webmaster@bdkamerica.org) or 925-388-0067.

languages. However, English is being used with increasing frequency as the second- and third-generations come of age.

For newer and older Asian American Buddhist communities alike, temples serve as hubs for both religious and cultural life.

The next group consists of those who were for the most part not born into Buddhist families, but converted to Buddhism as adults and whose main practice is sitting meditation. They are predominately of European descent, though there is a substantial

and increasing membership of people of color.

In general terms, members of this third group belong to Zen, Theravada (particularly vipassana, or insight lineages), or Tibetan traditions, which are centered on meditation practices. The immense popularity over the past decade or so of mindfulness practices has definitely increased the numbers belonging to this group.

The fourth group is made up of convert Buddhists whose main practice is chanting. The majority of this group are affiliated with Soka Gakkai International, or SGI, which is a denomination of Nichiren Buddhism. Like that of other Nichiren Buddhists, the main practice is reciting the *Odaimoku*, "the great sacred title" of the Lotus Sutra, which in SGI is pronounced "Nam-myoho-renge-kyo."

One of the largest Buddhist organizations in America today, SGI is also the most racially diverse organization, with a membership that includes large numbers of Asian American, Latino, African American, and white participants.

*Next: Why Is Buddhism Growing in America?*

## 50+ Years in the Dance Circle: Chizuko Shiro of SF, Marin

*Editor's note: "50+ Years in the Dance Circle" will pay tribute to the extraordinary dance instructors who taught Bon Odori at BCA temples for 50 or more years. This series continues with a tribute to Chizuko Shiro.*

**By Dr. Wynn Kiyama**  
Oregon Buddhist Temple

Born into an artistic family, Chizuko Shiro acted and danced in Japanese-language productions and taught Bon Odori in San Francisco and Marin for over six decades.

Hajime Miyazaki from Hiroshima and Chieko Kimura from Sebastopol met in San Francisco, California, married in 1926, and had three daughters — Ayako in 1928, Chizuko in 1935, and Hideko in 1943. Chieko was the primary caregiver to the girls while Hajime worked in the import-export business. For recreation, Hajime ran an amateur Japanese drama group, which performed at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco and Kinmon Gakuen.

The family provided Japanese classical dance lessons for the oldest and youngest daughters, but Chizuko, as a child growing up during World War II, did not have the same opportunity. Despite this, she familiarized herself with classical dance

movements and gestures, and developed a deep love of dance that continues to this day.

During World War II, the family was incarcerated at the Topaz and Tule Lake concentration camps. In 1945, they returned to San Francisco and Chizuko continued her education at Pacific Heights Elementary School, Marina Junior High School, and George Washington High School. She performed in her father's drama group and an amateur kabuki troupe in San Francisco.

At the Buddhist Church of San Francisco, Chizuko attended Japanese language classes, played basketball, and formed the Angels (later known as the Juniores and Saranas), a girls' club that assisted at temple functions and organized benefits and dances. In the late 1940s, Chizuko taught Bon Odori at the San Francisco temple as an assistant to Masako Hanyu Iwase. Chizuko and Masako danced in the Bon Odori program for the BCA's Golden Jubilee celebration at the San Francisco Civic Center in 1948, and were featured in a photograph of the event in *Life* magazine.

In the 1950s, Chizuko and George Shiro met at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco and the two were married in 1957. George



Chizuko Shiro with her grandchildren, Kenji and Kimiko Shiro, left, and daughter-in-law, Traci Shiro, right, at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco's Ginza Bazaar and Obon Odori in 2016. (Courtesy of Chizuko Shiro)

owned a television sales and repair shop and the couple had two children — Richard in 1960 and Michael in 1962. To alleviate Richard's asthmatic symptoms, the family moved north to Marin in 1962. Chizuko soon joined the Marin Nakayoshi Club, a Japanese American community group, and helped May Murata teach Bon Odori at the club's summer festival beginning in the mid-1960s.

The Buddhist Temple of Marin was organized in 1965 and held its first Obon with Bon Odori at the local American Legion Hall in 1966 with Chizuko as its instructor. In the early 1970s, the temple hosted its Obon festival at the Corte Madera Recreation Center and Brown's Hall, which was purchased and renovated into the temple building in 1972.

For over five decades,

Chizuko has led Bon Odori at the Buddhist Temple of Marin with assistance in the early years from Eleanor Aoki and the support of Yoshiko Fujimoto in the 2000s. While Chizuko has taught many different dances during her long tenure as Bon Odori instructor, her favorites include such classics as "Shamisen Boogie Woogie," "Tanko Bushi," "Tennen no Bi," and "Yakyuken Odori."



At far left, the family of Bill Sakahara, a U.S. Air Force veteran, is presented with the U.S. flag during Sakahara's July 1 funeral at the Orange County Buddhist Church. At left is Sakahara's Distinguished Flying Cross, the highest flight award in the U.S. military. Sakahara received the award for flying combat missions in Vietnam. (Courtesy of Sakahara family)



Bill Sakahara and Howard Nakagiri led OCBC's drive to renovate the OCBC Hondo. At left, from left, Betty-Ann Nagami, Aaron Nagayama, Rumi Nakatani, Jeff Folick, Howard Nakagiri, and Bill Sakahara are shown with hardhats on Aug. 31, 2017. The renovated exterior of the OCBC Hondo is shown above and the formal dedication was on Oct. 8, 2017. (Courtesy of Howard Nakagiri)

## Sakahara

Continued from Page 1

treasurer of the anniversary project for the new social hall.

Sadly, Sakahara, who was 80, passed away in Tokyo on May 18. He had traveled to Japan with his wife Janet and OCBC Sangha friends to attend the 850th/800th Joint Celebration Service on May 10, which marked the anniversaries of Shinran Shonin's birth and the establishment of the Jodo Shinshu teaching. The special service was held at the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto.

"Bill gave of himself and his time for others, more than for himself," Rev. Harada said at Sakahara's July 1 funeral at OCBC. "In Buddhism, we call that a life of a bodhisattva. A

bodhisattva is someone who sacrifices their own enlightenment so that all others can get enlightened first.

"Bill, instead of living for himself, lived in service of others, whether it was in the Air Force, with his family, or with his Sangha here at OCBC," Rev. Harada continued. "In this day and age of the 'me, me, me mentality,' it is rare to be around those who live for others."

William Takashi Sakahara was born on Sept. 12, 1942, in Fresno, California, to Takeo and Tsuyako Sakahara. He spent the first four years of his life incarcerated with his family — first at Gila River War Relocation Center in Arizona, then at the Tule Lake segregation camp in California.

After the family was released from camp in March

1946, they returned to Central California to restart their lives before moving to San Jose and Gilroy.

He entered the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, graduated with a bachelor's degree in international affairs in 1964 and later earned two master's degrees, one in political science and a second in information systems.

His commanding officer's wife arranged a blind date for Bill with Janet Okamura, an undergrad from nearby Colorado College. After they both graduated, the couple got married in 1965, embarking on a marriage that would last for 57 years and grow to include three daughters.

Sakahara — called "Saki" in the Air Force — had a 20-year military career. He was

stationed around the world. He was an F-4 fighter pilot, trainer in Oklahoma, Arizona, and Bitburg, Germany, and received the honorable Distinguished Flying Cross — the highest flight award in the U.S. military — given for "heroism or extraordinary achievement," for flying combat missions in Vietnam.

He served the Las Vegas Buddhist Sangha when he and his wife Janet were stationed there, and he served OCBC in a variety of ways. He was OCBC's Eitaikyo fund treasurer and was in charge of festival raffle prizes.

Sakahara was treasurer for OCBC's new social hall project, in which one of the fundraisers was for Sangha members to collect their spare change in piggy banks. That fundraiser alone raised about

\$30,000 in about five years. He and Janet counted out all that spare change from the piggy bank fundraisers.

Bill told everyone during the Japan trip that he was grateful for the opportunity to attend the special service in Kyoto. He purchased an onenju at the Nishi Hongwanji, and at his cremation service, Janet placed the new onenju in his urn.

Sakahara is survived by his wife, Janet; three daughters and sons-in-law, Kristin and Kendall Cummings, Robin Sakahara and Daniel Allen, and Karin and Kenn Kashima; five grandchildren, Kaitlin Cummings, Sumiye and Shiogo Allen, and Kayla and Kenna Kashima; a great-grandson, Takashi King; and two brothers and a sister-in-law, Dale Sakahara and Gene and Kathryn Sakahara.

## Japan Trip

Continued from Page 1

Registro Hongwanji Temple member Aiko Yagui said: "I am very happy to have been able to come with my mother from Brazil to Hongwanji. The staff with their smiles were welcoming, making me feel warm."

In addition, two ministers from the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada

assisted in officiating the service.

The Confirmation Ceremony, which followed the morning and afternoon sessions, included 61 participants from the overseas delegations receiving their Dharma name.

Brianna Hornig of Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church was among those who received Dharma names.

"Visiting Hongwanji for the first time, I am truly

happy to be able to take part in the Confirmation Ceremony together with my mom," Hornig said. "Having received a Dharma name will become a big support for me that I hope to cherish."

David Atcheson of Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, Hawaii, said: "Ten years ago, I visited Hongwanji with my family of three, and this is my second visit to Honzan. In addition to being able to attend the Joint Celebration

that I will never again be able to encounter, I was also fortunate to have the opportunity to take part in the Confirmation Ceremony.

"To have been able to reconfirm the hard work of our predecessors who passed on the Jodo Shinshu teaching to the present day, I have nothing but gratitude," he continued. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sunday services at betsuin could not be held in-person,

so it was delivered online, and I was able to help with that. I would like to continue to support betsuin."

Many of the delegates from the four districts also took part in the 17th World Buddhist Women's Convention, which was held on May 11-12.

In addition, groups toured Hongwanji-related historic sites and temples in Kyoto, Kanto, Hokuriku, and Kyushu.



## Rev. Jaskula

Continued from Page 1

On Sunday mornings, Rev. Jaskula boards the train from Albany, New York, where he lives, to take the two-and-a-half-hour ride into New York.

“It costs \$60 train fare one way. How many of us would spend \$120 to go to our local temple every Sunday?” Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada said. “I have to think about it myself. But that’s the kind of dedication we have from members on the East Coast.” (FYI: NYBC has reimbursed Rev. Jaskula for his train fares since former Resident Minister Rev. Earl Inaba retired in September 2021.)

### LGBTQ+ Community

Rev. Harada introduced Rev. Jaskula at the BCA National Council Meeting’s Town Hall on “The Benefits of Following the Shin Buddhist Path” on Feb. 18. Rev. Jaskula followed Rev. Maribeth “Smitty” Smith from the Buddhist Temple of San Diego in speaking about the benefits of a teaching that embraces all and forsakes none from the perspective of two Minister’s Assistants who are from the LGBTQ+ community.

Rev. Jaskula’s path to becoming such a devoted follower of Shin Buddhism has been a long, sometimes tortuous, road. In an unvarnished and emotional talk, he covered several topics and issues he experienced before he ever encountered the Nembutsu teaching. He spoke about battling negative feelings and thoughts as a closeted gay man as he navigated his way in mainstream society, decades before there was much discussion about the LGBTQ+ community. He detailed his coming out of the closet, and also talked about studying all sorts of religions and philosophies.

“I’d like to start off by saying that I personally came into Buddhism in midlife, not as a young person,” said Rev. Jaskula, who also serves the Albany Buddhist Sangha. He discovered Shin Buddhism through the local lay teacher program begun by the late Rev. Dr. Taitetsu Unno in 2001 at the New York Buddhist Church. Rev. Jaskula became a certified MA in 2007, and received Tokudo in 2012.

“When I’m talking to people about Shin (Buddhism), I often say that while it truly is a path for everyone, and I am really envious of those of you who were brought up going to temple, the teaching has a particular resonance for those who have been around a religious block — that’s the term I use. And, as Rev. Smitty told us, part of that experience of being around a religious block might have been encountering some really negative things.

“Over the years,” Rev. Ja-



Rev. Gary Jaskula, of the New York Buddhist Church and Albany Buddhist Sangha, gives a presentation during the Feb. 18 BCA National Council Meeting’s Town Hall seminar. He spoke about how the Buddhist message of “Come as you are” resonated deeply with him. (Courtesy of Jon Kawamoto)

skula said, “there is not a form of God that I have not worshipped or a philosophy that I have not at least entertained — trying to find something for myself.

“I did not come to Shin Buddhism, speaking for myself, looking for permission to be gay or even a place to be gay without any obstacles,” he said.

### Life in ‘the Closet’

When he was young, he lived “in the closet ... and closet is a rough place, but it was the only choice at that time in the context in which I grew up, which was the lower middle-class in the Tri-State area (New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut). It was

devastated.”

He came to the realization at the time that “I never really deeply accepted myself nor would it have been greeted favorably.

“Without belief, if you really didn’t think there was actually something there, what was the point of fooling yourself and suppressing yourself? — this was the question that was in my mind,” he said.

Rev. Jaskula decided to go out into the mainstream workaday world — and out of the closet, too.

“Now, mind you, I was completely unprepared to make it on my own in the world,” he said. “I had never, ever, considered any career or

York Buddhist Church was very, very fortunate to have monthly visits from Rev. Dr. Taitetsu Unno, who I consider my teacher. His teaching really resonated with me very deeply.”

It was a fortuitous encounter. Rev. Jaskula recalled meeting Rev. Dr. Unno on his second day at the NYBC in 2001.

“I started learning about a teaching that spoke about radical acceptance of all beings, not just humans, and that all, without exception, are embraced by Light and Life exactly as they are,” he said. “And, although I wasn’t looking for it, and I was quite bewildered, this was a won-

derful teaching and I found myself on a spiritual path again.

“The key thing from this particular talk is that there is no closet in Shin — and that is huge. That is really huge,” he said. “No institutional discrimination — ever. I’ve been around for a while, and I’ve never encountered anyone say anything negative about gay people, or lesbians, or trans, or whatever you are.

“We always say, ‘Come as you are,’” Rev. Jaskula said. “That is the phrase: ‘Come as you are.’ That has been my experience from the get-go. It was incredibly liberating.”

“My biggest preconception at that time about Buddhists was that they were teetotaling vegetarians and how would I deal with that? Anyway, I found something else entirely (different) at that time. New

or philosophical systems as an alternative to the natural world, which they see as impure or dirty,” Rev. Jaskula said. “But that is not the teaching of Shinran or Buddha. That (other) view, as I’ve learned, is dualistic in an unhealthy sense.

“Not all dualism is unhealthy,” he said. “We live in a conventional world. There’s practical dualism we have to deal with all the time. But in terms of ultimate things, this kind of dualism, where the world is dirty or impure and has to be overcome, that is unhealthy. A person approaching spirituality attempting to escape probably won’t get very far. The body and the natural world are realities that need to be integrated in a healthy spirituality, not denied.”

### Siddhartha Gautama

Rev. Jaskula said the balance people seek in life can be seen in the life of Siddhartha Gautama.

“His father showered him with every sensual pleasure from birth, hoping that this would prevent him from renouncing the world,” he said. “But that plan backfired. And, having experienced all his father had provided him, Siddhartha joined the ascetics, the polar opposite of what his life had been up to then. And then he nearly died of starvation.

“But he became a Buddha only when he found the middle way,” he said. “In the same light, Shinran, our master, was advised by his teacher Honen to marry when he could not get his own sexuality out of his head. That’s another teaching of the middle way — balance, the Nembutsu, enlightenment itself calling to us. It shines on everyone — householder, renunciant, lay priest. It’s that balance that counts. Ignorant self, Light and Life, they match perfectly in Shinran’s understanding.

“Shinran didn’t conceptualize LGBTQ in his day, but the tools really are there in his teaching for those doing so now,” Rev. Jaskula said. “Whether straight, LGBTQ, asexual, whatever, all are called without exception.

“If you see this in a healthy way, the bondings of the body and the physicality itself, are an invitation to enlightenment,” he said. “To balance, to integration and ultimate transformation — that’s the spiritual life, that’s the interior life. And this is the chief benefit of the teaching of the school of radical acceptance — accepting self, accepting others is perhaps another way of saying ‘benefiting self, benefiting others.’”

*Next: David Correia, a Minister’s Assistant with the Monterey Peninsula Buddhist Temple, will discuss the benefits of being a part of a Sangha.*

*“... there is no closet in Shin — and that is huge. That is really huge. No institutional discrimination — ever. I’ve been around for a while, and I’ve never encountered anyone say anything negative about gay people, or lesbians, or trans, or whatever you are. We always say, ‘Come as you are.’ That is the phrase: ‘Come as you are.’ That has been my experience from the get-go. It was incredibly liberating.”*

— Rev. Gary Jaskula, New York Buddhist Church and Albany Buddhist Sangha

working class and you didn’t have ‘gay’ people — that word didn’t even exist. ‘Perverts’ existed and some other nasty words and you didn’t want to be one of those. But that closet, from personal experience, is a very rough place. It really warps the mind ... that’s the world I grew up in.”

He said he was always drawn to religion, to philosophy, to abstract thought, particularly the mystical expressions of religion.

Rev. Jaskula said he didn’t accept himself and wasn’t accepted by others. Eventually, he became monastic, a seminary student — but at one crucial point in his life, he “stopped believing. I just stopped. I don’t know why. It was very weird ... I still sort of believed in prayer, but I didn’t believe any more that anyone was listening. There was this real chasm, and I was

practical thing, or anything like that, other than living a religious life. Ever since I was 5 or 6. I had no practical skills at all.”

### Midlife Crisis

And then — he had a mid-life crisis.

“I didn’t know what to do,” Rev. Jaskula said. “It was that (midlife crisis) — that led me to Shin. I thought, like many people coming into the church today, that I wanted some peace of mind, I wanted a little anger management, I would like to have some practical spirituality again, that kind of thing.

“I didn’t know what Shin Buddhism was,” he continued. “My biggest preconception at that time about Buddhists was that they were teetotaling vegetarians and how would I deal with that? Anyway, I found something else entirely (different) at that time. New

derful teaching and I found myself on a spiritual path again.

“The key thing from this particular talk is that there is no closet in Shin — and that is huge. That is really huge,” he said. “No institutional discrimination — ever. I’ve been around for a while, and I’ve never encountered anyone say anything negative about gay people, or lesbians, or trans, or whatever you are.

“We always say, ‘Come as you are,’” Rev. Jaskula said. “That is the phrase: ‘Come as you are.’ That has been my experience from the get-go. It was incredibly liberating.”

### ‘The Interior Life’

He then spoke about “the interior life,” an individual’s inner thoughts and perceptions about the world, an inner conversation that each of us has with ourselves.

“Many people see religion



## Remembering Rev. LaVerne Sasaki

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka Describes How He Was Influenced in His Studies and Sharing of the Dharma

*Editor's note: In light of the passing of BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. LaVerne Sasaki on March 31, Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka submitted the following remembrance about Rev. Sasaki, who he regarded as his first Buddhist teacher — along with Rev. Sasaki's father, Rev. Sensho Sasaki.*

By Rev. Dr. Kenneth K. Tanaka  
Professor Emeritus  
Musashino University, Tokyo

### First Buddhist Teachers

In the days after learning of Sensei's passing, many thoughts and memories came welling up in me.

In Buddhism, we often speak of "wisdom" and "compassion." For me, it was Rev. LaVerne Sasaki who first introduced me to the wisdom dimension of Buddhism, while it was Sensei's father, Rev. Sensho Sasaki, who opened the door to the compassion dimension. Before focusing on Rev. LaVerne Sasaki, allow me to say a bit about his father because, as father and son, they impacted me as "one set" as my first Buddhist teachers.

Rev. Sensho Sasaki was the resident minister when I first began attending the Mountain View Buddhist Temple at the age of 13 in 1961. What I remember very much about him was Sensho Sensei's warm, soft hands as he shook hands with each of the 250 or so Sunday School students as we exited the temple after the service.

As a minister with limited English speaking abilities, his sermons were difficult to understand, but Sensei more than made up for it with his warm smile and, most of all, through those warm, soft hands. It's amazing that even after 60 years, I can still "feel" Sensho Sensei's hands of compassion!

### Wisdom and Knowledge

It was the son, Rev. LaVerne Sasaki, who generated my interest in the wisdom and knowledge of Buddhism through the study classes that he held once a month, as Sensei traveled all the way from the Buddhist Church of Stockton, where he was serving as an associate minister. His classes were so interesting that I hardly missed a class during most of my high school years.

Sensei's classes provided answers to many of the questions that were unanswered at a Christian church that I had been attending a couple of years earlier. One such question was, "Why was there so much suffering (Duhkha) in the world when an all-powerful



Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka, above, is shown with Rev. LaVerne Sasaki in a group photo of the San Francisco Buddhist Council. Rev. Dr. Tanaka credits Rev. Sasaki with generating his interest in the wisdom and knowledge of Buddhism through the study classes he held. (Courtesy of the Sasaki family and Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka)

and all loving God had created it? Why couldn't he have done a better job!" My parents were not getting along, and the world had just gone through World War II that had killed 50 million people!

to study with the eminent professors. He also spoke fondly about his classmates, Shoyu Hanayama and Shojun Bando who had become well known, and about his master's thesis on the main text by Genshin,

influenced me in my desire to see more of the Buddhist world. One example would be my traveling to Thailand soon after college to enter a monastery to experience the life of a Theravada Buddhist monk.

*In my view, Rev. Sasaki was also extraordinary in his efforts to propagate Buddhism to a wider community as seen in his active participation in intra-Buddhist, inter-religious, and civic activities. One such event I fondly recall was when he invited the San Francisco 49ers football team for a series of exhibition basketball games at the Mountain View temple gymnasium.*

Fortunately, at these classes, my questions were answered. Sensei talked about the Four Noble Truths, which essentially said that "suffering is a natural part of life, and that we all experience it." Such a view affirmed what I was feeling and assured me that "I was not alone." Even the Buddha and Shinran Shonin had also experienced them and had gone on to resolve them through the Dharma.

Rev. Sasaki shared his wisdom and knowledge gained especially during his graduate student days at the University of Tokyo, where he was able

one of the Seven Masters of Shin Buddhism. Such sharing planted a seed in me to want to follow in his footsteps, which I did some 20 years later that greatly furthered my academic career.

### Global Perspective

During some of the study classes, Sensei shared his experience of attending the Third World Buddhist Conference in Rangoon, Burma, in 1954. It was an eye opener for me to know that someone I knew and respected had traveled to a distant Buddhist land for a Buddhist gathering. Such travels and experiences definitely

In my view, Rev. Sasaki was also extraordinary in his efforts to propagate Buddhism to a wider community as seen in his active participation in intra-Buddhist, inter-religious, and civic activities.

One such event I fondly recall was when he invited the San Francisco 49ers football team for a series of exhibition basketball games at the Mountain View temple gymnasium.

Besides promoting such games, Sensei also invited other Shin Buddhist ministers to gather at his temple for basketball games. (See a photo of us when we had more hair!)

As I write this, an image pops up in my mind of Sensei happily "prancing" back to play defense after making a great shot of his own.

In our most recent encounters, he called me, "a global Shinshu salesman!" Well, "salesman" was not the word I would have preferred, but I knew that coming from Sensei, it was a compliment.

In reflecting on his comment, I now realize even more that Sensei's outward and global perspectives had contributed to my own desire to reach out broadly and internationally. It is such a perspective that has encouraged me to have my first book on Shinshu, "Ocean: An Introduction to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in America," to be translated into Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and now Chinese.

### Scrubbing Towel

The above are some of the ways that Rev. Sasaki impacted my life, but I wish to close with one light-hearted episode. Some 25 years ago, Sensei was talking about how much he enjoyed taking a bath, especially when he used the long, coarse nylon towel from Japan to scrub his back. As he described how he scrubbed his back holding the two ends of the towel, he uttered, "Oh man, it feels soooo ... good!" It left such an impression on me that even today, every time I scrub my back, I see the image of Sensei scrubbing his back!

I realize that for Mrs. Helen Sasaki and the entire Sasaki family, the loss will be felt deeply for some time to come. However, I am sure that they are pleased that Sensei was able to accomplish so much and that he enjoyed life, sports, and the Dharma to the fullest.

He lived to the age of 93 (three years longer than Shinran Shonin), having nurtured a huge loving family, influenced so many people, and shared the Dharma within and beyond the Shin Buddhist community.

It's true that Sensei is no longer with us "physically," and I, too, will miss him. However, his memories will continue to be present in our lives. For me, Sensei will be with me whenever I scrub my back when taking a bath! Sensei will be with me encouraging me whenever I share the Dharma with the global audience! And Sensei will be with me when I recite the Nembutsu!

Thank you, Sensei! Namu Amida Butsu ...



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## AI Dharma Talk

Continued from Page 1

message. ChatGPT, developed by San Francisco-based OpenAI and launched on Nov. 30, 2022, enables users to refine a conversation to a desired length, format, style, detail, and language.

BCA Vice President John Arima, a Minister's Assistant at Mountain View, worked with MVBT Resident Minister Rev. Yushi Mukojima on the AI Dharma talk on June 1.

The AI Dharma talk began with a passage from Shinran Shonin's "Kyogyoshinsho":

*"Entrusting oneself to Amida Buddha is the most important act of the Pure Land Path, and the most difficult to realize. It is through the power of Amida Buddha's Primal Vow that we are able to attain liberation from suffering and attain birth in the Pure Land."*

Excerpts from the Dharma talk follow:

"Today, I would like to speak about the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha, which is a central teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

"The Primal Vow is the vow that Amida Buddha made in the remote past to save all sentient beings from suffering by leading them to his Pure Land. This vow expresses Amida Buddha's infinite compassion and his desire to help all beings, regardless of their background or abilities.

"The Primal Vow is based on the understanding that human beings are limited in their ability to attain enlightenment on their own. We are all subject to the cycle of birth, old age, sickness, and death, and we often struggle with our desires and attachments. The Primal Vow is a way of overcoming these limitations by relying on the power of Amida Buddha's vow.

"In Jodo Shinshu, the act of entrusting oneself to Amida Buddha's Primal Vow is known as 'shinjin.' Shinjin is the most important practice for Jodo Shinshu followers because it is the means by which we receive the benefits of Amida Buddha's vow.

"Shinjin is not something that we can achieve through our own efforts or merits. It is a gift from Amida Buddha, which

we receive when we sincerely entrust ourselves to his vow. When we entrust ourselves to Amida Buddha, we let go of our own efforts and place our trust in his infinite compassion.

"The Primal Vow is freely available to all beings, regardless of their background or abilities. It is not limited by time, space, or individual differences. All we need to do is entrust ourselves to Amida Buddha with a sincere and open heart.

"In Jodo Shinshu, we do not emphasize elaborate rituals or strict moral codes. Instead, we emphasize the importance of entrusting ourselves to Amida Buddha's vow with a pure heart. We try to live a compassionate and ethical life, not to earn merit, but as a way of expressing our gratitude to Amida Buddha for his infinite compassion.

"In conclusion, the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha is a powerful expression of his infinite compassion and his desire to help all beings achieve enlightenment. It is a central teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and serves as a source of comfort and hope for its follow-

*"What I found interesting about seeing how the ChatGPT AI would write a Dharma talk was that it was able to hit all the 'textbook' points, but it was not able to convey the concept of entrusting without turning the focus back towards ourselves."*

— BCA Vice President John Arima, a Minister's Assistant at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple

ers. By entrusting ourselves to Amida Buddha's vow, we can overcome our limitations and attain liberation from suffering. May we all entrust ourselves to Amida Buddha with a sincere and open heart. Thank you."

### 'Pretty Good Talk'

Arima said: "That was a pretty good Dharma talk. It fulfilled the basic format and requirements that Minister's Assistants are taught to do for a Dharma talk."

He said those requirements included:

- Opening with a quote meaningful to the subject of the talk.
- A lesson about the Primal Vow, shinjin, Other Power/Self Power, or the Pure Land.
- The teachings of Shinran Shonin and the seven masters

If we didn't, we might try to multitask or divide our attention, creating an experience that might not be as fulfilling. If we are honest about our efforts in this life and understand the true depth of Amida's Vow for us all, we can see the impact of the Nembutsu on our lives.

How would you create a true qualitative Nembut-

the process."

After his initial conversation with AI, Arima said he asked the AI more questions, feeding it prompts to narrow down the information that it should be searching for and processing to create the Dharma talk."

He said it took only a few minutes for ChatGPT to write the Dharma talk, and said he was "very surprised by the result. I thought it would take a lot longer and a lot more prompts to get a decent Dharma talk from the AI."

Arima wondered if AI-generated Dharma talks would replace talks by ministers.

"To look for an answer to this, I went back to the AI and asked, 'How does one attain shinjin?' As you can see, a lot of

su sharing moment with others? It is not just saying the words, but would entail knowing the Buddha's constant support and wish for us all, and then enacting the pure act of putting all of our hands together and reciting Namu Amida Butsu as one voice hearing the Buddha's call.

Think of the Buddha's

what is in the answer is the same points that were covered in the AI's Dharma talk. However, toward the end of the answer to my question, ChatGPT talks about 'practice.'"

### AI's Limitations

He said the AI began mentioning practicing various forms of mindfulness and listing things such as Nembutsu recitation, listening to the Dharma, and reflecting on the

questions; because it was made by people to be 'intelligent' in the egocentric way we define 'intelligent,'" he continued. "To truly and completely entrust in Amida's Primal Vow means that you must release your attachment to self-power and trust the Other Power of Amida's Primal Vow.

"Helping evil-minded people like me to accept the unexplainable and inconceivable is something that ministers and other Dharma teachers do that AI may not be able to do," Arima said. "If AI is built by humans to 'think' like humans, then AI will have the same arrogance to have to find the answer to every question — just like Skynet in the Terminator movies!

"What I found interesting about seeing how the ChatGPT AI would write a Dharma talk was that it was able to hit all the 'textbook' points, but it was not able to convey the concept of entrusting without turning the focus back towards ourselves," Arima said.

"The more you reflect on what ChatGPT says, the more it seems to say that you need to use your self-power to get the benefit of Other Power," he said.

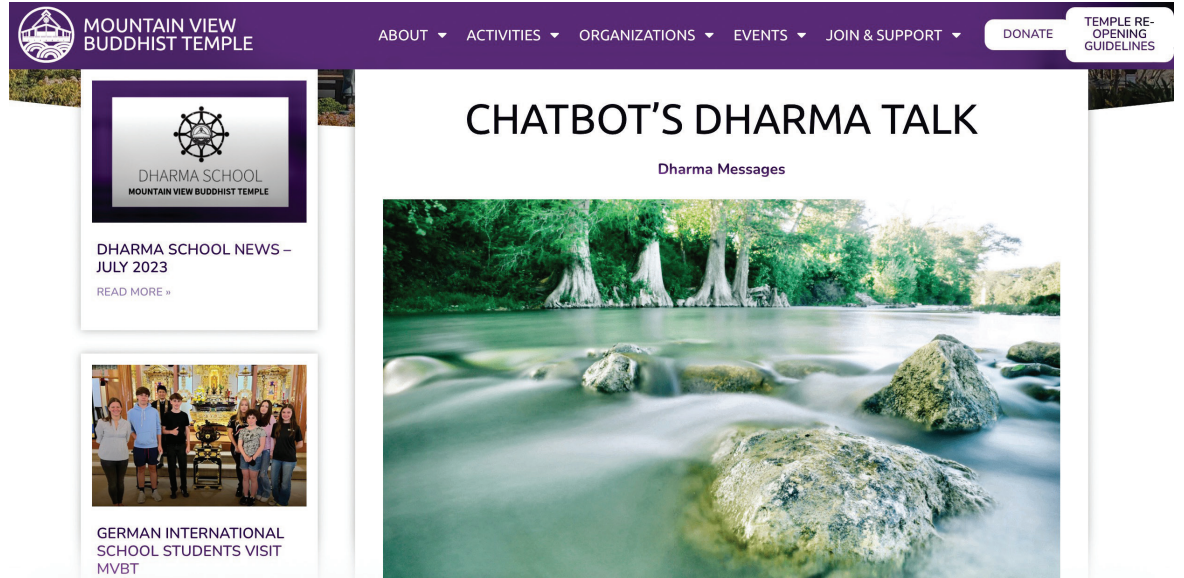
Rev. Mukojima also assessed the AI Dharma talk and concluded:

"This is not what is meant by shinjin because if we can understand the unexplainable, then Amida Buddha is no longer the Buddha of immeasurable life and light. Seeing the paradox of what the AI said helps us see and understand our own limitations."

each moment of their lives.

As the final thought, it is important to take a breath, to reflect, and with the intent to change your life just try to share a moment with someone whether in person or in your heart by putting your hands together and saying the seven syllables of Namu Amida Butsu.

Namu Amida Butsu



This is the Mountain View Buddhist Temple's website about the artificial intelligence (AI) generated Dharma talk on June 1. (Courtesy of Jon Kawamoto)

## Rev. Quon

Continued from Page 2

and recognizing that we are perfectly imperfect with the aspiration for something that has already been given to us. By knowing our limitations, we can commit fully to the process of Amida's Wisdom and Compassion.

If we didn't, we might try to multitask or divide our attention, creating an experience that might not be as fulfilling. If we are honest about our efforts in this life and understand the true depth of Amida's Vow for us all, we can see the impact of the Nembutsu on our lives.

How would you create a true qualitative Nembut-

wish for all of us to attain ultimate bliss. This is happiness and joy that comes from deep within that is not attained through any type of emotional or material source.

Just find the joy of being alive in this instant. Share this joy with others with the intent to turn them to a life of Nembutsu, which will help them to navigate and manage

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# 法輪

2023年 8月号

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二〇二三年度教化標語  
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### あの記事をもう一度!

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## 総長メッセージ ゴルフと仏教

米国仏教団 総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

私の趣味はゴルフです。スコアで100を切るのに苦労していますが、それでもいつも楽しんでプレーしています。ラウンド中に何度か良いショットが打てたり、ロングパットが入ったりすることもありますが、スコアはともかくプレーすることが楽しいのです。また、親しい友人や初めて会う人と一緒にゴルフをして親交を深めることができるのも魅力のひとつです。

仏教は私たちの身の回りにあります。いつでも日常生活の中に教えを見つけることができるのです。仏教について学ばば学ばほど、日常生活や身の回りで仏教を見たり、聞いたり、感じたりすることができるようになります。

私はゴルフをしているとき、仏教の教えを思い出したり、味わったりすることがよくあります。自分の自己中心性を気づかされたり、他力の教えを学んだりすることが多いです。ゴルフは肉体的だけでなく精神面もプレーに大きく影響するスポーツです。ゴルフをしていると、常に自分のエゴと向き合うことになり、素晴らしいショットを打ちたいと思うと、たいてい失敗してしまいます。反対に、素晴らしいショットを打とうというようなエゴイスティックな考えをなくし、ただリラックスして楽にスイングすると良い結果になることが多いです。

そして、ゴルフは、今に集中しなければなりません。さつき打ったひどいショットのことで頭がいっぱいだ、次もまたひどいショットを打ってしまいます。前回のひどいショットを頭から消し去り、今日の前にあるボール

を打つことに集中しなければなりません。先のことを考えすぎて、「いいラウンドが続いている!最後の2ホールをうまく打てば、今までで一番良いスコアが出るだろう」と思っていると、たいてい次のホールで8打や9打も打ってしまうのです。

また、最初の打目のティーショットでボールを遠くに飛ばそうとすると、たいていミスしてしまいます。リラックスして自分のスイングを信じて打てば、ボールは遠くまで飛んでくれますが、これは他力のことを教えてくれているように思います。真宗では「自力」、つまり「自己中心の力」を出すと、教えを深く理解することの邪魔になってしまふので、自力の心や力はからいを捨てるように勧めます。すると、「私」の世界ではなく、「他」の世界である仏法の世界がわかるようになっていきます。

ゴルフの不可解な矛盾点も仏教の教えに似ています。例えば、ボールを右に曲げなければ左を狙ってボールを打ち、左に曲げなければ、右を狙わなければならないのです。アイアンのクラブでボール打つときは、クラブを下に打ちつけるようにすると、ボールが打ち上がり、また、他のスポーツでは、より高いスコアを出すほうがよいのですが、ゴルフは違います。スコアは低ければ低いほど良いのです。これらのことは、仏教では謙虚になることは自分の傲慢さに気づくことであるなど、多くの矛盾的な表現があることに似ています。

さらに、ゴルフは誠実さが求められるスポーツです。ゴルフには審判がいません。バスケットボールやサッカーのように、ルールを破っても審判が見ていなければ罰せられないというのではないのです。ゴルフでは、ボールを池に入れたり、アウトオブバウンズになったりした場合など、自分でペナルティを課さなければなりません。この点は、自分が作り出したカルマを受け入れなければならぬ、ということを感じさせられるように思います。良いこと、悪いこと、中立的なこと、すべての行動を受け入れて生きていかなければならないのです。そして、ゴルフでは悪いプレーをした時に自分を卑下してはいけなく、良いプレーをした時に尊大になつて

はいけません。仏教は、人生には浮き沈みがある、と言いつても、物事が思い通りに進まなかったり、悲劇や不幸に直面したりしても、人生は決して絶望的なものではない、ということをお教えています。成功した時でも大きな顔はしません。なぜなら成功は、振り返ってみれば常に多くの人のおかげで、それは「私たちだけの力」ではない、ということに気づくからなのです。

私はこれからも、たとえ下手でもゴルフを楽しみ、ゴルフという挑戦的で楽しく、しばしば挫折を味わうゲームの中で仏教の教えを味わっていきたいと思います。

## 親鸞聖人御誕生850年 立教開宗800年慶讃法要 米国などから780人参拝

親鸞聖人  
御誕生850年・立教開宗800年慶讃法要の第4期中の5月10日北米やハワイ、カナダ、南米の海外開教区、台湾開教地などから780人のメンバー(門信徒)や開教使らが、午前と午後の法要に分かれて団体参拝し、50年に一度のご勝縁に遇えたことを喜んで



800th/850th Joint Celebration at Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto

法要は、午前は英語とポルトガル語、午後は英語と中国語の同時通訳が行われ、参拝者はイヤホンで通訳を聞き、モニターを見ながら厳粛な法要の雰囲気を感じ深く味わった。カルガリー仏教会(カナダ開教区)メンバーのジャッキー・ヘンダーソンさんは「初めての本山にとても感動した。歴史ある御影堂にいろんな国から同じ浄土真宗を信仰する人が集い、一緒におつとめする光景に圧倒された」、レジストロ本願寺教会(南米)メンバーのアイコ・ヤギユウさんは「ブラジルから仲間と一緒に参拝できたことがとてもうれしい。スタッフの皆さんが笑顔で迎えてくださり、温かい気持ちになれた」と語った。また、カナダ開教区の僧侶2人が法要に出勤した。

法要後に阿弥陀堂で行われた帰敬式には、午前と午後合わせて61人が受式。受式者を代表して法名を受けとつたアラメダ仏教会(北米)メンバーのブリアナ・ホーネグさんは「初めて本山に参拝し、母と一緒に帰敬式を受けることができて本当にうれしい。法名をいただいたことは、これからの私の大きな支えになる。大切にしたい」、ハワイ別院(ハワイ)メンバーのデービット・アチエソンさんは「10年前にも家族3人で本山参拝し、今回が2回目のご本山。二度と巡りあえない節目の法要に参拝できた上に、帰敬式を受けるご縁にも恵まれた。浄土真宗の教えを今に伝えてくださった先人の方々のご苦勞を再確認することができ、感謝しかない。新型コロナウイルスの時は、別院のサンデーサービス(日曜礼拝)が対面できなくなり、オンライン配信となり、そのお手伝いをさせていただいた。これからも別院を支えていきたい」と喜んだ。

4開教区の参拝者の多くは、翌11日から開かれた第17回世界仏教婦人会大会に参加した。また、各団体それぞれに京都や関東、北陸、九州などのご旧跡寺院を巡った。

本願寺新報、2023年6月10日号、1面より

## ダイヤルザダルマで日本語法話

電話でいつでも法話を聞くことができる「ダイヤルザダルマ」が好評を得ている。(800) 817-7918に電話すると、原田総長の声で音声ガイドが始まる。英語の法話を聞きたい人は1を、日本語は2、スペイン語は3を押すと、それぞれの言語で約5分間の法話を聴聞できる。英語は原田総長のメッセージ、日本語は日本語スピーカーの開教使によるメッセージ、スペイン語は英語のメッセージをスペイン語に訳したものになっている。法話は毎週水曜日午後1時に更新される予定。