

# WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

## LIVING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

### MVBT Member Ellen Kamei Is Selected as Mountain View Mayor

She Becomes the First Buddhist to Lead the City;  
Her Family Has Extensive Ties With Temple, BCA

By Jon Kawamoto  
Editor, Wheel of Dharma

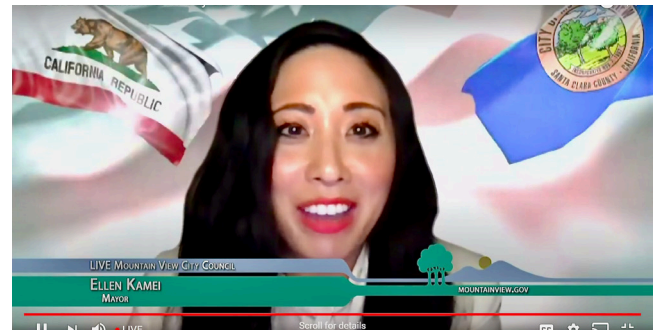
Mountain View Buddhist Temple member Ellen Kamei, whose family has long ties with the temple and the BCA, made history when she was selected as Mountain

View's mayor — becoming the first Buddhist to lead the city.

Kamei, who was elected to the Mountain View City Council in 2018, was unanimously chosen by her council colleagues as mayor on Jan. 12. Before that, she served as vice mayor in 2020, alongside former Mayor Margaret Abe-Koga.

It's believed that Abe-Koga and Kamei were the first Japanese American female mayor and vice mayor in the mainland United States.

"I became a member of the Mountain View Buddhist Temple, my paternal family's temple, when I returned back to the city after graduate school," Mayor Kamei



Mayor Ellen Kamei is shown at a recent virtual Mountain View City Council meeting. (Courtesy of Mayor Ellen Kamei)

Continued on Page 9

## SHARING THE NEMBUTSU WITH AMERICA

### Ministers Embark on Epic Road Trip

Revs. Hirano, Yamada Visit  
48 U.S. States in 38-Day,  
14,000-Mile Trek

By Jon Kawamoto  
Editor, Wheel of Dharma

Instead of being cooped up at home because of the pandemic — and driven by the urge to share the Nembutsu with America — Rev. Jerry Hirano decided to take a road trip.

But this wouldn't be any simple, ordinary road trip — it would cover all 48 states in the continental United States.

In all, it was a 38-day, 14,000-mile trek that began Sept. 23 and ended Oct. 30 at Rev. Hirano's home in Bountiful, Utah, with his 26-foot-long Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Motorhome.

Rev. Hirano's companion as a road warrior was his longtime friend and IBS roommate who went through Tokudo with him in 1986 — Rev. Ken Yamada, the retired minister of the Berkeley Higashi Hongwanji Temple and current editor of the Shinshu Center of America.

"Since we had gotten along through these rather intense situations, I thought we might be able



Rev. Jerry Hirano conducts a service in Arizona in top photo during a road trip through the continental United States. Memorable stops included, above left, Black Wall Street in Tulsa, Oklahoma, site of the Tulsa race massacre of 1921, and, above right, the Rohwer Heritage Site, the former Japanese American detention camp during World War II. (Courtesy of Rev. Jerry Hirano)

to get along for this trip," said Rev. Hirano, Resident Minister of the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple. "Plus, he is a fourth- or fifth-degree black belt in

karate, so he could protect me."

Before embarking on the long

Continued on Page 6

## TRIBUTE TO BCA ICON

### The Remarkable Life and Legacy of Shinobu Matsuura

She Helped Create a Music  
Tradition for BCA — and Her  
Influence Continues Today

*Editor's Note: This article pays tribute to Mrs. Shinobu Matsuura, a BCA pioneer and iconic figure who was instrumental in building a music tradition for the Buddhist Churches of America. It was written by Mrs. Matsuura's granddaughter, Hiro Imamura David. Shinobu's legacy continues today through the Institute of Buddhist Studies and through the Buddhist music that she and her daughter, Jane Imamura, and granddaughters, Hiro Imamura David, and Rae Imamura have created for the BCA. The article was written in behalf of the BCA Music History Subcommittee.*



Shinobu Matsuura

In 1918, Rev. Issei Matsuura traveled from the town of Guadalupe in California's Santa Maria Valley to Fukui, Japan.

Continued on Page 5

### 'Team Paul' Goes on Offense in Bone Marrow Drive for OCBC Member

BCA Temples, Friends, Family Holding Registration Drives

By Jon Kawamoto  
Editor, Wheel of Dharma

In an effort to find a bone marrow donor for Paul Goodman — a much beloved 29-year-old Orange County Buddhist Church member — several BCA temples, churches and community centers have launched registration drives that have spanned the entire West Coast, Texas, and Hawaii.

#### FYI

For more information, go to:  
[www.hope4paul.com](http://www.hope4paul.com)

On Jan. 31, OCBC held a drive-through bone marrow registration for Goodman. Other recent drive-through events in Southern California were held

Continued on Page 10



A drive-through marrow registration was held for Paul Goodman at the Orange County Buddhist Church on Jan. 31. (Courtesy of Ty Tanioka)

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that several companion audio recordings of gathas completed with the BCA Shin Buddhist Service Book in 1994 coordinated by the late Rae Imamura are posted under the Gathas section on the BCA website?

To learn more, go to: [www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/chanting-music](http://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/chanting-music).

— From the BCA Music Committee

BISHOP'S MESSAGE



By Rev. Marvin Harada  
Bishop of the BCA

By now, I think most of us are getting tired of this pandemic. In March, it will be about a year of dealing with social distancing, wearing masks, not being able to travel, not seeing our friends and family, and just not doing the things that we all normally did that we all took for granted, like simply going out to eat at restaurant,

## Patience During the Pandemic

having a drink in a bar with a friend, going to the movies, going shopping in the mall, going to a ball game, having people over for a cup of coffee or dinner. When will it all

seen the horror of what this virus can do to us, and no one wants to be hospitalized or put on a ventilator, much less have their life taken from them. There is still so much

the situation. We can't go off to work, or go to the gym, or go fishing or whatever we did for fun to "get away." Just going to the store feels like we are taking a risk. We limit our activities and outings to a minimum.

More than ever, the Buddhist teaching of the Six Paramitas can have a lot of meaning for us. The paramita of kshanti, which means "patience," or, "to endure," is something that we can remind ourselves of during this difficult pandemic. Our patience is being pushed to the limit. Our capacity to endure is being pushed to the limit. But in the case of the paramitas, the result of our practice, is

*More than ever, the Buddhist teaching of the Six Paramitas can have a lot of meaning for us. The paramita of kshanti, which means 'patience,' or, 'to endure,' is something that we can remind ourselves of during this difficult pandemic.*

end we wonder? We anxiously await getting the vaccine, and getting our lives back to what it was before the virus.

On top of that, we still worry about getting infected with the virus. We have all

anxiety, concern, and fear, as we continue to wait out the storm of this virus.

Being limited to our homes, tensions can build and we just can't get away for a break like before, adding to the stress of

Continued on Page 8

## Nembutsu May Be Our Form of 'Grateful Dead'



By Rev. Naomi Seijo Nakano  
San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church

In the 1960s, a rock band was formed taking the name of Grateful Dead. Its original name was Warlocks, but there was already a group by this name. Not to be confused with the other group, one of the original founders, Jerry Garcia, by chance while on a wild ride of drugs, came upon an Egyptian prayer, aptly named Grateful Dead. From there, the group is now known as the Grateful Dead.

But the term "grateful dead" has various folklore tales associated with this term. It is illustrated in many cultures throughout the world. As an Egyptian prayer, it is based on the principle of reciproca-tion, which is the practice of exchanging things with others

*Remember me in quiet days  
While raindrops whisper on  
The windowpane.  
Remember me in your memories  
Have no grief. Let the joy we knew remain.  
Remember when your thoughts turn  
To me, know that I would not have  
You cry, but live for me and laugh for me.  
When you are happy, so am I.  
While you live, I shall not die.*

— "Remember Me in Quiet Days" poem, author unknown

for mutual benefit. This prayer is a calling of blessings by others for the deceased person. Those who call the name help the deceased into a happy afterlife.

In other cultures, the tale tells of a traveler who comes across a corpse. He asks why this person had not been buried and the reply was that the deceased had debts and there-fore an honored proper burial was denied. This traveler pays the debts, while in another version is that the traveler pays for the burial.

This traveler then goes on his way and acquires debts of his own. During his journey, this traveler meets another fellow traveler, who in turn helps him. However, there is a condition that comes with

this help and it is to divide among others half of whatever he attains. The fellow traveler then reveals himself, and this fellow traveler is the grateful spirit of the deceased. Thus is the meaning of grateful dead.

As mentioned before, many cultures have a version of this tale. In Buddhism, there are some similarities to this tale. When a person passes, there is a monetary offering to the family. It is called "koden," when translated means, "incense and sutra." This word refers to the offering of incense and the chanting of sutras at the service. Money is given to the family of the deceased in order to help pay for the burning of incense and a minister's chanting during the funeral service.

It is also an offering of condolence to the family of the deceased. Over time, the meaning of this monetary offering has changed. This offering can be used to defray some of the cost of the funeral or to pay debts owed by the deceased. It is also made to the family in remembrance of the deceased and a reminder to the deceased family that friends are always available to them in their time of grief. This offer-ing is then reciprocated when the friend or family member passes, either of equal amount or what one can afford at the time.

To follow the concept of grateful dead is "omimai," translated to mean "honorific sight-dance." It is an "inquiry into a person's health or condition." When stricken with any mishap, we are limited in producing an income to pay our debts. It is a gift taken to a friend recovering from an illness or to a friend or group recovering from natural disasters or accident and so on. It may be used to aid in defraying some of the debts owed.

Continued on Page 8

## Ministerial, Kaikyoshi-ho Assignments Announced

The BCA Office of the Bishop announced the following ministerial and Kaikyoshi-ho (Kaikyoshi assistant) assignments:

**Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara**, Resident Minister of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, was assigned as the Supervising Minister for the Buddhist Temple of Marin.

**Rev. CJ Dunford**, IBS student, will assist Rev. Kuwahara at Marin as a part-time minister with tokudo, to gain valuable experience in the work of a minister.

The Kaikyoshi-ho assignments are as follows:

**Rev. Chiemi Onikura-Bly** of the

Twin Cities Sangha in Minneapolis, Minnesota, will assist **Rev. Ronald Miyamura**, Supervising Minister for the Twin Cities Sangha.

**Rev. Kathy Chatterton** and **Rev. Anne Spencer** of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple will assist Supervising Minister Rev. Jerry Hirano.

**Rev. Amy Koe Umezu** of the West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple will assist Resident Minister **Rev. Koho Takata**. Rev. Umezu will also be working to create a "campus ministry" of some form with UCLA as part of her duties at West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple

**Rev. Jim Warrick** of White River Buddhist Temple will assist Supervising Minister Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki.

## Correction

In an article about BCA podcasts in the February Wheel of Dharma, the name of IBS research fellow Natalie Fisk Quli was misspelled.

In addition, in the same article, the word "recognized" was misspelled.



### 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  
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:**  
**Jon Kawamoto**  
**Editor, Japanese Section:**  
**Rev. Ryuta Furumoto**  
**Print Production:**  
**Jeffrey Kimoto**



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



By Dr. Kent Matsuda  
BCA President

Around the middle of December 2020, the COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna became available. I was lucky enough to be one of the first recipients of the vaccine. This was only possible because I see COVID-19 patients in the hospital.

Although I thought that having a vaccine would make opening our temples happen sooner, lately, I have begun to doubt that thought.

As the pandemic continues, we are now hearing of variant strains of the coronavirus

# COVID-19 Vaccines Are Here — and So Are Variants

developing. The vaccine manufacturers have told us that the current vaccines should protect us against the known variants. However, it may not take long before we come across a variant strain that is not covered by the current vaccines.

That means that we will need to have another vaccine to cover any variant strain that is not addressed by the current vaccines. As time goes on, we may come across more variants that are not covered by the current vaccines.

This means that we will have to get at least one more vaccine to be fully protected. The situation may resemble what we do currently for the flu virus.

Just having a vaccine gives us some protection against the coronavirus. However, even if we are vaccinated, we need to continue to wear a mask, wash our hands frequently, and socially distance. There is no guarantee that the vaccine will make one immune against the virus. If the vaccine is

95% effective, then 5% of the recipients will not acquire immunity.

The more times the virus replicates, the more chances that a variant strain may develop. We have given the coronavirus too many chances to replicate in this country.

Due to this, I am concerned that our temples may not be

meetings that dealt with fundraising during a pandemic. At least two of our larger temples were able to generate donations in the six figures. Our temples need to start work on what they will be doing this year to help maintain some semblance of income.

I anticipate that the BCA per member dues this year will

the long run, we will generate funds that will help the BCA’s financial situation. However, we have to use funds to make the parsonage attractive enough so that someone will want to rent it. And, we need to maintain it better than we did in the past after renting it out.

The same situation applies to the BCA headquarters. Rev. Harada will not have an office at the headquarters building in San Francisco. This will allow us to rent out an entire floor in the building. We already have a potential renter for that floor. Again, this will help BCA’s financial future, but it will require funds to make the space suitable for our renter.

Therefore, if you have a chance to get the coronavirus vaccine, I strongly urge you to do so. I realize that it is currently difficult to do so, but as time goes on, it should get easier to get the vaccine. However, we need to think about the possibility that our temples may not be able to fully open this year.

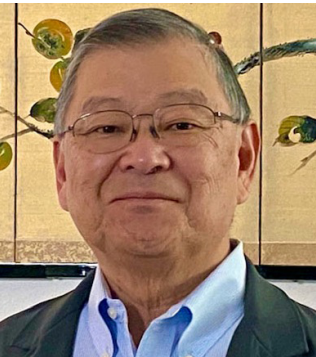
*In anticipation of keeping our temples closed, I hope our temples start making plans for replacing the traditional fundraisers with virtual or socially distanced fundraisers.*

able to open this year. We will have to see, but the presence of the variant strains has me very worried.

In anticipation of keeping our temples closed, I hope our temples start making plans for replacing the traditional fundraisers with virtual or socially distanced fundraisers. Last year, the BCA Executive Committee held two Zoom

be less than what was determined last year. However, the per member dues amount will not be zero. The BCA continues to have bills and expenses despite a lot of cost-saving that has been done. We are very fortunate that Rev. Harada has not had to do much traveling. His decision to forgo living in the Belmont parsonage allows us to rent out that house. In

## A Letter From the BCA Endowment Foundation Board President



Dear BCA Members and Friends:

**Carrying the Dharma Forward**

We now understand that it is very difficult to prevent the spread of new pandemics in our global society, but in understanding the science of controlling them we all play a part in protecting each other from pandemics.

By each of us taking action to protect others, we ultimately protect ourselves. It is also very difficult to understand how to achieve a satisfied and unified

society, when people find it difficult to see, appreciate and understand each others’ socially and psychologically caused pain and suffering and, if we all could, we all might have a better opportunity to live better lives.

During his time of change and strife, Shinran Shonin was able to realize, through achieving self-understanding, learning to see things as they truly are, and entrusting in Amida Buddha, that all are welcome in the Pure Land, and we all will realize it as well. Eight generations later, Rennyo Shonin faced similar challenges and helped transmit the teachings and message of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism to the common masses and facilitated the growth of our mother temple organization in Japan, which eventually led to the founding of the Buddhist Churches of America.

Through many challenging periods since the BCA was founded over five generations

ago, our members and ministers created and sustained Sanghas and temples to learn and practice Jodo Shinshu teachings. To address the challenges of our time now and into the future, it is our generation’s opportunity to address the needs of people today and in the future. There has not been a greater need, which will continue to grow.

The BCA Dharma Forward initiatives in support of BCA and IBS programs provide us the opportunity to contribute to continuing the legacy that has and will be created.

**2020 BCA Endowment Foundation Results**

The Endowment Foundation manages investments for the BCA, the Institute of Buddhist Studies and 27 affiliated organizations. Along with the rest of the country, the 2020 financial markets were roiled by a hot economy at the start, a horrendous

attack on all sectors delivered by the COVID-19 pandemic, the social order was shaken by the realization of the impact of systemic racism in our country and the tremendous political turmoil of the national elections and aftermath. Our residents, as well as tech and growth companies, were able to pivot and adapt to new conditions with the financial aid of Congress and the policies of the Federal Reserve Bank, which is reflected in the Foundation’s investment results.

This past year, the Endowment Growth A Fund showed a return of 20.3% and overall investment earnings increased by \$6,129,368 and \$1,035,395 was disbursed. Total assets managed by the Endowment increased from \$35.7 million to \$41.9 million, due to investment returns, donations and deposits into custodial accounts. The Endowment received a total of \$466,277 in donations. The Endowment will continue to stay the course

with long-term investing in a diverse portfolio, which has netted positive returns in the past.

The Endowment supports the Dharma Forward fundraising efforts, which will contribute to BCA and IBS initiatives. Please participate in Dharma Forward in any way you can and contact Michiko Inanaga, Director of Development, at the BCA Endowment Foundation if you need any assistance or please don’t hesitate to contact me at the following address:

Buddhist Churches of America  
Endowment Foundation  
1710 Octavia St.,  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
Phone: 415-776-5600  
hmizuno@bcahq.org

In Gassho,

Charles Ozaki, President,  
BCA Endowment Foundation



Rev. Dr. Daijaku Kinst

## IBS’ Rev. Dr. Kinst Is Listed in Credits for Pixar’s ‘Soul’

There’s a definite connection between the Institute of Buddhist Studies and Pixar’s latest movie, “Soul” — and it goes beyond the theme of the afterlife and what gives humans purpose in living.

Rev. Dr. Daijaku Kinst, Director of the Buddhist Chaplaincy Program at IBS, is listed in the credits for “Soul” under “Cultural, Music and Faith Based Advisors.”

The movie’s main charac-

ter, Joe, is a jazz pianist who teaches high school music. After a near death experience, he finds himself in the “Great Before,” a place between life and death where new souls are trained to find their “spark,” or life’s purpose. He contemplates his choices and regrets the existence that he mostly took for granted.

“Soul” has clear Buddhist references, including the main message of the movie which

stresses the importance of awareness. Joe comes to appreciate the importance of enjoying daily, mundane things like food, nature and relationships rather than constantly striving for material success.

“I enjoyed the movie and played a very small part in helping the people who created it,” Rev. Dr. Kinst said. “Basically a few years ago, I received an email out of the blue one day in my office at the JSC

asking if I would be willing to consult in the early stages of a film they were planning. I must admit I didn’t believe it was true at first -- ‘How did they find me?’ I’m not famous or anything. I never found out.”

But she went over to Pixar studios in Emeryville, got a badge that said “Eke an Alien” and met with Pixar veteran



“ ‘The Golden Chain’ is a guide for living an engaged Buddhist life ... it encourages us to embrace our humanity,” says Camille Hamilton Pating of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco, shown at the 16th World Buddhist Women’s Convention in 2019 . (Courtesy of Keith Kojimoto)

## ‘The Golden Chain’: Guide to a Life of Love

*Editor’s Note: This article appeared in Lion’s Roar and is reprinted with the permission of Pating, who is a BCSF Certified Assistant who coordinates Youth Affiliate organizations, Buddhist Scouting Awards and teaches Dharma School. She is an attorney in Oakland, California. “The Golden Chain” is a gatha by Dorothy Hunt.*

**By Camille Hamilton Pating**  
Buddhist Church of San Francisco

“The Golden Chain” is a traditional recitation within American Shin Buddhist communities, much loved as a children’s reading. For decades, it has been recited in Buddhist Churches of America temples, youth services for Dharma School, young Buddhist groups, and scouting and basketball programs. In my Jodo Shinshu temple, saying “The Golden

Chain” comes as naturally as saying Nembutsu, or the Name, of Amida Buddha, joyfully expressing gratitude for Amida’s compassionate vow.

**‘The Golden Chain’**

*I am a link in the Buddha’s golden chain of love that stretches around the world*

*I must keep my link bright and strong*

*I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself*

*I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts, to say pure and beautiful words, and to do pure and beautiful deeds, knowing that on what I do now depends not only my happiness, but also that of others*

*May every link in the Buddha’s golden chain of love become bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.*

Continued on Page 9

## Professor in Japan Recalls Teachings of Minister, a Mentor and Friend

*Editor’s Note: Professor Paul McCarthy was raised in Minneapolis and received his bachelor’s degree in English Literature and Japanese language at the University of Minnesota and a Ph.D. at Harvard University in Japanese literature. He’s taught English and Japanese language and literature for about 40 years in the United States and Japan. He is a translator of Japanese literature and describes himself as a friend and admirer of Buddhism, especially Pure Land, and attends St. Alban’s Anglican-Episcopal Church in Tokyo.*

**By Paul McCarthy**  
Professor Emeritus  
Surugadai University

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, I was a student at a Catholic high school in Minneapolis. I had a strong interest in Asia in general, and Japan in particular, and my focus was on both religion and literature. I had never met a Japanese or Japanese American person in my life. Hearing that there was a Buddhist Student Association at the University of Minnesota, I made inquiries and attended one of the association’s evening meetings. The members were mostly from Asia (Thailand, Taiwan, Japan) with a sprinkling of non-Asian students like me. It was there that I met Yuri Kyogoku. (That double i is not a typo. Her father had a good Russian friend whose name was Yuri, and she was named after him.) Rev. Kyogoku was a small, frail woman in her middle years, with a sharp mind and a warm personality. Over the



This 1963 photo of a picnic in Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis, Minnesota, shows members of the Japanese Student Association and the Buddhist Student Association. Rev. Yuri Kyogoku is at the left in the back row, wearing sunglasses. (Courtesy of Paul McCarthy)

next six years, until I graduated from the University of Minnesota with a double-major in English literature and Japanese language, she became my teacher of Buddhism and my first Japanese American friend. She was a Kibei, who was born in the United States and then traveled to Japan to study Shinshu doctrine in Kyoto with the idea of coming back to minister in the United States. Unfortunately, she was caught in Japan when World War II erupted, and she spent the next four years experiencing the hardships of life in wartime Japan as she completed her Buddhist education. After the war, she experienced some difficulties in returning to the United States because of the suspicions against U.S. citizens of Japanese descent who ended up spending the war years in Japan. Ultimately, she succeeded in proving that she had had nothing to do with the Japanese war effort and had not cooperated with anti-American


propaganda or the like, and so was allowed to go back home to the United States. When we first met, she was doing graduate work in Library Science and was working at the University of Minnesota’s central library. I have the impression that her leadership of the Buddhist Student Association and her serving as minister for a small congregation of Japanese American Shin Buddhists in the Twin Cities was done pro bono, not as a means of earning her livelihood. Rev. Kyogoku had some hard work to do to enlighten me, 17 at the time, about Buddhism. I had an almost Schopenhauer-like view that, according to Buddhism, life was “bad” or “evil.” That appealed to a pessimistic side in my character at the time. “Not ‘bad,’ Paul,” she said gently. “Filled with suffering and difficulties at times, but by no means ‘bad.’ ” I remember how we had a guest lecture from an anthro-

Continued on Page 9

## Las Vegas Members Certified as MAs


Michael Tanaka and Dr. David Hopper, longtime members of the Las Vegas Sangha, were certified as BCA Minister’s Assistants at a service of the Las Vegas Buddhist Sangha by Bishop, Rev. Marvin Harada. The Las Vegas Sangha meets twice a month, with the first gathering of the month officiated by Rev. Harada or another minister, and the second gathering of the month is conducted by the Minister’s Assistants. Both assistants have completed the Hongwanji Correspondence Course. By holding a second gathering each month, the Las Vegas Sangha has seen growth in their membership. During the pandemic, it held Zoom services. But, in recent months, in-person gatherings have been held following the safety protocols of Clark County in Nevada. (Courtesy of Michael Tanaka)






BAKER-NORD  
CENTER FOR  
THE HUMANITIES

2021 Cleveland Humanities Festival: IDENTITY



**How the Buddhist Teaching on Non-Self Offers a Path in These Uncertain Times**

Kenneth K. Tanaka



**Wednesday, March 24 at 6:00 PM (ET) - Free**  
<https://case.edu/artsci/identity>

What is identity? Does the Buddhist view allow for discussion of Identity when they assert the teaching of “non-self” (*anatman*)? It would be a contradiction if non-self means that “self does not exist,” but that is not what it means. It is not about whether the self exists or not objectively or ontologically. We will explore what “non-self” means and what it really means. Does “I” exist or not? If yes, then what is that “self”? If not, then what or who is the “I” in “I am”?

From a Buddhist perspective, we are called to continuously remind ourselves of the dangers of fixed identities, both in the sense of a superior belief of “exceptionalism,” and as a cause of *dukkha* (suffering/dissatisfaction) in this life. We live in a world that is interconnected and interdependent. The concept of Buddhist identity explores a path that offers understanding and compassion, a path for working together in this time of global pandemic and social/economic uncertainty. How we perceive our own identity determines our response to these times.

A print copy of Ken Tanaka’s latest book *Jewels: An Introduction to Buddhism* is available for a \$6 donation at “Just Ask” on [www.clevelandbuddhisttemple.org](http://www.clevelandbuddhisttemple.org).

**This event is co-sponsored by the Cleveland Buddhist Temple**



These photos are from the life and events of BCA pioneer Mrs. Shinobu Matsuura. Top right, Mrs. Matsuura is shown with her family at the Guadalupe Buddhist Church before World War II. Seated, from left, are daughters Mary, Kiyo, Lily and Jane. Standing, from left, are: son George, Rev. Issei Matsuura and Mrs. Shinobu Matsuura. At bottom left, Hanamatsuri service is held at the Gila River internment camp in 1944. Bottom center and right, Mrs. Matsuura is shown in San Francisco before boarding a Japan Airlines airplane to pick up the Gohonzon that is now at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple. (Courtesy of Berkeley Buddhist Temple)



Matsuura

Continued from Page 1

Rev. Matsuura was the resident priest at the Guadalupe Buddhist Church from 1915 and this visit to Japan was arranged for him to be introduced to Shinobu Kuninaga, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Kuninaga. This bit of history began with a pot of burnt rice prepared by this bachelor priest. The rice was discovered by the visiting Madam Wariko Kai, the renowned poet and educator who had toured the American Buddhist temples in 1915.

Upon her return to Japan, Madam Kai remembered the rice in Guadalupe and consulted with the eminent Buddhist scholar and

priest, Joen Ashikaga. These two prominent figures decided that the priest in California needed a perfectly matched wife, wisely choosing Shinobu Kuninaga. With unanimous blessings, the couple shortly married.

Just 22, Shinobu left her comfortable home in Japan for a new life as a Bomori, the wife of a Buddhist priest, in America. She could not have expected the conditions that would greet her, but she promised herself what had been her long-standing dream: to have a piano in her new life. She firmly believed even as a novice Bomori that music should be an essential part of temple life in America.

In 1918, the Buddhist community in the Santa Maria Valley was

largely farm workers living in primitive housing. There were many young families with children to be cared for while both parents worked the fields.

After Shinobu arrived in America, the deadly Spanish flu pandemic began in 1918. The temple became a refuge for children of sickened parents. The Matsuuras became front-line workers bringing goods and medicine to the sick. Shinobu remembers staying up long nights, crying alongside the crying babies in her care.

During 1919, with the continuing pandemic and the widespread discrimination against the Japanese, families sent their children to rela-

Continued on Page 10

Venice  
Continues  
Senior Dana  
Deliveries

The Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple compiled this collage of photos of its Senior Dana Deliveries in 2020, and plans to continue the program this year. The deliveries include donations of practical items like masks and hand sanitizer and food items. "Our members have enjoyed the care packages and visits and we are grateful for your support," the temple's The Sangha Initiative says in a thank you note. Each recipient receives a card by Girl Scout Troop 5325 and a message from VHBT Resident Minister Rev. Kory Quon. The program was formed as a collaborative effort to strengthen community outreach. (Courtesy of Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple)



Music Committee  
Webinars Set

By Kemi Nakabayashi  
Chairperson, BCA Music Committee

The Bon Odori/Taiko/Public Music subcommittee of the BCA Music Committee has been meeting regularly since this past fall.

Led by Wynn Kiyama (Oregon Buddhist Temple) and Tyler Moriguchi (Seattle Betsuin), this subcommittee includes representatives from California and Hawai'i. We are pleased to announce two upcoming webinars, co-hosted by the BCA Executive Committee.

The purpose of these webinars is to review the challenges and best practices related to online bon odori and taiko.

The first webinar, "Bon Odori Online," will be presented via Zoom from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. PST on March 27. It will feature short presentations by temple representatives from San Jose, Sacramento, Pasadena, Seattle, and Seabrook. The focus of this webinar will be the practice and presentation of obon dance online.

To register for "Bon Odori Online," go to: <https://forms.gle/kkug16Y9bGuzA6Ye8>

The second webinar, "Taiko Online," will feature presentations by Buddhist taiko leaders from California and Hawai'i: Johnny Mori, Elise Fujimoto, Sydney Shiroyama, and Paul Sakamoto.

An open forum will follow to share ideas and resources related to online taiko rehearsals and classes. This webinar will be held via Zoom from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. PST on April 3.

To register for "Taiko Online," go to: <https://forms.gle/5AvJfviLkbjzznt6>

Registration is required for both webinars. Please see the webinar flyers for more details.

BCA Music Committee Webinar

INNOVATIONS & CHALLENGES with  
BON ODORI ONLINE

March 27, 2021 • 11:00 am – 12:15 pm PST

Featuring short presentations by five BCA temples followed by an open forum to share ideas and resources.

Temples:  
San Jose, Sacramento, Pasadena, Seattle & Seabrook

Moderator: Wynn Kiyama, Oregon Buddhist Temple

For registration  
<https://forms.gle/kkug16Y9bGuzA6Ye8>  
Hosted by the BCA Executive Committee

BCA Music Committee Webinar

TAIKO

INNOVATIONS & CHALLENGES with  
TAIKO ONLINE

April 3, 2021 • 11:00 am – 12:15 pm PST

Featuring short presentations by four taiko leaders followed by an open forum to share ideas and resources.

Panelists:  
Johnny Mori, Senshin Buddhist Temple  
Elise Fujimoto, Mountain View Buddhist Temple  
Sydney Shiroyama, Palo Alto Buddhist Temple  
Paul Sakamoto, Puna Hongwanji Mission

Moderator: Tyler Moriguchi, Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple

For registration  
<https://forms.gle/5AvJfviLkbjzznt6>  
Hosted by the BCA Executive Committee



Revs. Jerry Hirano and Ken Yamada are shown in the Arizona desert on their recent trip through 48 states. Bottom left, Revs. Hirano and Yamada pose with the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Motorhome at the start of their travels. Bottom right, the first stop was the Wakamatsu Farm in Placerville, site of the first settlements of Japanese immigrants in 1869. Rev. Hirano conducted a service at the first Japanese grave on U.S. soil of 19-year-old Okei Ito. (Courtesy of Rev. Jerry Hirano)

Road trip

Continued from Page 1

road trip, Rev. Hirano reflected on some of his preconceived thoughts and opinions.

“Having been a part of the BCA national leadership, at many of the meetings, I definitely heard a liberal bias in much of what people considered the United States to be,” he said. “I was born and raised in Utah and my temples (Salt Lake, Ogden and Honeyville) are all outside of California. The politics in the United States is very diverse, yet BCA has a very liberal bias.

“Although I am quite liberal politically, my temples are not necessarily the same,” he continued. “As I felt critical of the BCA, I had to look at my own bias and I realized that I had very little knowledge of the United States outside of the Western viewpoint. I had not even been to many states outside of the Western United States. I thought I should begin to see what the United States physically looked like. I knew I couldn’t really visit with people, but environment does affect the humans living in those situations, so I would get a bit of understanding by physically seeing the United States.”

Rev. Yamada wrote on the Higashi Hongwanji USA website: “Before the trip, friends worried we’d encounter racism and discrimination, especially in the South. On the contrary, people were friendly and nice. We saw different responses to the pandemic, from strict protocols to business as usual. Almost everywhere, we felt the importance of religion, primarily Christianity. In this election year, signs of division were strong and loud.”

Of course, the pandemic was a dominant factor in the trip — the ministers, for the most part, decided against visiting many temples and churches and couldn’t stop in and chat with local residents at restaurants. They mostly kept to themselves and their faces were covered with masks.

They ended up staying in RV parks and four different motels. In



Mississippi, there was a sign warning about alligators in a lake near a RV park.

Along the way, they encountered weather ranging from the intense heat, humidity and mosquitos in Arkansas to snow and temperatures down to 6 degrees Fahrenheit.

**First Stop: Wakamatsu Farm**

Rev. Hirano began the trip on Sept. 23 by driving to the Bay Area to pick up Rev. Yamada. The first stop for the ministers was the Wakamatsu Farm at the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony in Placerville in Northern California. It’s the site of the first settlement of Japanese immigrants in 1869, the first child born as Japanese American, as well as the first Japanese grave on U.S. soil of 19-year-old Okei Ito, who was only 16 when she arrived.

“As a Japanese American, I wanted to somehow pay tribute to the first Japanese who planned on actually living in the United States, not just make money and return to Japan,” said Rev. Hirano, who performed a simple Buddhist service before the grave. “It was this spirit that was the foundation for Japanese Americans.”

They also stopped at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley and the BCA Headquarters in San Francisco. COVID-19 precautions were taken, so as they walked into the JSC, they were sprayed with disinfectant fog and their temperatures were checked.



Other BCA visits included the Orange County Buddhist Church, where they met with Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada and Rev. Jon Turner in the parking lot, and the Denver Buddhist Temple, where they met with Rev. Noritaka Imada and held an outdoor service in front of the statue of Shinran Shonin. And they visited Rev. Hirano’s temples in Utah — Salt Lake, Ogden and Honeyville. Rev. Hirano is also the Supervising Minister of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple in Ontario, Oregon.

In addition, the Higashi temples in Berkeley and Los Angeles invited them to visit and hold a service.

**Rohwer ‘Eye Opening’**

The ministers also visited several former detention camps that imprisoned Japanese Americans during World War II — the Santa Fe Concentration Camp in Santa Fe, New Mexico; the Minidoka National Historic Site in Jerome, Idaho; and the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Park County, Wyoming.

“However, of all the Japanese American sites, the Rohwer, Arkansas, (internment) site was very eye opening,” Rev. Hirano said. “I couldn’t imagine living there, even in 2020 with the swamps, humidity and heat. I felt haunted seeing the site and imagining living conditions there. It really made me realize

A Surprising  
Dharma Lesson  
at a Toll Booth  
in Maryland

*Editor’s Note: The following is a shortened version of an article entitled, “At a Maryland Toll Booth,” written by Rev. Jerry Hirano for the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple newsletter about his recent road trip to visit the 48 states in the continental United States.*

Rev. Jerry K. Hirano  
Salt Lake Buddhist Temple

I had been anticipating for quite some time about going to Harper’s Ferry.

Unfortunately, some directional miscalculations caused us to get there late. It should have been only about a 30-minute drive from where we were camped, but it ended up taking us a few hours of driving through John Denver’s “Country Roads” of West Virginia.

Although not unpleasant, it was a bit challenging in a 26-foot RV. When we got close to Harper’s Ferry, we discovered how it was so crowded, with traffic backed up over a mile just to get to the site and the shuttle buses from the parking lots to the Harper’s Ferry monument area were jammed full. So we passed, going instead to the visitors center, stopped along one of the country roads, did a service for John Brown’s sacrifice and to all the people who have died in the name of equality and human rights.

Then my personal epiphany came as we were driving to our RV park in Delaware and stopped at a toll booth in Maryland.

As I was driving, and listening to “The Good Lord Bird” about John Brown, a true religious fanatic, I thought about Shinran and the followers that walked 10 provinces just to ask him about his faith and practice, as expressed in chapter two of “Tannisho.” I think walking 10 provinces, hundreds of miles, in medieval Japan, risking bandits and wild animals is a lot harder than driving a Mercedes RV across America.

As I was thinking about how I sure didn’t like the South very much, and I was in Maryland en route to Delaware, to me, it meant leaving the South, going into our 23rd state, almost halfway through the 48 contiguous states.

At this toll booth, in front of me was a car from South Carolina. I wasn’t too crazy about South Carolina, since it had so many Trump signs and it felt oppressive. On the license plate of this car were the words, “In God We Trust.” I thought to myself, “If it is in God they trust, what is it with this racism?” As I was thinking these negative thoughts about this unknown person and state, I pulled up to the toll booth.

The attendant said, “Your toll has been paid.”

“Excuse me,” I said. He had a mask on, so I thought I misunderstood. He explained, “That lady in front of you paid your toll. No charge.”

At that moment, I realized, it is me that has all the bias and prejudice. It is me that is in hell. I am the one who creates this systemic racism. I have the problem of thinking so badly of unknown and unseen people.

As Shinran said, “If I could attain Buddhahood by endeavoring in other practices, but said the Nembutsu and so fell into hell, then I would feel regret at having been deceived. But I am incapable of any other practice, so hell is decidedly my abode whatever I do.”

This is where I am, who I am. But because of Amida Buddha, there is no charge, there is no need for anything but “Namo Amida Butsu.” To that woman, I say, “Thank you, whoever you may be. Thank you for the lesson and the toll.”

Continued on Page 7



At right, Revs. Jerry Hirano and Ken Yamada stand in front of the BCA Headquarters in San Francisco as they started their trip through 48 states. Above, they stopped at the Heart Mountain internment camp site where Japanese Americans were imprisoned during World War II in Wyoming. Bottom left, they visited the memorial site where George Floyd was killed by police on Memorial Day 2020 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Bottom right, Rev. Hirano says the Nembutsu at the grave of Elvis Presley in Graceland in Memphis, Tennessee. (Courtesy of Rev. Jerry Hirano)



Road trip

Continued from Page 6

how much the Issei and Nisei suffered and how much the current stay-at-home orders are nothing compared to what they went through.”

The trip, in no particular order, also included stops at: Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah; Epcot Center in Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida; Niagara Falls in New York; Kennebunkport, Maine; Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota; and the Salem Witch Trials Memorial in Salem, Massachusetts. The memorial marks the infamous witch trials of 1692-93, when women and men were accused of practicing witchcraft and were executed.

“This was our country’s early history of mass hysteria caused by isolationism and religious extremism, serving as a lesson for current times,” Rev Yamada wrote.

“Of course, we had to stop in Memphis, Tennessee, to see Graceland, the home of Elvis Presley, well ... just for fun,” Rev Yamada continued. “We did pause before Elvis’s grave in the backyard and recited the Nembutsu, ‘Namu Amida Butsu.’ “

Visiting Civil Rights Sites

As for the non-Japanese American sites they visited, the list included the Black Wall

Street massacre monument in Tulsa, Oklahoma; the Muhammad Ali Center, a multicultural center in Louisville, Kentucky, in honor of Breonna Taylor, who was killed inside her home during a police raid gone wrong; George Floyd’s murder site in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and crossing the Edmund Pettis Bridge. The bridge in Selma, Alabama, was the site of the conflict of Bloody Sunday on March 7, 1965, when police attacked Civil Rights Movement demonstrators as they were attempting to march to the state capital of Montgomery.

“Having short services at each of these areas gave me a sense of understanding the sacrifice of so many for my civil rights,” Rev. Hirano said. “My personal reason in becoming a priest was after being involved in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1970s.

“This initial phase of my growing up made me realize that before I became critical of the larger U.S. political and human rights violations, I should first understand my own ego-centered mind and how my life is a part of those atrocities. Holding services at those sites helped me to somewhat come full circle. It’s easy to talk about civil rights or Black Lives Matter. It is extremely difficult to actually make a difference.

“I really had the feeling of people who believed and supported President Trump were racist, uneducated fools,” he continued. “When I saw what

the landscape of the United States was like, I realized how our country can have many viewpoints.”

**‘We’re All Connected’**

Rev. Yamada said, “Buddhism teaches we’re all connected and tied together. Throughout the country, people try to live the best they can, make a living and live in peace. We have more in common than differences.

“The Buddha diagnosed the problem long ago. We live in a world of interdependence, but our ignorance blinds us. Truly our lives are tied to our country, community, and each other. Looking back at the trip, I’m amazed at this country’s natural beauty, various communities, but also its painful history. My hope is that we’ll finally come together and realize the great Oneness of our lives.”

Rev. Hirano said the road trip reinforced his personal beliefs, both politically and religiously.

“Having been born and raised in Salt Lake City, my need to see both sides of the political spectrum is essential to stay balanced,” Rev. Hirano said. “I have very good friends on the conservative right and many on the liberal left .... My trip helped me better understand that all people are both good and evil. It is the causes and conditions in our lives that have allowed us the viewpoints we hold dear.”

**CBE SEMINARS ONLINE FOR ALL**  
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK  
*\*Pacific Time - Check local time zone*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 5 PM - 6:30 PM (\*PACIFIC)**

**SOCIALLY ENGAGED BUDDHISM:**  
**Jodo Shinshu Perspectives**  
What is “Socially Engaged Buddhism”? What are some examples of Buddhist social engagements in Japan and elsewhere? How do we apply the idea of socially engaged Buddhism to a Jodo Shinshu life guided by the Nembutsu ?

**Guest Speakers:**

**Prof. Mitsuya Dake**  
Graduate School of Intercultural Communications, Ryukoku University, Kyoto, Japan  
  
Prof. Dake is on the faculty of Ryukoku University’s Graduate School of Intercultural Communications, and is director of its Center for the Studies of South Asia. He received his masters degree from Ryukoku and has completed his Ph.D. courses for literature. His areas of research include: Shinran Thought; Engaged Buddhism; and Inter-faith Dialogue. He serves on the editorial board of the journal, *Contemporary Voices of Dalit*.

**Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara**  
Supervising Minister, Berkeley Buddhist Temple Manager, Jodo Shinshu International Office  
  
Rev. Kuwahara has a master’s degree in Jodo Shinshu Studies from the Institute of Buddhist Studies and Ryukoku University, and completed the Ryukoku Ph.D. program in Jodo Shinshu studies. He has also served as co-director of the BCA Center for Buddhist Education; coordinator for the Hongwanji Office of the BCA Jodo Shinshu Center; and staff member of the International Department of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

**REGISTER ONLINE ~ FREE**  
<https://forms.gle/dtkIF6w47Fz4TpCN9>

**DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED - CLICK TO DONATE**  
<https://bca.kindful.com/campaigns/232361?utf8=%E2%9C%93&campaigns=232361&amount=>

**VISIT: [BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG](http://BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG) EMAIL: [CBE@BCAHQ.ORG](mailto:CBE@BCAHQ.ORG) TEL: 510.809.1460**

**2021 BCA YOUTH RETREAT EVENTS**

**APR 24: MIDDLE SCHOOL SESSION**

**JUL 12-16: BYR HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER RETREAT**

**NOV 6: BYR & FRIENDS REUNION EVENT**

**REG INFO WILL BE EMAILED TO YOUR TEMPLES**

**Questions please email: [bkmizushima@bcahq.org](mailto:bkmizushima@bcahq.org)**

**2021 Ryukoku-IBS Lectures**

**Akira Yoshida**  
Associate Professor, Ryukoku University, Faculty of Economics  
  
Lecture Title:  
Views of the Human Beings in the Doctrines of the Buddhist Praxis  
「仏教の修道論に見られる人間観」  
  
**Save the Lecture Dates and Time**  
March 8 (Mon) 6:00PM – 7:30PM  
March 9 (Tue) 6:00PM – 7:30PM  
March 10 (Wed) 6:00PM – 7:30PM  
March 11 (Thu) 6:00PM – 7:30PM

The 2021 Ryukoku Lectures will be delivered by Akira Yoshida, Associate Professor of Ryukoku University.

He talks about how the teaching of early Buddhism viewed human beings and their Buddhist praxis toward enlightenment in India, by referring to the Abhidharma texts by the sarvastivada and writings in the sixth century about the theory of Buddhist epistemology.

There will be four lectures on zoom. Registration on the IBS site:  
<https://www.shin-ibs.edu/event/ryukoku2021/>

Both Lectures are free and open to the public.

English translation will be provided by Rev. Dr. Mutsumi Wondra.

## Bishop’s Message

Continued from Page 2

the unfolding of wisdom in our life. Wisdom is what liberates us from this world of suffering, the world of samsara.

There are some who might argue that from a very strict Jodo Shinshu perspective, that the Six Paramitas aren’t something that we encourage or even practice. I would argue that point and say that the Six Paramitas are fundamental practices of the Mahayana Buddhist path. If Jodo Shinshu is Mahayana Buddhism, then how can we not practice the Six Paramitas.

The first of the Six Paramitas is “dana” or “giving.” Without the practice of giving, our temples would fold. The “dana,” the generous giving of members, both materially and spiritually, as in volunteering

and serving in various roles at the temple, is fundamental to all of our churches and temples. We cannot survive a day without it. We cannot say that we only practice “dana” and throw out the rest of the paramitas.

Returning to our practice of patience as a fundamental practice in our life as a Buddhist, is how we can live through this terrible pandemic. It can give meaning to the stress, the anxiety, the difficulty of what we are going through. We just have to practice patience. This is our life as a Buddhist. This is our path of the unfolding of wisdom.

There will be a light at the end of the tunnel. The virus cannot last forever, because we know that the teaching of impermanence says it won’t. It might last longer than we would like, but it will not last forever.

Vaccines are beginning to become available, and we all hope that as more and more people receive the vaccine, that the virus will subside and that we will be able to return to some form of life as we knew it before the pandemic.

Some things will remain. We may have to keep wearing masks. We may have to continue to be careful, but hopefully many of the restrictions that inconvenience us will be lifted.

Other positive things that we have learned during this pandemic will continue. We will continue to share the Dharma virtually in some manner, as we have found that we can reach many new people via the internet. But, hopefully, we will all be able to meet again in person as well. What a wonderful reunion that will be, but for now, we just have to practice patience, patience, and more patience.

## Rev. Nakano

Continued from Page 2

It is our “dana” of unselfish giving without asking for anything in return that we share. It is through this unselfish giving that we share with others in their struggles. These gifts or offerings may be reciprocated or repaid, if or when we find ourselves in difficulties.

Shinran Shonin was poor in wealth, yet he was rich in the Dharma. He freely offered the teachings to anyone whether rich or poor, educated or not, male or female, adult or child. Shinran expounded the Dharma to whoever wanted to hear, listen and learn. The only condition that Shinran Shonin asked is that we continue to lis-

ten, hear and learn. In return, we share with others.

Shinran Shonin never asked for a temple to be built in his honor or for any payment. From the time of Shinran Shonin to the present, it is the followers who feel the importance of continuing his teachings. We continue in hearing and listening. We give donations to the temple, so that we can continue to share the teachings to others, who also want to hear and learn of the teachings.

We are still able to hear the words and teachings and Shinran Shonin is repaying us through the words and teachings of his teachers. His deep entrusting in Namu Amida Butsu and reliance on the words of the Buddha can still be heard through the chanting of sutras

and his writings.

Shinran Shonin is reciprocating his gratitude. It is his way of returning and sharing his appreciation and we continue to share ours with others and we are able to continue the search of our true self.

We share in our Namu Amida Butsu/Nembutsu in gratitude and thankfulness for being able to still hear the teachings. We are never abandoned in our time of need or joy and we are accepted just as we are.

We continue and try to live a life of Nembutsu. We are indebted to Shinran Shonin for his never ending entrusting in Namu Amida Butsu and the teachings. Perhaps it is our Namu Amida Butsu that is our grateful dead.



## ‘Dial the Dharma’ for Enlightening Messages

800-817-7918

Press 1 for English, Press 2 for Japanese

BCA  
Center for  
Buddhist  
Education

**CBE SEMINARS ONLINE FOR ALL**  
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK  
*\*Pacific Time - Check local time zone*

TWO SATURDAY SESSIONS, 11 AM - 1 PM (PACIFIC TIME)

ZEN & SHIN BUDDHISM

<b>PART 1:</b> <b>MARCH 6, 2021</b>	<b>PART 2:</b> <b>MARCH 13, 2021</b>
 <b>Letting Go:</b> A ZEN & SHIN APPROACH TO LIBERATION <b>Dr. Duncan Ryukken Williams</b> <i>University of Southern California Author, AMERICAN SUTRA: A STORY OF FAITH AND FREEDOM IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR (2019)</i> <small>Duncan Ryukken Williams was born in Tokyo, Japan to a Japanese mother and British father and grew up in Japan and England until age 17, when he came to the U.S. to attend college (Reed College) and graduate school (Harvard University, where he received a Ph.D. in Religion). He is currently Professor of Religion and East Asian Languages &amp; Cultures and the Director of the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture. Previously, he held the Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair of Japanese Buddhism at UC Berkeley. He has also been ordained since 1993 as a Buddhist priest in the Soto Zen tradition and served as the Buddhist chaplain at Harvard University from 1994-96.</small>	 <b>Zen Practice</b> TIMELESS CALLING, TIMELY RESPONSE <b>Tenkei Coppens Roshi</b> <i>Abbot, Zen River Temple- Uithuizen, The Netherlands Author, TIMELESS CALLING, TIMELY RESPONSE, A GUIDE FOR ZEN BUDDHIST PRACTICE (2020)</i> <small>Anton Tenkei Coppens is the abbot of Zen River Temple. Born in The Netherlands, he has a background in art and art history, started his Zen training in England in 1976, and continued it from 1980 with Genpo Merzel Roshi and Taizan Maezum Roshi, mostly in the US but also in several European countries. He received Shiko, Dharma transmission, from Genpo Roshi in 1996 and Inka, the final seal of approval, in 2006. Tenkei Roshi also practiced Zen in Japan with Junryu Kuroda Roshi and became a fully qualified representative of the Soto school. Together with his wife, Tamara Myoho Gabrysch Roshi, and a number of close students, he established Zen River Temple in 2002.</small>
<b>REGISTER ONLINE FOR MARCH 6: PART 1</b> <i>Guest Speaker: Dr. Duncan Williams</i> <a href="https://forms.gle/Fhcw6qHIMK8Y9bK7">https://forms.gle/Fhcw6qHIMK8Y9bK7</a>	<b>REGISTER ONLINE FOR MARCH 13: PART 2</b> <i>Guest Speaker: Tenkei Coppens Roshi</i> <a href="https://forms.gle/TEoGskJYehi5ZsCa8">https://forms.gle/TEoGskJYehi5ZsCa8</a>

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED - CLICK TO DONATE  
<https://bca.kindful.com/campaigns/232361?utf8=%E2%9C%93&campaigns=232361&amount=>

VISIT: [BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG](http://BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG) EMAIL: [CBE@BCAHQ.ORG](mailto:CBE@BCAHQ.ORG) TEL: 510.809.1460

BCA  
Center for  
Buddhist  
Education

**CBE SEMINARS ONLINE FOR ALL**  
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC - REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK  
*\*Pacific Time - Check local time zone*

SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 2021 11 AM - 1 PM\*

What is the Future of  
Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the West?

namo  
amida butsu  
namo amida butsu

GUEST SPEAKERS: THREE BISHOPS

HAWAII	BCA	CANADA
		
REV. ERIC MATSUMOTO BISHOP, HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII	REV. MARVIN HARADA BISHOP, BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA (NORTH AMERICA DISTRICT)	REV. TATSUYA AOKI BISHOP, JODO SHINSHU BUDDHIST TEMPLES OF CANADA

**REGISTRATION - Free** **CLICK TO REGISTER:** <https://forms.gle/1egQ3umNGki4xf1J7>

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED **CLICK TO DONATE**  
<https://bca.kindful.com/campaigns/232361?utf8=%E2%9C%93&campaigns=232361&amount=>

Visit: [buddhistchurchesofamerica.org](http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org) email: [cbe@bcahq.org](mailto:cbe@bcahq.org) tel: 510.809.1460



BUDDHA DHARMA 24-7

[EverydayBuddhist.org](http://EverydayBuddhist.org) has over one hundred hours of Shin Buddhist education and Dharma content which is available 24/7. Our response to this crisis is to provide:  
**More free content for everyone**  
**Frequent blog posts**  
**Livestream “How To” courses and Q&A offerings**  
Online Dharma support is more important than ever during these stressful times. Come check us out.

 **EVERYDAY BUDDHIST**  
[www.everydaybuddhist.org](http://www.everydaybuddhist.org)

**CUSTOMIZED BUDDHIST  
FACE MASKS**

**Personalize Your Face Mask**



  
+  
**BCA**  
**Your Temple**



**Pick Your Colors & Lettering**

- BCA logo + customize lettering - “BCA” “OCBC”
- Pick 2 colors - black, gray, purple, light purple



**Features**  
2 masks in 1 - flip over for new look  
Machine washable - multi-layered - antimicrobial coating

**How to Order**  
<https://www.flipmasks.com/collections/BuddhistTemple>  
\$11 each + \$1.95 for shipping 1-5 masks

**Questions:** [Naoko.Fujii@gmail.com](mailto:Naoko.Fujii@gmail.com) or 650-485-1560  
*Thank you for your support of the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple Dharma School  
Nishi Hongwanji Pilgrimage Fundraiser*

McCarthy

Continued from Page 4

pologist who had recently come back from Japan, where he had had contacts with Soka Gakkai. His illustrated lecture was full of praise for this new form of “living Buddhism.” Rev. Kyogoku listened carefully and didn’t say a word to contradict or challenge the speaker. Later, she explained to me — who was quite taken with the image presented — that the matter was not so simple and that the group had negative and positive sides. What impressed me was the restraint she showed at the public lecture, not wanting perhaps to contradict the academic speaker or to engage in sectarian polemics.

By the time I was 18 or 19, I had decided that I was a Buddhist, and not a Catholic anymore. Rev. Kyogoku’s reaction was: “That’s fine, Paul, if that’s where your path leads you. But don’t go and tell your mother now that you’ve changed your religion.”

Her reaction was thoughtful, compassionate concern that I not cause pain to my mother, who was elderly and a very pious Catholic. Without her restraining words, I might well have gone home and made my startling

announcement to my bewildered mother. Rev. Kyogoku was not into that kind of proselytizing.

In the mid-1960s, she moved to Columbus, Ohio, where she became a university librarian. All this time, she had been living with her aged mother and caring for her. Although Obaa-sama and I could not communicate well, she was a loving presence in Rev. Kyogoku’s home, and showed me great kindness. I still have a copy of the Japanese Shinshu daily “prayer book” that she inscribed and gave to me.

I lost touch with Rev. Kyogoku until about 1988, when she saw a review in the New York Times of my first book-length translation from the Japanese: “Childhood Years, the Memoir of Tanizaki Jun’ichiro.”

She wrote to congratulate me and wish me well in my new life in Japan. When I wrote back, I addressed the letter to the assisted living facility where she stayed, and to “Rev. Yurii Kyogoku.”

“Enough of that ‘Reverend’ stuff,” she wrote right back. “Just call me ‘Yurii’ from now on,” she responded.

She died in Richmond, Virginia, a few years later. I will never forget her, my first Buddhist and Japanese American mentor and friend.

Rev. Dr. Kinst

Continued from Page 3

Pete Docter, who co-directed “Soul,” and about five others.

“They were just forming their ideas and were interested in Buddhist views of the afterlife and some other things,” Rev. Dr. Kinst said. “They were a lovely, humble, thoughtful and curious

crew and very kind — really wanted to make sure to be inclusive and respectful. It was relaxed and easy and I enjoyed myself.”

Rev. Dr. Kinst says she “pretty much forgot about it” until people at IBS, including Dean of Students Dr. Scott Mitchell, and friends told her they saw her name in the credits.

She said it was a “fun thing to have happened.”

Mayor Kamei

Continued from Page 1

said in a statement. “In fact, it is in the gardens of Mountain View Buddhist Temple that my husband proposed.

“I feel renewed hope for 2021,” she continued. “The road ahead is still long and there is much work to be done. Yet, I am heartened by the path of public service to the community that I learned through my experience as a temple member.”

would spend many days with them at their home in Waverly Park, planting the seeds for my roots in the city,” Kamei said in her biography on the city of Mountain View website.

The Kameis later moved their nursery to Morgan Hill.

Kamei was an active member of both the Morgan Hill Buddhist Community Center and San Jose Buddhist Church Bet-suin, where she participated in Girl Scouts, Jr. YBA, Judo and Suzume No Gakko. She served as a Dharma School assistant

Program in San Jose Japantown. It will be called “The Kamei Family” Scholarship.

In November 2019, Kamei was proposed to by Chris Takeuchi in front of the garden at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple. Kamei and Takeuchi were recently married in the same spot in October 2020 under COVID-19 restrictions.

MVBT Resident Minister Rev. Yushi Mukojima praised Kamei’s selection as mayor and the milestones it marked.

“I am really proud that

*‘Buddhism emphasizes the teaching of equality and, just as Buddhism has been supported by countless wonderful women, Ellen shows us clearly how our community is sustained by many women leaders.’*

— MVBT Resident Minister Rev. Yushi Mukojima

MVBT President Bob Matsumoto detailed Kamei’s long ties with the temple.

“The Kamei family are no strangers to the Mountain View Buddhist Temple,” he wrote. “Ellen’s grandparents, Kenzo and Ruth Kamei, were very active in the temple helping with various events, especially Obon. Ruth was also very active in the BWA. Ellen’s extended circle of relatives that are active in the temple include the Ozawa, Inouye, Nishimoto and Uyehara families.”

Kamei was born and raised in Silicon Valley, the daughter of a first-generation Chinese and Puerto Rican American mother from New York City and a third-generation Japanese American father born at Heart Mountain internment camp in Wyoming. She is also multilingual and can speak in Spanish, Japanese and Mandarin.

Her grandparents, Kenzo and Ruth Kamei, met in Mountain View and her grandfather later owned his small business as a flower grower and passed the tradition on to her father.

“The nursery was first located in Mountain View and I

during high school and participated in the Padma Program.

Kamei received her bachelor’s degree in English at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and her master’s degree at the Fels Institute of Government at University of Pennsylvania. She also attended Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government.

After completing her undergraduate studies at UC Santa Barbara, she went to the Mie Prefecture of Japan as a Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program assistant language teacher, where she taught kindergarten, elementary and middle school for two years.

When Kamei moved back to California after graduate school, she moved in with her grandfather and became a board member of the Japantown Community Congress of San Jose.

As a board member, she served as a coordinator for the Nikkei Community Intern Program, an eight-week summer internship. She is honored and proud to share that her family will provide ongoing funding for one participant of the Nikkei Community Internship (NCI)

Ellen, a member of the MVBT, was inaugurated as mayor of the city of Mountain View in January,” Rev. Mukojima said in a statement. “It was an amazing and historic event for several reasons: She is a woman, Japanese American, and Mountain View’s first Buddhist mayor.

“Buddhism emphasizes the teaching of equality and, just as Buddhism has been supported by countless wonderful women, Ellen shows us clearly how our community is sustained by many women leaders,” Rev. Mukojima continued.

“I also believe that Ellen’s great achievements will give the young people in our Sangha both courage and hope about America’s future,” Rev. Mukojima said. “I sincerely hope that, with Ellen as our role model, we can realize a wonderful world where all women are proud of and confident in their talents and abilities and will not be afraid to become leaders who contribute to the well-being of their community and the world. We stand together in full support of Ellen in her new challenges. Again, congratulations, Ellen!”

Pating

Continued from Page 4

As I write this reflection on “The Golden Chain,” our country is in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, is suffering an economic recession, and is gripped by massive gatherings for racial justice.

We have witnessed relentless suffering, death count milestones, and panic-buying of toilet paper and hand sanitizer. We have seen yet another viral video showing violence against an African American person. There are so many killings of people I do not know, yet the stories are so familiar they begin to repeat themselves. I am overwhelmed by feelings of pain, numbness, and exhaustion. This is when I go to “The Golden Chain.”

For me, there is a profound restorative power in this simple message of practicing acts of kindness and respect to all beings and recognizing the

interdependence of life. “The Golden Chain” is a guide for living an engaged Buddhist life. In the despair of this unprecedented reality, it encourages us to embrace our humanity.

This simple teaching contains many essential concepts of Buddhist engagement.

*I am a link in the Buddha’s golden chain* encourages me to release my self-centeredness, assumptions, and delusions, and to reflect on oneness with Amida Buddha, the chain that connects us all.

*Knowing that on what I do now depends not only my happiness or unhappiness, but also that of others* encourages me to be aware of my karmic

impacts. Acknowledging our interdependence encourages empathy and listening deeply to those crying out for help.

*May every link in the Buddha’s golden chain of love become bright and strong, and*

*may we all attain perfect peace* affirms our bodhisattva ideals and aspiration for all to access the Pure Land.

The shock of all that is happening in the world now is still raw, and the landscape of this new reality is constantly changing. Wherever the next breaking news story inevitably leads, I will come back to “The Golden Chain” as an aspiration for restoring humanity in a time of inhuman challenges.

BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA

Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations

National Conference

Hosted by  
Northern California District

October 14-16, 2022

DOUBLETREE HOTEL, SACRAMENTO CA



Winds of Change  
Jidai No Shinka Ni Kiku  
時代の進化に聞く

 FBWA 2022

Goodman

Continued from Page 1



Paul Goodman

at the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center in West Covina, Los Angeles Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple in Little Tokyo, and Tanaka Farms in Irvine.

In addition, the following have or are hosting drives: Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin in Honolulu, Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple, San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple, and individuals in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Plano, Texas.

“It’s wonderful how the temples and community centers are willing to host the drives and how people of all backgrounds and ages are coming out to support his cause,” said Carole Sugimoto, who along with husband Steve and sons Derek and Tyler, helped to coordinate a donor campaign for Goodman with A3M, a Los Angeles-based organization that recruits potential marrow donors.

“This was an overall coordinated effort with what we refer to Paul’s army/village,” Steve Sugimoto said. The campaign — which began about a month ago — quickly picked up momentum, and seven mutual friends grew to over 100 people in reaching out to others and organizing events.

“Promoting the events has been easy — it seems everyone wants to help Paul find a match,” Sugimoto

said. “One of the most touching realizations was how much of an impact Paul has had on his ‘little’ campers from LABCC. He has been a repeat LABCC counselor for 10 years. Some of those campers are now old enough to register with Be The Match (the largest marrow registry in the world run by the National Marrow Donor Program), some volunteered to work with the drives and some fellow counselors are coordinating bone marrow registry drives of their own.”

“I’m really looking for, you know, someone to kind of be involved in saving my life,” Goodman told CBSLosAngeles in January. “There’s a bone marrow match out there in the world for me, and if we could get it in the next couple months that would just be so amazing for my prognosis and my outlook.”

Goodman, a filmmaker who runs his own production company, is battling a recurrence of leukemia. He grew up at OCBC, playing basketball and is a volunteer tech advisor for OCBC programs. He’s also a counselor for the Los Angeles Buddhist Coordinating Council church camp.

The ideal match for Goodman would be a donor who is 50% Japanese and 50% Caucasian, and between the ages of 18-44 years old.

“It has truly been an amazing campaign and is a testament to how many people Paul and the Goodman family have touched,” Steve Sugimoto said. “We continue to receive texts, emails, phone calls from people that want to help and contribute, and that is why this campaign has grown so quickly.”

Sugimoto said it “has definitely been a cross-generational campaign and it warms our heart to see those that we remember as little kids now contribute tremendously as adults to this campaign.”

For more information, go to: [www.hope4paul.com](http://www.hope4paul.com).



Stacey Suzuki holds a “thank you” sticker as she takes part in a drive-through marrow registration at the Orange County Buddhist Church on Jan. 31. (Courtesy of Ty Tanioka)

Matsuura

Continued from Page 5

tives in Japan for their safety. In response to this trend of family separation, the Matsuuras established a licensed Guadalupe Children’s Home within the temple grounds.

Thirty-six children ranging in age from 6 to 16 took up residence on the temple grounds, well-cared for while remaining happily close to their parents. Over the years, the temple would be home to almost 60 children.

In spite of the hardships, the Matsuuras continued temple services and managed to procure an old \$60 pump organ for the Sunday School. As the pandemic eased in 1920, a temple fundraiser generated funds to purchase a used piano. Shinobu wrote modestly in her diary that since there was no one in the Sangha to play, she accompanied the gathas as best as she could.

**Pioneering Gatha Book**

Singable gathas had been Shinobu’s wish and she was grateful when a newly published gatha book, “Raisan” was sent to her in Guadalupe by Hawaii’s Bishop Yemyo Imamura. Bishop Imamura and his wife, Kiyoko, shared a keen interest in music and the arts. Under their guidance, a pipe organ was built into the newly constructed Hongwanji Temple in Honolulu in 1916.

The prominent Japanese composer, Kosaku Yamada, was engaged as resident composer for new gathas. Kiyoko wrote poems which Yamada set to children’s gathas. “Raisan” was the culminating work which was published and distributed. Little did anyone suspect that one day, Joen Ashikaga, the eminent Buddhist priest responsible for bringing together Rev. Matsuura and Shinobu would also arrange a meeting between the Imamura’s eldest son, Kanmo, and the Matsuura’s eldest daughter, Jane. Although the families came from the same Fukui region in Japan it is perhaps fitting that in America, this auspicious connection was kindled by a pioneering gatha book.

In 1928, the Matsuura family, now a family of six, returned to Japan. Shinobu had become ill in Guadalupe and needed care. In 1931, Rev. Matsuura responded to a call to become one of several priests in the growing Buddhist community of Fresno, California. The family, now seven strong, returned to America.

It was in Fresno that Jane began piano lessons. Jane progressed so quickly that despite the hardships of the Great Depression, Shinobu extravagantly bought a \$100 used piano. This piano was to accompany their return to the Guadalupe community; follow them to the Gila River Relocation Center; return to Guadalupe after the war; and finally retire in Berkeley after



The Berkeley Buddhist Temple choir members pose in front of the old Hondo in 1951. In the center are Rev. Kanmo Imamura and, in white blouse, Jane Imamura, the eldest daughter of Mrs. Shinobu Matsuura. (Courtesy of Berkeley Buddhist Temple)

the passing of Rev. Matsuura.

**Buddhist Choir Formed**

This piano and Jane’s remarkable musical talent paved an inspired path to one of the earliest Buddhist choirs in America. Upon returning to Guadalupe in 1935, Shinobu researched and found Mrs. Muriel Fisk, the best piano teacher in the area for Jane. Mrs. Fisk had settled in Santa Maria with her husband William from England.

Mrs. Fisk formed a deep friendship with the Matsuuras and started a temple choir at the Guadalupe Buddhist Church. Meeting every week, the Guadalupe YWBA Choir performed not only in the temple, but in various community festivals, including broadcasting on the San Luis Obispo radio station and performing in 1939 at the Golden Gate International Exposition at San Francisco’s Treasure Island.

Even after Pearl Harbor, Mrs. Fisk and her husband stood by the Japanese American community. They traveled to the Tulare Assembly Center to bring supplies and food to the large group of internees from the Guadalupe area. Mrs. Fisk led the choir for a final time on the Tulare fairgrounds grandstand, lifting spirits over the barbed wire fence.

The Fisks faced harsh repercussions for their support of the Japanese Americans, including job termination and chose to leave their home because of the local backlash. A widowed Mrs. Fisk returned to England after the war’s end. Before she left, she gave her baby grand piano to Jane in Berkeley. It was on that piano that Jane, as the Bomori of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, would teach a whole new generation of young Buddhist pianists!

During the war years, Shinobu was active at the Gila River Relocation Center. She, along with three other Buddhist priests and Rev. Kanmo Imamura, who had just joined the family as the newly married husband to Jane, set up camp temple services, complete with music. Shinobu gradually handed her musical baton to Jane, now herself a young and devoted Bomori.

Shinobu and Rev. Matsuura returned to Guadalupe after World War II and turned the

temple into a temporary hostel for returning internees. Suffering from cancer that began plaguing him while he was incarcerated separately from the family, Rev. Matsuura passed away in 1947. After his death, Shinobu moved to Berkeley, where Rev. Kanmo Imamura and Jane Imamura had settled.

**Role in IBS Precursor**

Shinobu continued her active work as a prominent member of the Buddhist community in Berkeley. Together with Bishop Enryo Shigefuji and Rev. Kanmo Imamura, they discussed plans for a new BCA Study Center. The first classes were held in 1949 in her modest but welcoming home. As the number of participants grew, lectures and classes were held at the Berkeley temple. Eventually the study center expanded to become the current Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS).

Shinobu played a large part in the arrival of the Buddha statue (Gohonzon) that sits in the Onaijin at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple. In 1955, Rev. Imamura asked Shinobu to seek out a Buddha image for the newly constructed temple. Shinobu chose the priceless Buddha she found standing in Joen Ashikaga’s temple on Ikunoshima in Hiroshima prefecture.

The Buddha statue dated from the Kamakura era (1185-1333), a period that saw the birth and spread of the Jodo Shinshu teachings throughout Japan. Joen Ashikaga and his temple members graciously bid their Buddha image farewell as it left for America in Shinobu’s care.

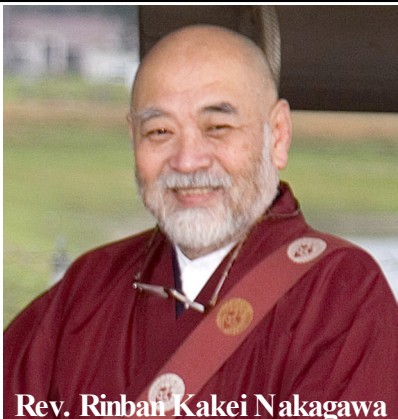
In her later life, Shinobu welcomed streams of visiting scholars, artists and interested Buddhists to her home. She traveled the world, inspiring others in the teachings of the Buddha through her modest and compassionate example until 1972, when she suffered a debilitating stroke.

She was still teaching Japanese, giving occasional sermons and greeting guests when, in 1980, she became bedridden. Before her passing in 1984, she was awarded the Zuihoshi 5th Order from the Emperor of Japan and the Humanitarian Award from Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai of Japan.

# 今月の法話

「六字のおいわれを聞く」

フレスノ別院 輪番 中川 嘉慧



Rev. Rinbar Kakei Nakagawa

こんにちは。フレスノは梅の季節がおり、桜の季節になってまいりました。みなさんお元気でお過ごしでしょうか？

本願寺フレスノ別院の中川嘉慧です。

フレスノと聞かれると、とても暑いところ、というイメージがありますが、冬には朝晩がけっこう寒くなります。ことしの冬は、気候が不安定で一両日の寒暖差が30度以上という日もありました。この原稿を書いている2月の中旬も、日々の温度差が20度前後あったりする今日この頃です。

わたしは、うっかり、風邪をひいてしまいました。朝、お寺に行こうと外に出ると、一日前の気温が、70度前後あつてとても温ったかかったので、うっかり薄着のまま、肌がヒンヤリかんじたのですが、まあいいかと、そのままお寺に行き、ダルマセンターの大きな建物に入ると、建物全体が、夜中から明け方にかけての冷気で冷え切ってしまった。少々寒いが、すぐ済むからと思い、用事をものの一時間程で片付けてすぐに帰宅したのですが、寄る年波のせいかな、案の定、風邪をひいてしまいました。

フレスノ別院に赴任する以前、わたしはは十年以上のあいだ、冬がずっと寒い北西部のワシントン州にいたのですが、このような風のひき方をしたことはありませんでした。むしろ、北西部三州、ブリティッシュ・コロンビア（カナダです）、ワシントン州、オレゴン州でのウィンターシーズン、

特にサービスやお説教で訪れたローカルのお寺の寒かった思い出はありません。とくに本堂の中は、お手洗いであろうと、廊下を歩いていても、外に出ることがないかぎり、お寺じゅうの何処にいても、肌身がヒンヤリとする場所はありませんでした。もっとも、そうしておかないと、水道や下水のパイプが一旦凍ってしまうと、アトが大変だからです。寒い地方だからこそ、完璧に暖房施設が整ったわけですね。

お説教に招かれて旅行するときには、下着を一枚余計に持って行った事を思い出しました。本堂が暖か過ぎて、サービスのあと、汗びっしょりになる事が多かったから換えの下着が必需品だったのです。私に限らず、冬の期間、寒い中西部や北西部のステイツから、温かいはずのフレスノを訪れて親類とリユニオンを楽しんだのはよいが、反対に風邪をひいたという話をよく聞きます。

さて、風邪をひいたわたしは、そこで思いいたりしました。仏法を聴くとは、何を聞くのかということ。

それは、お釈迦さまの思いやり溢れる智慧での導き、すなわちアミターバで成し遂げられたお名号、すなわちお釈迦さまのお声である六字のおいわれを聞くのです。それは、われわれが、仏陀にならしていただける道が保証されているという、ほんとうにところが安らぐ事実を聞くということなんです。

浄土真宗は、この一点につきます。

うっかり寒いめをして風邪をひいた身から言わせていただくと、もしも「あたたかい」という事実に出遭った時には、「寒いんじゃないか」、「つめたいんじゃないか」という疑心、すなわちうたがいのところは消えてしまはずです。そして、気づいたのです。

「信心の喜びは、あゝぎの汗のように、びっしょりになるほど、いっしょく自然ににじみでてくるのだなあ」と。

親鸞聖人は、正像末和讃38のに示されます。

如来(によらい)の作(さ)願(がん)をたづぬれば 苦(く)悩(のう)の(う)有(う)情(じょう)をすてずして 回(え)向(こう)を首(しゅ)としたまひて 大(だい)悲(ひ)心(しん)をば成(じょう)就(じゅ)せり

すなわち、

「釈迦牟尼仏陀の、思いやり溢れる智慧での導きが、お名号に成し遂げられた事実は、大事な事には一切気づくことなく、無知のまま生活する以外にないわれわれをも、けっして無視することはないという事。」

そもそも、そのような、われわれ凡夫を確実に、余すことなく救うのが仏陀の目的なのだから、したがって、溢れて止まない思いやりの心が、佛の智慧が働く絶対条件なのである。」

お釈迦さまのやるせない、暖かすぎるお慈悲の働き、（これをアミターバといいます）に会えば会うほど、一枚一枚、疑い自力のころは、はぎとられて、丸裸にされてしまう私なのです。

本当に助かるのか、助からないのかと、自分ひとりの思い惑う余地など全くありません。ただただ、仏恩の広大なることを喜び、ご報酬の日暮らしに、このイノチのありつたけを燃やし尽くしてください。それこそ、お念仏に救われた者の姿であります。寒いまんまで咳するよりも、暖かすぎるお慈悲の中で、お念仏の汗をいっばいかきましよう。

南无阿弥陀仏、Namu-Amita-bha、Nan mit bha、なんみんばだあ。

お釈迦様は、名号と呼ばれる「南无阿弥陀仏 Nam(a)mit bha」を、「最初の仏性から生まれた慈悲深い智慧と優しさはかり知れない」という意味でお唱えになっています。

私たちは、このお釈迦様の自然な声に合わせて、

「お釈迦様の慈悲深い智慧と優しさに感謝して身を委ねます」と応答して念仏もうさせて頂きます。そして、この原初的な仏性の働きの結果、いつしか、私たちが唱えた言葉が、私たち一人一人が、幾重にも積み重なり、汚染されたカルマを原動力としながら、突き動かされるように生きている現実と縁起して、私たちに個々の仏性を顕在化（信心開発 しんじんかいほつ）せしめるのです。

## オンラインで広がる「法縁話し合い法座 ミネソタ州ツインシティ仏教会

コロナ感染対策防止のため、各地の仏教会では日曜法座及び、各種の行事や勉強会がオンラインで行われる中、ミネソタ州のツインシティ仏教会では、「日本語話し合い法座」をオンラインで継続し、ミネソタ州以外からの参加者も増えた。外出できず人と会うことが少なくなった社会の中で、貴重な交流の場になっている。参加者からの声を聞かせてもらった。

林田晶子さんは、一昨年、日本に住んでいた最愛のお父さんを亡くされて、親孝行ができなかったことを悔やんでおられた頃、ツインシティ仏教会開教使補の鬼倉フライ知永美氏と出会い、話し合い法座に参加をされるようになった。



Participants of the online Dharma discussion led by Asst. Minister Rev. Chiemi Onikura Bly at Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha

「お誘いいただいたときに、肩がスツと軽くなったのを覚えています。仏教のことは何も知らず心配しましたが、少しづつ、仏教、浄土真宗のみ教えを聞かせていた

だく大切な機会となりました。」「以前は亡くなった父に対しては、申し訳ない気持ちでいっぱいでした。もっと長く生きたかったのではないかと、最後に何か言い残したこともあるのではないかと悩み、後悔の念が強くなりました。」「真宗の学びの中で、父が間違えなく往生させていたにいて、お浄土に迎えられていることを味わい安堵し、今は父のおかげでこのような法縁に恵まれたことに感謝しています。」

林田さんはツインシティ仏教会のサービスだけでなく、他の仏教会の勉強会や法話会にも参加されているそうで、1月には御本山の報恩講の御堂布教等も、オンラインで拝聴されていた。「今では法縁が心の拠り所になっています。亡き父との架け橋であり、人生のみちしるべでもあります。悩んでいるときにこの法話会と出会えたことが、父が仕向けてくれた縁だとも思い、父にも感謝しています。」

「参加者の皆さんからのご質問やご意見により、私の方がたくさんのご気づき字ばせていただいています。看取り、終活問題、家族や子育てなど直接的な身の回りの問題から、自死について、差別や偏見、社会分断などの厳しい問題も話題になります。またちよつとしたアメリカと日本の習慣の違いや、海外にいながら手に入る和食やお酒の話まで、話題に事欠くことなく、毎回楽しいおしゃべりも続きます。オンライン化されたことで、遠隔地からの参加者もいらつしやるので、コロナ感染が終息しても、オンラインで続ける予定です。長引く厳しい社会環境の中で、気兼ねなく自分の想いを分かち合い、ご法縁の輪が広がることを願っています。」と鬼倉フライ開教使補は語る。

\*\*\*\*\*

鬼倉開教使補より

どなたでも気軽に参加いただける会です。ツインシティ仏教会の日本語話し合い法座に参加を希望される方は、次のEメールアドレスにご連絡ください。

tcbuddhist@q.com

毎月第2と第4月曜日、中西部時間の午後8時から9時半です。

# 法輪

2021年 3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@bcahq.org  
for WOD: WODeditor@bcahq.org

二〇二一年度教化標語  
「仏法をバーチャルで  
シェア、次元を超えて  
おうちで聞法」

## あの記事をもう一度！

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>

## 総長メッセージ

### パンデミックを耐え忍ぶ

米国仏教団 総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

みなさん  
はコロナ禍  
での生活に  
飽き飽きし  
ているので  
はないでしょ  
うか。

この生活

は去年の3月から始まりました。ソーシャルディスタンスングをし、マスクを着用し、旅行に行かずに、友人や家族に会うのも簡単ではありません。レストランに食事に行くこと、友人とバーで飲むこと、映画に行くこと、モールで買い物をする、野球を観に行くこと、コーヒーを飲んだり、夕食を食べたりするために知人を家に呼ぶことなど、私たちが今まで当たり前のようにしていたことができなくなりました。いつになつたらこの状況が終わるのでしょうか？皆がワクチンを接種し、パンデミックが始まる前の生活に戻ることを待ちわびています。

それに加えて、新型コロナウイルスが体にも与える影響を懸念し、恐怖心を持ち、ウイルスに感染するのではないかと不安を抱えています。誰も入院したり、人工呼吸器を使用したり、ましてや命を奪われることを望んでいません。一刻も早く事態が好転することを願っています。

私たちは今、できるだけ自宅に過して、活動や外出を最小限にしています。そのため、心の緊張が高まりストレスが増えています。仕事に行くことも、ジムに行くことも、釣りや趣味など気晴らしのためにいたこともできないのです。お店に行く時でもウイルス感染のリスクがあるように感じて生活

しています。

このような状況で、私はこれまで以上に「六波羅蜜（ろくはらみつ）」の実践が意義深くなっているように思います。六波羅蜜のひとつ、「忍辱（にんにく）波羅蜜」は、「耐え忍ぶ」という意味で、このパンデミックの不自由な生活の中で、しばしば思い起こさせられます。六波羅蜜は、仏の智慧が展開されて、私たちの生活の中で実践されるものだといえます。仏の智慧とは、忍土といわれる、この苦しい世界、輪廻の世界から私たちを解放するものです。

伝統的な浄土真宗の観点からは、六波羅蜜は私たちが実践したり、勧めたりするものではないと主張する人もいるかもしれませんが、けれども私はその点に異議を唱え、六波羅蜜は大乗仏教徒の基本的な修行であると考えています。浄土真宗が大乗仏教であるならば、私たちは六波羅蜜を実践すべきなのです。

六波羅蜜の最初の徳目は「布施（だんな）」で「与える」ことです。与えることの実践がなければ、私たちのお寺は成り立ちません。お寺でのダーナとは、お寺のメンバーの方による、物質的、精神的な惜しみない奉仕活動のことです。お寺で様々な仕事をし、役割を担い、ボランティアをしてくださることでお寺が成り立っています。ダーナなしでは一日もお寺が存在していくことはできません。六波羅蜜の中のダーナだけを実践することを勧めて、他の徳目はやらなくて良い、ということはないでしょう。

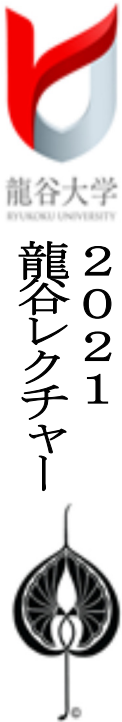
仏教徒としての生活の基本となる忍辱波羅蜜を実践することこそが、この恐ろしいパンデミックを生き抜く方法なのです。その実践によって、ストレス、不安、不自由な生活に意味を見出すことができるのです。耐え忍ぶことは仏教徒としての道であり、これは仏の智慧が私たちの生活の上に展開された結果なのです。

トンネルの先には光があります。新型コロナウイルスの状況は永遠に続くことはないでしょう。全ては無常だからです。私たちが思っている以上に長くなるかもしれませんが、永遠には続かないのです。

現在、ワクチンが利用できるようになり始めています。より多くの人がワクチンを接種し、ウイルスの感染拡大が収まり、パンデミックの前に送っていたような生活に戻ることができることを、皆が願っています。

けれども、コロナ禍の生活でしているいくつかのことは、しばらくは続けていくかもしれません。マスクを着用し続けなければならぬかもしれませんし、ウイルスに感染しないよう注意し続けなければならぬかもしれませんが、多くの制限が解除されると思います。

このパンデミックの中で私たちが学んだポジティブなことも、これからも続いていくでしょう。インターネットを通じて多くの新しい人々とのつながることができるようになることがわかりました。ですから、これからはインターネットを使用して仏法を共有していくことになるでしょう。けれども、皆とは実際に、お寺に集まって会えるようになることも楽しみにしています。その時は素晴らしい再会になることでしょう。今はただ忍辱波羅蜜を実践し、耐えに耐え忍んでいきましょう。



講師：吉田哲准教授（仏教学・インド哲学専門）

講義テーマ：「仏教の修道論に見られる人間観」

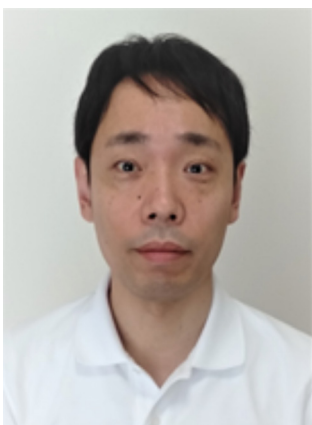
講義要旨：修道論（修行論）に関する仏教の教説の中に見られる人間観のうち注目すべきいくつかの特徴を見てみたい。特に、説一切有部のアビダルマ文献における記述や、6世紀以降の仏教認識論における記述を中心にあつかう予定である。

\* 英語通訳はワンドラ睦開教使（IBS Faculty）が勤めます。講義日程については、3月8、9、10、11日いずれも午後6時〜7時30分までZoom

講義となります。受講登録はIBSウェブサイト

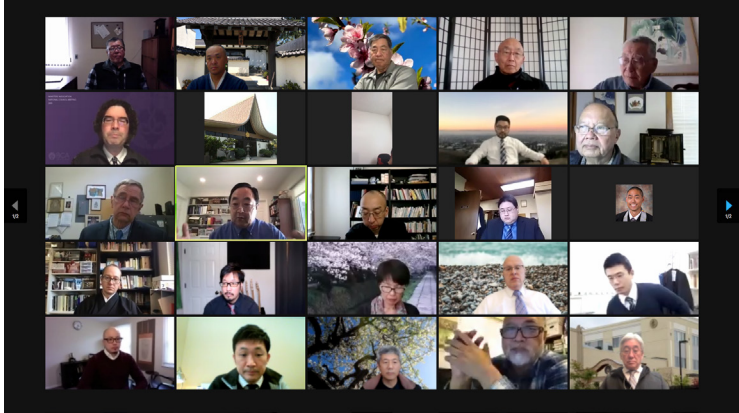
https://www.shin-ibs.edu/

event/ryukoku2021/からします。



Assoc. Prof. Akira Yoshida

## 開教使会議とワークショップが開催される



Ministers' meeting

2月19日に開教使会議が行われた。今回は新型コロナウイルスの影響でインターネット会議プログラムを使用した開催となった。通常は会場に集まり、開教使会議とBCA代表者会議を開催していたが、今回は、オンラインの利便性を活かして、代表者会議が開かれる1週間前に開教使会議をすることになった。会議では各教区、各付属団体からのレポート

や、開教使アシスタントから開教使補へ進む過程などについて話し合われた。

2月20日にはBCA代表者会議にあわせて行われるタウンホールミーティングとワークショップが開催された。このワークショップも通常は代表者会議が行われる週に開催されていたが、今回はオンラインで1週間前に行われ、代表者だけでなくBCAのメンバーも自宅からインターネットで参加できるようにした。オンライン化の時代での新規会員を増やす方法、開教使の引退後の生活資金、お寺でプリスクールやシニアプログラムを運営する方法、BCAの基金、仏教青年会の集いなどのワークショップが行われ、多くの門信徒が参加した。

## ダイヤルザダルマで日本語法話

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