

# WHEEL OF DHARMA

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## The Name Becomes the Person

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop



The Buddhist Churches of America National Headquarters' staff members will be wearing name badges now. This is a great idea, especially for the staff working at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, because the JSC has so many visitors.

Wearing a name badge is important. It introduces a person's name and background to others. To wear a name badge is a sign that one wants to be recognized by others. I am sure that you have worn your name badge when you attended a conference. Sometimes we forget people's names, but name badges help us identify them. By calling someone's name, we can be connected with the person. The name becomes the very person.

My name is Kodo Umezu. The alphabetical spelling of my name has no meaning. But when written with

Chinese characters (*kanji*), people can see the meaning of my name. My given name means "a broad path or way" and my family name means "a waterfront with plum trees." However, I am not a broad path by a waterfront with plum trees. My family name tells my family origin and my given name reminds me of my parents' wish for me.

Now, let us think of another name that we are very familiar with. It is the Name; Namo Amida Butsu. According to Shinran Shonin and other masters of the Pure Land tradition, the Name means "I take refuge in the Buddha of Immeasurable Wisdom and Compassion." They have explained to us that the ultimate dynamic reality reveals its presence through the Name, Namo Amida Butsu. Without the Name, we have no point of contact.

The masters also say that the Name is not just revealing its presence; it has been commanding all of us to turn to it. It wants to be acknowledged by all. Jodo Shinshu members have been responding to this call by reciting the Name with appreciation.

Continued on Page 6

## BCA Ministers and Delegates Convene in Bellevue



Photo courtesy of Michael Endo

Ministers Association Cabinet – Secretary: Rev. Patricia Jisho Usuki, Southern District – San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple; At Large: Rev. Ronald Gutei Miyamura, Eastern District – Midwest Buddhist Temple; Secretary: Rev. Joshin Dennis Fujimoto, Northwest District – Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple; Treasurer: Rev. Harry Gyokyo Bridge, Bay District – Buddhist Church of Oakland; Vice Chair: Rev. Bob Bombu Oshita, Rinban, Northern California District – Buddhist Church of Sacramento; Vice Chair: Rev. Ken Kenshin Fujimoto, Rinban, Coast District – San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin; Chairperson: Rev. Jerry Kyosei Hirano, Mountain States District – Salt Lake Buddhist Temple; Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop; Executive Committee – President: Dr. Kent Matsuda, Enmanji Buddhist Temple (Bay District), President-elect: Kenneth Tanimoto, Watsonville Buddhist Temple (Coast District), Vice President: Charlene Grinolds, White River Buddhist Temple (Northwest District), Treasurer: Jeffery Matsuoka, Buddhist Church of San Francisco (Bay District), Vice President: Rick Stambul, West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple (Southern District). Missing from photo: At Large: Rev. Kakei Nakagawa, Rinban, Central California District – Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple and Secretary: Susan Bottari, San Mateo Buddhist Temple (Bay District).

## Sharing Ideas – Listening

At the conclusion of the first day of the Buddhist Churches of America National Council Meeting, the delegates from the 61 temples were split into four groups by Ron Murakami, the outgoing BCA president. Each group was led by a facilitator to brainstorm ideas on how the BCA national organization can help each of the local temples.

The facilitators – Richard Endo of Mountain View Buddhist Temple, Char Grinolds of White River Bud-

dhist Temple, Rich Stambul of West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple and Steve Terusaki of Buddhist Church of Oakland – all engaged each of their groups and brainstormed ideas.

"Communication, communication, communication! It was the resounding outcome of my group and it looked like all of the groups had communication as one of their issues," remarked Ms. Grinolds at the follow-up session after reconvening

Continued on Page 6

The 2014 National Council and Ministers' Association Meetings, hosted by the Northwest District and Seattle Buddhist Church, Betsuin, were held from Feb. 27 to March 1 at the Westin Bellevue in Washington. The meetings began in memoriam of the late Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada, most recently of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, and the late Rev. Koju Terada, retired, from Gardena Buddhist Church.

The National Council Meeting was attended by 155 delegates. Temples registered two lay delegates plus their head resident

minister and, in addition, any other kaikyoshi ministers assigned to the temple before Jan. 15. The delegates needed to take action on three areas.

The first action was to approve the 2014-2015 National Budget of \$2,556,650, of which \$1,598,942 will be assessed to the temples. The approved assessment for each temple member was calculated at \$107.25. Second, the Bylaws of the Buddhist Churches of America were amended by a two-thirds vote. The words "and bear the cost of attendance" were stricken from

the part regarding directors-at-large attending a national council meeting. Also stricken was a provision that allows the National Board to approve the dates of future National Council meetings to be in February and/or March. Third, the National Council delegates elected directors-at-large to three open, three-year terms. They are Gary Omori of Buddhist Temple of Salinas, Hoshina Seki of New York Buddhist Church, and Mick Kubota of Vista Buddhist Temple.

The National Ministers As-  
Continued on Page 6

Embraced by the  
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15th World Buddhist Women's Convention

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## The Gatha Project Leads Opening Nembutsu

The Northwest District presented an offering of the Gatha Project during the opening service of the recent 2014 BCA National Council meeting in Bellevue, Washington.

The Gatha Project combines taiko drums, chanting of Nembutsu, organ accompaniment, and choir voices from the Northwest District temples.

Weaved around an adaptation of the gatha "Nembutsu," originally arranged by Chizu Iwanaga, these elements were brought together in an elaborate but simple production spearheaded by Rev. Joshin Dennis Fujimoto of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple.

As the BCA ministers chanted "Na Man Da Bu," each of the groups were added



Photo courtesy of Tom Nishikawa

in to create a synergistic symphony. Donna Sasaki played the Nembutsu gatha as the members of Idaho-Oregon's Sangha Taiko (Carrie Mori, Michelle Sadamori, Melody Smit, Eric Spencer, and Sharmon Fujimoto) provided the percussive background. The members of the Seattle Buddhist Church, Betsuin, then added their voices to the climactic conclusion.

The final chorus included all representatives and leaders of the BCA temples. The effort was to capture the beauty and the power of the Nembutsu for each individual and to reinforce that the Nembutsu is incomplete until it is shared.

Rev. Fujimoto says, "When we open, we can recognize what was already there." The Gatha Project has been presented

previously at a Northwest District Convention. It is a very fluid process in which different groups can participate.

The members of the Seattle Betsuin choir are: Fumi Groves, Irene Mano, Paul Mori, Kemi Nakabayashi, Tsukasa Namekata, Sunkie Oye, Ben Shimbo, Darlene Shimizu, Terrie Tanino, and Rev. Jim and Rona Warrick.





# Happiness

By Rev. Dennis Shinseki  
Monterey Peninsula Buddhist Temple

*"Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared."*

—Shakyamuni Buddha



Author Steve Rushin wrote an article in the AAA magazine about "The Happiest Place on Earth?" In his article he recalls for us the opening of Disneyland. The park creators estimated about 10,000 visitors for opening day and were overwhelmed when 28,000 arrived. Plumbers were on strike which left the park without drinking water in the searing Southern California heat. Walt Disney was confronted by a guard who stopped him from entering, and the founder of the happiest place on earth said, "Ei-

ther you let me through here or I'm going to hit you right in the face and walk over your body." The happiest place on earth, yeah, right.

Every time I have ever been to Disneyland, I have seen a combination of smiling, laughing, crying, yelling, joy, and disappointment. Under the huge sign of "The Happiest Place on Earth" you will see all of this. As it tries to live up to its name, Disneyland is a microcosm of our world filled with moments of joy/sadness, laughter/tears. Like the picture here of Grumpy and the happy boy.<sup>2</sup>

The Buddha talked about happiness in relation to all other aspects of life. He said there are three types of feelings: sukha or happiness; dukkha or pain; and adukhamasukha neutral feelings. The neutral feelings are the same as happiness, but a spiritual happiness. Happiness arises from the five senses and is the happiness of worldly desires and attachments. The Buddha's task was not only to overcome ill but to attain good

and happiness for all of us. We attain happiness in many ways in our daily life. We can divide these into three: physical; material; and spiritual. We are happy because we are healthy, handsome, or beautiful. Materially we are happy because we are rich, live in a nice home, own a beautiful new car, etc. Spiritual happiness is found in friendship and love. Happiness is created when one is honored, praised, sympathized with, comforted, etc.

All of these conditions of happiness depend on external causes. Happiness is attained by possessing something or being given something by someone. Therefore when the cause of the happiness is gone or destroyed the happiness disappears. It is beyond our control.

Buddhism teaches us to look into the nucleus of things instead of looking externally. We have to look within ourselves to see what makes us happy. The real way of happiness is the awareness of one's true and real life in connection

with all things and people around us. True happiness is something that we create from within. The right attitude and a clear and correct mind and view of the world are the way to happiness.

Right attitude is looking beyond relative views and transcends dualistic comparisons. Right attitude means to see and recognize the uniqueness of each person and situation and understand things as they are.

The Buddha said "Know thyself." Before we can hope to attain happiness we must know what and who we are. And who we are is the self that is constantly evolving and awakening and is the sum total of other things and other people. This is the world of oneness, the world of Nembutsu. All the dualistic comparisons that we make are in reality one. The world of oneness is Nirvana where the Buddha and I are one.

Namoamidabutsu.

<sup>1</sup>Via Magazine, March-April 2011, page 36

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

## ...Until Then, Be Patient and Just Listen

By Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi  
Buddhist Church of Stockton

I am often asked why I became a minister. Although I was born and raised in a Buddhist family, I didn't appreciate the teachings until my senior year in college. I have to thank my father for constantly dragging me to the temple for sermons. Seeds that he planted finally ripened then. Let me share a story with you.

One day, three practitioners discussed why they had entered religious life.

The first practitioner said, "One day, I was walking in a vineyard. The grapes and leaves were a splendid sight in the early morning rays of sun. However, that afternoon some ragged people came and for

no reason they destroyed the entire vineyard. Seeing the ruined vineyard, I realized the impermanence of life and decided to enter the monkhood."

The second practitioner said, "While I was walking along a river bank, I saw a young girl washing a worn-out metal bowl. Her bracelet accidentally touched the bowl and made a beautiful sound. That triggered me to enter the monkhood. I realized then that, when the right condition arises, even a worthless bowl can make a beautiful sound."

The third practitioner said, "While I was standing by a pond admiring beautiful lotus flowers, a group of young women came to bathe. After bathing, they picked every lotus blossom and left the pond. At that moment, I realized

that although one may enjoy this glorious life, it is only temporary. For this reason, I decided to enter the monkhood."

This story tells us that the time, place, or occasion for awakening or appreciation of the teachings varies. However, it is not mere coincidence or chance that leads a person to awakening or appreciation.

Newton discovered the Law of Gravitation by seeing a falling apple. It was not mere chance that he discovered this theory. Actually gravity existed from the very beginning of the universe. Newton was thinking about it constantly, and that intensity and seriousness led him to understand gravity.

Like the sun shines on all things on this earth without any discrimination, the Buddha-Dharma is all



around us. The opportunity for us to realize and appreciate the teachings doesn't lie in the future nor does it need special experiences. Just continue to listen to the Dharma. And just continue to be mindful of yourself and the world surrounding us. Seeds will ripen.



By Rev. Koshin Ogui  
White River Buddhist Temple

I once met a person who was able to find joy amidst sadness.

It was back in 1979 when I was living in Cleveland, Ohio. I received a call from the chaplain of the Metropolitan Hospital. The chaplain said there is a patient with AIDS who is near the end of his life and has requested prayers from various local world religious leaders. He called to ask if I could offer the patient a prayer as a representative of the Buddhist religion. Honestly, I did not want to go to visit this patient. But being that I was the only Buddhist minister in the Cleveland area, I felt that I had no choice but to comply with the chaplain's request.

Back in 1979, research on AIDS was still new and not much was known about this scary disease, let alone any proper known treatment. When I arrived at the hospital, I was asked to put on a gown, mask, and rubber gloves and was then escorted into the patient's room. The patient was a Caucasian man lying in bed on his side, his face drawn, his eyes sunken in. I couldn't find any proper words of prayer to offer this man. As I stood there silently, he spoke to me with a very weak voice. "I am going to die soon. Please offer me a Buddhist prayer." When I heard his words, "...I'm going to die," for some reason, these words moved me to respond in this strange way. "I am going to die too. I drove here today to see you. On my way home, I may be involved in a traffic accident and who knows, I may die before you." Rolling his large, sunken eyes at me, he said to me disappointedly, "You're a strange priest. Other priests who have come to visit me had wonderful words of prayer for me." Not being able to meet his expectations, I apologized to him and left the hospital. That night, I laid in bed reflecting on the day.

The next day, to my surprise, I received a call from the hospital chaplain again. He said that the AIDS patient that I visited yesterday would like to see me again. Reluctantly, I went back to the hospital. Upon entering his room, the patient said to me in shortened breath, "You know, last night I couldn't sleep at all. I was up all night thinking. What you said to me was true. All I was thinking about was my own death. Like you said, you could have died before me on your way home in a car accident, and I would still be alive because I can't drive and therefore, there was no chance of me being in such an accident."

From that moment on, my meeting with this AIDS patient took on remarkable meaning and it led to my meeting with him a number of more times after. Each time, I would have to gown up, put on a mask and rubber gloves, and disinfect myself prior to entering his ICU room. At times, I thought this was such a pain. But in my once a week visits with him, I gradually became moved by his interest and enthusiasm.

The following event happened during my third visit with him. It happened to be lunchtime when I

arrived at his room. He was complaining about how awful the hospital food was. Just as he was about to put a piece of beef in his mouth, I grabbed his arm and asked him, "What's that?" Startled, he looked up at me with a frightened look and replied, "It's beef." I responded by saying, "Ah, so the cow sacrificed its own life so that it could help to sustain your life....YOU who is about to die!" After a moment of silence, his hand began to tremble and tears began to roll down his cheeks. Then he said, "The food on the plate is shining! Life is shining!" Moved by his words and action, I, too, was moved to tears. Before I knew it, I had placed my hands in gassho.

After a few moments passed, he shouted in a crying voice, "I am being allowed to live because of the life of the cow! I am being allowed to live because of the life of the vegetables! I am being allowed to live this life because of so many things! Why didn't I realize this before?" What a wondrous experience this was. To myself, I thought, how could such a reaction and how could such words come from a person in this situation. How wondrous it all

Continued on Page 6



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We recommend a length of approximately 700 words, typed, single-spaced. Longer submissions will be rejected or, if accepted, split into multiple parts.

We prefer Microsoft Word documents in an 11-point Times New Roman font, as it translates best for our graphic design department. If you do not have Word, a simple text file will work, even pasted into the body of an e-mail message. In ALL cases, do not embed images in Word document. Send as separate attachment. Please do not send text as PDF files.

Color prints or digital prints are acceptable. Color photocopies, inkjets, or third-party photo sharing websites are not recommended. Photo attachments should be sent at 300 dpi JPEG, TIFF or PDF format for best resolution. Cell phone images are not recommended. Web-based images (72 dpi) do not produce quality images for newspaper usage.

We reserve the right to crop photos and illustrations to conform with space and design requirements.

Submission deadline: 20th of each month.

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## Tacoma Buddhist Temple Centennial: Second Century in the Making



Image above is the Tacoma Buddhist Centennial drawing by June Akita. Image at upper right, early picture of Tacoma Buddhist Temple.

By Debby Abe and June Akita  
Tacoma Buddhist Temple

Tacoma Buddhist Temple members and Rev. Kojo Kakihara, resident minister, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the temple's founding on May 2-4 with special services and a luncheon.

Started as the Tacoma Buddhist Church, the temple was established in 1915, after a small group of young Issei (first generation Japanese Americans) had been holding services in a small rented room on Market Street in Tacoma's Japan Town neighborhood. Current temple members reflect on their appreciation and gratitude for the sacri-

fices and dedication of the early pioneers as they enjoy the many activities of the temple today.

The main activity for the weekend centennial celebration is a luncheon on Sunday, May 4, at La Quinta Inn. Friday evening and Saturday, there will be fun activities and workshops for all ages, including bowling for the Dharma School kids, and a cooking class for men. The Tacoma members would like to reconnect with folks who haven't been to Tacoma temple recently, and to give them an opportunity to meet members and tour the temple. Built in 1931, it was placed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places in 1995.

The temple members

have been busy preparing for the anniversary with projects that included remodeling the Dharma School classrooms with new carpet, fresh paint, new furniture and two refurbished bathrooms; recarpeting the lobby entrance and hallway; and refinishing the Hondo's hardwood floor.

The new mural on the temple's outer rear wall was commissioned with help from a grant from the City of Tacoma. It features a cherry blossom tree stretching over a young woman, an octopus, and glowing lotus blossoms, representing the temple's presence in the Northwest.

Tacoma members, known for their fabulous temple potlucks, are selling



Tacoma Temple Treats II, a cookbook for the centennial loaded with their favorite recipes.

The weekend is only the beginning of the celebration. The yearlong observance will culminate with a group tour to Japan in the spring of 2015.

The perfect birthday present would be a visit from people from all over the country.

Tacoma Buddhist

Temple Centennial, May 2-May 4, 1717 S. Fawcett Ave., Tacoma, WA 98402. Temple phone number: (253) 627-1417.

To attend the festivities, or to order a copy of Tacoma Temple Treats II, contact June Akita at [juneakita@comcast.net](mailto:juneakita@comcast.net).

The cookbook is \$20 plus \$5 shipping and handling for each copy. For more information, visit [www.tacomabt.org](http://www.tacomabt.org).

## Thank You, Ron Murakami

### President's Message



By Dr. Kent Matsuda  
BCA President  
Enmanji Buddhist Temple

BCA members have been extremely fortunate the past two years with Ron Murakami as president of the BCA. During his presidency, we have had our biggest change in headquarters staff. The BCA was fortunate to hire Kevin Arakaki, first as the interim director and now as the BCA Controller. Alan Kita just finished his first year as Chief Administrative Officer. Together with Gregg Sera as a part-time assistant, we have an outstanding team of individuals at

the headquarters office that can meet the needs of BCA members.

Ron Murakami was instrumental in hiring the people we now have at the headquarters office. Ron helped in the transition process, too. Ron was able to travel throughout the BCA and, with his wife Karen, see firsthand what was going on at our temples. Oftentimes, he paid the transportation costs himself.

I have been impressed with Ron's ability to run meetings and remain focused when distractions occur. He is punctual and truly cares about the state of the BCA. We should all thank Ron for his years of service to the BCA.

I would like to thank the December 2011 BCA National Board for electing me as the next president of BCA. The next two years will be challenging both for the BCA and myself. A lot of important issues will need to be resolved so that BCA can be on stable financial footing.

For those of you who are not familiar

with me, I grew up at Enmanji Buddhist Temple in Sebastopol, California in the Bay District. I currently serve as their temple president. During the years 1996-1998, I served as the president of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco. Most recently, I chaired the BCA Campaign - The 21st Century Committee. I have also chaired three other BCA committees.

Ron Murakami was able to visit many temples and spend a lot of time at various functions held throughout the BCA. I am not sure that I will be able to do the same, since I still work full-time as a solo internist. But, with the help of my unbelievably talented cabinet, if I am not able to attend a special function, I will try to send someone in my place.

I hope we can all help the BCA move forward with Rev. Umezu's vision of making the Jodo Shinshu Teachings available to everyone. With your help, I am sure that we can accomplish this and more. Let us begin.

## Plug Into Buddhism: High-Teching at Jr. YBA Conference

By Troy Yamaguchi  
Orange County Buddhist Church

When trying to decide on a theme for Orange County Buddhist Church's (OCBC) 2014 National Conference for Junior Young Buddhist Association (Jr. YBA), OCBC Jr. YBA members considered many different aspects about the religion. For their National Conference, the N-member planning committee decided to pinpoint Buddhism's constant presence in their lives as a focal point for the National Conference. The theme they selected is "Plug Into Buddhism."

So what does it mean to "Plug Into Buddhism"? First, it means to be aware of Buddhism's substantial influence on the decisions that one makes, and the life that one lives. In today's high-tech society, it is easy to take Buddhism's presence for granted. During their 2014 National Conference, OCBC Jr. YBA organizers will highlight the bond between their religion and their secular lives by using technology as an analogy. By seeing how Buddhism and technology can be inter-

Continued on Page 6

## Keynote Speakers Announced for 2015 World Buddhist Women's Convention



Rev. Nana Yanase

The Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Women's Federation, hosts of the 2015 World Buddhist Women's Convention in Calgary, Canada, are pleased to announce the two keynote speakers for this international gathering. The English keynote speaker is Reverend Patricia Kanaya Usuki and the Japanese keynote speaker will be Reverend Nana Yanase.

Registration information and program details are now available at [www.wbwconvention.com](http://www.wbwconvention.com). All interested are urged to visit the site for early deadlines.

English Keynote Speaker: Rev. Patricia Kanaya Usuki is a Sansei (third-generation Japanese Canadian) born and raised in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Since 2004, she has served as a Buddhist Churches of America resident minister assigned to the San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple located near Los Angeles, California. She received her B.A., Modern Languages and Literature, University of Toronto, a B.Ed. from the University of Ottawa, and an M.A. at the Graduate Theological

Continued on Page 6



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### IDAHO-OREGON BUDDHIST TEMPLE Jodo Shinshu in the Treasure Valley

The city of Gardena used to be very unique because Japanese Americans made 20% of the city population. Many of them wanted to have a Buddhist church in this area. In 1925, leaders decided to go forward and construct a church building and the following year, established the Gardena Buddhist Church with 50 members and a \$3 fee/per year. Then there were various affiliated organizations like a Women's club and Jr. Young Buddhist Association (YBA). The Japanese language school was also organized and currently there are over 300 students attending.

Gardena Buddhist Church had become the center of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the area as well as in community activities. In 1931 it became an independent church from the Los Angeles Betsuin. In 1976 we celebrated the 50th Anniversary and in 2001, the 75th Anniversary. Looking towards our 100th anniversary, we continue to spread the teaching of Nenbutsu and create the ideal community in this Gardena area.

Note: This series introducing BCA temples correlates to the 2014 BCA Calendar.

## 2014 BCA Theme: "Take Refuge in the Light of Joy"

Amida Tathagata is also known as the Light of Joy. Shinran Shonin said, "Buddha is light; it is wisdom. This wisdom is itself Amida Buddha." (The Collected Works of Shinran, (CWS), p. 543) Anyone who encounters the Light of Amida rejoices; therefore, it is called the Light of Joy. Let us turn to the calling of the Infinite Life and Light and find meaning in this life.  
- Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop





## BCA Education News & Highlights - Take Refuge in the Light of Joy!

From time to time, the Wheel of Dharma will be sharing articles from our BCA ministers about their life at IBS. Following is our first in the series, written by our BCA Bishop, Reverend Kodo Umezu.

### My Student Life at the Institute of Buddhist Studies

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, IBS Class of 1976

When I came to the U.S. as a BCA minister in October, 1973, I was only 22 years old. I didn't know anyone in this country—only the names of a few people. One of them was Rev. Haruyoshi Kusada.

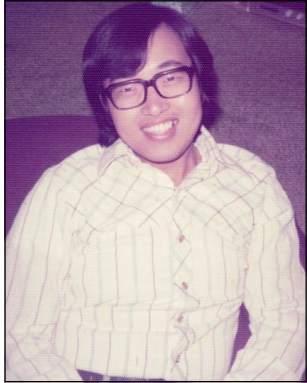
It was the late Rev. Kusada and Rev. Makoto Ohta, my classmate who had arrived a few weeks earlier, who greeted me at the San Francisco International Airport. Rev. Kusada was the director of the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) in Berkeley. Upon my arrival at the IBS building on Haste Street, I was introduced to the late Rev. Philip Karl Eidmann and some other students studying there. IBS was the graduate school of the Buddhist Churches of America and home to several ministerial aspirants.

I stayed at IBS for a few weeks and then was assigned to the Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple in Central California. I was very fortunate that the head minister of the temple was Rev. Gibun Kimura, who was a close friend of my teacher, Prof. Sosuke Nishimoto of Kyoto. Rev. Kimura was the type of a person who believed that ministers should always be furthering their Jodo Shinshu studies. Rev. Kimura didn't greet me with the usual welcome but asked me a question. "Umezu-kun, what is your understanding of the 17<sup>th</sup> Vow?" Those were his exact words of welcome. I don't recall how I answered the question, but I remember that he treated me like his own son.

About two years later, I enrolled at IBS. It was Bishop Kenryu Tsuji's idea that I needed to study more and get a Master of Arts degree in Buddhism before I joined the U.S. Navy. He was hoping that I could serve as a Buddhist chaplain in the Navy. While I was at IBS, I got to know many other students who were striving to become the BCA ministers and who are serving as BCA ministers now. Later, Bhante Seelawimala arrived from Sri Lanka and joined us. The IBS teaching staff included Rev. Dr. Hoshu Matsubayashi, the late Rev. Toshio Murakami, Rev. Tesshi Aoyama, the late Rev. Ryumei Iguchi, Rev. Masami Fujitani, and the late Prof. Ryosetsu Fujiwara, to name a few.

We studied hard but we had a lot of fun, too. Rev. Kusada and Rev. Eidmann used to live at the Haste Street building, so we were able to receive much from these great teachers. I have many fond memories of this time in my life.

Buddhism is not just something you learn from a book. It lives as people, systems, and institutions. If you encounter people with "dharma flavor" you are fortunate. I strongly recommend furthering your religious studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies and interacting with other students and teachers there.



### Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course - Monthly Essay

Visit: [www.JSCC.cbe-bca.org](http://www.JSCC.cbe-bca.org) for course details



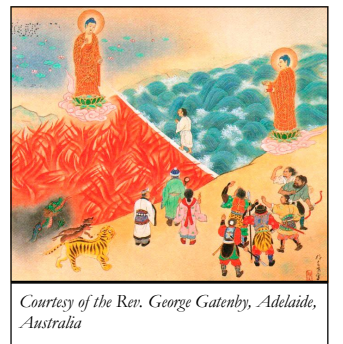
#### What Does the Parable of the Two Rivers and a White Path Teach Us?

By David Chang

The parable of the Two Rivers and a White Path is a description of life and the difficulty of trying to obtain enlightenment through one's own effort or power. The rivers of fire and water represent a person's anger and greed—roaring and boiling over the narrow path to enlightenment. While there exists a path to the other side of the rivers and on to the Pure Land, to cross these rivers without assistance would almost assuredly result in failure. Not to succumb to anger or greed along the way as they obscure and obstruct the path would seem to be more than any person could accomplish. Additionally, other people, perceiving the same rivers and paths as we do, reasonably try to dissuade one from attempting the voyage. It seems dangerous and an impossible task. Bandits, representing other schools of thought, also try to discourage the person from making the crossing as it does not seem like a safe, or perhaps assured, path.

At first I didn't really understand this parable as I thought the small path was perhaps a path that one could perhaps cross through their own power; for example, via good thought, right actions, etc., and that if one was extraordinarily skilled one could cross it by oneself. However, as I thought on it more, it is small and appears uncrossable to emphasize that it is possible to traverse only with Amida Buddha's help (more than help actually)—that one's actions do not really contribute to the crossing. I suppose in a more modern context, this path could be an escalator or a moving sidewalk (although that is less dramatic); the person just needs to step on the path and the transportation is carried out through another source of power.

I also had two other thoughts when reading this parable. One was about the bandits. When reading I felt sympathy for the bandits, because in the end and in their own way, they are trying to assist the traveler. They are caught up in perceiving the world at face value as most do. They see the rivers and path for what they appear to be: dangerous. And at the end, they try to warn the traveler against something they would consider folly. The sympathy comes from understanding their viewpoint, and understanding that there is nothing the traveler (or myself) can do to change their view, and that they will see more pain and suffering because of it.



Courtesy of the Rev. George Gatlenby, Adelaide, Australia

In my life, I have long stopped trying to convince anyone of anything. People simply won't recognize something or understand something unless they want/are ready/are willing to do so. At this point in my life, all I will do is describe how I view things, and others can make of it whatever they choose. When I was younger I was very headstrong and judgmental, and could not understand why I could not convince people of a particular view or position, but now I just accept that people must draw their own conclusions. It is, after all, their life and viewpoint, not mine! I also have changed my behavior because I have realized that I am also FREQUENTLY wrong! So I am also a bit sad for myself when I think of the bandits or the people in the parable because I feel that I personally do not have the clarity or ability to fundamentally change anything and get them to see the world and Amida's Other Power as I understand it.

I also had another thought somewhat related to the above when reading this parable. I thought that it is a remarkably self-centered thought to believe that one could achieve Nirvana through his/her actions alone! To me that seems almost paradoxical in a belief system that stresses interdependence and the illusion of individuality. I think in a way reliance on the Primal Vow is also somehow related to the concept of relaxing the focus on oneself. We have greed and anger because of our self-centeredness: I am the only thing that matters and I'm going to ensure that I get everything I can to assure my well-being. However, reliance on the Primal Vow, it seems to me, is almost diametrically opposed to this. To believe that almost nothing that one does in this life will contribute to being born in the Pure Land other than a reliance on Amida Buddha's Primal Vow I feel is a message that many would find difficult to accept because it marginalizes any notion of self-worth (I mean this in the sense of possessing the tools and wherewithal to determine one's own destiny). I'm not sure I'm on the right track with this last thought, but it does interest me. I'm not saying that reliance on Amida Buddha's Primal Vow is demeaning in any way, but rather it takes the focus off of one's own efforts and achievements and (to me anyway) says that these things in this world are somewhat meaningless. Only relaxing the focus on yourself and entrusting yourself to Amida Buddha and the Primal Vow will transport you across the rivers of fire and water. It seems like a simple message, and at one level it is, but when one contemplates what the message means, a great deal of insight can be gained by considering the implications of the story.

David Chang, formerly of San Jose Betsuin, recently moved to San Gabriel with his wife Stephanie and son Cole to support Stephanie's parents, one of whom is currently in hospice care.



## INSTITUTE OF BUDDHIST STUDIES

### FRIENDS OF IBS MINISTERIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Institute of Buddhist Studies would like to gratefully acknowledge the following individuals, families and organizations for their generous support of the new, annual giving fundraising effort for the IBS Ministerial Scholarship fund, which began in 2013. Thanks to the gifts of those listed below, the grand total as of February 15, 2014 is \$41,695.46

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Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Nishikawa	

### Prof. Nobuhiro Fukagawa Lectures in Berkeley & Gardena

The Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Center for Buddhist Education are pleased to present Professor Nobuhiro Fukagawa at two major educational gatherings this March. He is on the faculty of Ryukoku University's Department of Shin Buddhist Studies in Kyoto and serves as the resident minister of Sainen-ji Temple in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Japan. Prof. Fukagawa was recently appointed to the rank of *Kangaku*, the highest academic ranking within the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.



#### March 19 & 20: RYUKOKU LECTURES

*The Propagation of Shin Buddhism: Challenges and Possibilities*

7 - 8:30 pm Free & Open to the Public (Note new time schedule)

Jodo Shinshu Center - 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA

Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS)

#### March 22: SPRING PACIFIC SEMINAR

*The Benefits of a Life of Shinjin*

9 am - 4 pm Registration \$30 (Includes lunch) **Extended Deadline: March 17**

Gardena Buddhist Church - 1517 West 166th Street, Gardena, CA

Presented by IBS & BCA Center for Buddhist Education

Hosted by the Southern District Ministers Association & Buddhist Education Committee

Registration and other program details available at

[www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org](http://www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org) (click on CBE).

BCA Southern District members are urged to register through their temples.

### CBE 2014 Calendar of Events

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

**February - April:** Central Cal Buddhist Education Programs

**March 14-16:** TechnoBuddha Conference with Rev. Patti Oshita

**March 19-21:** Ministers' Continuing Education (MCE)

**March 22:** Spring Pacific Seminar at Gardena Buddhist Church

**March 27-29:** Spring Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) seminar

**April 19:** Japanese Seminar

**May 21:** Gotan-e (Shinran's Birthday) Service

**June 28:** LGBTQ & Buddhism Seminar

**June 30-July 2:** Ministers' Summer Fuken

**July 4-6:** Summer Pacific Seminar (Summer MAP credit). See ad on page 5

**August 8-9:** Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course August Workshop

**September 6:** Baby Boomers Seminar with Rev. Patricia Usuki

**September 18-20:** Fall MAP seminar at New York Buddhist Church

**October 4:** Japanese Seminar

**October 20-31:** CBE Japan Educational Tour

**November 11-13:** Ministers' Continuing Education (MCE)

**December 11-16:** Winter Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) seminar

See details at [www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org](http://www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org)

Email: [cbe@bcahq.org](mailto:cbe@bcahq.org) Ph: (510) 809-1460





## BCA Education News & Highlights - Take Refuge in the Light of Joy!

### CBE Co-Director's Message:

## Encountering Followers of the Nembutsu

by Rev. Marvin Harada

As a minister, I often have the wonderful opportunity to encounter deep followers of the Nembutsu. Recently I conducted a funeral service for an elderly lady who lived to the amazing age of 105. She was a very devout follower of Shin Buddhism, and for the great majority of her life, was healthy and mentally alert.

When she turned 100, for her birthday, her grandson interviewed her and asked her all kinds of thought questions. I would like to share a couple of her responses.

One of the questions posed to her was, "Grandma, what do you say to yourself when you are so furious and mad at someone?" Of course most of us would say that we yell or curse, or at least raise our voice. This woman responded, "I never feel that way." It was truly her honest response. Imagine never getting mad, but that was truly how she felt. Nothing in life ever angered her to the extent that she was that furious with anyone.

The second question was, "If you could meet anyone from the past, dead or alive, who would it be?" I thought that her response would be to see her late husband again, or something like that, but she said, "I would like to meet Bodhisattva Dharmakara who for five kalpas contemplated on the Dharma."

I thought to myself, "Who would ever give an answer like that?!" I would never, ever give a response like that, but this devout follower of the Nembutsu, in listening to many sermons and Dharma talks about Bodhisattva Dharmakara, wanted to meet Bodhisattva Dharmakara more than anyone from the past.

Being a minister is such a privilege, to be able to encounter wonderful followers of the Nembutsu, whose insight, deep understanding, and way of living teaches me so many things about the path of the Nembutsu.

## The Dharmakara Series: Our Lifelong Learning Challenge

### INTRODUCTION TO THE SANBUTSU-GE: Gatha (verses) in Praise of the Buddha (Part 2)

by Rev. John Iwohara

This is the continuation of a series of articles on the *Sanbutsu-ge*.  
The reader is also encouraged to visit the on-line site: [Dharmanet.org](http://Dharmanet.org)



<http://www.dharmanet.org/coursesM/Shin/I.html>

In the previous article I wrote on how Jodo Shinshu scholars of the past identified Ananda as representing "foolish beings." In other words, Ananda represents *us* in the Larger Sutra. Put in another way, Ananda helps us to see that we, as foolish beings, are the reason why Amida Buddha gave rise to and fulfilled his Vow and how it is for our sake that Sakyamuni Buddha appeared in this world to teach us about Amida Buddha. In seeing Ananda as representing all foolish beings, however, we need to ask ourselves how similar to Ananda are we?

Like Ananda many of us have been listening to the Dharma, and in particular the Nembutsu teaching as clarified by Shinran Shonin, for years. In listening to this Dharma we have been taught that with Faith (*shinjin*) we will enter the ranks of the *Rightly-Established* and, without fail, be born in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha to become a Buddha ourselves. There are times that we, like Ananda and Shinran Shonin, are able to exclaim how we are able to "rejoice in what I have heard and extol what I have attained" [CWS, p. 4] and are able to find both the inspiration to seek and the great joy to live our lives in the Nembutsu teaching. Despite this, however, we also, again like Ananda, sometimes fail to fully live out what is expressed by the Nembutsu. Do we not, like Yuien-bo before us, express our inability to fully recognize the significance of the Nembutsu working in our lives? Do we not sometimes question and sometimes say or feel:

*Although I say the nembutsu, the feeling of dancing with joy is faint with me, and I have no thought of wanting to go to the Pure Land quickly. How should it be [for a person of the nembutsu]? [CWS, p. 665]*

This question by Yuien-bo was one that I also was forced to ask myself. For me, at this particular time, it was a very hard look. The occasion was one where I was invited to give the Dharma message at another temple's special service. To accommodate the request I had to fly into the city of the temple. The resident minister of the temple was unavailable to pick me up so instead his wife and two children came to pick me up. I was given the passenger seat of the car and after being picked up the plan was to take me to the hotel where I would be staying that night, check-in and then go out to eat dinner. On the way to the hotel, however, mother and children got into a passionate discussion about how best to go to the hotel. The mother, who was the driver, wanted to go via freeway. The children insisted that it would be easier and faster to take surface streets. Unfortunately, the discussion got most heated before getting onto the on-ramp which was a left-hand turn from the road that we were on. It was unfortunate because the driver decided to stop the car before the on-ramp to fully discuss the options available. Meanwhile, while I was sitting in the passenger seat, I was the only one that seemed to notice that there was an oncoming vehicle quickly approaching our now stopped car.

I listened to the conversation hoping that it would soon be resolved but I could not help but to worry about the headlights of the car that kept getting bigger and brighter as their conversation continued. The oncoming car was not slowing down. The conversation did not seem anywhere near reaching a conclusion. For whatever reason, I thought that my life was going to end that night. In that moment, I neither rejoiced at going to the Pure Land nor did I think about becoming a Buddha. I did not even say the Nembutsu. Instead, all that came out of my mouth was a soft whimper that said, "No (I don't want to die)." Given that I am writing this article today means that my life did not end that night. Fortunately, even while continuing the debate about which route was the best to take, the driver made an executive decision and dashed onto the freeway, avoiding the oncoming vehicle.

My writing about this incident, even many years after the fact, still fills me with a sense of shame. Why didn't the Nembutsu come out? Instead of whimpering "no" why didn't I find celebration in my impending birth in the Pure Land?

As part of the answer to Yuien-bo's question, Shinran Shonin first identifies himself as a foolish being. He states, "I, too, have had this question, and the same thought occurs to you, Yuien-bo!" He then continues his answer by saying that what represses this sense of joy is our blind passions, or those traits and qualities that make us foolish beings. With regards to not wanting to go to the Pure Land, Shinran Shonin states, "*Further, having no thought of wanting to go to the Pure Land quickly, we think forlornly that we may die even when we become slightly ill; this is the action of blind passions. It is hard for us to abandon this old home of pain, where we have been transmigrating for innumerable kalpas down to the present, and we feel no longing for the Pure Land of peace, where we have yet to be born. Truly, how powerful our blind passions are!*" [CWS, Pp. 665-666]

Despite being told how wonderful the Pure Land is, there was no thought of my birth into the Pure Land. Instead, all I could focus on was the pain of my death. Like Ananda, who could only focus on the death of the Buddha, there was neither joy nor celebration. In this regard, Ananda and I are very much alike.

On the other hand, however, just as the Buddha prophesied, Ananda helped to spread the true Dharma in all directions and benefited the world. It was also Ananda's appreciation of the Buddha's appearance that allowed us to hear of Amida Buddha and his Vow. This is no small feat. Are we like Ananda in this regard as well? To help answer this question let us consider what happens when we chant the *Sanbutsu-ge*. Whenever we chant the *Sanbutsu-ge* we share in the Dharma of Amida Buddha and re-affirm the reason for Sakyamuni Buddha's appearance in this world. The Dharma taught by the Buddha, and in particular the Dharma found in the Larger Sutra, can still be heard as part of the living tradition that is Jodo Shinshu. It is because of Jodo Shinshu that we, like Ananda, are able to discover that we too can become a true disciple of the Buddha while being a foolish being, and that even as a foolish being we are capable of extraordinary things. We are able to move the heart of a Buddha, and we are able to help others to take notice of that heart that has promised to enlighten the minds of all beings. We are just like Ananda. We, too, are able to help others to hear the Dharma of the Nembutsu. We, too, like Ananda did in all the Sutra he shared, are similarly able to declare, "Thus, I have heard," and in this declaration express our joy at having heard and at the same time help others to hear and then share in the joy of *Namo Amida Butsu*, all while still being a foolish being.

**Pacific Seminar – 21<sup>st</sup> Century**  
A Special Summer Session

Sea of Suffering,  
Ocean of Compassion

July 4 – July 6, 2014

Jodo Shinshu Center  
2140 Durant Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94704

**Honored Guests:**  
Rev. Dr. Taitetsu Unno and Mrs. Alice Unno

**Keynote Speakers:**  
Rev. Tetsuo Unno and Rev. Dr. Mark Ty Unno

**Guest Speaker:**  
Rev. Harry Gyokyo Bridge



Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies and  
Buddhist Churches of America – Center for Buddhist Education

*"Suffering can be vast, like the sea; great  
compassion soothes the greatest of sufferings.  
One finds that, in the rhythms of daily life, as well as in  
major moments of difficulty, loss and separation, some of  
the greatest opportunities to realize great compassion  
open up to us. Shin Buddhism in particular helps us to  
discover that, in the midst of deep suffering, there is the  
unfolding of the heart of great compassion."*

Dr. Mark Unno

This year's seminar draws on the tradition of creating an intensive, interactive and inspiring dharma gathering for all interested seekers: students, scholars, ministers, and newcomers—multigenerational and multi-ethnic—that began in the early 1960s. Featuring speakers and special guests who were part of those early Pacific Seminars, this will be a special opportunity to hear how several generations of teachers and followers have been cultivating new fields for Shin Buddhism in 21<sup>st</sup> century America over the course of the last half-century.

"Sea of Suffering, Ocean of Compassion" is a reminder of Shinran Shonin's repeated use of the ocean as a metaphor for the dharma as a universal refuge, and how clearly this speaks to the 21<sup>st</sup> century's sea of suffering and urgent need to realize the ocean of compassion.

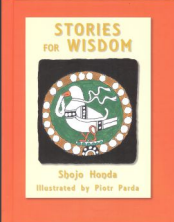
For program and registration details, visit:  
[www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org](http://www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org)  
and click on CBE.

## CBE Shinran Shonin Study Tour: October 20-31, 2014

CBE is sponsoring a "Shinran Shonin Study Tour" in October of this year. Bishop Kodo Umezu will lead the tour and offer Dharma messages along the travel route. Tour highlights will include spots in Ibaragi and Northern Japan where Shinran stayed during his exile. We will visit the Eshinni Museum dedicated to the wife of Shinran; travel through part of the beautiful Japan Alps and stop at the UNESCO World Heritage Site village of Shirakawago, with its famous steep-sloped thatched roof homes, which was founded by Shin Buddhists; then we'll visit Kyoto, the heart of Shin Buddhism and Japanese culture. The cost of the tour is \$2,900.00 (not including airfare).

After the tour ends, participants are invited to continue on their own, or can stay in Kyoto for a few more days. There is room for a few more tour participants, so if you are interested in joining us, please contact CBE Tour Committee member Brian Nagata at (510) 853-8505 or email him at [manager@numatacenter.com](mailto:manager@numatacenter.com) for further information.

## Stories for Wisdom



Rev. Shoji Honda, minister emeritus of the Ekoji Buddhist Temple, recently had several of his short stories printed in a book called *Stories for Wisdom*, published by Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai America (BDK America). Complimentary copies were sent to each BCA temple. The following is an interview conducted by Ekoji Dharma School student Franny DeAtley with Rev. Honda about his lifetime experiences which led to this charming and inspirational book of stories from all over the globe:

As a college student in Osaka, Japan in the 1940's Rev. Honda witnessed the devastation following World War II. He recalls vividly the charred landscape and the casualties, but most of all, he remembers the many orphans who, having lost their parents, "had no one to take care of them." As part of a student Buddhist study group, Rev. Honda and his classmates visited children in orphanages. They entertained the children with stories, plays, and puppet shows. They took their work seriously, critiquing and honing their skills and drawing from the works of Aesop, Brothers Grimm, Hans Christian Anderson, and the Jataka Tales.

When Rev. Honda became the interim minister at Ekoji, he shared his expertise in storytelling with an enthusiastic Dharma School. He describes his amassed collection of stories as, "beautiful, at times sad, and filled with deep meaning...very precious," and also subtly implying the wisdom of the Buddha's teaching. "These stories are stories of wisdom, and not just for school children, but for people of all ages and from all backgrounds," Rev. Honda said in describing his stories. "There is something for everyone, at all stages of life."

One of Rev. Honda's personal favorite stories, "The Pearl" begins high atop the Himalayan Mountains in India...

*Stories for Wisdom* may be purchased from the BCA Buddhist Bookstore for a \$10 donation. To order, go to [www.bcabookstore.com](http://www.bcabookstore.com) or [sales@bcabookstore.com](mailto:sales@bcabookstore.com), or call 510-809-1435.





## NC Report

Continued from Front Page

sociation, chaired by Rev. Jerry Hirano of Salt Lake Buddhist Temple, met Thursday, Feb. 27. Rev. Hirano had the ministers seriously consider how employee benefits are distributed and what changes have taken place over the years.

There was a conjoining conference in which 18 members of Young Leaders Today (YLT) from six of the eight BCA districts participated. The young people are Youth Minister's Assistants and/or members of the Junior Young Buddhist Association (Jr. YBA) and College YBA. Their workshops were led by Rev. Kojo Kakihara of Tacoma Buddhist Temple, Rev. Kurt Rye of Ekoji Buddhist Temple, and Keith Sawada of Senshin Buddhist Temple.

Jeff Matsuoka, BCA Treasurer, initiated the evening's collection for the Zaidan Fund. This traditionally takes place at every national and district gathering to raise money for the BCA Endowment Foundation. Koichi Sayano, board member of the BCA Endowment Foundation, made a presentation on the history of the Zaidan Fund and the relationship between the BCA and the BCA Endowment Foundation. YLT members collected \$3,000 from participants at the evening banquet.

The 61-temple delegation concluded its annual meeting on March 1 with an evening banquet. At this gathering, the BCA honored the 25-year achievements of Rev. Dean Koyama of Palo Alto Buddhist Temple and Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto of Berkeley Bud-

dhist Temple. Also honored was Rev. Zuikei Taniguchi of Buddhist Temple of Alameda for 50 years of service to the BCA. The 2013 retirees, Rev. Hiroshi Abiko, former rinban at Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, and Rev. Masao Kodani of Senshin Buddhist Temple were honored as well. Earlier, Rev. Kodani gave the Dharma talk at the national Eitaikyo service. He described how "life is better at 70, even if you don't remember everything."

There was a showcase of talent at the banquet. Valerie Chun of White River Buddhist Temple and Jason Yokoyama of Seattle Buddhist Church, Betsuin, both members of YLT, served as emcees for the "Got Talent" entertainment program. Other YLT members participated as well.

"Got Talent" featured the singing ministerial trio of Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop, Michael Endo, Secretary to the Bishop, and Rev. Nori Watanabe, newly arrived resident minister of Oxnard Buddhist Temple and supervising minister of the Buddhist Church of Santa Barbara. Hide Mizuno, executive director of the BCA Endowment Foundation, performed a bluegrass fiddle solo. And emcee Valerie Chun suspects that "The BCA has way more unknown talent."

As an invitation to next year's gathering in San Diego, February 25 to March 1, 2015, delegates from Southern District led an exuberant rendition of "We Will Rock You" with host committee co-chairs, Ralph Honda of Buddhist Temple of San Diego and Terry Omori of Vista Buddhist Temple.

but the life of other's sacrifices, kindness, thoughtfulness and patience. I am grateful. Gassho."

About three weeks later, I received a call from the hospital chaplain. He informed me that the patient had passed away. In a letter the patient wrote and left for me, he said, "Because of AIDS, I was able to meet you. And I was able to meet with such a beautiful and wonderful teaching. I was also able to learn how to put my hands in gassho. I was able to realize how fortunate I was to have been born a human being and to live this life. Now I am grateful to AIDS. I don't have much money left, but please have a drink on me. Thank you very much. Gassho." There, in the envelope together with the letter, was some money.

Returning to the temple, I chanted a sutra by myself. Reflecting upon this remarkable encounter, similarly remarkable tears began to flow from my eyes. This experience was certainly beyond any ideal situation. Yet, through this encounter, I was able to meet with someone who found joy amidst great suffering and sadness.

*(This article appeared in Japanese in the January 2014 Wheel of Dharma. Translation by Michael Endo.)*

# Who Am I? - YABA Explores Identity

Identity and transitions are important themes in young adults' lives, and the Young Adult Buddhist Association recently held a seminar at San Mateo Buddhist Temple.

The 16 attendees, included five who do not have current ties to a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temple, shared talks on their own identity and future goals. They also discussed ways to attain those goals and learned about their connections to Buddhism.

The seminar began with a service conducted by the temple's resident minister, Rev. Henry Adams, who let the group on discussions and workshops on identity and transitions and how they relate to Buddhism.

YABA gathers Buddhists



between the ages of 22 to 35. All generally graduated recently from college and are starting out in their career paths.

Anyone who are interested or

have questions in joining future events should e-mail [yaba.bca@gmail.com](mailto:yaba.bca@gmail.com) or take a look at the Facebook group at [www.facebook.com/groups/BCAYABA](http://www.facebook.com/groups/BCAYABA).

## WBW Convention

Continued from Page 3

Union, Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, California. She continued her education in Japan, graduating from Chuo Bukkyo Gakuin Seminary in Kyoto, and received Kyoshi ordination in 2002. During that period, she served at the International Department of the Hompa Hongwanji, as a European language specialist (French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian); she was the English editor for Jodo Shinshu - A Guide (2002). In 2007, her master's thesis was published as a book, *Currents of Change: American Buddhist Women Speak Out on Jodo Shinshu*. In a Tricycle- The Buddhist Review (Summer 2011) article titled "The Great Compassion: An Interview with Reverend Patricia Kanaya Usuki," writer Jeff Wilson notes that "Even though Jodo Shinshu was the first Buddhist organization to ordain American women back in the 1920s, Usuki's study was the first systematic exploration of women's experiences in America's oldest Buddhist tradition (Jodo Shinshu was first established in Hawaii in the 1880s, and California in the 1890s)..."

Japanese Keynote Speaker: Rev. Nana Yanase is the sixth generation resident minister of the Kyō On

Ji Temple in Nara Prefecture. The temple belongs to the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-Ha denomination of Shin Buddhism. Rev. Yanase debuted as a singer - songwriter in May, 2004 with her debut single "Kaero" (Let's Go Home). Nana's appeal is instantly recognizable with her eloquent melody and gentle, yet deeply heartfelt vocals and lyrics.

At the age of 30, Nana was diagnosed with uterine cancer. Through her life-altering experience of dealing with her cancer, as well as her position of being a female minister, Nana experienced deep insight into "life and death". It was her music which became the vehicle of healing for Nana. Through it, she was able to overcome her medical conditions, and her music continues to inspire all those who have encountered it. She has been the subject of a documentary aired on Nippon Television titled, "The Singing Nun - From Battling Cancer came the Inspiration of Life" and was featured in an episode of the documentary series, "Grande Jete", aired by the Nippon Broadcasting Corporation.

Presently, Nana has a very full schedule with concert performances, writing of essays, as well as conducting her unique blend of presenting the Dharma through her music and talks at temples throughout Japan. She has

supported the relief work for those affected by the East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of 2011 by creating a song "Makenai Towel" (Towel of No Giving Up) as a fundraiser. Read more about Nana and listen to her music at [www.yanasenana.net](http://www.yanasenana.net)

About the 2014 World Buddhist Women's Convention: The World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Association held the 1st World Buddhist Women's Convention in Kyoto, Japan in 1961, and since then, the various member countries have had the honor of hosting the convention held every 4 years. Originally, the convention was held for the women only, however, things have changed over the years and the convention now encompasses both men and women in the Jodo Shinshu Sangha or spiritual community. The World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Association is made up of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Federation of Japan; Honpa Hongwanji Mission, Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations; Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations; South America Honwanji Buddhist Women's Federation; and the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada Women's Federation.

## Sharing...

Continued from Front Page

back to the ballroom. "People want an opportunity to be heard and the smaller groups really allowed everyone to speak and to have some discussion."

Mr. Endo further reported that "we received many good inputs and thanks to Ron (Murakami) for organizing this session." He further stated, "Brainstorming is a good process - it's what you do with it after." Corroborating Mr. Endo's remark, Mr. Terusaki ended the summary wrap-up session with his group's most emphatic message to the BCA, "Make sure there is follow-

through!"

"Mr. Murakami noted that many of the brainstorm ideas were among those already in progress for future national councils. Mr. Murakami emphasized that changes are being made to the activities of the National Council. His goal is to provide current and relevant information to the attendees in a more convention-like atmosphere. The 2015 Host Committee, led by brother-sister team of Terry Omori, Vista Buddhist Temple, and Ralph Honda, Buddhist Temple of San Diego noted that next year's National Council Meeting in San Diego promises to be different. And besides official delegates,

other temple members should be interested in attending. Plans are also being incorporated with the host committee for the 2016 National Council Meeting in Visalia.

Dr. Kent Matsuda, incoming BCA President, met with his new cabinet during lunch on Saturday to discuss these ideas and put forth new orders on budget presentation and reports. He plans to have a follow-up session at the San Diego National Council. "I am pleased with how it turned out. Some common themes stood out from all the sessions."

A summary of the ideas presented will be reported in the April issue of The Wheel of Dharma.

## OCBC Jr. YBA

Continued from Page 3

woven, the participants can see how Buddhism can be interwoven into their lives.

Another aspect of "Plugging Into Buddhism" is utilizing the Dharma actively and positively. The teachings offer many powerful tools with which one can face life, and the 2014 National Conference aims to highlight these tools, and help the participants use them to their fullest potential.

Being "Plugged Into Buddhism" means to actively participate in the local temple. OCBC's

2014 National Conference aims to facilitate these qualities by encouraging discussion and participation. The host committee knows that it is easiest to learn when learning is fun, and the goal of the workshops are to be as entertaining and interactive (and fun) as they are informative and significant.

OCBC's Jr. YBA sincerely hopes that all Jr. YBA-aged members of the BCA temples can join them from August 30 - September 1 at the Orange County Hilton (Costa Mesa, CA) and "Plug Into Buddhism."

Troy Yamaguchi is the Publicity Chair of the OCBC Jr. YBA and is in the 11th grade.

## Rev. Umezu

Continued from Front Page

Therefore, let us think about the name badge that the ultimate dynamic reality is wearing. Revealing the Name is the kindest act to all beings.



# 今月の法話

## 名号となつて時空を越える



山東三州仏教会  
藤井道栄開教使

た。だが、ひとたび肝(はら)がすわると、その後は学べる質と量とに雲泥の差が生まれることに驚いた。そうかと言って私の仏道は「お花畑の中で鼻歌交じりで」との歩みとは程遠く、なんと次々と目前に難題が浮かび上がることか。その一つ一つの問題が自分の力量では簡単に解けるようにも思えなかった。

その中の重大な二つが、「アミダ仏の教えは本願(ほんがん)と名号(みょうごう)」。だと聖人は説く。その「本願」と「名号」がよく解らない。だが、時間をかけて本願の一つ一つを身に引き当てて読めば「なるほどなあ、仏法の上にはこの世に無いことが示されている。私の願ひ求めるべき世界が説かれている」と知れる。だが、もう一つの「名号」というものには歯が立たない。手がかりさえ思い当たらない。私は名号の前で唾然として立ちつくす他なかった。

「なぜアミダ仏の成し遂げた全世界が名号となることを選んだのか？」という疑問が湧き出てきた。そこで經典や聖人を調べてみる。しかし私の求める解答はどこにも見出せなかった。それらに記されている説明の多くは異口同音に南無阿彌陀仏の中身の説明だけだった。はい話の南無の意味、アミダ仏の意味であり、「名号」には全ての功德(くどく)が欠くことなく込められている。だからこそ救われる」という類の説明ばかりだった。なぜ名号となることを選んだのか？なぜ名前と成ったのか？この疑問が解けなければ一歩も前に進めないように感じ、いつも悶々としていた。そして心はいつもこの問題の解決を待ち望んでいた。そんな悶々とした日々が続く中で、ある日のこと四十八願を讀んでいて「ああ、これだ！言葉となり名号となった意味はこれなんだ！」と気付いた。その瞬間は長年の難題が解けた瞬間だった。

それまでは「なぜ言葉となり名号となったのか？」「言葉の本質とは何か？」が知りたくて言語学の書物を出せなかった。はて、大事な箇所を見逃していったのだらうか？それとも私に理解する器量がなかったのか？まあ、どちらにしても空しく終わるしかなかった。もがいてみたが難題は解けなかった。「ああ、解けないような問題をかかえ、俺はむなしく死ぬのだからか」と思うと、「こんな教えに出会うからひどい目に遭うのだ」と愚痴の一言も言いたくなる始末だった。

難題が解けた瞬間は次のようにやって来た。本願を

読んでいて「確かに一つ一つの本願は自分の願ひ求めるべき世界だが、この經典は昔々に説かれた仏陀の言葉であり、教説ではないか。その教説が今の私にとどき、私を見定めている。文字となった教説は時代を超え、国を越えて今の私に届いているではないか！その文字の源をたどれば、それは仏陀が法座で口から発した言葉であり教説ではないか！言葉としての教説にはすでに文字となる働きを内蔵して時空を越える力があるのだ！文字となった教説は、翻訳され、国を越え時代を超えて今の私に届く働きがあるのだ。そして届いた言葉は私の中で教説として再生されているではないか！言葉の本質がここにあった！時空を越えるとはこういうことなのだ！」と。

もう少し説明を加えたい。仏陀の口から発せられた教説は、その場だけで消え去るものではない。聞いて感銘した人々が語り伝える。言葉として記録する。編纂されて經典となり、翻訳されて時代も国も超える。そして私のもとに今とどいていて。だが、その教説の中に人々を動かす力が含まれていなければ、その言葉はその場で消え去るしかないことではないか。

するといくら言語学の書物を開いてみても大切な箇所には気付かなかった訳がはつきりしてきた。私は疑うこともなく「言葉」というものは、あなたと私の意思疎通の手段」とばかり思っていた。この強い思い込みが「言葉は真実を、時空を越えて、不特定多数にとどける働きがある」という側面を見えなくしていた。ここで「不特定多数」と書いたが、仏典には「十方衆生」となっている。真実は衆生の良し悪しを選ばないから「不特定多数」とも「十方衆生」とも表現される。

ところが、である。これで「めでたし、目出度し」と終わってはくれなかった。感動したはずだったし、言葉の本質みたいなものにも触れたようにも思っていた。だが、「待てよ、そういえばどこかで同じような説明を聞いたことがあるぞ」と思い出した。キリスト教の説明に「言葉となった神」「神は言葉となった」というのを思い出した。丸で冷や水を浴びせられたように感動は萎縮し消え去った。「だが、どうだろう。神は言葉となり教説と成ったかも知れないが、名を称えさせて衆生を迎え損(と)る仏行には成ってはいない」と思い当たった。すると「なるほどね、丸で人体みたくに各臓器が本願であり、臓器が集まって名号という身体を作っているのか」との思いに至る。いくら生きた臓器がいくつあろうがそれだけでは意味がない。個々の臓器・働きが集まって一つの身体を成し「命を成し」て始めて各臓器の意味をなすのではないかと。それが名号であり阿彌陀仏の命ではないかと思いついた。

では、名号と成ることを選んだアミダ仏の真意とは？阿彌陀仏の命とは何か？アミダ仏が私を救ってくれるとはありがたいことだが、救われるとはどういうことなのだろうか？

ある日乱雑になっていたオフィスを整理している時だった。「おお、ここにあったか！」と大事にしていたノートを見つけた。そのノートとは開教使用の講義の際に克明に記したものの。ほぼ丸二日の「唯識(ゆいしき)」という哲学的な講義で、実によく解り今までの疑問点が多く解けた講義だった。その後二年以上も何かとお世話になった大切なノートだった。しかし、

そのノートを手にした瞬間、「さもありなん！」と見つけるだけだった。何度も使ったノートの内容を何一つ思い出せなかったのである。もう一度読み返せば思い出せることは確かだったが、そうはしなかった。「これでいいんだ(何も覚えていなくて)」と内心で自分に言い聞かせていた。

私は多くを聞いた。多くを学んだ。多くを憶えている。そう思っていたが全てを忘れてしまっていたのである。だが、ただ一つ、南無阿彌陀仏だけは忘れていなかった。それで充分ではないかと自分に言い聞かせていた。難しいことは時間がかかる。明日の命さえ保障のない身ではないか。混み入った哲理は理解し憶えていなければならぬ。だが、みな忘れた。だが、阿彌陀仏はただ一つを私に与え、称えさせ、迎え損る。これ仏行のことである。阿彌陀仏の命のことである。

救うとは仏行をもって私を阿彌陀仏と等しくすること。丁度、濁った川の水が大海に注がれて海水と一味になるが如くに。川の水はただ流れて大海に入るだけでいい。私は導かれるままに一つを保ち、それを称え、ミダ海に流れ込めば、それでいいのである。

藤井道栄  
新潟県佐渡島出身。1978年に開教使として渡米し現在までの開教歴は35年。ワシントン州に16年、南カリフォルニアに16年勤務。現在コロラド州デンバー市の山東三州仏教会に駐在。

## ようこそ、オックスナードへ

今月はBCAで一番新しい開教使で昨年末にオックスナード仏教会に赴任した渡辺正憲(わたなべまさのり)先生にお話をうかがった。

「ノリ先生、初めての開教使さんと代表者会議となりましたが、出席された感想はどうでしたか？」

はい、ご門徒さんの代表と開教使が活発に意見をだしてあってアメリカらしいなと思いました。会議と聞いても堅苦しくなく、ユーモラスなところもあったのも驚きました。私の誕生日がちょうど会議中の2月28日だったのを知った新理事長の松田さんが会議中に皆でハッピーバースデーを歌おうと提案し、歌ってあげました。また、私の名前はアメリカ人にしたら呼びにくいということで、「マサノリ」のマサをとって



「ノリ」と呼んでもらうようにしましたが、それを聞いた方がさうそく、「ノリ(海苔)にはご飯があるね」とアメリカンジョークと日本のおしゃべりがまぎったようなコメントをしてくださいました。BCAは全体的に楽しい感じがします。

なぜ開教使になろうと思われたのですか？

ニューヨークで松林芳秀先生に会ったことです。私のもとと絵描きでもあり、ニューヨークで個展を開けないものかと思いつきました。2011年にニューヨークに長期滞在することにしました。その時松林先生がおられたニューヨーク教会を手伝うことになり、開教使の仕事に興味をもちました。それで2012年に開教使養成講座(IPOP)に参加したのです。

ではその時は画家でもあり、僧侶でもあったのですか？

はい。ニューヨーク滞在時は、38歳でしたが、その時は絵描きでもあり、僧侶でもありました。私の実家は両親とも公務員でお寺ではありませんが、母の実家が広島県の山形郡にあるお寺でした。私自身は、生まれも育ちも埼玉県ですが、夏休みになると広島のお寺ですごして、正信偈、重誓偈、讚仏偈などを朝晩となっていました。今思うとそれが幼少期での仏教教育になっていたと思えます。母が公務員をしながら真宗僧侶となり、母の影響もあって、私は33歳の時から真宗の勉強を真剣に始め、僧侶となりました。父も母の影響で昨年70歳で得度をし、今は家族三人が僧侶になりました。

僧侶になられる前は画家をされていたのですか？



そうです。画家といってもそれだけでは食べていけないので20代は塾の講師などいろいろな職業を経験しました。日本で働いてお金をためて、それから海外を旅しました。私は、日本大学芸術学部出身で、彫刻を勉強しました。大学卒業後、見聞を広めたいと思ひ、まずヨーロッパなどを旅しました。特に、ゴッホが好きだったので、生地であるオランダをはじめ、ゴッホの足跡をたどりました。イタリアのアートも大好きで、イタリアの色んな都市に行つて多くの芸術に触れました。でも、自分の人生に少なからぬ影響を与えたのは、インドに滞在した時に見た、火葬の風景でした。

カンジス川のほとりのパラナシという町に二週間ほど滞在したのですが、その時に遺体を焼くのを目の当たりにしました。それを見た時、最初は現実としてその光景を受け止めることができませんでした。それを見続けるうちに、「人というのはこういうものなのだ。生きていくものである以上、やがて死ぬのだな。」と初めて自分に死というものが身近に感じられました。それは、「それでは自分の生きていく意味はなんだろうか？」という問いを起させるとも貴重な体験となりました。このことが仏教への関心を深めるきっかけになったと思います。

それで東京仏学院へ行かれたのですか？

はい、2006年に学院に入学しました。卒業後、ご縁があって広島県呉市の、ある大きなお寺に法務員として務めることになりました。そこでは、多くのことを勉強させていただきました。広島県は、門徒さんが真宗の教えをとても大切に生活されている尊い土地柄です。広島県は、昔から安芸門徒と呼ばれ、多くの真宗者から一目置かれていたとかがいまました。法務を通して、お念仏と共に生かされているという姿を、理屈ではなく日々の生活のなかで教えていただきました。勉強を始めた当初は、理屈が先に立って、念仏するのが恥ずかしかったのですが、ご門徒さん方との触れ合いの中で、私自身、お念仏が自然に口から出るようになってきました。呉のお寺にお世話になった3年半は、本当に貴重な体験となりました。その後、先ほど述べましたように、ニューヨークでの滞在を経て、2012年のIPOPでの研修を通して、現在、BCAの一員として勤めさせていただくことになりました。

最後に一言おねがいします。

浄土真宗の教えに出会わせていただけたことにより、私の人生の意味は大きく変わったと思います。日本多くの御門徒の方々に教えていただいたこの喜びを、今度は開教使の一人として、アメリカの御門徒さんと共に分かち合っていけたらと望んでおります。今後ともどうぞよろしくおねがいします。



# 法輪

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二〇一四年度教化標語  
「歡喜光に帰命せよ」

## 全米開教使、代表者 会議が開催される

2月27日(木)から3月1日(土)にかけて開教使会議および全米代表者会議が開催された。



オープニングサービスの様子

今年のホストは西北部教区で会場はシアトル市郊外にあるベルビュー市のウェスティンホテル。開教使会議は二十七日に行われ、三十八名の開教使が参加し、将来の展望や米国の社会問題への取り組みについて話しあった。社会問題に関しては「死刑制度の廃止」について討議がなされた。米国仏教団開教使から死刑の廃止に賛成する決議を表明するかに

ととした慎重な見解を導き出す必要があるとし、今回の会議では決議を見送り各仏教会や教区で話し合いを持つことが推奨された。

28日からは各寺院の開教使、理事長などの代表者による会議が行われた。会議は午前8時からのおーピングサービスで始まり、梅津総長がご法話で人間の凡夫性について話され、「現代の風潮で開教使が門徒を門徒が開教使をエバリュエートしようという動きがありますが、凡夫が正當に他人を評価できるのではありませんか？ 仏さまの目からは人間は完全ではなく不完全で煩惱に満ちています。ただひとつ人間が完全だと言えるのは、人間は完全に不完全な存在だということ。真宗の人間観を印象深く説かれた。会議では2014年度の予算の決議、開教使及び本部職員健康保険の一元化への移行状況をはじめ、IBSやCBE、BCAの各コミッティーからのレポートがなされた。3月1日には会議終了後、先亡の開教使、門徒を追悼する永代経をお勤めし、昨年引退した小谷政雄名誉開教使がご法話をされた。また、法要では今会議をもってBCA理事ケが村上ロビン氏(ホワイトリバー仏教会)から松田ケント氏(園満寺)へと交替するにあたり、新理事会員の就任式も執り行われた。同日夜のバンケットには昨年引退の安孫子洋名誉開教使が挨拶をされ、小谷師と共に感謝の言葉が送られた。また、松本デイビッド開教使(パークレー)、小山ティーン開教使(パルト)



会議に出席する各寺院の代表者

が勤続25年、谷口瑞溪開教使(アラバマ)が勤続50年、代表者として来られた。ホストの教区と開教使の代表者

## 総長コラム

米国仏教団 総長 梅津廣道

昨年新しく事務長として本部で働いていくくださるのがアラン喜多氏です。彼は事務方の大ボスです。彼のアイデアで、本部職員はこれから名札をつけるようになりまして。特に、パークレーの浄土真宗センターで働いている職員は、外部からの訪問者が多いこともあり、名札が必要となっております。名札には英語で一番上に米国仏教団と書かれてあり、中に名前、そして下に職名が書かれています。

名札をつけるということはどういうことでしょうか。まず自分を紹介するということでしょう。ということが相手に名前や役割を知ってもらいたいということがあるでしょう。皆さんも経験があると思いますが、大会などに参加すると大きな名札をもらいます。それをつけていることで、相手の顔は覚えていくけど、名前が出てこない場合に大変役に立ちます。だから、名前があるということは、私たちは一人で生きているのではないという証(あかし)なのです。人に認めてもらいたいという思いがあるのです。

また名前には意味があります。私の場合は梅津廣道です。梅津という姓は家系や出身をあらわし、廣道という名は親の願いを思い起こさせます。ただ、私と名前との間には関係がありません。私は広い道ではありませんが、梅の生えた水際でもありません。名前と自分一つになってはいけません。

名札で思い起こさせてくれるものがあります。それ



Rev. Dr. Kenneth Tanaka

### 沢田先生亡くなられる

去る2月22日に沢田信了謙三名誉開教使が、パイセリアで亡くなられた。師は兵庫県出身で父の諦了師に続いて開教使となった。1962年に龍谷大学大学院で修士号を取得後、同年に開教使として渡米。オレゴン仏教会、ヤキマ仏教会を経て、1968年にロサンゼルス別院に勤務。1972年からアイダホオレゴン仏教会、1982年よりパイセリアおよびアイニニューバ仏教会、1991年よりワシントンビル仏教会、1999年より山東三州仏教会を歴任。2002年からサニリスオピビスボ仏教会へ駐在し、2006年に引退された。1972年に師と辻前総長と共にインドへ旅行した小谷政雄名誉開教使は、「沢田先生はいつも本を読んでおられて勉強家でした。アジャンタの石窟に行った時、先生がきれいな声で往生札をお勤めされたのをよく覚えています。」と生前の師を偲んだ。葬儀は3月6日(木)にバイセリア仏教会に於いて梅津総長導師で執り行われた。

## 2014年春の聞法の集い

浄土真宗センターで「春の聞法の集い」が開催される。この集いは春と秋の二回催され、ベイエリアを中心とするカリフォルニア地区の浄土真宗門徒だけでなく、仏教に興味を持つ在米の日本人などが集う。今回の講師は四名で、引退開教使の西村郁雄師、松林芳秀師、谷口昌陽師と、開教使歴50年を迎えた谷口瑞系(アラムタ仏教会)。日時：四月十九日(土)午前十時から午後三時の予定。参加費は20ドルで昼食がつく。

詳細は浄土真宗センターまで(問い合わせ先：米国仏教団仏教教育部 担当 桑原浄信 510-230-8439)

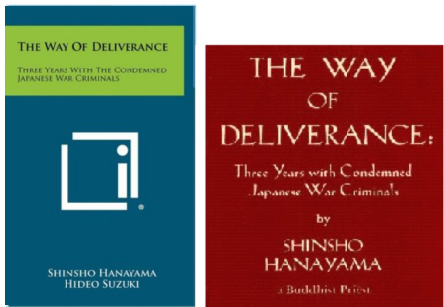
## 「平和の発見」

### The Way of Deliverance

Three years Condemned Japanese War Criminals

By Dr. & Rev. Shinsho Hanayama

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Hard cover Book e-book for Kindle and i-pad

### 「平和の発見」英語版が再出版

花山信勝(1898~1995)第九代BCA総長の著「平和の発見」が英語版となって再出版された。花山師は花山勝清開教使(ワッソビル仏教会)の祖父にあたる。「平和の発見」は師が第二次世界大戦後にA級戦犯として裁かれた東條英機らを教誨師として訪れお念仏の世界に導いた回想録で、宗門内外の多くの読者に読まれてきた。今回は現代の読者のニーズに答え、電子版も出版された。



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一何の為に生まれてきたのか

仏教の目覚め、救いとは

講師：田中ケネス開教使、博士

武蔵野大学教授

日時： 2014年3月27日(木)  
午後2時 - 3時半  
場所： サンフランシスコ仏教会 社交室  
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### 田中ケネス博士略歴

1947年、山口県生まれ、日系二世の両親と1958年に渡米。カリフォルニア、スタンフォード大学 文化人類学部卒、米国仏教大学院修士課程終了、東京大学大学院(インド哲学)修士課程終了、カリフォルニア大学(パークレー校)哲学博士

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著書：The Faces of Buddhism in America, 真宗入門、アメリカ仏教-仏教は変わる、アメリカも変わる、その他

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