

WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

VOLUME 39 • ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 2017

Three-in-One Summer Pacific Seminar has an International Flair

By Ellen Hamada Crane,
Minister's Assistant
Orange County Buddhist Church

With guest speakers coming from around the globe, the 2017 Summer Pacific Seminar was an unqualified success. The theme for the event, held August 18–20 at the Jodo Shinshu Center, was “Shin Buddhism: Current Challenges and Future Prospects” and explored Shin Buddhism’s influence as a worldwide presence.

Headlining the stellar array of presenters was renowned Australian author Rev. John Paraskevopoulos, whose book *Call of the Infinite: The Way of Shin Buddhism* is a Shin Buddhist classic. He was joined by three other international participants who included Thais Campos from the Honpa Hongwanji Temple of Brasilia, Brazil; David Quirke-Thornton from England, a member of the Shin Buddhist Fellowship United Kingdom; and Rev. Uma Lama Ghising (aka Rev. Ashma), the first female Shin Buddhist minister from the first Shin temple in Nepal, the Kathmandu-Hongwanji. In addition, Rev. Ai Hironaka of the Lahaina Hongwanji Mission, Maui, Hawaii gave the Dharma talk at the closing service.

To allow as many people as possible to partake in this exemplary gathering of presenters, three events were combined: The Summer Pacific Seminar, the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course August Workshop, and the Summer Minister’s Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. The Jodo Shinshu Center was overflowing and many had to find (sometimes creative) accommodations in the surrounding area. Needless to say, the event was well worth

whatever efforts were made to attend.

As the keynote speaker, Rev. John Paraskevopoulos was extraordinary! He touched on such themes as the importance of spiritual realization in the *shinjin* experience, rehabilitating the sacred in response to “secular” Buddhism, and the relationship of Shin Buddhism to other Buddhist schools and other religions. We were awestruck by the depth and breadth of his knowledge and the passion he exuded about Shinran and the Shin path. Many of us resolved to read or re-read all of his books and there was quite a run on the BCA Bookstore.

The three other presenters gave all of us a better understanding of Shin’s worldwide impact as it has moved out of Japan and into other places in the world, like Brazil, Europe, and Nepal. Thais, David, and Rev. Ashma came from the far reaches of the globe and yet they validated Shinran’s core teachings which resonate for their sanghas, because Shin speaks to the humanity that is common to us all. Shin adapts to new environments while the fundamental truths it speaks to remain true. Some of Shin’s adaptations were truly surprising, like the August Festival in Brasilia, where Obon morphed into an every-weekend, month-long celebration featuring 3,000 to 5,000 line dancers!

The panel discussions were lively explorations on questions of gender equality in the Buddhist Churches of America, the role of meditation in Shin, and maintaining Shin’s core teachings without diluting its message, among many others. Friendships were renewed and new ones formed. I was reunited with members from my 2014 Tokudo class:



The theme of this year’s Summer Pacific Seminar was “Shin Buddhism: Current Challenges and Future Prospects.” Co-sponsored by the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Center for Buddhist Education (CBE), it featured a panel of international speakers. Left to right: Rev. Kodo Umezu, IBS President and BCA Bishop; Rev. John Paraskevopoulos (Australia); Thais Campos (Brazil); David Quirke-Thornton (UK); and Rev. Uma Lama Ghising (aka Rev. Ashma, Nepal). Below: The Pacific Seminar opened with a book talk by Rev. Paraskevopoulos (far left), keynote speaker and author, who was introduced by BCA Bookstore Manager, Gayle Noguchi. Photos by Tim Shimizu.

Carmela Hirano, Cheryl Ikemiya, Laverne Imori, Irene Goto, and Tadao Koyama. Participants came from as far away as New York and Hawaii,

and there were 70 people on Saturday! We enjoyed lovely meals prepared by Judy Kono and her staff of hard working volunteers and there was a

lively energy at all the meals as participants shared ideas, stories, and laughed. It was a perfect weekend filled with dharma and dharma friendship.



2017 BCA Ministers’ Summer Retreat

The 2017 Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Minister’s Summer Retreat was held on August 15-17 in Reno, Nevada, hosted and organized by the Northern California Ministers Association.

This year’s guest lecturer was Professor Koitsu Yokoyama, a respected Buddhist studies scholar, who addressed the Buddhist philosophy of “Consciousness Only” (*vijnaptimatra*). Prof. Yokoyama earned his doctorate in Indian Philosophy from Tokyo University. He is currently an Honorary Professor at Rikkyo University in Tokyo and Vice Chancellor of Shogen

Junior College in Gifu.

Besides Prof. Yokoyama’s intriguing lectures, the three-day seminar included a BCA Ministers Association meeting, a session on Retirement Planning, and a service with the BCA’s Reno *Howakai** which meets at the Reno Buddhist Center (a non-denominational Buddhist temple founded in 1989 and affiliated with the Higashi Honganji in Tokyo).

**Howakai*: lit. “Dharma study group” but the term is often used to designate BCA’s temple branch groups.



More Features, More Potential Problems

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

A few months ago, I took my wife's car in for its first maintenance service visit since we bought it a year ago. Cars today don't require frequent service. I spoke with a service representative.

Service Rep: Is everything okay?

Rev. Umezu: No, something is wrong with the fog lamps. Sometimes only one side comes on.

SR: That's one of the new features of this car. When you steer to the right, the right light turns on and when you steer to the left, the left light turns on.

RU: Oh, I see. How nice.

SR: Today's cars have many new features. But you know, the more features, the more potential problems.

I was surprised to hear such a profound statement from him. And it is so true. "The more features, the more potential problems." I was reminded of the descriptions of human life in the *Larger Sutra*. They show us that people from thousands of years ago had the same issues and problems that we have today.

"People of the world, being weak in virtue, engage



Kieshiki at Berkeley Buddhist Temple: On September 17, 2017, Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop, conducted the Kieshiki Affirmation Ceremony at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple as part of the O-Higan Service. Rev. Candice Shibata (far left), Resident Minister, assisted. Seven Sangha members received their Buddhist names. Photo by Edythe Vassall.

in strife over matters that are not urgent. In the midst of abject wickedness and extreme afflictions they painstakingly toil for their living. Whether noble or corrupt, rich or poor, young or old, male or female, all people worry about wealth and property. In this there is no difference between rich and poor; both have their anxieties.

"For example, if they own fields they are concerned about them. If they have houses they

worry about them. They are also anxious about their possessions.

"Sudden misfortune may befall them: all their possessions may be destroyed by fire, swept away by floods, plundered by robbers, or seized by adversaries or creditors.

"When their lives end in such agonizing conditions, they must leave everyone and everything behind. Even nobles and wealthy people have these

worries.

"The poor and the underprivileged are constantly destitute. If, for example, they have no fields, they are unhappy and want them. If they have no houses, they are unhappy and want them."

(Excerpts from *The Larger Sutra* pp. 47 and 48)

As you can see, if we possess many things, we worry that we might lose them. If we do not have anything, we wish we had things. We cannot get away from worries and anxieties. The simple comment that the service rep made is really true.

Some people think that Buddhism is too negative about life. It may appear to be negative, but in fact, it helps us deal with reality. Buddhism is a teaching of awareness and clarity. It helps us to be ready for things that inevitably happen in the course of life. There is no life without death. There is no meeting without parting. There is no beginning without ending.

We always want just the good without the bad, but the two are actually inseparable. Once we come to understand that life is such, we can live with a positive attitude and with joy and humility.

Namo Amida Butsu



By Rev. Harry Gyokyo Bridge, Buddhist Church of Oakland

Lately I've been thinking about values. When I started studying to be a minister I would sometimes hear how it could be confusing to figure out which values in the temple were Buddhist and which were Japanese. Of course, it isn't always that simple, since Buddhist values are deeply embedded in Japanese society.

However, recently I am realizing that now it appears that there is just as much, if not more, confusion between Buddhist values and what we might call American values.

Part of the problem is that values seem so natural that we often don't even notice them. We just assume that this is the way things are. But I would argue that one Buddhist value is precisely *not* to take anything for granted, including the values that we hold. It's not that we need to get rid of our values, but as Buddhists it is important to be aware of our values, Buddhist or otherwise.

One value which can be found in both Buddhism and America is freedom. This year one of Shinran Shonin's state-

ments reported in the *Tannisho* keeps coming to mind. In a discussion of compassion in different types of Buddhism, he recognizes that one type of compassion is "to pity, commiserate with, and care for beings.

It is extremely difficult, however, to accomplish the saving of others just as one wishes." In other words, although we may try to help others, there are many things beyond our control, so our urge to help may not go the way we want.

Another type of compassion is the compassion of a Buddha, someone who has awakened to perfect wisdom and compassion. With this kind of compassion, one can "freely

benefit beings as one wishes." This is the perfect freedom of Buddhism – it isn't freedom to do what you want, it is freedom to help others without the impediments of ego and the Three Poisons.

Even if this vision of freedom seems fantastic, it is the emphasis on helping others that is important. Wisdom and Compassion are the ultimate values of Buddhism. Even if we can't perfect them in this life, they give us an ideal to aim for and to keep in mind when we examine the secular values we also hold.

Especially now, since the Three Poisons of Ignorance, Hatred, and Greed seem to be becoming mainstream American values.

Buddhist Values?

West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple



West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple
2003 Corinth Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90025
Tel: (310) 477-7274
E-mail: wlabtooffice2003@gmail.com
www.westlosangelesbuddhisttemple.org

In 1926, the Sawtelle Howakai (Fellowship) was established as a branch of the Los Angeles Temple (today's Los Angeles Betsuin). In 1930, property at 2003 Corinth Avenue was purchased, and a house on the property served as the temple. The West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple became independent on June 1, 1950.

A new temple was completed in 1955 with the altar dedication conducted in 1957. The first major renovation of the combined *onaijin* (altar), stage, and social hall room was spearheaded by our former minister, Rev. Harold Oda, in 1996. In October 2016, all of the items in the *onaijin* were fully restored for the first time.

The *onaijin* is very spacious with full *wakidan* (side altars) and *yoma* (rear area). It is fully lit and can be viewed in its entirety from the *gejin* (outer seating area). The *onaijin* floor and the height of the pews are both 18 inches, which makes it very pleasing to the eye. Rev. Oda had the pews cut and lowered about one inch to accommodate elder members so they could put their feet firmly on the floor and sit comfortably.



Wheel
of Dharma

(USPS 017-700)

Official Publication of the
Buddhist Churches of America

BCA National Headquarters
1710 Octavia Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Tel: (415) 776-5600
Fax: (415) 771-6293
Info@bcahq.org

www.BuddhistChurchesOfAmerica.org

Email: WODeditor@bcahq.org

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.

Change of address and subscription cancellations:

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.

WHEEL OF DHARMA POLICY

HARDCOPY PUBLICATION LICENSE:

Authors who submit articles for publication in the Wheel of Dharma ("WOD") thereby grant WOD a royalty-free non-exclusive paid up license, worldwide, in perpetuity and in all media (the "License") to use, edit, and republish the article(s) and to grant sublicenses to any third party to do so on the same terms. WOD grants third parties an identical License to republish its articles so long as the article(s) is republished in its entirety, without edit, providing credit to the WOD and the Buddhist Churches of America.

ONLINE PUBLICATION LICENSE:

Authors who submit articles for publication in the Wheel of Dharma online ("WOD") thereby grant WOD a royalty-free non-exclusive paid up license, worldwide, in perpetuity and in all media (the "License") to use, edit, and republish the article(s) and to grant sublicenses to any third party to do so on the same terms. WOD grants third parties an identical License to republish only the first three paragraphs of any article, without edit, providing credit to the WOD and the Buddhist Churches of America, including a hyperlink to the article in WOD.

Editor: Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop

Editor, Japanese Section:

Rev. Ryuta Furumoto

Managing Editor: Brian

Kensho Nagata

Section Editors: Yumi Hatta,

Michael Endo

Copy Editor: Edythe Vassall

Print Production: Jeffrey Kimoto



Like the Buddhist
Churches of America



Find us on:
facebook®



President's Message: What Can I Do?

By Ken Tanimoto, BCA President

From the time of my last article, many unforeseen worldwide disasters have happened. The devastation that occurred from hurricanes in Texas and Florida and the 8.1 magnitude earthquake and hurricane in Mexico will forever be in my heart and memory.

These disasters are life-changing. Many who were affected by these tragedies will not come out intact. Their lives have been shattered: their loved ones are gone; their physical injuries may never heal; their lost livelihoods might not be recovered; their personal belongings are now only memories. For those who have not been affected by these tragedies, our first reaction may be to ask, "What can I do? How can I help?"

There are many institutions and service organizations that one can donate money, food, or clothing to. Whatever one chooses to do, you are giving hope and dignity to those in desperate need.

Our Jodo Shinshu founder, Shinran Shonin, experienced similar tragic situations during his life. In Japan during Shinran's time, people suffered from earthquakes, famine, fires, and fighting amongst rival clans and factions. In the face of widespread war and natural disasters, he pondered how he could help. And what he offered to *everyone* was the understanding of Amida's Vow of kindness and compassion so that *everyone* could learn and share the *Nembutsu*.

In a few weeks, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Social Welfare Committee letter will be sent to you explaining the need to help those less fortunate than us. The Social Welfare Committee normally offers grants to community programs and/or charities that need assistance for specific needs.

This year's letter will be a little different. It will state that funds collected from our BCA members will be designated to a disaster relief fund especially for stricken areas in Texas, Mexico, and

Florida. Following some discussions, it was decided that the funds will be divided among local direct relief organizations that are recommended by the Japanese American Citizens' League (JACL).

You might have already given a donation of some kind to help these devastated areas. Thank you for your help. But please keep in mind that the needs of those affected will continue for a long time, as the actual rebuilding of lives is a long-term process. You can give again and again because the needs will be ongoing.

The immediate needs are tangible items that will feed, clothe, and give shelter. The long lasting intangible gift, like Shinran's gift, is a gift of hope and joy for everyone. I hope that we as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists never stop giving of ourselves for the sake of others. Anyone can donate at any time to worthwhile causes using the BCA website as their mechanism for giving.

My late cousin Thomas Kumano, a dedicated Sanger/Fresno Temple mem-



Ken Tanimoto helping prepare food to feed the homeless in Chicago at the 2017 Eastern Buddhist League Conference on Labor Day weekend. Photo by Alvin Hayashi.

ber, wanted to impress upon everyone the importance of giving through the Nembutsu. He said, "People doing good deeds will seed the earth with faith, happiness...love...for a life worth giving!"



Delivery Service

By Rev. Koho Takata,
Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

I was surprised about a year ago when I read a Japanese article on "Obousanbin." "Obousan" means a Buddhist minister and "bin" means delivery service. Amazon Japan started marketing the "Obousanbin" or minister delivery service for those who do not have their own temple. For a price, an obousan or Buddhist minister will come to your home, gravesite, or mortuary to conduct a memorial or funeral service.

The basic cost of "obousanbin" for a memorial service is 35,000 yen (about \$350) and a funeral service costs 55,000 yen (about \$550). The service is pre-paid online by credit card. There are various options, such as receiving a Buddhist name or having two services in one day at different locations (for example, a gravesite service following a memorial service at home). Of course, there are charges for the additional services.

The company now has around 1,000 ministers from seven major Buddhist schools throughout Japan, from Hokkaido to Okinawa. The company is asking ordained ministers to sign up and join the business. According to the news, this minister delivery service is becoming popular with both ministers and lay people.

After Gautama Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became Shakyamuni Buddha, he shared the Dharma with hundreds of thousands of people for 45 years. Many of his followers abandoned all of their belongings to become monks and nuns. Many lay people also took refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as their spiritual foundation. The monks and nuns provided the Dharma and the lay people supported the monastics with their utmost respect and reverence, providing food, clothing, and shelter as their *dana* (charity) offerings. The practice of *dana* is called "Kisha." "Ki" means joyfulness or gladness and "sha" means to discard or become

free from attachment. Our offertory system originated from this practice.

Today whenever we gather to listen to the Buddha-Dharma at our temples, we contribute our *dana* to the temple and minister as an expression of gratitude and appreciation for receiving the Buddha-Dharma.

I recall a *Nisei** woman who was interviewed by a Harvard University Research Group about the establishment of the Arizona Buddhist Temple. She stated, "I still remember my father saying, 'even if you must miss a meal, I have to pay my dues to the temple.'" This thought has stuck with me. I was really moved by his deep appreciation for the Buddha-Dharma and his firm commitment to and ownership of his temple.

The spirit of *dana* continues to influence our lives and makes it possible for us to hear the Buddha-Dharma in our temples.

We are truly grateful that Amida Buddha is always delivering his service about Infinite Wisdom and Compassion. It is transmitted to all beings at all times and in all places without any exceptions. Let us all express our deep appreciation and gratitude to Amida Buddha for his delivery service of the Buddha-Dharma and live a Nembutsu life centered around the Buddha-Dharma throughout our daily lives.

Shakyamuni Buddha and Amida Buddha are our father and our mother,

*Full of love and compassion for us;
Guiding us through various skillful means,*

*They bring us to awaken the supreme shinjin.***

(Collected Works of Shinran, p.380, #74)

* *nisei*: children of immigrants from Japan

***shinjin*: deep entrusting in Amida Buddha's Vow to save all beings from suffering.

Seattle Betsuin Dento Hokoku Tour

In April 2017, 21 members of the Seattle Betsuin, Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple, and Los Angeles Betsuin embarked on a religious journey of a lifetime under the guidance of Rev. Sala Sekiya. The trip was in conjunction with the *Dento Hokoku Hoyo* (services observing the accession of our new religious leader) held at the Nishi Hongwanji mother temple.

Upon arriving in Kyoto, our spiritual journey began with attendance at the Hongwanji's *Oasaji* (6 a.m.) service, then meeting with our new Gomonsu Kojun Ohtani, followed by a visitation to Shinran Shonin's burial site, the Otani Hombyo.

We traveled on to the town of Ohara to visit sev-



Members of the Seattle Betsuin tour group at the Kagoshima Betsuin. Photo by Yukio Morikubo.

eral important places connected to the beginnings of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. We also visited Hiroshima, Kumamoto, Hitoyoshi, Kagoshima, and ended our tour in Ibusuki. For many of us, encountering historical landmarks and hearing stories of the *Kakure Nembutsu* (Underground Nembutsu) period in our

history brought us to tears. (See the Berkeley Buddhist Temple article on page 4.)

We left Japan grateful for the warm hospitality we received at the numerous temples we visited. Thanks to all who assisted in making our pilgrimage a wonderful bonding experience that we will long remember and cherish.

Let's Meet in Kyoto for HOONKO!

Escorted by Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

Join Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, for a unique opportunity to express your gratitude and participate in *Hoonko*, Shinran Shonin's Memorial Observance, at the Nishi Hongwanji (our mother temple in Kyoto), from January 14-17, 2018.

This "Hoonko in Kyoto" program is sponsored by the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE). It involves attending the *Hoonko* Service and listening to Dharma talks with translation by Bishop Umezu, and includes three hotel nights with breakfast, plus a special *Hoonko* commemorative vegetarian lunch within the historic Hongwanji Shoin Chambers.

After attending the *Hoonko* observance you are free to stay on your own or return



to the USA.

The "Hoonko in Kyoto" cost is \$600 per person, single occupancy. Airfare is not included. Sign up by December 1.

For further information, please contact: cbe@bcabq.org



Save the Date: February 21-25, 2018

BCA Ministers Association and National Council Meeting
Together in Gassho

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sacramento, CA

Registration Materials will be sent to temples in October



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

Berkeley Buddhist Temple Kakure Nembutsu Tour

The Berkeley Buddhist Temple's Japan Tour from March 23 to April 1, 2017 began in Kyushu, where they learned about the persecution of Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, and ended in Kyoto with the Dento Hokoku Hoyo service celebrating the inauguration of the new Monshu (Head Priest of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition). Sangha members and friends attended from Berkeley, Cleveland, Hawaii, Kansas, Oakland, Palo Alto, and San Jose.

The Kagoshima Prefecture was the heart of the anti-Nembutsu movement called "Kakure Nembutsu." Kakure means secret or hidden. With the emergence of Japan's feudal era (around the year 1185), there was a rise in the power and strength of Nembutsu followers throughout the country. Firmly believing in the core teaching that all beings are equal in the eyes of the Amida Buddha, many followers refused to subject themselves to the authority of provincial lords. Shinshu followers went as far as deposing the lord of one province and ruled it for more than 100 years. Afraid of the threat they posed, the lord of Satsuma (now Kagoshima) outlawed the Nembutsu practice in his province.

Sangha members gathered in caves to meet in secret and express their devotion, and to hide their obutsudan altars, Amida Buddha and Nembutsu scrolls, sutra books, and other religious articles. More than 120,000 Nembutsu followers were tortured and killed by the Satsuma government during the Kakure Nembutsu period. It is a very special, very sad part of Japan's history which most people know nothing about.

Kakure Nembutsu Moments

On a cool and rainy March day, deep in the Kagoshima mountainside, our group of pilgrims climbed up and down a muddy path and several hundred mossy steps up to a secret Nembutsu altar. We experienced the effort that Kakure Nembutsu followers made to worship, realizing how privileged we are to be able to drive to



our air-conditioned temples. The devotion of these followers resonates through the centuries so that the precious teachings of Shinran fall upon our ears today. On the journey up the mountain, we also experienced the beauty of early Spring with plum blossoms encouraging our efforts to climb to the altar. These first blossoms of Spring renew our spirits and remind us to never give up.

Faye and Dexter Mar, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin

Kagoshima is located in Japan's far south. For nearly 300 years, the ruling clan of that area saw Jodo Shinshu as a threat to its power and prohibited its practice. Many terrible and violent actions were taken against Jodo Shinshu practitioners, so followers of the religion had to meet in secret locations, such as caves. Some of these secret spots are preserved today, and we were able to visit several sites. As some of us were able to squeeze our bodies through tiny openings into hidden caverns, we could feel something akin to the frisson of fear that must have accompanied the practice of our faith when previous generations had to risk death to be followers of Jodo Shinshu teachings.

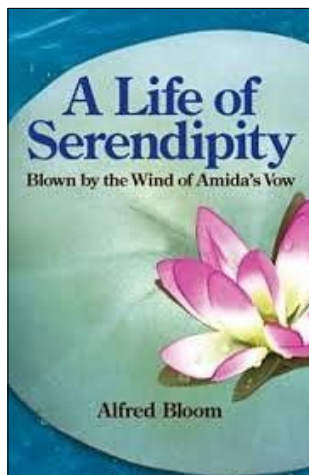
As we concluded our trip at the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha temple in the presence of the young Gomonshu, we had a new and deep appreciation for the sacrifices by those who have gone before us in order to keep the teachings alive.

Evelyn and Gary Glenn, Berkeley Buddhist Temple



Left: A hidden altar.
Top: Religious items on display in a museum.
Above: A cave entrance.

BCA Bookstore News By Gayle Noguchi



Now available: *A Life of Serendipity: Blown by the Wind of Amida's Vow* by Dr. Alfred Bloom. Paperback, \$17.95.

So many people have fond memories of the late Dr. Alfred Bloom and the impact that he had on their lives. However, there are still many more who never had the opportunity to meet this wonderful person and inspiring teacher. Fortunately, Dr. Bloom shares with us in *A Life of Serendipity: Blown by the Wind of Amida's Vow* the unfolding story of his life, of his personal and religious journey through his own recollections.

Beginning with his birth in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dr. Bloom goes on to discuss his time at Harvard University, postwar Japan, his first teaching position at the University of Oregon, his life in Hawaii during the 1970s and early '80s, his experiences with the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Buddhist Churches of America, and finally his retirement in Hawaii. At the end of each section Dr. Bloom acknowledges "people to remember": those who played instrumental roles during those particular periods in his life. In the spirit of *Ondokusan*, he also recognizes how blessed he has been throughout his life and that he could never adequately repay this great debt. Dr. Bloom concludes by sharing his reflections on the meaning of Shinran's teachings and Amida's Primal Vow.

Also available by Dr. Bloom: *Strategies for Modern Living: A Commentary with the Text of the Tannisho*. Paperback, \$10.00.

If you want to understand the essence of Shin Buddhism, the very succinct Japanese classic, *Tannisho: A Record in Lament of Divergences*, distills the voluminous teachings and writings down to its core.

Using clear and simple terms, Dr. Bloom translates this seminal text and he then provides a brief, yet deeply insightful examination of each section of the *Tannisho*, allowing its timeless truth to resonate with meaning for our lives today.

To purchase, go to buddhistchurchesofamerica.org and click on the BCA Bookstore link, or contact gnoguchi@bcabq.org or 510-809-1435. The BCA Bookstore is located in the Jodo Shinshu Center at 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704. Open Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Like us Facebook.



2017 BCA Educational Events

Programs subject to change.

Events at the Jodo Shinshu Center unless otherwise noted.

October 12-14 ~ Fall Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto (IBS) will lecture on chapters 15 & 16 of *Tannisho*, Dr. Natalie Quli (IBS) will lecture on Diversity and Intersectionality in the Buddhist Bay Area, and Rev. Sala Sekiya (Gardena) will teach chanting and liturgy.

October 28 ~ Southern District Seminar: "Jodo Shinshu Rituals in Daily Life" at the Los Angeles Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, 815 E. First St., LA. Guest Speaker: Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki, Rimban, Seattle Betsuin. In Japanese: 8:30 - 11:45 am and in English, 12:30 - 3:45 pm. Free. Register by October 14. Call (213) 680-9130 or email nishidharmacenter@gmail.com.

November 18 ~ "Rainbow of Infinite Light: LGBTQ in Shin Buddhism Seminar" will be held at the Seattle Buddhist Temple Betsuin from 10 am - 3 pm. Guest speakers are Marsha Aizumi and Aiden Aizumi (authors of *Two Spirits, One Heart: A*



Mother, Her Transgender Son, and their Journey to Love and Acceptance), Rev. Dr. Jeff Wilson (Professor of Religious Studies and East Asian Studies, Renison University College at the University of Waterloo), and Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara (Co-Director, Center for Buddhist Education). A panel discussion, called "Naturalness: On Becoming Our Authentic Selves" will feature local queer Buddhists and be moderated by Sensei Elaine Donlin of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco (BCSF). A portion of the seminar will be dedicated to small group discussions by participants on the subject of Buddhism and LGBTQ inclusion. \$40 general, \$20 student. Limited space available, register by November 8 at rainbowbuddhists.brownpapertickets.com. Ticket includes lunch, coffee, tea, and snacks. For more information: seattlebetsuin.com/index.php/rainbow

November 18 & 19 ~ Photo Exhibit: "The Buddha's Words and Scenery of India" from 9 am - 4 pm at the Los Angeles Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, 815 E. First St., LA. Special presentation on the Buddha-Dharma & India by Rev. Mas Kodani on 11/19 at 1 pm, followed by Kinnara Gagaku and Bugaku (traditional Buddhist music and dance). Free admission. Sponsored by BDK, LA Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, and Senshin Buddhist Temple. Visit nishihongwanji-la.org or call (213) 680-9130 for details.

December 7-9 ~ Winter Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. Dr. Mark Blum (UC Berkeley) will lecture on *Tannisho* chapters 17, 18, and epilogue. Rev. Daijaku Kinst (IBS) will lecture on Dogen, and Rev. Harry Bridge (Oakland) will teach chanting and liturgy.

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



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

MVBT Girl Scouts' Dream Trip: "To Japan, Our Roots!"



(Top, l to r:) Hanging Cranes at the Hiroshima Memorial Peace Park: Erin Hamasaki, Brianna Lee, Miyo Imai, Vicky Shinkawa, and Maddie Matsumoto. (Lower, l to r:) At Nishi Hongwanji with the Shiga Girl Scout Troop 44: Leslie Imai, Miyo Imai, Brianna Lee, Maddie Matsumoto, Erin Hamasaki, Vicky Shinkawa, and Tricia Uyeda. Photos by Leslie Imai.

Five members of the Mountain View Buddhist Temple's Girl Scout Troop #60736 made the trip of a lifetime and visited Japan this summer. Treasuring the roots of their heritage and *Nembutsu* faith, the girls diligently raised funds for the trip over the past four years and planned this journey on their own, making their motto, "To Japan, our roots!"

One of the highlights of their trip was to attend services at the Hongwanji Headquarters in Kyoto. Later, they helped to clean the temple's huge courtyard as an expression of their gratitude.

They visited the Hongwanji International Center where they met with Girl Scouts from the Choonji

temple in nearby Shiga Prefecture. Together, they created handicrafts as they formed treasured friendships. They saw their leader, Tricia Uyeda, receive her Buddhist name.

During this two-week, long-cherished dream trip, the girls also met fellow Girl Scouts in Hiroshima, hung 1000 Cranes at Hiroshima Peace Park made by the MVBT Sangha, Girl Scouts, family and friends, took part in boxing food at the Second Harvest Food Bank for welfare facilities in Tokyo. They toured Ryukoku University and learned about the exchange programs with the US. The girls stayed at a traditional *onsen* (hot spring resort) and had a *kaiseki* dinner in Hakone. They attended a Tokyo Giants Game and were able to explore Asakusa, Takeshita Street, Ginza, and Akihabara in Tokyo and much more.

Through the process, the girls said they learned about teamwork and how to apply it to other situations in life. They learned that people have different strengths and weaknesses, and that communication and planning are extremely important when working in a large group.



The trip has inspired them to continue to travel, experience, and learn more about different cultures around the world.

OUR JODO SHINSHU TRADITIONS

The Many Names of Shinran Shonin

Shinran Shonin is revered as the founder of Jodo Shinshu (Shin Buddhism). The word "Shonin" means a sacred person or a master. But Shinran was not his first, second, third, or even fourth name. How many names did Shinran Shonin have? And why so many?

Born on May 21, 1173, his first given name was **Matsuwaka-maru**. Due to the tragic loss of his parents, he was taken to the Shoren-in Temple at the age of nine and ordained as a Tendai monk. At that time, he received the Buddhist name, **Hannen**.

At the age of 29 he went to Kyoto to seek out Honen Shonin, the Pure Land Master who taught that Amida Buddha selected the recitation of the *Nembutsu*, *Namo Amida Butsu*, as the practice that leads to awakening. Accepted as Honen Shonin's disciple in 1201, Hannen was given a new Buddhist name, **Shakku**, referring to the Pure Land Masters *Doshaku* and *Genku* (Honen Shonin). He later took the name **Zenshin**, from Masters *Zendo* and *Genshin*.

In 1207, due to opposition from established Buddhist monks on Mt. Hiei and in Nara, an Imperial order was issued against Honen Shonin's group. Shakku, now 35 years old, was stripped of his position, given the secular name **Fujii Yoshizane**, and exiled to Echigo Province. There he changed his name to **Gutoku**, which means "ignorant, stubble-haired one." However, he used the opportunity of exile to spread the *Nembutsu* teaching. After five years he was pardoned, and became known as **Shinran** (from Masters *Tenjin*(shin)/*Vasubandhu* and *Donran*) **Shonin** by those who respected and followed him.

Shinran Shonin passed away in Kyoto on January 16, 1263 at the age of 90.



Parents, grandparents, Dharma School teachers: What animals are on your temple's altar? Feel free to read this article to your young ones and stimulate their interest. Ask your minister or minister's assistant to look with you on your *onajjin*.

"Amida's Zoo"

By Rimban Katsuya Kusunoki, Seattle Buddhist Temple Betsuin

My family had a lot of animals when I was a child. At one time, we had three dogs, ten chickens, cats, goldfish, carp (*koi*), squirrels, hamsters, and more. I remember our family also had a rabbit and a crow. It was like a small zoo. After my father woke up, the first thing he would do was to conduct morning service at the *hondo* (main hall of the temple). After that, he fed the animals and cleaned "Kusunoki's Zoo." Their feces, hair, and feathers were all over the yard. It was hard work to clean and wash them away every morning. Sometimes I helped him with the clean up. One good memory was that once in a while, our family was able to get some fresh eggs. I used to put the raw fresh egg onto hot rice and add a little bit of soy sauce. I mixed them and ate it. I really loved the dish "*tamago gohan*"! In my memory, every morning, my father would ring the bell, then chant a sutra in the *hondo* and the dogs and chickens would be yelling and calling to get breakfast. It was very lively each morning.

There are, in fact, many animal ornaments in the Buddha's altar (*onajjin*). Let me introduce you to the animal ornaments that I found in the Seattle Betsuin. There are a lion and two dragons on the incense burner that people use to offer incense (*oshoko*) at a service. There are two cranes and a turtle on the candle stand. There is also a dragon on the flower vase. There are birds on the tables in the altar area. I also found some elephants,



fish, and shrimp in the *onajjin*. I have heard that some temples' *onajjin* also have a tiger, a cat, an octopus, a squirrel, a heron, a turban shell, a frog, a monkey, and an ogre. I learned that the *onajjin* is the embodiment of the Amida Buddha's Pure Land. I thought that the Pure Land is quiet but it might be a lively realm!

According to the *Amida Sutra*, there are six kinds of birds in the Pure Land. Let me introduce them briefly.

White swans have elegant white bodies and are well known as a symbol of long life.

Peacocks have very beautiful long tail feathers and eat poisonous animals.

Parrots have a feather crown on their heads, a short tail, and a thick, curved bill. They are said to be able to speak the human language.

Sarikas are mythical birds resembling bush warblers. They also are able to speak the human language.

Kalavinka is another mythical bird that has a woman's face and sings in the sweetest voice.

Jivam-jivakas are known as the mythical "life and life" bird with one body and two heads. There is a famous Buddhist story of Jivam-jivakas.



In the Pure Land, these birds gather and sing together with their beautiful voices six times a day. Their voices are gracefully harmonized and create a beautiful melody. The beautiful melody is their recitation of Buddha's teaching. Whoever listens to this melody is mindful of the Three Treasures; Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Please carefully look at our temple's altar (*onajjin*) the next time and find these animals. Let me know if you find an animal which I did not introduce in this article.

Reprinted from Seattle Betsuin newsletter, Wheel of the Sangha, July 2017

Enjoy over 70 Dharma talks and lectures on the BCA Center for Buddhist Education Channel on



Hear from ministers, lay leaders, scholars, and special guest speakers recorded at programs presented by CBE and its educational partners. Choose from a wide variety of topics and presentations in English and Japanese.

Visit YouTube.com and search "BCA Center for Buddhist Education Channel" to view the many selections.

Contact CBE at cbe@bcahq.org or (510) 809-1460



2017 IASBS Conference Held in Tokyo



The 18th Biennial Conference of the International Association of Shin Buddhist Studies (IASBS) was held at Musashino University in Tokyo from June 30 to July 2, 2017.

Shin and Pure Land Buddhist scholars from more than fifteen institutions, research centers, and temples in Japan, the United States, South America, and

Europe convened under the theme of "Self-Benefit and Benefit of Others in Pure Land Buddhism."

The conference was honored by the presence and participation of His Eminence Zenmonshu Koshin Ohtani of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

Americans presenting papers included Anne Spencer from The College

of Idaho, Professor Mark Blum from the University of California, Berkeley, Jeff Schroeder from the University of Oregon, Hudaaya Kandahjaya from BDK America, and Shigeki Sugiyama from the Buddhist Temple of Alameda, who was recognized as the eldest conference participant.

Dr. Ken Tanaka officially stepped down as IASBS

President at the meeting. Dr. Mitsuya Dake, professor at Ryukoku University, was elected president.

"It was wonderful to be at Musashino University, to reconnect with other Shin Buddhist scholars, and to dive deep into the dharma," commented Dr. Scott Mitchell, Dean of Students and Faculty Affairs, Institute of Buddhist Studies.

BUTSU BUTSU...

By Brian Kensho Nagata, Managing Editor

After being blessed with 62 years of life on this Earth, I can tell that some of my body parts are reaching their obsolescent point. My hearing seems to be slowly going, as can be expected... (too much loud music when we were young...) but I'll be the first to admit that *I am not a very good listener* and I most certainly do not absorb the Dharma very well when listening to Dharma talks.

However, I am very grateful that the Buddha realizes my innumerable limitations and actively encourages my learning through various means.

Recently, while reading a Buddhist publication, I was led to a wonderful teaching by the Venerable Dharma teacher Pema Chodron:

"The truth you believe and cling to makes you unable to hear anything new..."

But how can this be? I know what I know, and what I know is *the real truth* as far as I am concerned... Most of the time, I try to do what is right and proper based on what I have learned and experienced... but is all this false and fleeting? How I wish I could hear the call of *Namo Amida Butsu... Nam Man Da...*

Thank You to 2017 IBS Donors

The Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) would like to express our deep appreciation to the Friends of IBS, who have responded to the 2017 appeal for continued support.

We have received a total of \$103,971.24 in gifts from January 1 to July 31 in the following categories: IBS Ministerial Scholarships; Chaplaincy/Research; Institutional Development; Accreditation; Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations Eshin-ni and Kakushin-ni Endowed Chair in Jodo Shinshu Studies; and additions to existing endowments.

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

ACCREDITATION

Mr. Hiroji Kariya

CHAPLAINCY/RESEARCH

Rev. Dr. Daijaku Kinst
Ms. Margie Sunahara
Rev. Ronald and Mrs. Kyoko Suzuki
Ms. Nancy T. Hirota - In memory of Akira "Ike" Hirota
Ms. Miyoko Kaneta - In honor of Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki

ESHIN-NI AND KAKUSHIN-NI ENDOWED CHAIR

Dr. Kyoto and Mrs. Jeanette Arakawa
Rev. William and Rev. Nobuko Briones
Ms. Charlene Grinolds
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Greer Nishikawa
Mr. John and Mrs. Lynne Ozawa
Mr. Koichi Sayano
Mr. Steven and Mrs. Kathleen Terusaki
Ms. Jean Toshima
Rev. Kodo and Mrs. Janet Umezu
Anonymous

Buddhist Churches of America
National Council
Coast District Buddhist Women's League
Northern California Buddhist Women's League
Northern California Buddhist Women's Association
Placer Buddhist Church Buddhist Women's Association
Stockton Buddhist Women's Association
Walnut Grove Buddhist Church
Buddhist Women's Association

ENDOWMENTS

Mr. Robert Oto
Ms. Grace N. Takahashi

FRIENDS OF IBS (FIBS)

Dr. Ben and Mrs. Kiyo Chikaraishi
Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Emilie Endo

Mr. Dennis M. and Mrs. Setsuko F. Furuike
Mr. William and Mrs. Norma Geenty
Rev. Gregory and Mrs. Kyoko Okura Gibbs
Mr. Miles and Mrs. Lorraine Lowe Hamada
Mr. James Pollard and Ms. Janis Hirohama
Ms. Rosie and Ms. Christine Kakiuchi
Ms. Ruby Kiyohara
Rev. Ronald and Mrs. Sayako Kobata
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kuramoto
Mrs. Ruby Kuritsubo
Rev. Dean and Mrs. Linda Koyama
Ms. Joyce Maniwa
Ms. Chiyoko Masumoto
Roy and Masako Matsuo
Mrs. Evelyn Motoyama
Mr. and Mrs. Ron Murata
Ms. Catherine F. Nagareda
Mrs. Mary Nakamura
Mr. Russell L. Nakano
Mr. David and Mrs. Lily Nakatani
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Greer Nishikawa
Ms. June Okubo
Mr. Herb and Mrs. Etsuko Osaki
Ms. Teruye Oshidari
Mr. Dick (Digger) and Mrs. Agnes Sasaki
Rev. LaVerne and Mrs. Helen Sasaki
Dr. Richard and Mrs. Kay Schellhase
Mr. and Mrs. Sei Shohara
Mr. Ronald and Mrs. Kyoko Suzuki
Ms. Sumiye Tanabe
Mr. Steve and Mrs. Reiko Tsuchida
Mr. and Mrs. James M. Tsuda
Patty Fujikawa and Carl Wilmsen
Mr. Roger and Mrs. Nancy Wong
Rev. Haruo and Mrs. Shigeko Yamaoka
Raymond and Caroline Yamasaki
Mr. and Mrs. Isamu Yoneyama
Rev. and Mrs. David Fujimoto - In honor of Khari Galdones
Ms. Shelley Hatakeyama - In memory of Rev. Junjo Tsumura & Rev. Ikuo Nishimura
Ms. Nancy T. Hirota - In memory of Akira "Ike" Hirota
Ms. Miyoko Kaneta - In honor

of Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki
Mrs. Aya Nagatomi - Windle and Mr. David Hoke Windle - In memory of Masatoshi Nagatomi
Mr. Greg, Mrs. Linda, and Miss Brittany Nakamura - In memory of Satoshi Hane
Mr. John and Mrs. Lynne Ozawa - In honor of Bill T. Nishimura
Ms. Mary, Elaine, and Ms. Phyllis Mie Nomi Sugimoto - In memory of Fred Shigeo Sugimoto
Ms. Grace K Yamakawa - In memory of Satoshi Hane
Ms. Sue Yamasaki - In memory of Sumiko Yamasaki
T.C. Yoneda - In memory of Mr. Tom Gabel & Girvani

San Jose Betsuin Adult Buddhist Association
West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple

GENERAL

Mrs. Akiyama Living Trust, Ms. Misako Akiyama, Trustee
Mrs. Darlene N.T. Bagshaw
Dr. Alfred and Dorothy Bloom
Rev. John and Mrs. KoKo Doami
Mr. Jeffery and Mrs. Namy Folick
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Fujikawa
Dr. Jack and Mrs. Grace Fujimoto
Ms. Denise Gervais
Mr. George and Mrs. Suzuka Hanada
Mr. John and Mrs. Tsuneko Hashiguchi
Mr. Hiroji Kariya
Mr. Hiroshi and Mrs. Sadako Kashiwagi
Mr. Kiyoshi and Mrs. Irene Emiko Katsumoto
Ms. Kathleen A. Kubo
Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki
Mr. Roy and Mrs. Masako Matsuo
Mr. Jeffery Matsuoka
The Mizutani Family
Mr. Osamu and Mrs. Helen Y. Mori
Mr. James Y. and Mrs. Alice K. Nagahiro
Mr. Russell L. Nakano

Mr. Mits Nakayama
Mrs. Linda K. Oda
Mrs. Joyce Oishi
Mrs. Yukiko and Mr. Eugene M. Otake
Ms. Keiko Otani
Mr. Joe and Mrs. Jill Ozaki
Mr. John and Mrs. Amy Peterson
Mr. Harold and Mrs. June Sano
Mr. Tad Shibata
Ms. Margo Spears
Mrs. Pearl T. Sugimoto
Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Muriel Sunada
Rev. Ronald and Mrs. Kyoko Suzuki
Ms. Patricia Takeda
Ms. Ikuko Takeshita
Rev. Diana L. Thompson
Mrs. Sakaye Tsuji
Ms. Emi Tsutsumi
Rev. Fumiaki and Rev. Patricia Kanaya Usuki
Ms. Opal Wakayama
Mr. Raymond and Mrs. Caroline Yamasaki
Mrs. Dorothy Yanagi
Mrs. Fusae Yoshida
Anonymous

Mrs. Victoria C. and Mr. James A. Brundage - In memory of Mamura Norio Sensei
Rev. Donald Castro - In memory of Rev. P.K. Eidmann and Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada
Ms. Kiyome Hirayama - In honor of Mr. Art Hirayama
Ms. Kiyome and Mr. Bruce Hirayama - In honor of Tsukasa Saneto
Ms. Joyce Iwasaki - In gratitude for the recovery
Mrs. Robbin Kawabata and Mr. Carl S. Gutekunst - In memory of Mrs. Yoshiye Kawabata
Ms. Miyoko Kaneta - In honor of Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki
Mr. Andy and Mrs. Lisa Mayeda - In memory of Mr. Masami Mayeda
Ms. Keiko Otani - In memory of Mr. Heishiro Otani
B.H. Terasaki - In memory of Marlene Terasaki
Mrs. Midori Yoshimura - In memory of James T. Yoshimura

Alameda Buddhist Women's Association
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
The Free Buddhist Health Ministry
West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple
Buddhist Women's Association

今月の法話

「臨終勤行」

ロサンゼルス別院開教使 高田興芳



Rev. Koho Takata

私がハワイ教団、カウアイ島のカピア本願寺に駐在させて頂いた頃、病院のチャプレン（病院専属の聖職者）として患者さんと接するご縁がありました。あまり寿命が長くない方々に拠り所となるみ教えを通して心に安らぎを与えるというのが主な仕事でした。

そのリストの中で、仏教徒の患者さんを訪問し、主に末期、病院に収容されておられる全ての患者さんのリストが着きました。ほとんどがキリスト教系の牧師さんばかりで仏教寺院から病院のチャプレンに所属しているのは私を含めて二人でした。チャプレンになると専用の事務所が与えられ、毎日、病室に収容されておられる全ての患者さんのリストが着きます。

ある夜中過ぎにカピア本願寺のメンバーの娘さんが電話をかけてくれました。担当医からお母さんの命は今日亡くなるか明日亡くなるか分からない程、危険な状態と告げられたのでお参りをしたいという事でした。すぐに着替え、病院に飛んでいくと、その方が酸素マスクをしてベッドに横たわっておられました。なるべくその方の耳元でお勤めをし、家族の方に勤めの意義を話し、その晩は帰宅いたしました。翌日は、ホテルで会議がありましたので、その方と今生でお会いするのは最後になると思い、飛行場に行く前にその方の病室を訪問しました。すると、昨晩、酸素マスクをして、もう亡くなるかと担当医に告げられていた方がベッドに座って看護婦さんに朝食を食べさせてもらっていました。私はあまりの驚きに部屋を間違えたかと思いました。看護婦さんが言うには、朝、起きられて最初に言われたことはお腹がすいたという事でした。それで朝御飯を食べておられるのですよと説明された後に、看護婦さんはそのメンバーの方に「この方はあなたのお孫さんですか」と聞かれました。すると、その方は「いいえ、この方はお寺のお坊さんです。」と私の事を覚えておられました。私は本当に覚えておられるのか確かめる為に、「昨晚、一緒にお参りをしましたね。覚えておられますか?」と尋ねました。するとその方は「はい、よく覚えております。」とお答えになりました。このお話はほんの一例ですが、私のアメリカ開教のなかで、気付かされた事は、

人はどんなに苦しくても、そして、臨終でも家族の声や開教使がお勤めする声がちゃんと聞こえているという事です。

人が亡くなった時に枕経というお勤めをします。枕元でお経を上げるから枕経という名称がついたのではと思いますが、本来、浄土真宗では、枕経ではなく、臨終勤行というお勤めを亡くなった後ではなく、まだ、生きておられるうち（生命終わるときに臨んで）にお勤めいたします。臨終の時に、亡くなっていく人、その方の家族や親しい友人を呼び、病室やケアホーム、或いは自宅でお勤め致します。それは、亡くなっていくお方が今までの限りのないお慈悲で包んでくださっておられた阿弥陀様に、また、死後も同じように阿弥陀さまのお慈悲に包まれ光と寿きわみなぎと成らせて頂くことに對して臨終の一念に報恩感謝すると同時に残された遺族の方々が亡くなっていく方を通して「生死いずべく道」「後生の一大事」について、教えを頂くご縁となるお勤めです。

親鸞聖人はお弟子さんに宛てられたお手紙の中で、「真実の信心を得た人は、阿弥陀さまの撰取不捨の働きによって信心が定まる時に必ず浄土に往生して悟りを開く身となる。それゆえ、臨終を待つ必要もないし、来迎を頼みとすることもなし。まさしく、平生、信心の定まるその時に往生は定まるのであり、信心の行者には、様々に説かれる臨終来迎の儀式法則というものはまったく必要がないのである。」とはっきりと誤解を解いておられます。枕経や臨終勤行は亡き人がい

い所に生まれる為にお祈りするための追善供養のお勤めではありません。親鸞聖人が説かれましたように凡夫の往生は平生において教えを頂くことによつて決まります。臨終勤行は先にもお話いたしましたように阿弥陀さまに報恩感謝するとともに残された方々が亡き人の死に直面することにより自分の今ある生命に対して感謝し、生命終わった後にどうなるのかという後生の一大事を見定めておく為にお勤めされるものです。

本願寺第8代宗祖の蓮如上人は「仏法においては明日という事はない。」と言われました。私達は今日があれば明日が必ず来ると思いますが、私たちの生命は今日亡くなるか明日亡くなるか分からない無常の世界で生きています。平生業成という言葉がありますように、共に毎日の日暮の中でお念仏の日暮をさせて頂き、この度のご縁は初事と思つべし、我一人の為と思つべし、今生最後と思つべしと仏法を聴聞させていただきますように。

南無阿弥陀仏

2019年世界仏教婦人会大会 大会宣言が発表される

2019年9月にサンフランシスコで開催される第16回世界仏教婦人会大会の大会宣言が発表された。先月、同大会の世界代表者会議がサンフランシスコのBCA本部で行われ、日本、米国、ハワイ、カナダ、ブラジルから婦人会の代表者が集い、大会を主催するBCAの代表者から大会のあらましや日程に加え大会宣言が発表された。以下宣言本文。

第16回世界仏教婦人会大会宣言

この度、私共、米国仏教団仏教婦人会連盟が第16回世界仏教婦人会大会を開催させていただきますことは、光栄の至りです。

1961年に開催された第1回大会から今日にいたるまで、世の中は、争いが絶えず、益々困難な問題が山積する一方であり、私たちの住む地域や家族もその影響を受けざるを得ない状況下にあります。今日、私たちは、急激に変化し続ける多種多様な民族や文化の中で、み教えを共にお聞かせいただき、阿弥陀如来の願いの中に共生させていきたいと考えています。この迷いの世界に生きていく私どもが大きな慈しみのお心の中で生かされているということ、この度の大会の標語を「お念仏に生かされて」とさせていただきます。

浄土真宗の歴史を紐解いてみますと、阿弥陀如来の願いに生きる多くの仏教婦人の方々が浄土真宗の興隆に貢献してこられたことが顕著に表れています。その最も代表的なお方が、恵信尼公と覚信尼公です。恵信尼公は、生涯の伴侶であられる親鸞聖人と共にお念仏のみ教えを深く味わわれ、その喜びを多くの人々と分かち合うために、生涯を通し、親鸞聖人を献身的に支えて下さいました。また、末娘の覚信尼公は、お父上であられる親鸞聖人が顕かに示されたお念仏の大道を永代にわたって生きとし生ける全てのものに歩んでいただきましたという願いから、その礎を築いてくださいました。

この度の標語「お念仏に生かされて」は、私たちは皆、ひとすじのお念仏の大道を共に歩み、共にお念仏を喜ぶ御同朋・御同行であるという事を思い起こさせてくれます。共に恵信尼公と覚信尼公が今日の私どもに残された願いを忘れることなく、世のなか安穩なれ、仏法ひろまれと親鸞聖人のお言葉をいただき、確かな歩みを進めてまいりましょう。

訃報

9月3日にオレンジカウンティ仏教会において土網ジョーン開教使の葬儀が行われた。土網開教使は8月16日に81歳で往生された。1965年に開教使としてロサンゼルス別院に赴任。カーテナ仏教会へ異動後、開教使を休職してロサンゼルスカウンティの図書館司書となり、アジアコレクションを管理した。1977年よりオレンジカウンティ仏教会にパートタイムとして勤め、2013年9月に引退した。葬儀には約500名が集い生前の師を偲び、阿弥陀如来に報恩謝徳の思いを表した。

一緒に参りしましょう 報恩講を京都で

来年1月15日と16日の二日間、ご本山での報恩講に梅津総長と一緒に参りませんか。ご門さまのお言葉や通夜布教のご縁にあうことができます。それと16日のお昼には国宝の書院でおいしいお精進のお齋もいただくことができます。費用が飛行機代を除き600ドル(3泊4日)です。詳しいことはche@bcana.orgでお問い合わせください。締め切りは12月1日です。

今月の一枚

8月に行われた布教研究会にて、講師の横山紘一師による武術のデモンストレーション。横山師は鹿島神流の師範。講義の中で武術の心得を説くこととなり、桑原開教使が相手をつとめた。



Professor Yokoyama (left) and Rev. Kuwahara

法輪

2017年10月号

発行所
米国仏教団
Buddhist Churches of America
1710 Octavia Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
電話(415) 776-5600
FAX (415) 771-6293
Email: info@bcqh.org
forWOD: WODeditor@bcqh.org

二〇一七年度教化標語
「まことの人生を
歩もう」

あの記事をもう一度!

法輪のバックナンバーがBCA
ウェブサイトにて読めます。
<http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/about-us/wheel-of-dharma>

ミッドウェルで産のあつてのセミナー



Seattle Betsuin's Women in Buddhism Conf.

9月23日(土)にシアトル別院で女性仏教徒のためのセミナーが開催され、西北部教区の寺院から約80名の女性門信徒が集った。今回で5回目となる同セミナーのテーマは「Buddhist Paths: Women's Choice (仏教徒の道、女性の選択)」。

講師には南アラメダ郡仏教会の日間加キヤロル開教使、パークレー仏教会の柴田キャンデイス開教使に加え地元ワシントン大学で比較宗教学を教える徳野・キヨコ博士が招かれた。参加者は「仏教と女性について日間賀先生が教え、柴田先生が自身の経験、徳野先生が歴史の面からそれぞれ講義くださいました。」

総長コラム

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

数ヶ月前、家内の車を初めて定期点検のために車を買ったディーラーのところへ行って行きました。今頃の車は、以前と違って、1万マイルまたは12ヶ月という長期間点検が不要となっていてありがたいです。

そこで修理担当の人から、「何か不具合がありますか」とたずねられました。別に大した問題はなかったですが、「バンパーの下にあるフォックランプが時々片方だけ点い

エブリデイブデイズム・セミナーの田中師が 中村元学術賞を受賞

8月26日(土)に浄土真宗センターにおいて、元BCA開教使と元IBS助教で現武蔵野大学教授の田中ケネス博士によるセミナーが開催された。

セミナーのタイトルは「A Day with Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka」でエブリデイブデイズムコミンティーが主催した。エブリデイブデイズムとは新しくCBE(仏教教育部)が新しく始めたプログラムで、すべての世代を対象とした教育と社交を兼ねたファンイベントである。今回のセミナーでは田中師の講義の他、近日出版予定の「Jewels」と既刊の「Buddhism On Air」を中心としたディスカッションが行われた。

田中師は「セミナーでは、アメリカに適した浄土真宗と思われ顔を強く打ち出すようにしました。『聴聞』はもちろん重要ですが、アメリカでは、もっと身体経験を感じ

ていることがあるのでチェックしてください」と、お願いしました。すると、その人が、「それはこの車の新しい仕様で、ハンドルを右に切ると、右側のフォックランプが点き、左に切ると、左のランプが点くので、故障ではありません」と、教えてくれました。そして、続けて、「この頃の車はいろいろな新しい機能がついていますが、それだけまた故障する可能性も増えています」と、当たり前だけど、忘れてしまっていることを教えてくれました。

この時、なぜか知りませんが、仏説無量寿経の中の言葉を思い浮かべました。それは、『有田憂田、有宅憂宅(うでんうでん、うたたくうたく)』というリスミナルな言葉です。田が有ればそれによって憂いがあり、宅(家)が有ればあ



EveryDay Buddhism Seminar at JSC

られるアプローチが求められています。しかし、流行している禅やマインドフルネス瞑想ではなく、我が浄土真宗の七高僧の一人善導大師の『五正行』を現代アメリカ人に合った形で実践してもらいました。最後は、『南無阿弥陀仏』と称名念仏の重要性を強調いたしました。」と米国の風土に適応した浄土真宗の伝道方法を試みた。また、テクノブツタ参加者の若者やベイビーブーマー世代の門信徒を交えたパネルディスカッションが行われ、世代をこえて意見交換をした。

また、田中師は10月に第27回中村元学術賞を受賞することになっている。同賞はインド学や仏教において優れた学術研究および文化活動を行った者へ贈られており、田中師は米国人で初めての受賞者となる。師は「大変名誉な賞をいただくことになりました。この受賞はアメリカ仏教が日本の仏教学界においてより高く評価され始めたことも意味していると思います。仏教者としてのキャリアをBCAで始めさせていただいたことをたいへんありがたく思っています。ご指導くださった先生方やご門徒さんたちへこの場を借りてお礼申し上げます。」とBCAの法友に感謝している。授賞式は10月10日に日本のインド大使館で行われる。

るで憂いがあるということ。私の車にはいろいろな機能がついていていいのですが、その分また心配が増えてしまいます。本当に勝手なものです。また、その少しあとには今年、『無田亦憂欲有田、無宅亦憂有宅』ともあります。田が無ければまた田が有って欲しいと憂い、宅が無ければまた宅が有って欲しいと憂う』とあります。いろいろな機能がついていなければ、ついていて欲しいと思う自分がい

私たちが実に多くのものを持っていきます。またそれはいつかはすべてにさようならをいわねばならないということ。あればあるで心配、なければないで心配です。ディーラーの人の言ったことは間違いのない名言であります。

龍谷大学大学院生が訪米

8月19日より8月28日まで、龍谷大学大学院実践真宗学研究会の教員と大学院生21名がベイエリアとロサンゼルスを訪れた。真宗伝道学特殊講義「真宗伝道学の基礎的研究とアメリカ伝道の実践的研究」がテーマの研究旅行。川添泰信教授の引率で、19日にサンフランシスコ空港に着した一行はサンフランシスコ仏教会、浄土真宗センターを訪れ、法要へ参加した他、梅津総長、IBS教授、開教使らから講義を受けた。24日にはロサンゼルスへ移動、ロサンゼルス別院、オレンジカウティイ仏教会で開教使から講義を受けた。また、仏教会付属の幼稚園の見学や寺院のファンドレイジングイベントへ参加し門信徒との交流をはかった。将来開教使を志す院生もおり、開教使、門信徒から期待を寄せられていた。



Ryukoku Students at Los Angeles Betsuin

仏教は非常に暗い宗教であるという人がいます。暗いのではなく、本当のことを言い当てるのです。それを受け取りたくない「私」がいるのです。生があれば死があり、出会いがあれば、別れもあります。はじめがあれば終わりのあります。一方だけを欲しがりますが、神仏に頼って身勝手なお願いをする人生ではなく、明らかに足元をてらしてくださる教えに出会って、強く明るく生き抜いていかなければなりません。

新しい車はこれからも修理費がかさむことを覚悟しながら(できないかも知れませんが)大事にしていきたいと思います。