

WHEEL OF DHARMA

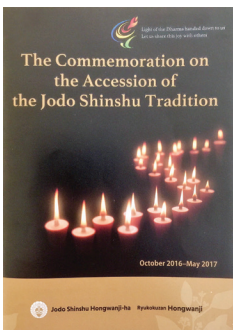
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Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition **Dento Hokoku Hoyo*



From October 2016 through May 2017, tens of thousands of Jodo Shinshu followers have been traveling to the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha's head temple, Ryukoku-zan Hongwanji, in Kyoto, Japan. Ten commemoration sessions of eight days each, with one service per day, have been scheduled so that followers from all over the world could join in the celebration of this historic transition of Nembutsu leadership. Several hundred Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) members and friends have been participating. Rev. Mutsumi Wondra and BCA president, Ken Tanimoto write about their trips in this issue.

Shown above is the cover of the official Commemoration booklet. Copies were distributed at the recent BCA National Council Meeting Special Chanting session presented by the Center for Buddhist Education. View the session online at YouTube.com and search for *2017 BCA NCM Special Chanting Session - Shoshinge Nembutsuge*.

What is the Commemoration of Accession?

Below is the explanation in the official Accession Commemoration program booklet on page 4:

On June 6, 2014, the Jodo Shinshu Tradition was transmitted to the 25th Head Priest, Sennyō Monshū. The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition or *Dentō* Hōkoku Hōyō*, is conducted standing before Amida Tathagata and Shinran Shōnin to formally announce that the newly-inducted Head Priest will take on the responsibilities as Monshū. He will follow in the footsteps of his predecessors to spread the Dharma on to new generations and embrace the opportunity to share the Nembutsu teaching with all people. It is also a festive occasion welcoming everyone to celebrate the inauguration of the new Monshū.

**Dentō 伝灯 literally means 'transmit light' in which the Buddha Dharma is compared to 'light' or 'a lamp' that is to be relayed from person to person and generation to generation.*

Slogan:

*Light of the Dharma handed down to us
Let us share this joy with others*

DHARMA TRAINING FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS
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Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and Buddhist Churches of America (BCA)

Read more about this new outreach project for credentialed teachers on page 4.

Visiting Master Shinran's Historical Sites in Japan: Connected Beyond Time and Space

By Rev. Mutsumi Wondra,
Orange County Buddhist Church

Twenty-three members of the Orange County, Vista, San Diego, and Gardena Buddhist churches and temples participated in the Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition Service for Sennyō Go-monshū-sama on March 31, 2017 at the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto. It was one of our most memorable days because we were able to directly meet and greet Sennyō Go-monshū-sama.

We were on a ten-day tour in Japan visiting Shinran's historical sites. First, we visited the Hō-kai Temple at Nino-no-sato where Shinran was born and Shōrenin where he was ordained by Master Jien, a Tendai monk. We saw the statue of Shinran with his own hair attached at Shōrenin. Then the bus took us to Mt. Hiei. We visited the Jōgyō-zanmai-dō (the hall of constant nembutsu practice) in the Sai-tō area, where Shinran spent twenty years as a monastic.

Spring in Kyoto was one week late this year, so we could not see the *sakura* cherry blossoms there. Our trip continued to the northern part of Japan, where Shinran and Eshinni lived for seven years after leaving Kyoto because of the Nembutsu persecution in 1207.



The Shinran pilgrimage included a service at Kenshin-do Temple.

In Niigata, we visited the Kenshin-do Temple located on Kotaga Beach and Kokufu Betsuin Temple. The Eshinni Museum was another memorable place we visited, and it hailed! The Japan Alps were covered with snow, and there was a lot of snow still on the road at the beginning of April. We wondered how Shinran, Eshinni, and their children lived in such a severe place and shared the Nembutsu teaching with ordinary people such as farmers, fishermen, and villagers.

We moved on to Nagano and visited the Kenshin-do Temple (shown

in photo above) located at Kotaga Beach.. It was quite an experience to go through a pitch-dark tunnel underneath the altar. Toward the end of tunnel, we finally saw ourselves in a mirror. Was it a trip to the Pure Land?

Our final destination was Tokyo, where we finally saw beautiful *sakura* at Ueno Park. The pink petals were blowing around in the spring wind, enjoying their short life.

The ten-day trip turned out excellent, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it. We felt closely connected to Shinran and Eshinni beyond time and space.

Investiture of Dr. Judy K. Sakaki, President of Sonoma State University

To stretch, to question, to engage, to contribute, to trust, and to re-imagine a student-centered university.

On April 20, among the thousands of smiles at the investiture of Judy K. Sakaki, Ph.D. as the seventh president of Sonoma State University, BCA members, especially those from the Buddhist Church of Oakland, were a lively presence. Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop, Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka, past BCA bishop, and Dr. Leroy M. Morishita, president of California State University, East Bay, and member of the Institute of Buddhist Studies Board of Trustees, were among them. For in addition to her amazing personal achievements, Dr. Judy Sakaki happened to be a longtime member of the Oakland Buddhist Church.

Dr. Sakaki is the first Japanese American woman president in the nation to lead a four-year college or university. She is a first-generation college student, a product of public education and a gradu-

ate of both the California State University and the University of California. She has devoted her entire career to issues of access, affordability, inclusive excellence, educational opportunities, and achievement for all students. Sakaki earned a Ph.D. in Education from UC Berkeley, and an M.A. in Educational Psychology and B.A. in Human Development from California State University, East Bay.

Sonoma State University, located in Rohnert Park, California has an enrollment of over 9,000, and is one of the 23 campuses of the California State University system. Previously Sakaki served as Vice President, Student Affairs in the University of California Office of the President. She co-chaired a task force on *Recognizing Students Interned During WWII* that resulted in honorary degrees being awarded to approximately 700 Japanese



Dr. Sakaki (center) surrounded by BCA friends including Rev. Umezu, BCA bishop, (back row), Mrs. Janet Umezu (front, left) and Buddhist Church of Oakland members.

Ed Aiona Photography

American students who were enrolled in the University of California in 1941-42.

Speaking to the theme of Investiture Day: "Dance with Change," Sakaki noted, "It's been quite a dance and a time of change for the campus and for me... I am thankful for all that everyone has done to embrace the dance and to work together -- to stretch, to question, to engage, to contribute, to trust, and to re-imagine a student-centered university."

A specially curated exhibit on the new CSU president's life, titled: *I Am Because...* Dr. Judy K. Sakaki's Journey to

the SSU Presidency, "explores the challenges, victories, and motivations that Dr. Sakaki faced on her path to the Presidency. From her grandparents' struggles as first generation immigrants to the inspirational support of her mentors, Dr. Sakaki's personal and professional journey would not be possible without the people and the events that have shaped who she is today."

Exhibit open through July 31, 2017 at Sonoma State University Library, Jean and Charles Schulz Information Center, 1801 East Cotati Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA.



Thank You, Honen Shonin



By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

everyone, while the various other practices are not open to all types of people, because they are difficult. Was it not in order to bring all sentient beings without exception to Rebirth that Dharmakara in his Original Vow cast aside the difficult practices and chose the easy one?

If the Original Vow had required us to make images of the Buddha and to build stupas, the poor and the destitute would certainly have to give up hope of Rebirth, but the fact is that the rich and the highborn are few, while the poor and the lowborn are exceedingly many.

If the Original Vow required us to have wisdom and intelligence, the foolish and the unwise would certainly have to give up hope for Rebirth, but the fact is that the wise are few, and the foolish are very numerous.

Again, if the Original Vow required us to hear and read many things, those who have heard and read little would certainly have to give up hope of Rebirth, but the fact is that those who have heard much are few and those who have heard little are very many.

Further, if the Original Vow required us to observe the precepts and abide by the rules for monks' behavior, those who have broken the precepts and those who have never undertaken them would certainly have to give up hope of Rebirth, but the fact is that those who observe the precepts are few, while those who have broken the precepts are exceedingly many.

As for the various other practices, they should be understood in the same way.

We should know that if the

Original Vow required us to perform the manifold practices above, then those who are able to attain Rebirth would be few and those unable to do so would be very many.

For this reason, Amida Tathagata, in the distant past when he was the Bhiksu Dharmakara, moved with an impartial compassion and wishing to save all beings universally, did not choose in his Original Vow concerning Rebirth the manifold practices, such as making images of the Buddha and building stupas. He chose the single practice of uttering the Nembutsu in that Original Vow.

(Honen Shonin)

I can imagine how joyful Shinran Shonin must have felt when he met Honen Shonin, a man who personified the virtues of Amida Buddha; the embodiment of the realm of Suchness. Shinran Shonin was able to encounter a living Buddha and found the way to continue to live with deep joy and humility.

Shinran Shonin said that we were born into human life so that we can hear the Basic, Primal, and Original Vow coming from the realm of Suchness, the realm of Nirvana, or the Pure Land. By encountering the Vow, we come to realize our limitations and foolishness. With this understanding, Honen Shonin called himself a foolish being without wisdom.

Amida's Vow is to save all beings without exception from suffering. The only condition for us is to recognize Amida by saying its Name, *Namo Amida Butsu*.

In May, we celebrate Mother's Day. A mother becomes a mother when her child recognizes her and

calls her "mother." In this way, Amida or Suchness wishes to be recognized. Amida is mother and father for everyone. Buddha's Vow was established to make us realize our true identity by selecting the practice of calling Amida's name. Our true parent has been calling us from the realm beyond our perception.

There is no truth in human judgment. We live within a shell created by our own karma and don't see Suchness as our source of life. There is a big gap between what we think of ourselves and what the Enlightened One thinks of us. It is out of deep sorrow over human conditions that the heart of Suchness has been expressed as a Vow to save all beings from the world of suffering.

Shinran Shonin called Amida's name with joy and gratitude. Let us join him and hear the heart of Amida. Let us attend the *Fuji matsuri*, or *Gotan-e* service and listen to what Shinran Shonin and Honen Shonin taught. Happy Birthday to Shinran Shonin and Thank You Very Much to Honen Shonin.

**Original or Primal Vow (Hongwan):* The 18th of 48 Vows made by the Bodhisattva Dharmakara, who became Amida Buddha, promising to liberate all beings from suffering: "If, when I attain Buddhahood, the sentient beings of the ten quarters, with sincere mind entrusting themselves, aspiring to be born in my land, and saying my Name perhaps even ten times, should not be born there, may I not attain the supreme enlightenment. Excluded are those who commit the five grave offenses and those who slander the right dharma."

EBL Conference September 1-3, 2017

North American Buddhism: A Path Forward



By Joy Zavala,
Midwest Buddhist Temple

The 2017 Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) Conference at the Midwest Buddhist Temple (MBT) in Chicago, Illinois will

soon be here! Our conference theme is "North American Buddhism: A Path Forward." We have planned a series of seminars that will generate ideas and actions that we can take back to our temples. EBL conferences are a time for recreation and renewing acquaintances, and there will be time for fun and fellowship.

We are honored to have Rev. Kurt Rye from Placer Buddhist Church as our keynote speaker.

We will also welcome Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America.

All conference activities will take place at MBT. Seminars, *Obon* and *Taiko* Workshops, Dharma School Activities, and TED talks are on the agenda. The conference will end on a high note – a barbecue on Sunday which includes our famous Chicken Teriyaki served at the MBT Ginza Holiday Festival.

Registration cost is \$100 per attendee if paid by July 31, 2017, after which an additional fee of \$25 will be charged. Children under 16 may be added at no cost. The fee for Sunday Only is \$40 per attendee. Optional activities (at an additional cost) include a casino trip and a brewery tour.

Hotel accommodations need to be made individually as there is no centrally booked hotel. All information for this

conference may be found at: <http://mbtchicago.org/ebf-2017>

Please see our website for detailed information on registration, recommended accommodations, transportation, and schedule. There are many interesting and exciting places to see and things to do in Chicago (ranging from free on up). Please share this information with your Sanghas. We hope to see you in Chicago on Labor Day Weekend!

Visit the BCA website www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org to find a BCA temple, Educational Events, Resources and more!



Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
12371 Braddock Drive
Culver City, CA 90230-5869
Tel: (310) 391-4351
www.vhbt.org

Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Established in 1930 as a branch of the now Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple began as a Howakai (gathering to hear Buddha's Teachings), meeting in private homes. Ground breaking for a new temple at its current location on Braddock Drive in Culver City took place in 1962. The dedication of the new temple was held in 1963.

The temple facilities were expanded in 1969, and the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple became an independent Buddhist Churches of America temple in March 1976.



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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.

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Berkeley Buddhist Temple resident minister, Rev. Candice Shibata and BCA president Ken Tanimoto at the Otani Hombyo Mausoleum.

By Ken Tanimoto
BCA President
Watsonville Buddhist Temple

On March 31 of this year, I was fortunate to attend the Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition of our 25th *Monshu* (head priest), Ohtani Kojun,

President's Message: Witnessing Shinran Shonin's Legacy

whose Dharma name is Shaku Sennyō, at the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan. Along with 250 other members of the Buddhist Churches of America, I was privileged to witness the changing of our world Jodo Shinshu leadership from father to son. Monshu Sennyō will follow in the footsteps of his predecessors to propagate the Joy of the Dharma worldwide.

Now, many of you are probably wondering, "Why is this such an important event that hundreds of thousands of people from faraway lands would travel to witness it?"

To tell you the truth, I thought about it myself before deciding to go. I could have stayed home and visited my new four-month-old grandson whom I haven't seen in while, or even enjoyed some needed relaxation time. Instead I made the decision to attend this historical religious event that will now last forever in my memory.

It was quite a sight to see hundreds and hundreds of opened umbrellas in front of the Amida Hall, waiting to go in to the service. The cold and rainy day did not dampen the

spirits of those attending. I think everyone was excited to be there to witness and be a part of this historic event with our new spiritual leader, his family, and thousands of other Jodo Shinshu followers.

The act of reciting the *Shoshin Nembutsume* in the same room with a descendant of our founder, Shinran Shonin, really warmed everyone's hearts and energized our minds and bodies. It was an emotional high that I did not expect. The special chanting style we followed was introduced during Rennyō Shonin's tenure. *Shoshinge* has been chanted at the Hongwanji daily for over 500 years. That made it even more special to me.

In his brief but enlightening Dharma message, Monshu Sennyō affirmed his gratitude to his predecessors for their achievements in embracing and spreading Amida Buddha's Primal Vow to all sentient beings. He also commented that, in our challenging world today, Jodo Shinshu will change; that there will be many bad times as well as good times in our future; and that the only constant which will make our lives stable will be

the "Unconditional Compassion and Light of the Dharma."

After the Accession Ceremony, I was graciously invited by the Berkeley Sangha tour group, led by Berkeley Buddhist Temple's resident minister, Reverend Candice Shibata, and Mr. Michael Endo, to accompany them to the Otani Hombyo Mausoleum. There we would pay our respects to Shinran Shonin, the person who gave us our religious freedom in Jodo Shinshu, and the past 22 *Gomonshu* who are also interred there. We were allowed to enter the special room that is directly in front of and nearest to the actual shrine of Shinran. Everyone felt moved to be allowed into that sacred room.

I suddenly realized that, in one day, I had witnessed the accession of the new 25th *Gomonshu* and was offering incense to the person who founded Jodo Shinshu over 750 years ago. With that thought, there were no regrets about the time and energy spent to experience such a great moment in my lifetime.

Namo Amida Butsu

New Brochures for Outreach & Education

By Rev. Fumiaki Usuki,
Southern District Ministers Association

Many of you are already enjoying the second set of 17 Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Brochures that were written by the Southern District Ministers and other BCA Ministers. They were distributed to BCA Temples during the National Council Meeting at San Jose in March. The Southern District Ministers embarked on this project four years ago, and now a total of 32 brochures have been produced and printed, thanks to funding by the Southern District Council.

Over the years, various brochures and pamphlets have been made available by a number of organizations, including the BCA Bureau of Buddhist Education, the BCA Ministerial Association, *Nanbu Kyoku Kyogaku-Bu* (Southern District Ministers Association), and others.

Many of the brochures date back to the early 1960s through 1980s and, although they are still treasures, it was felt that the time had come to update some topics and add new ones.

Digital versions are available in the following Google Drive folders. Feel free to upload any documents directly.

Brochures may be downloaded at:
<https://www.nishihongwanji-la.org/teachings/brochures-on-buddha-dharma/>



Harmony of the Nembutsu Teaching



By Rev. Kaz Nakata,
Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji
Buddhist Temple

"I take great care in preparing a rice paddy, as Dharmakara Bodhisattva spent five kalpas [billions of years] to thoroughly establish his 48 vows. I plant each seed wholeheartedly, just as I recite Nembutsu wholeheartedly each time. I remove weeds from the rice field, like I stay away from the allurements of monastic self-power practices (*jiriki*). I constantly water the rice field, the way I maintain the Nembutsu teachings from generation to generation. When the end-of-life season comes at autumn, I harvest the rice with pleasure. *Namo Amida Butsu.*"

— Shinran Shonin's
Rice Planting Song

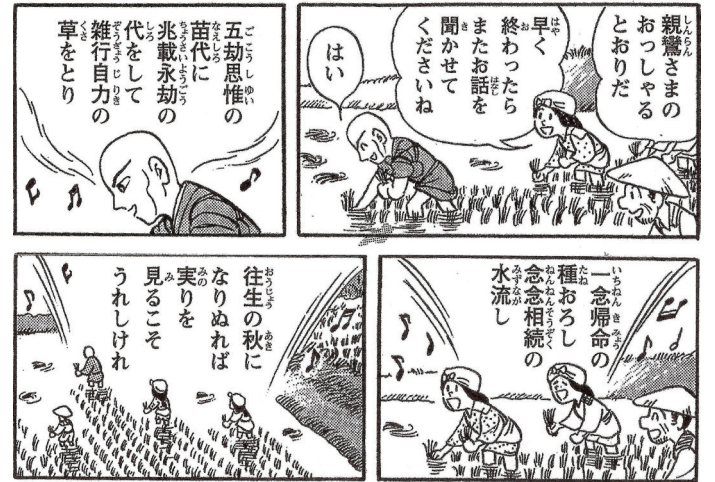
After Shinran Shonin stayed in Echigo for seven years, he decided to relocate to northern Kanto (the Tochigi and Ibaraki areas), with his family and other

Nembutsu followers in 1214.

He and his family settled in several locations in Kanto area. They lived in buildings called *sō-an*, thatched huts. It is widely known that Shinran Shonin did not build any temples because he wanted to spend his energy on the propagation of the *Nembutsu* teachings.

One *sō-an* was located in Inada. There was a young farmer there named Hei-taro. Hei-taro lived in Inatomi, which was 12 miles away from Inada. He often visited Inada to listen to Shinran Shonin's talks. In the spring of 1218, Hei-taro invited Shinran Shonin to Inatomi to share the *Nembutsu* teaching with local farmers. These farmers were busy planting rice. They were singing their local rice-planting songs but they were not reciting the *Nembutsu*. Shinran Shonin walked down to a rice field and started helping the farmers. He shared his own rice-planting song with them. In the lyrics of the short song, he summarized the essence of the *Nembutsu* teachings. The farmers were very pleased to sing his song, and it was later known as Shinran Shonin's rice planting song.

Shinran Shonin did not ask the farmers to stop planting rice to listen to his talk. Instead, he



Illustrations from the story, "Shinran Shonin's Wife, Eshinni-sama" from *Daijō*, a magazine published by the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha. This scene appeared in the May 2009 issue.

modified his talk to fit their convenience. Before Shinran Shonin, Buddhism was mainly shared with nobles and high officials at temples, or monks would visit their castles or places of residence. I believe that Shinran Shonin did not hesitate to try new ways of sharing the Dharma. In fact, he wrote many poems called *wasan*, and one of his *wasans* is known as *On-Doku-San*. We often sing it at temples. The song is sung by both Nishi Hongwanji and Higashi Hongwanji members.

Shinran Shonin used singing as a means of sharing the Dharma. If he had been a traditional "ritual-centered

monk," he would not have walked down to the rice fields and sung.

Today, many Hongwanji temples in Japan are integrating singing and musical performances in their traditional services, and hold Buddhist concerts both in and outside of the *Hondo* (main hall). I love singing. Every Sunday I sing loudly and enjoy making harmony with everyone in the *Hondo*. In the harmony, I can feel the propagational spirit of Shinran Shonin from 800 years ago. So please, don't hold back. Take pleasure in the joy of singing.

Gassho.



New IMOP Session Begins

On April 24, 2017, the International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP) held its opening service and reception at the Jodo Shinshu Center. This year's participant, Rev. Masanari Yamagishi (front, center), received a warm welcome from Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop (center, right), Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, Center for Buddhist Education Co-director (at center, left) and other Jodo Shinshu Center staff and IBS students. Rev. Yamagishi is from a temple family in Takaoka in Toyama Prefecture and aspires to one day serve as a *kaikyoshi* (overseas minister) in Hawaii. IMOP is a 3-month training and orientation program which includes English language and culture classes, seminars, field trips and temple internships. Rev. Yamagishi will be one of the speakers at the upcoming Japanese Seminar on May 13.



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

BCA Bookstore News by Gayle Noguchi



Now available: *The Want Monsters and How They Stopped Ruling My World* by Chelo Manchego. Hardcover, 16.95. Recommended for ages 4-6.

One of the basic teachings of Buddhism that we learn from an early age is that greed is one of the three poisons. Told from the point of view of a child struggling with his inner Want Monster, Manchego's story presents this teaching with a degree of discernment seldom conveyed to children: 1) that wanting is not necessarily "bad," 2) that we all experience wanting things, and 3) we cannot rid ourselves of our Want Monster, but by cultivating awareness we can make peace with it and not allow it to control us. In the beginning, the Want Monster is depicted as gigantic, but by the end as the relationship transforms, the Want Monster shrinks to a manageable size. The story concludes with an invitation to draw what your own Want Monster looks like.

Also available: *Gratitude: Effortless Inspiration for a Happier Life* by Dani DiPirro. Hardcover, \$9.95.

One of the distinguishing elements of Shin Buddhist teachings is its emphasis on awakening to the reality that my life is possible because of the compassion and generosity of others. *Gratitude* by DiPirro consists of inspirational quotations, reflections, and thought-provoking activities that promote this kind of awareness. *Gratitude* encourages us to slow down and to see the daily gifts we receive in life that often go unnoticed. Perfect as a gift for a young adult, adult, or for yourself!

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 on Facebook.



Preview screenings at BCA temples begin in June!

THREE JEWELS: Buddhism in Brazil

A new documentary project
by Rev. Kentaro Sugao

Reverend Sugao is back! The Brazil-based Hongwanji priest/filmmaker/director of *Streams of Light: Shin Buddhism in America* (2013) continues his cinematic explorations of the Buddhist diaspora with a new project, *Tres Joias (Three Jewels)*, scheduled for release this summer. *Three Jewels* is an unprecedented look at the development of Buddhism in Brazil, revealing the Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, through its Buddhist teachers, teachings, and communities. **As the project nears completion, donations are deeply appreciated to ensure its release on schedule.** See 2017 BCA Educational Events Calendar below for screening dates and locations.

Visit the indiegogo.com site and search "Three Jewels: Buddhism in Brazil" to view the trailer and support the project. Donate soon for special screening perks. Donations by check are also welcome, payable to "BCA Endowment Foundation" with check memo to "Three Jewels film project." Mail to: BCA Endowment Foundation, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109.

View trailer and donation opportunities online
www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org click on the *Three Jewels* icon

2017 BCA Educational Events

Programs subject to change. Events at the Jodo Shinshu Center unless otherwise noted.

May 4 ~ "Millennials and the Future of Our Temples." Lecture by Prof. Erik Hamerstrom, 7-8:30 pm. Open to BCA Ministers, temple leaders, and members. Presented by Center for Buddhist Education (CBE).

May 13 ~ Spring Japanese Dharma Gathering. 10 am - 2 pm, \$15 includes lunch. Rev. Ryoso Toshima, Hawaii Kyodan minister emeritus, and Rev. Masanari Yamagishi, International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP), will give Dharma talks. Sponsored by CBE. Email kkenwabara@bcabq.org or call (510) 230-8439 with questions.

May 19 ~ Gotan-e Service. Speaker: IMOP minister, Rev. Masanari Yamagishi.

May 30-31 ~ Ministers' Continuing Education (MCE) Seminar. Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, Dr. Scott Mitchell, others. Presented by Center for Buddhist Education.

June 3-27 ~ Three Jewels (Tres Joias). Preview screenings of the new documentary trilogy about Buddhism in Brazil by Rev. Kentaro Sugao. June 3, Senshin Buddhist Temple; June 4 Orange County Buddhist Church; June 9, JSC; June 12, Tacoma Buddhist Temple; June 13, Seattle Betsuin; then on to Japan. Contact CBE or visit the BCA website for more information.

July 3-9 ~ BCA Youth Advocacy Committee (YAC) Summer Retreat. Hosted by the Buddhist Church of Sacramento (Sacramento Betsuin), this week-long retreat is designed for students 15-18 years of age. For more information, contact Rev. Patti Oshita, poshita@comcast.net or Revs. Tim & Carol Castle, teamcastle@comcast.net.

July 20-23 ~ Dharma Training for School Teachers. A special program open to public school teachers. Presented by Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). Visit buddhistchurchesofamerica.org for details.

July 22-30 ~ 2017 National Speaking Tour: Shin Buddhism in the Land of Shakyamuni. Rev. Sonam Wangdi Bhutia, Head Priest, Kathmandu-Hongwanji, Nepal, will speak in Hawaii, Chicago, and New York. Presented by CBE and Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Buddhist Study Center. In association with Midwest Buddhist Temple, New York Buddhist Church, and American Buddhist Study Center.

August 17-19 ~ Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course August Workshop. Attendees from the online course will have an opportunity to meet each other and some of their instructors, as well as participate in Summer Pacific Seminar activities.

August 18-20 ~ Summer Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. Begins Friday at 2 pm. Held in conjunction with Summer Pacific Seminar (see listing below).

August 18-20 ~ Summer Pacific Seminar. Begins Friday at 7 pm. Keynote speaker: Rev. John Paraskevopoulos, author of *Call of the Infinite*. Co-sponsored by IBS & CBE.

August 26 ~ "A Day with Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka." 9 am - 5 pm. Presentation of his new books: *Jewels: Introduction to Buddhism for American Youths, Scouts and the Young at Heart (with humor)* and *Buddhism On Air*. Book signing at the end of the day. Panel discussion: "Engaged Buddhism for Our Personal and Social Lives." Sponsored by the CBE Everyday Buddhism Committee.

September 26-29 ~ West and East Hong(w)anji Overseas Propagation Exchange (WEHOPE) and Ministers' Continuing Education (MCE) Seminar. Nishi and Higashi ministers will meet, study, and dialogue together.

September 30 ~ Fall Japanese Seminar. Speakers to be announced.

October 12-14 ~ Fall Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar.

December 7-9 ~ Winter Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar.

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

Dharma Training for School Teachers: July 20-23, 2017

Reaching out to educators beyond our BCA circles

If you are working in the teaching profession and a BCA member, you may sometimes wish that there was a way to introduce Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu to your non-Buddhist colleagues, since there are so many lessons the Buddha provided as the quintessential teacher for diverse students.

The Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Buddhist Churches of America Center for Buddhist Education are pleased to present a new educational seminar for K-12 teachers who are interested in learning about the Buddha's timeless teachings and transformative pedagogy for cultivating wisdom, compassion, and mindfulness in our students -- as well as within ourselves as teachers.

Dharma Training for School Teachers will take place on July 20, thru July 23, 2017, at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, CA. Topics will include: "Lessons from Buddha," "Nurturing Compassion in Students," and "The Mindful Classroom." Key presenters are the Venerable Madawala Seelawimala (aka Bhante), and the Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto.

"I truly believe that teaching is one of the most sacred professions. I also believe that being a schoolteacher is the most difficult position to fill. Schoolteachers need support and respect from parents and communities," writes Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop, who will be a convener as well as a presenter.

If you are in the teaching profession, please help us spread the word on this special outreach initiative to credentialed K-12 teachers who are not part of our BCA temple communities who may be interested in Buddhist approaches to education. We are now offering a special "BCA Colleague 2 for 1 Rate" if you are interested in applying with your colleague. Contact CBE to discuss the details by June 1, 2017.

Please go online for application information including eligibility and financial aid at buddhistchurchesofamerica.org. **The application deadline is June 1, 2017.** For more information, email cbe@bcabq.org or phone (510) 809-1460.

OUR JODO SHINSHU TRADITIONS

Incense Offering (Jpn. Guko / Oshoko)

Walk up to the front of the altar and bow at a distance of about two steps in front of the Oshoko table. Step up to the table (starting with your left foot), and with the right hand take a pinch of powdered incense. Drop it into the incense burner, on top of the lit sticks of incense or charcoal. *Gassho* and bow. Take a step backward (beginning with the right foot), bow and return to your seat.



Oshoko represents the acceptance of transiency and fulfillment in life.

(Excerpted from the pamphlet "A Guide to Buddhist Etiquette" by Rev. Lee Rosenthal, published by the Buddhist Churches of America Southern District Ministers' Association with funding from the Southern District Council.) Visit YouTube.com and search "How to Offer Incense (Oshoko)" to view a video posted by the Gardena Buddhist Church.



BCA Education News & Highlights - Live a Real Life!

How I of All People Got into a Tannishō Translation Workshop

By Diane Ames, Berkeley Buddhist Temple

I was not sure I wanted to go, as a workshop on *Tannishō* commentarial materials sounded very scholarly and I think that I have forgotten more classical Japanese than I ever knew. But my husband, who has a Ph.D. in Buddhist studies, thought that it sounded interesting, and we both went as observers with Dr. Blum's permission.

The Tannishō Commentarial Workshop (March 25-27 at the Jodo Shinshu Center) was indeed pretty scholarly. It turned out to be the first session of a five-year project organized by Dr. Mark Blum and sponsored by the University of California at Berkeley and the universities of Ryukoku and Ōtani, to translate for the first time some important commentaries on this Shin Buddhist classic. A number of scholars and graduate students in the field having assembled for this purpose, we split into three groups, directed by Drs. Blum of UC Berkeley, Conway of Ōtani, and Dake of Ryukoku University respectively. Each group was to begin translating a different commentary. My husband and I decided to stay in Dr. Blum's group, whose task was to translate a commentary written by one Enchi in 1662.



The first section of the commentary went kind of slowly, as Enchi apparently felt obliged to define virtually every word in the prologue of the *Tannishō*. When the group kept coming to phrases that even Dr. Blum didn't know, necessitating prolonged consultation of reference works to establish that it was the title of a long-forgotten Chinese dictionary Enchi had used, I admit that I secretly considered flight. However, we eventually came to the part that I found most interesting, which was translating the Prologue of the *Tannishō* itself (as quoted by Enchi).

Here I played an unexpected role, as I was the only person who had brought a couple of the most popular English translations. So when we got to, say, the first phrase, "*Hisoka ni guan o megurashite*," Dr. Blum would ask, "What does Dennis Hirota's translation have for '*megurashite*?' And I would reply that in the back of Hirota's book, which is supposed to be a rather literal translation, he has "pondering," making the whole phrase "pondering my foolish thoughts within myself alone," while in his more literary translation in the front of the book, he has "within my foolish thoughts." I would add that Taitetsu Unno has "reflecting" and translates the whole phrase "in reflecting upon my foolish thoughts." Then Dr. Blum would declare that neither translation completely satisfied him, so everybody would consult classical Japanese dictionaries and try to think of an appropriate translation for "*megurashite*." My husband, who has made a five-hundred-page translation of a Buddhist philosophical text, said that this is what translating a canonical text is like, agonizing over what each word, phrase, and sentence was supposed to mean and how to express it in English.

I departed from the three-day workshop with a deepened realization of how much Buddhists everywhere owe to translators. And I learned something about the original language of the prologue of the *Tannishō*.



(Left) Workshop attendees in session. (Right) Pictured are several of the many translations and commentaries on *Tannishō* available at the BCA Bookstore, located in the Jodo Shinshu Center.



SUMMER PACIFIC SEMINAR - 21ST CENTURY



SHIN BUDDHISM: Current Challenges and Future Prospects

Keynote Speaker: **Rev. John Paraskevopoulos**

Author, *Call of the Infinite: The Way of Shin Buddhism* and other works

August 18-20, 2017

Jodo Shinshu Center 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

The 2017 Summer Pacific Seminar - 21st Century "Shin Buddhism: Current Challenges and Future Prospects" will build upon last year's theme of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism as a worldwide religion. Shin Buddhists from around the world will relate their experiences and insights on Shin Buddhism today and in the future.

Rev. John Paraskevopoulos, a Shin Buddhist priest based in Australia, will touch upon several themes including the importance of spiritual realization and religious experience; rehabilitating the sacred in response to "secular" Buddhism; difficulties in doctrinal terminology; and the relationship of Shin Buddhism to other Buddhist schools as well as other religions.

In addition to our keynote speaker, we will hear Thais Campos discuss the topic of Jodo Shinshu in Brazil, and David Quirke-Thornton will speak on Shin Buddhism in Europe. The program also includes a book talk and signing by Rev. Paraskevopoulos at the BCA Bookstore, also located in the Jodo Shinshu Center.



Rev. John Paraskevopoulos is an ordained Shin Buddhist priest based in Australia and author of three books. He holds a first-class honors degree in Philosophy from the University of Melbourne in Australia and is editor of *Muryoko* the online Journal of Shin Buddhism. In 2014, Rev. Paraskevopoulos spoke at the 17th European Shin Buddhist Conference in the UK. His talk, "Jodo Shinshu: The Supreme Teaching for the Present Age," was reprinted in the *Wheel of Dharma* from January through July 2015, and is also available online at www.nembutsu.info/JodoShinshu.pdf.

Thais Campos is a Shin practitioner living in Brasilia, Brazil. She graduated from the University of South Santa Catarina with a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. Her passion for Eastern Philosophy led her to Shin Buddhism via the Honpa Hongwanji Temple of Brasilia. Thais completed the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course in 2016. One of her JSCC essays was published in the March 2015 *Wheel of Dharma*.



David Quirke-Thornton is a member of the Shin Buddhist Fellowship United Kingdom (UK). Formerly a Franciscan Friar, David trained as a Buddhist Chaplain at The Buddhist Society in London and served as chaplain to the Police. David has a keen interest in Interfaith and Intra-Buddhist relations.



Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the BCA Center for Buddhist Education

For program details and registration information, visit:
www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org and Click on CBE or Email: cbe@bcahq.org
Registration ends on July 18, 2017



2018 BCA Calendar Photo Contest

The theme of the BCA Calendar is "PEACE"

Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) members are invited to submit an original photo or picture of something you think represents or illustrates the idea of "peace" to be used in the 2018 BCA Calendar.

1. Photos/pictures should be in **digital format**. Images should be **minimum** 350 dpi @ 100% (8-1/2" x 11")
2. Please limit to one submission per person. Please include your name and temple affiliation with your submission.
3. Please submit your image to Judy Kono and Michael Endo by **May 15, 2017**.

Judy Kono: jkono@bcahq.org

Michael Endo: mendo@bcahq.org

4. Twelve (12) photos/pictures will be selected from amongst the submissions.
5. All submissions shall become the property of the Buddhist Churches of America.

YouTube Enjoy CBE programs online at YouTube.com

Enjoy over 50 talks, lectures, and special programs presented by CBE and its educational partners on YouTube.com. Search for "BCA Center for Buddhist Education Channel."

Recently posted were the special chanting of *Shoshin Nembutsuge* at the BCA National Council Meeting (right), and a lecture by UC Berkeley professor, Dr. Mark Blum, on sections 13 & 14 of *Tannisho: A Record in Lament of Divergences* from the Spring Minister's Assistant Program (MAP).



Ministers and gagaku musicians led the special chanting ceremony (Hosan Dento Saho) at the Buddhist Churches of America National Council Meeting. Photo by Al Hironaga.

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

BCA YAC Summer Retreat July 3-9, 2017

Hosted by the Sacramento Betsuin

This week-long retreat, designed for students 15-18 years of age, is sponsored by the Buddhist Churches of America Youth Advocacy Committee. For registration information, contact: Rev. Patti Oshita, poshita@comcast.net; Revs. Tim & Carol Castle, teamcastle@comcast.net; Sensei Grace Hatano, bghat1@sbcglobal.net; Sensei Koichi Mizushima, bkmizu@gmail.com; Sensei Kelvin Mark, 273kmark@sbcglobal.net; or Sensei Keith Kato, kmasamikato@gmail.com



IBS Symposium Generates New Conversations

Interdependence/Intersectionality: Marginalization, Oppression, and American Buddhism

On Friday, April 14, nearly fifty Buddhist scholars, teachers, and activists convened at the Jodo Shinshu Center for a much-anticipated IBS Symposium on “*Interdependence/Intersectionality: Marginalization, Oppression, and American Buddhism*,” to discuss issues of marginalization and oppression related to race, gender, and sexuality both inside and outside American Buddhist communities both historically and at the present. The event was sponsored in part by BDK America.

Dr. Scott Mitchell, Dean of IBS faculty, provided opening remarks. Dr. Daijaku Kinst, on the IBS faculty, introduced the speakers and moderated a panel discussion and Q/A session with audience members.

Four speakers shared a variety of scholarly perspectives as well as personal commentary, addressing questions which included:

- How did the racialization

of Japanese American Buddhists relate to World War II internment?

- How are Asian and white Buddhist communities in conversation or at odds?

- How have new Buddhist communities developed or responded to historical or contemporary exclusion related to gender or sexual orientation?

- How might Buddhists respond to the current US political climate?

Funie Hsu, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of American Studies, San Jose State University, made the first presentation, titled, “World War II Incarceration and the Racialization of Japanese American and Asian American Buddhists,” which highlighted points from her thought-provoking article, “We’ve Been Here All Along,” published online by LionsRoar.com (November 21, 2016)

As LionsRoar.com describes in their introduction:

Funie Hsu says it’s time

we recognize the contributions of Asian American Buddhists and address the racism and cultural appropriation that marginalizes their ongoing role in transmitting the dharma in the West.

<https://www.lionsroar.com/weve-been-here-all-along/>

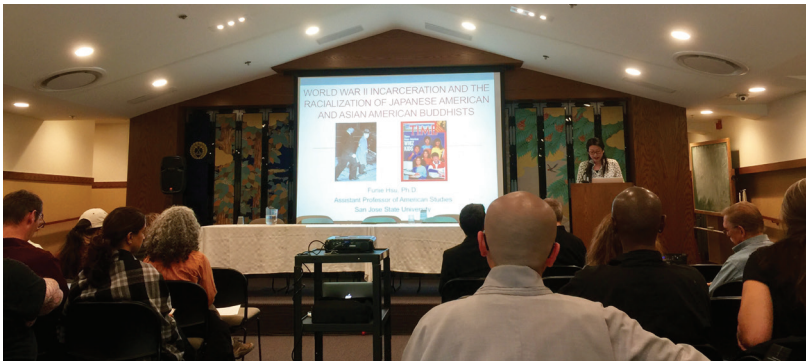
Natalie Quli, Research Fellow, Institute of Buddhist Studies, presented on “The Disempowering Rhetoric of Authenticity,” and provided a broad, historical view of some of the social, cultural, and religious forces and dynamics which contributed to ‘disempowering’ Buddhists of Asian descent, albeit unintentionally and unconsciously.

Ann Gleig, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Central Florida, presented her paper on “Queering Buddhism or Buddhist De-Queering? LGBTQI Buddhism, Intersectionality and the Limits of Liberal Convert Buddhism.” Her study of the

East Bay Meditation Center, and groups like the Alphabet Sangha pointed to inspiring new models and approaches to building sanghas based on inclusion, valuing diversity at their core.

Rev. Harry Bridge, Resident Minister, Buddhist Church of Oakland, presented “I Sing the Body Interconnected,” his personal perspectives on growing up as a person of Japanese and Caucasian background; as a musician, and as a Jodo Shinshu minister whose congregation is still largely based in the Japanese American community and located in a diverse urban center.

A lively Q/A session followed the presentations and the panel discussion generated momentum for ongoing dialogue. Engaging voices from academia, activism, and the community, the symposium provided a unique space for addressing vital questions for Buddhism today.



In the upper right photo, speakers are seated, left to right: Prof. Ann Gleig, Rev. Harry Bridge, Dr. Funie Hsu, Prof. Natalie Quli, and moderator, Dr. Daijaku Kinst.

Workshop Series on Tannishō Commentarial Materials Launched

On March 25 through March 27, the Centers for Japanese Studies and Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, together with Ōtani University and Ryūkoku University in Kyoto, launched the first session of the *Workshops on Tannishō Commentarial Materials*, under the supervision of Dr. Mark Blum, Professor and Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair in Japanese Studies, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at UC Berkeley.

Co-sponsors for the first session at the Jodo Shinshu Center, included the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the BCA Center for Buddhist Education.

The Workshop will continue for five years, meeting twice a year for 3 to 4 days each time, in late March in Berkeley and early August in Kyoto, where it will be



Over 20 scholars from universities including Ryūkoku, Ōtani, Harvard, UC Berkeley, and the Institute of Buddhist Studies gathered for the inaugural session of the ambitious Tannishō project led by Dr. Mark Blum, UC Berkeley professor. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Diane Ames, Rev. Noriaki Ito, Prof. Mark Blum, Rev. Kodo Umezu, Prof. Mitsuya Dake, and Prof. Michael Conway.

hosted alternately by Ōtani and Ryūkoku universities.

“The Workshop will focus on critically examining premodern and modern hermeneutics of the *Tannishō*, a core text of the Shin sect of Buddhism, and arguably the most well-read religious text in postwar Japan. Organized around close readings of the most influential materials produced in early modern, modern, and

postmodern Japan, the workshop aims at producing a critical, annotated translation detailing the salient ways in which this text has been both inspirational and controversial, as well as a series of essays analyzing a wide spectrum of voices in Japanese scholarship and preaching that have spoken on this work,” writes Dr. Blum.

See related article on Page 5.

Institute of Buddhist Studies May Celebrations

By Rev. Seigen Yamaoka
IBS Vice President for Development



This May, the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) will celebrate the accomplishments of six students completing both degree and certificate programs, including Master of Arts, Buddhist Chaplaincy Certificate, and Kyoshi Certificate, as well as certificates in Theravada and Soto Zen Buddhist Studies. We will also honor our visiting exchange students from Ryūkoku University and the Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts.

Please come and celebrate our graduates at two special events in May.

First Annual IBS Alumni Association Graduate Reception



Rev. Marvin Harada, IBS Alumnus and Board Member

The Alumni Association of the Institute of Buddhist Studies is holding its first annual graduate reception on Thursday, May 18, 2017 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Jodo Shinshu Center. The event will be an occasion to celebrate the graduates, who will share short presentations on their work, followed by a message from IBS alumnus, Rev. Marvin Harada of the Orange County Buddhist Church. Light refreshments will follow.

2017 Graduation and Commencement



Chenxing Han, 2017 Commencement Speaker

The commencement ceremony will be held on Friday, May 18, 2017 from 10:30 AM at the Jodo Shinshu Center. Our commencement speaker will be Ms. Chenxing Han, IBS Graduate Class of 2014 and author of a forthcoming book on young adult Asian American Buddhists. Additionally, we will honor the recipient of the 2017 IBS President’s Award, Mr. Hiroji Kariya, for his years of service to IBS.

Congratulations to all of our graduates! We look forward to seeing you in Berkeley!



BCA Dana Program Update

Dana donation received in the fiscal year FY2016-17 (April 2016 to March 2017) was \$135,010.

Thank you for your generous support.

For information and online donation options:

Visit: buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

Email: donate@bcabq.org
Phone: (415) 776-5600 x311

今月の法話

「本願真実のみ教え」

フローリン仏教会

開教使 菅原 佑軌



たまひ 猶霊瑞華としめしける」(『浄土和讃』54)

(現代語訳) 釈尊がこの世にお生まれになった本意は、『華嚴経』や『般若経』や『法華経』などの方便の教えではなく、第十八願の本願真実の教えを開き顕すためであった。この本願真実に遇い、信を得ることは、「難値難見」、三千年に一度しか咲かない霊瑞華のようなものである。今、遇いがたくして遇わせていただき、聞き難くして聞かせていただいたのである。

(黒田覚忍(2009)・『聖典セミナー 浄土和讃』、本願寺出版、p.207)

はいいものでもう五月ですね。「五月蠅い」と書いて「うるさい」と読みますが、確かにこの五月頃から蠅が活発に活動を始めます。お寺のキッチンでも秋田のなまはげの如く、「蠅はおらんか」とハエタタキを持ちながら徘徊されておられる方を見ることがありますが、不殺生戒を守ることがいかに難しいかということをお思い知らされる季節でもあります。

さて、「本願真実のみ教え」というのは迷いの世界から抜け出すものを何一つ持っていないこの私が、迷いの世界とは反対であるさとりの世界へといたらせていただく「まことの利益」を恵むみ教えであり、それは「必ず救う、われにまかせよ」という阿彌陀如来さまの第十八願、ご本願のお働きによります。この第十八願の一つ前、第十七願を親鸞聖人は「諸仏称揚の願」と名付けられました。これは諸々の仏さまがた

が阿彌陀如来さまのことを褒め称えて、「南無阿彌陀仏」というお念仏を私たちにおススメしてくださっておられるという願いであります。このことを少し例え話で味あわせていただきましたと思いますけれども、みなさん、「スイカ割り」というのをご存知でしょうか。

スイカ割りというのは一人が目隠しをして、棒でスイカを割るというピニャータに似たシンプルなゲームです。今回は2チームに分かれた場合を想像していただきたいと思えます。目隠しをされた状態で何のガイドもなくスイカを割ることは難しいですね。そのためにチームメイトが右だとか左だとかガイドをしてくれます。そしてチームメイト以外の人は適当なことを言っ

てスイカを割ろうとしている人を惑わします。さて、これが本願真実のみ教えとどう関わっているのかということですが、まずチームメイト以外の人達は自分たちが勝つために目隠しされた人をスイカから遠ざけようとしていきます。ですから彼らは偽の教えを説く「邪道・外道」と呼ばれる人達です。よくこんな話を耳にしますね。この壺を買えばかならず幸せになりますとか、あなたに悪霊がついているからお払いをしなければならぬ。そのためにはこれだけのお布施をしてもらわないといけないという人達の話。このように私たちを真実から遠ざけ、適当なことをいって自分の私腹を肥やしているのが「邪道・外道」の人達です。これは「まことの利益を恵む」教えとは全く逆の教えです。

さて、この私たちが目隠しをされた人のようなものです。煩惱という目隠しをして生きていく私たちですから何が真実か、がわからぬ。この人生をどう進んでいくべきかわからない。そうであるにも関わらず、一生懸命に棒を自分勝手に振り回しているんです。危なっかしいですね。煩惱で目隠しをされているのに一生懸命、自分で物事をコントロールしようとしていて、周りの人達を自分の言葉や行為で傷つけているのが私たちであり、自分の力で真実へといたることが出来ると思っているのが私たちです。

では、煩惱によって目隠しされているこの私たちがスイカを割る、つまり迷いの世界から抜け出すにはどうしたら良いか。それは私を導いてくださる声に耳を傾けることです。たとえばチームメイトの一人が一生懸命「こっちへこい、こっちへこい、大丈夫だから私にまかせてこっちへこい」とスイカへと導いてくれるように、私たちが真実へと導いてくださっておられるのが阿彌陀如来さまであります。このように「われに任せよ」と願われているのが阿彌陀如来さまのご本願のおこころです。

そして、残りのチームメイトが「その声にまかせれば大丈夫だぞ」と呼びかけているように、私たちに「ご本願の呼び声におまかせしなよ」と呼びかけてくださっておられるのが諸々の仏さまたちであります。これは第十七願のおこころです。私たちは煩惱という目隠しをされているから阿彌陀さまや諸仏のお姿はみることができない。しかし、その呼び声を聞くことはできます。それが「私に任せて、こっちへこい」という呼び声、「その声におまかせしなよ」という呼び声、「南無阿彌陀仏」という呼び声であります。

数年前にお浄土へと還られましたが、深川倫雄和上という和上さんがおられました。深川和上は「阿彌陀さまというのには、見える仏になったんじやない、聞こえる仏になっただけだ」とおっしゃっておられました。私たちは煩惱に眼を障えられて、見ることはできないけれども、この私を導こう、真実へと目覚めさせようというお働きは「南無阿彌陀仏」という呼び声となっております。

さて、チームメイトの呼び声に対して「本当だろうか」という疑いの心を持って自分の思うように棒を振ってあげればスイカを割ることは出来ません。ですから、呼び声にただただおまかせしていくわけです。「本当だろうか」という疑いの心、はからいのこころがなくなり、呼び声にただただおまかせしていく、おまかせしておけば大丈夫だ、というこころが浄土真宗というこころの「信心」であります。

この呼び声におまかせしていけば、この眼が煩惱によってさえぎられたままでも必ず真実の世界へといたることが出来ますから、「本願真実のみ教え」は「まことの利益を恵む」教えであるわけですね。この「まことの利益を恵む」教

えに出遇うとどうなるかということが示されているのが「浄土真宗の生活信条」であると私は味あわせていただいております。「みほとけのめぐみをよるこび、互いに敬い助け合い、社会のために尽くします」とありませぬ。こうならなければいけない、というわけではありませんが、南無阿彌陀仏という呼び声に出遇わせていただくことによって、自分勝手に生きていた自分に気づかせていただき、他人を傷つけてばかりいた自分を反省して、互いに敬い、助け合っていくという思いを持って生きていくように次第になっていく、それが念仏者の生き方ではないでしょうか。

合掌

著書紹介コーナー

元BCA開教使で、武蔵野大学教授の田中ケネス師が今年初めに新刊を上梓した。本のタイトルは『智慧の潮・親鸞の智慧・主体性・社会性』(武蔵野大学出版会)で、田中師をはじめ、武田龍精龍谷大学名誉教授、末木文未士東京大学名誉教授など13名の研究者が親鸞聖人の教えを「智慧」「主体性」「社会性」に焦点をあて、学術的な見解を述べている。田中師は2016年にも、『アメリカ流 マインドを変える仏教入門』(春秋社)、『仏教と気づき』(武蔵野大学出版会)、『多様化する現代社会と浄土真宗』グローバルな視点より(響流選書)を出版しており、米国での浄土真宗や仏教界の動向を日本仏教界へ向けて紹介している。



A new book by Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka

マレスノダルマスクール大会

4月22日、23日にマレスノ別院でダルマスクール教師大会が開催され、113名のダルマスクール教師が集った。テーマは「音楽、仏法への道」とし、ゲストスピーカーにはロサンゼルス東本願寺別院の開教使で、日系人ジャズバンド、ヒロシマの元ベーシスト、幡ピーター師が招かれた。大会では音楽をどのようにダルマスクールの中に取り入れるかが話し合われた。参加者は、「昔から歌われている仏教賛歌や新しく作られた曲など、みんなで歌えて楽しかったです。」と歌によって得られるつながりを楽しんだ。



Dharma School Conference at Fresno Betsuin

人事
4月1日付けで、ローダイ仏教会駐在、ウォーナットクローブ仏教会兼務の楠克也開教使がシアトル別院に異動。ローダイ仏教会、ウォーナットクローブ仏教会はストックトン仏教会の本好由紀子開教使が兼務する。

訃報

4月2日に安孫子温子夫人が101歳で亡くなられた。温子夫人は故安孫子義孝名誉開教使の妻で安孫子洋名誉開教使の母。葬儀は園満寺で4月15日に営まれた。

法輪

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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>

IMOPが開講

4月下旬にIMOPが開講された。IMOPとはInternational Ministerial Orientation Programの略で開教使を目指す日本人僧侶を対象とした養成プログラム。2008年より開始され、浄土真宗センターの本願寺オフィスのもとで運営されている。今年のIMOP受講生は山岸昌也師と大内佑真師の2名で、浄土真宗センターを拠点として、約三ヶ月間研修を受ける。研修では英語学校に通うほか、開教使や門徒からの講義を受けアメリカやカナダで伝道活動に携わる僧侶としての基礎を築いていく。受講生の二人は5月13日(土)に浄土真宗センターで催される春の聞法セミナーで法話をする予定。

春の日本語聞法セミナー
Spring Japanese Dharma Gathering at the Jodo Shinshu Center

「釈迦の説法と阿彌陀仏の救い」
おおうち よしみち
大内 祐真 師 (IMOP 受講生)

「阿彌陀様のひかりにつつまれて」
やまざし まさなり
山岸 昌也 師 (IMOP 受講生)

「浄土真宗の特色」
としま りょうそう
戸島 良三 師 (ハワイ教団名誉開教使)

Date: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm Saturday, May 13 2017
Place: Jodo Shinshu Center 2140 Durant Ave, Berkeley

Fee: \$15 (昼食代込み/当日いただきます)
事前のお申込みは必要ありません。

米国仏教団仏教教育部 担当: 桑原
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伝灯奉告法要へ参拝

3月下旬に京都の本願寺で伝燈奉告法要が営まれ、北米、カナダ、ハワイの海外開教区から約240名が参加した。BCAAからは、ロサンゼルス別院、シアトル別院、オ

レンジ郡、ベニス、バークレー、アラメダ、マウンテンビューの各寺院の僧侶と門信徒、191名が参拝した。法要参拝後、各寺院はそれぞれ開教使が引率するツアーに赴き、親鸞聖人ゆかりの地や観光名所をおとすれた。以下はオレンジ郡仏教会、ワンドラ睦開教使のレポート。

肌で感じた親鸞聖人ご旧跡巡りツアー

3月31日に本山にて行われた伝灯報告法要に参拝のあと、オレンジ、ピスタ、サンディエゴの門徒さんたちは、オレンジ郡仏教会の開教使ワンドラ師のプランのもと、親鸞聖人旧跡巡りの旅を乗り込みました。



Ninai-do in Mt. Hiei

一行は、京都をあとにバスに乗って、まずは親鸞聖人ご誕生地の日野の里の法界寺、続いて聖人が天台宗の慈円大師のもとで得度を受けた青蓮院を参拝しました。青蓮院では聖人の髪の毛が植えられている珍しいお像がありました。

京都の町を北東に向かって20年間の山のご修行をされた比叡山へ。山から吹き下ろす冷たい風を受けながら、一行は西塔にある常行三昧堂を見学しました。90日のあいだ、不断の念仏をされたというお堂です。



Orange County Buddhist Church Japan tour group at Kokufu Betsuin



また見上げる日本アルプスは雪化粧。親鸞聖人と恵信尼さまはこんなな厳しい気候のところで暮らされていたのか・と思われました。このあと、一行は長野の善光寺を参りして、東京に到着。今年は一週間遅れの桜でしたが、上野公園は桜が満開でした。やっと見られた日本の桜。淡いピンク色の花びらが春の風に舞っています。

10日間の旅は、時空を超えて親鸞聖人と恵信尼さまを肌で感じる事ができる素晴らしい旧跡巡りツアーとなりました。

(寄稿 ワンドラ睦、OCCB)

総長メッセージ

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

五月になりました。五月といえば、親鸞聖人のお誕生をお祝いする降誕会(ごうたんえ)がお勤めされます。聖人は旧暦の四月一日にお生まれになったと伝えられています。それを新暦に直して、五月二十一日にお祝いをするのです。親鸞聖人は浄土真宗を開いたかたとして知られています。聖人は師匠である法然上人が浄土真宗の開祖であると言っておられます。私たちが素晴らしい教えにあうことができるのも、法然上人と親鸞聖人の出会いがあったことです。

では、法然上人の教えとは一体どういうものでしょうか。親鸞聖人は法然上人から何を聞かれたのでしょうか。その教えは「選択本願念仏集」という書物に詳しく説かれています。その中の一部を紹介いたします。

『(略)念仏は、ほかの行とちがって、誰にでもできる易しい行だからです。本願というのは、誰一人もらすことな

く、すべての人を浄土に生まれさせようとするものですから、難しい行を差し置いて、易しい行として念仏を選んだのではないのでしょうか。

もし本願が、裕福でお寺や仏像を作ったり寄進することを条件としたら、そうでない人たちが浄土に生まれることはできませんし、その望みを捨てなければなりません。実際は、貧しい人の方が多いのです。

もし本願が、智慧や知識をもつことを条件としたら、そうでない人は浄土に生まれることはできませんし、その望みを捨てなければなりません。実際は、頭のよくない学問のない人の方が多いのです。

もし本願が、多くのことを聞いたり、読んだりすることを条件としたら、そうでない人は浄土に生まれることができませんし、その望みを捨てなければなりません。実際は、それができない人の方が多いのです。

もしまた本願が、戒律を守ることを条件にしたら、戒律を守れない人は浄土に生まれることができませんし、その望みを捨てなければなりません。実際は、それができない人の方が多いのです。

そして、ほかの行についても同じことが言えます。

こういうわけで、すべての人を救いたいという願いから、阿彌陀如来はいろいろな行を条件とした本願を建てなかつたのです。たった一つ「我が名を称えよ」という本願を建てられたのです。』

ところで、五月は母の日の月でもあります。子どもが母を「母さん」と呼ぶときに母は母となるのです。母の願いは子どもにとどき、子どもは母を呼ぶのです。

一如の親は、すべての衆生の母であり、父であります。人間は、過去からの宿業で自分の殻をつくり、その中で右往左往しています。真実の親の呼び声は、人間の思いを超えた世界から呼びかけていてくださいます。人間の価値判断の世界に真実はありません。だから、念仏だけを選んで、称えてくれよとの願いがおこされたのです。

本当の自分、本当の親に出会えて親鸞聖人は念仏を申されたのです。一緒に真実の世界からの願いの呼び声を聞かせていただきます。