



WHEEL OF DHARMA

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Message

On the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching

The year 2023 will mark the 850th anniversary of Shinran Shonin's birth and 2024 will be the 800th anniversary of the establishment of the Jodo Shinshu teaching. To commemorate these occasions, we will be having the joint celebratory observance in 2023.

Shinran Shonin was born in 1173 and entered the priesthood at the age of nine. However, after devoting many years to monastic Buddhist practices on Mt. Hiei, he decided to descend the mountain at the age of 29. Following the guidance from his new mentor Honen Shonin, who introduced him to the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha, Shinran Shonin came to entrust himself to the Nembutsu teaching preached by his master. Several years later, their Nembutsu teaching was banned and Shinran Shonin was exiled to Echigo, present Niigata. Following his pardon, Shinran Shonin moved to the Kanto region where he engaged in propagation of the Nembutsu teaching of Other Power, namely the working of Amida's great wisdom and compassion. It is believed to be then when he began writing his main literary work, *The True Teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way*, known as *Kyōgyōshinshō*. Since the essence of his teaching that emphasizes entrusting oneself to the Buddha's working of Other Power and recitation of the Nembutsu was clarified in the composition, the *Kyōgyōshinshō* is also referred to as *gohonden*, or the most foundational scripture of the Jodo Shinshu teaching. Based on Shinran Shonin's own inscription in the writing stating that he was 52 years of age at the time, the year 1224 became designated as the year when the Jodo Shinshu teaching was established.

Buddhism began approximately 2500 years ago when Śākyamuni became a Buddha, awakening to the true reality of this world, such as, the principles of dependent origination, impermanence, and no-self. However, ordinary people like us are neither able to realize the truth of enlightenment nor practice a life of nonattachment. To the contrary, we see things from our egocentric viewpoint and because of that we constantly suffer, encounter hardship, and fight with one another. That is why Śākyamuni Buddha informs us of the existence of Amida Buddha who had vowed to save all ordinary and foolish beings like us, by guiding us to supreme enlightenment. Furthermore, Shinran Shonin clarifies that we, as the recipient of Amida's working, have already received the Buddha's wish in the form of the Name, *Namo Amida Butsu*.



Nishi Hongwanji Temple in Kyoto, Japan, is the headquarters of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

As the manifestation of the ultimate wisdom and compassion that accepts everything as it is, Amida Buddha's working equally embraces every living being, never to abandon us no matter how egoistic and filled with blind passions we may be. When truly realizing how vast the Buddha's compassion is, we cannot help but feel ashamed of our way of living that is a far cry from Amida Buddha's wish. That is why Shinran Shonin laments, "How ugly it is! How wretched!" in referring to himself. However, this feeling of shamefulness could motivate us to endeavor to lessen the Buddha's sorrow even if only limited results were expected. Furthermore, that sentiment should synchronize with our efforts of sharing the Buddha's Vow with as many people as possible and feeling others' grief and joy as our own, because these acts are in accord with the wishes of Amida Buddha, and also Shinran Shonin who aspires

for peace and tranquility and the Buddha's teaching to spread throughout the world.

Let us appreciate the Dharma and Nembutsu teaching even more deeply, and together strive to realize a society in which everyone can live in peace and harmony, resonating in the hearts and minds of all. As the first step of this movement, I would like to ask for everyone's cooperation in continuing our organizational plans for the future and successfully conducting the joint celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's Birth and the 800th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching.

January 9, 2019
SHAKU SENNYO
OHTANI Kojun
Monshu

'Live the Nembutsu' Fitting Theme for Conference



By Susan Bottari
General Chair, 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention

The theme of the upcoming 2019 World Buddhist Women's Conference is "Live the Nembutsu."

It is such an appropriate theme for this conference as it captures how each of us, whether we live in San Francisco, Honolulu, Vancouver, Sao Paulo or Kyoto, follows the same Nembutsu path in similar but unique ways.

I did not become a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist until my 30s. I was born in Hawaii and with my parents moved to the mainland United States in the mid-1950s. My parents were Jodo Shinshu Buddhists and I had no idea until they passed away.

When my family moved to California, they enrolled me in Catholic Japanese Missionary School that was, ironically, directly across the street from the Buddhist Church of San Francisco. Although I attended a

parochial school during the week, on Sundays, half of my friends and I attended a Presbyterian church and the other half of my friends attended the Buddhist church. In those days, I went to "Sunday School" for social, not religious, education.

The family who provided day care for my children introduced me to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. When my oldest child was about 4 years old, it was recommended that she attend Dharma School. Since this was my first experience outside of Christianity, when my daughter attended class, I also attended a Dharma School class so I could learn about the Jodo Shinshu Teachings.

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Act of Kindness Is Reminder of Buddha's Heart

When we reflect on the establishment of the Vow,

We find that the Tathagata, without abandoning sentient beings in pain and affliction,

Has taken the directing of virtue to them as foremost,

Thus fulfilling the mind of great compassion.

-- "Collected Works of Shinran," Page 408

By Rev. Kodo Umezu
BCA Bishop



On April 7, Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the BCA, conducted the Kieshiki Affirmation Ceremony for 17 members of the Buddhist Church of Oakland as part of its Hanamatsuri Service. In this Shin Buddhist ceremony, performed before the altar of Amida Buddha and Shinran Shonin by the Bishop of the BCA, one takes the important step of affirming one's reverence for the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and one's determination to tread the path toward Buddhahood.

Some years ago, I had a very unforgettable experience on board an airplane as I was coming back from Japan.

The flight was completely full and my seat was way in the back of the cabin. I tried to get some sleep, as I usually do, so I could adjust to time in the United States easily.

I fell asleep shortly after take-off and slept through the meal time. When I woke up after a few hours of sleep, a flight attendant came to my seat and asked me, "Would you like to have dinner now? I saw you were sleeping and I didn't want to bother you. I saved the meal for you."

I was so surprised and moved by the spirit of her service. She was paying attention to each and every passenger on board. I knew I was not in the first-class cabin and I didn't think that I deserved such special treatment.

This flight attendant's kindness reminded me of the compassionate heart of Amida Buddha who vowed to find a way to save all beings whether good and bad,

smart or foolish, small or great.

In this world, there are indeed many teachings and most of them require or demand for us to do something in order to be saved. It is a conditional salvation.

The universal compassion of the True and Real Mind and Heart, however, goes out to all beings, especially those who are experiencing difficulty in their lives and looking for light. The Unconditional Love appears in this world as Buddha's Name, Namo Amida Butsu. Namo Amida Butsu is easy to say. Even if we cannot say Namo Amida Butsu, we can feel the heart of Amida Buddha when we hear Namo Amida Butsu.

There was a time when Buddhism was perceived to be only for people born into a higher status, or for people who can undergo difficult practices.

Honen Shonin, who went through

years and years of study and practice, came to realize that Buddha's essence is compassion for all beings, without exception. Calling the name, Namo Amida Butsu, is the practice for all, especially for those who are not able to perform religious practices.

A devout Nembutsu person once said with a deep sense of joy and gratitude, "Though I have neither the feeling of joy nor shinjin, I am grateful to know the compassionate word from the Realm of Suchness saying 'come as you are'."

These words really resonate with me. The heart of Amida Buddha is for all sentient beings, especially those who are not able to become free from karmic afflictions. We are always in the mind and heart of Amida Buddha. How fortunate we are!

I would like to thank the kind flight attendant for reminding me of the heart of Amida Buddha.

Answers to Awakening Have Always Been There



By Rev. Fumiaki Usuki
West Los Angeles
Buddhist Temple

Our family of three came to the United States in 1960, following our father, who had arrived in 1956 and was working as a camp laborer in Dinuba in Central California.

After my father completed his contract, the family was reunited in Oxnard. I can recall the first day of school where we were literally thrust into a class with no idea of what was to happen to us. The school was mostly filled with children of migrant workers. My brother entered the first grade and I was in the third grade.

Although we had finished these years of school in Japan, we both had to repeat them "for our good." Such was the beginning of our life in the United States, not necessarily exciting but rather frightening. Yet, somehow, we managed to assimilate into this society.

We can recall many trying moments, but we can remember many unusual and unique moments as well. Perhaps some of the early Japanese immigrants may remember going to movies at the temple, where the huge, old movie projector and equipment were brought out for the monthly Japanese movies. Of course, I cannot remember much about Sunday School classes, but such memories have been on my mind for years. We also could not realize the impact of these early years on our lives.

Because of language and academic issues, my life was driven by sports, activities and

work -- and I managed to keep busy.

For some reason, when we were raising our family in Aptos while working in the Silicon Valley, I felt the urge to take our children to the Watsonville Buddhist Temple. Of course, this did not necessarily go well with the kids, but they were good sports.

Later, as I was engulfed with work while teaching an Industrial Technology class at San Jose State University, for some reason, I became interested in Buddhism. Go figure.

So here I am, reflecting on

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By Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi
Buddhist Temple of San Diego

Many of you know that I am recovering from a serious, but non-life threatening surgery. This situation has enabled me to experience the Nembutsu at a broader and deeper level.

My response to my current

condition is "Na Man Da Bu, thank you." Because my life is surrounded by "Na Man Da Bu," this seemingly negative experience of a surgery reveals the compassionate spirit that always supports us. I want to thank the Sangha, friends, and others for the wonderful expressions of support and good will. This is a wonderful example of the basic Shin principle of "Ni Shu Jin Shin." Let me share this wonderful concept.

"Ni Shu Jin Shin" can be translated as the "two aspects of deep mind." This concept

anchors much of Shinran's lessons. The traditional interpretation suggests that as a person admits to his egocentric tendencies, one becomes open to the compassionate response of the Buddha. For those whose lives are heavily influenced by Japanese culture, this idea may be more easily accepted. The ever-present sense of humility in Japan lends one to admit to one's faults.

But for many of us Americans, it is a difficult admission that our ego may be the cause of our discontent. Surrendering my ego position to oppos-

ing forces is a sign of personal weakness. How might I learn and accept this deep teaching with this attitude of a dominant ego?

Experiencing a surgery, accident, or illness is not something any of us wants. Yet, for me, it has provided a perspective that my mind might not have accepted with a healthy body. I have been helpless for weeks. I was living the life of an infant. Family, friends, medical aides and others were providing all my needs for survival. My ego and self-effort could not support my

well-being. It was the efforts of others that supported me.

"Ni Shu Jin Shin" is not some esoteric concept that might be discussed by scholars. The two aspects of "deep mind" are something that each of us can experience in any aspect of life.

It is that "Jiriki," self-effort, is insufficient to maintain our physical and spiritual life. "Tariki," the efforts of others toward our well-being, is the true reality that sustains all of us. We can now appreciate the

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The Experience of 'Na Man Da Bu'

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By Richard A. Stambul
BCA President

On the Road to the Eastern District Council

kindness, and a collective desire to solve problems: an active and successful example of what it means to spread the Dharma. It was heartwarming to join the spirit that filled the room.

During the gathering, the Cleveland Buddhist Temple reported that it sold its temple building last year and is now renting and using space for its services and events at a Unitarian Church in Shaker Heights. I had the great pleasure of meeting and talking with Gary

is not always measured in size but rather in the devotion of those in attendance.

Midwest Buddhist Temple talked about its “increasingly diverse population,” and that its board consists of a “strong and diverse mix of ages, nationality and cultural backgrounds.” MBT reported that its “membership breakdown is 22 percent Nisei, 47 percent Sansei, 11 percent Yonsei, and 20 percent non-traditional.”

The New York Buddhist Church

bers. Seabrook also celebrated its 73rd anniversary in 2018.

For those who may doubt the vitality, vigor and success of the Buddhist Churches of America during its 120-year presence in the United States, one need only look to the BCA temples of the Eastern District Council.

Representing BCA, I reported our great success last year in achieving the transfer of the BCA Archives (over 340 linear feet) to UCLA where it is now permanently housed. According to experts at UCLA, the BCA Archives is the world’s most important archival collection of Japanese American and Shin Buddhist history in 20th century America.

I also reported on the success of the Bloomquist Estate proceedings, which will result in a substantial financial gift to partially endow a chair at the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

Throughout the conference, Rev. Ron Miyamura, Kyokuchō of the EDC and resident minister of the MBT, provided a grounding presence as he led and guided all those in attendance. My apologies to the many others who attended but who are not mentioned.

Most important, I can report that the BCA temples and sangha in the Eastern District are vigorous and full of heart. It’s clear that for those temples, taking their cue from Rev. Umezu, Shinran Shonin is also their boss.

Namo Amida Butsu.

“A good lesson, perhaps: that goodness and quality in a religious organization is not always measured in size but rather in the devotion of those in attendance.”

Jaskula, a minister’s assistant at New York Buddhist Church, who has generously offered to drive from New York to Cleveland to conduct monthly services. Kudos to Gary for his commitment to spreading the Dharma.

The Ekoji Buddhist Temple described itself as a “temple of growth and optimism” because of the diversity of its Sangha. The temple membership is growing and they reported that its recent services have been attended by 60 to 80 people. Ekoji told us something that stuck in my mind: that it is a relatively small temple but “large of heart.” A good lesson, perhaps: that goodness and quality in a religious organization

shared its appreciation of Rev. Earl Ikeda, now in his sixth year as resident minister. Rev. Earl recently received the 2018 Community Service Award, given by the Bronx Community Board, for his “community pastoral care” work. NYBC celebrated its 80th anniversary and raised the funds used to restore its Onaijin.

The Seabrook Buddhist Temple, whose services are conducted by its supervising minister, Rev. Ikeda, honored Dr. Gordon Bermant, past BCA President and Chair of the BCA Governance Committee, for leading “Religious Riddles,” which have been discussions of great interest to its mem-

Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, was about to offer a Dharma talk celebrating Hanamatsuri and the birth of Siddhartha Gautama to the leaders of BCA’s Eastern District Council (EDC) in Cleveland, Ohio.

I watched Umezu Sensei, as I have scores of times in the past. Yet, this time, it was a bit different. Hanging on the wall behind him was an 8½-by-11-inch image of our founder, Shinran Shonin. It was about to fall off the wall, so Rev. Umezu turned around and slowly reattached it with great care.

Turning back to face the audience and referring to Shinran, he casually commented, “He’s my boss.” Everyone laughed. Yet the authentic connection between Rev. Umezu and Shinran was moving. Thus began his Dharma talk.

Among those attending, the opening moment was typical of the esprit de corps that characterized the gathering, which was filled with mutual respect,

TechnoBuddha, in 12th Year, Stays True to Core Mission

By Hideki Maniwa
Buddhist Temple of Alameda

As the TechnoBuddha Conference has grown and evolved, the conference has stayed true to its core mission of providing opportunities for young professionals to be part of a community interested in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

TechnoBuddha is now in its 12th year, and in that time, has become an annual home away from home and I’ve had the pleasure of attending over half of these events.

From its humble beginnings, where there were just over a dozen attendees, TechnoBuddha has grown to consistently reaching capacity at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley.

With a record 27 first-time attendees including representatives from Hawaii, Oregon, and even Winnipeg, Canada, the future looks promising!

This year’s conference was held from March 22-24 with the theme: “No Self? No Problem!” As guests trickled into the center throughout Friday, March 21, they were greeted with a warm welcome, followed by an even warmer meal prepared thoughtfully by Judy Kono and Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, who are instrumental in the success of this event, and their helpers.

Following a Saturday morning service, Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi led a keynote about “Discovering Our Authentic Self & Practicing No Practice.”

Learning about cultural differences of the self in the East

versus and West, as well as the meanings behind “thank you” and “please” were engaging and relatable.

During the speech by Rev. Dr. Akahoshi, the group was encouraged to meditate with eyes partially open, then share their thoughts in a small group. The similarities and differences discovered were quite eye-opening.

This year’s conference was co-chaired by David Chin (San Mateo Buddhist Temple) and Laurie Handa (San Jose Buddhist Betsuin), who incorporated new elements, resulting in a spectacular weekend of services, socializing, splendid workshops, small group discussions, *sugoi shyashin* (great pictures), and strangely scarce amounts of sleep.



A capacity crowd -- including 27 first-time participants -- attended the 12th annual TechnoBuddha conference, held March 22-24 at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley. The theme of this year’s conference was “No Self? No Problem!” (Courtesy of Tim Shimizu)

The TechnoBuddha committee is thankful to be a part of the Jodo Shinshu community, and grateful for the support of the employees and volunteers at the Jodo Shinshu Center and Berkeley Buddhist Temple.

While TechnoBuddha began as an annual conference, it has

grown to become a community of young professionals who can be found at events throughout the year.

See where the TechnoBuddha community will be going next by following the Facebook page: facebook.com/technobuddha.conference.

San Jose’s Jean Wilson, Scout Leader, Mentor, Volunteer, Fondly Remembered

By Warren Wilson
San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin

A great leader passed away. Jean Copeland Wilson, who died March 13 at the age of 85, became a Buddhist in 1953 when she enrolled in a Comparative Religion course at Southern Methodist University.

Wilson also took correspondence courses from the Buddhist Society of London and studied with Buddhist friends from India.

She made two trips to Buddhist historical sites in Japan, China, and India. She and her husband, Warren Wilson, have been members of San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin since 1972.

Among the many activities at San Jose Betsuin, Jean Wilson was a member of the Board of Directors until 1993 when the Wilsons moved to Georgia. Her Scouting highlights included Girl Scouts Junior Troop 260, Cadette Troop 404, and she began Girl Scout Senior Troop

782 in 1977. She was a Girl Scout leader at the San Jose Betsuin for over 23 years and was active on the local, district, and national levels.

Because of Wilson’s efforts, the Girl Scouts of America adopted a more flexible Scout Promise in 1993. The new Promise allows each Scout to affirm her adherence to religious values according to her own faith. The change recognizes and honors the religious diversity

June Copeland Wilson, who died March 13 at the age of 85, was a member of the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin since 1972. Wilson was a former member of the San Jose Betsuin Board of Directors and was a Girl Scout leader at the San Jose Betsuin for more than 23 years. (Courtesy of Warren Wilson)



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Arigato Obaachan (Thank You Grandmother) Campaign Donors and Honorees

The Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations (FBWA) has been receiving special donations in support of the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention, to be held from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1, 2019, in San Francisco.

The names below represent women being recognized and honored for their sacrifice, hard work, dedication, generosity, pursuit of the Buddha-Dharma, and help in the propagation of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

In recognizing your Obaachan, mother, aunt, sister, or group of women, you are also honoring them for the very special role they have played in your life.

Your name, together with the names of those you wish to honor, will be writ-

California Avenue Norge - **Mrs. Cho & Mrs. Park-Chang**, Placer Buddhist Women's Association - **Past & Present BWA Members**, Tom & Lorraine Sakata - **Miwa Noyoshi**, Wendy Adachi - **Shiki Ito & Wakako Adachi, Yoshiko Adachi & Kimiko Takata**, Lynn Black - **Koto Ogaki, Irene Kawamura**, Aiko Fujii - **Arigato Obaachan**, Suzanne Fujinari - **Omitsu Taketa**, John & Debbie Hiramoto - **Sumiko Hiramoto, Elso Kanagawa**, Janis Hirohama & Jim Pollard - **Sachi Ochiai, Yasu Hirohama**, Kathy Ito - **Chizuko Ito, Mine Ito**, Russell Kagehiro - **Elsie Kagehiro**, Noreen Kamimura - **Aiko Okabayashi, Sue Fujino, Louise Kamimura**, Sueko Kawamoto - **Suye Kawamoto, Miyo Yamasaki**, Daniel & Nancy Martinez - **Mary E. Root (mother), Ritsu Nabeta (mother), Shimeno Nabeta (grandmother), Hatsuye Uyeno (grandmother)**, Lynne Matsumoto - **Tetsuko Yamaguchi, Yuri Yamaguchi**, Lily Masuno - **Fumiko Shibata**, Teruko Matsumura - **Mrs. Seto Uchida**, Ron & Karen Murakami - **In Loving Memory of Mothers Hideko Murakami & Yae Sasaki**, Marion Nishimura - **Kazuko Yamane,**

Kiku Yamane, Kuni Yamanouye, Helen Nishimura, Karen Ritzman - **Kazu Shibata, Yasuko Wakai, Susan Wakai, Buddhist Church of Stockton**, Aiko Rucker - **Kimiko Otsubo**, Janet Sakahara - **Kura Kashiwagi Hiratsuka, Sonoye Hiratsuka Okamura, Sanaye Okamura**, Terry Sato - **Haruye Kato, Shizue Ito, Yoshiye Nagata, Yoshino Kato**, Terry Sato - **Hanae Watanabe, Wanda Kato, Haruyo Kato**, Ted Shimoido - **Hatsugiku Uchizono**, Kiyoko Takashima - **Yasuno Uyenishi, Shizuko Taketa & Hanayo Takashima**, Judith Urabe - **Mitzi Michiko Saito**, Rev. Patricia Usuki - **Mrs. Kiwano Shiraishi**, Judy Terao Uyema & Family - **Mary Sasaki Terao**, Joyce J. Yamada - **Matsu Kawano, Masako Kawano, Tomi Yamada, Jane Yamamoto - Mrs. Mary Yagura, Mrs. Shizue Yamamoto, Mrs. Naoe Yagura, Mrs. Tsugi Yoneda**, Louie & Irene Yamanishi - **Asayo Yamanishi, Kiyoko Fujita**, Alison Yoshihara - **Madame Kazue Kudo**, Kelly & Jayne Tan - **Teruko Tsumura, Kazue Hashiguchi - Sueno Hashiguchi, Toshi Ouchida**, Jamie, Aaron, JoDee Hirota - **Grandma Konoye Hirota**, Edna Horiu-

chi - **Usako Oda (grandma), Emiko Oda Ikeda (mother)**, Stan & Nancy Ito - **Midori Satow, Isao Ito, Kiku Suzuki**, Sharon Kotabe - **Kiyoko Kamezaki Inaba, Toki Kamezaki**, Keiko Otani - **Chisato Otani, Mary Mario Ito**, Mitz Otsuka - **Tome Otsuka, Tsuchi Kinoshita**, Helen Sakaishi - **Chizuko Mary Sakaishi, Mary Michiko Tokano**, Cathy Tsukimura - **Natsuyo Tsukimura**, June Yamagata - **Satsuki Kusumoto, Ai Yamagata**, Kikuko Y. Freeman - **Kikue Yamanaka, Tamie Kameda**, Dean & Rise Hirabayashi - **Akie Hirabayashi, Norma Inouye, Yasu Hirabayashi**, Priscilla Mui - **Orie Mio**, Julie Akiko Gladsjo - **Asako Sakata, Rosalind Sakata, Joyce Sakata**, Daisy Tsujimoto, Lianne Tsujimoto-Wong & Gail Tsujimoto-Cho - **Tome Tsujimoto**, Makawao Buddhist Temple BWA - **In honor of the Obachans of Makawao Buddhist Temple Fujinkai and Asoka Clubs**, Sara Kashima - **Yoshiko Kashima**, Shirley Gee - **Tatsuko Takemori, Isao Ito**, Lynne M. Kataoka - **Polly T. Kataoka (mother)**, Shintaku, Yamasaki & Kruse Family - **Sumiko Yamasaki & Misao Shintaku**, Karen Kamine

Behr - **Sazae Kamine**, Aiko Kamine - **Sazae Kamine, Kinu Negishi**, Gerry Nakano Tsukiji - **Misao Nakano, Saye Uyemura, Mildred Yaeko Nakano, Ruth Kikuye Tsuruda**, Patricia Bungo & Amy Yoshikawa - **Asako Honda & Yoshiye Sue Bungo**, Kathy Nishimoto - **Nami Okada, Sami Okada, Shiki Hamada**, Janet Arakawa - **Kikuyo Sekino (BCSF), Miyo Nakanishi (Palo Alto BC)**, Mr. & Mrs. Ace Hanada - **Sakue Kamiji, Matsue Handa**, Rose Chikuma Takamoto - **Reverend Mrs. Mutsuyo Tsunoda**, Barbara Finn - **Mutsuko Kitasaki**, Carol A. Tsunozumi - **Mrs. Akiyo Tomonaga, Mrs. Tsugie Tsutsui**, Debbie & Don Shimizu - **Emi Shimizu**, Allison, Emily, Aaron & Avery Doami - **Machi Doami**, Charlene Yoritsune & Janice Yoritsune - **Shiseko Yoritsune**, Rev. Ellen Hamada Crane - **Masako Hamada, Konobu Kawate, Shiki Hamada**, Rev. & Mrs. Marvin Harada - **In memory of Kane Harada, Misao Tameno, Sayo Shimojima, Take Hirabayashi & Gloria Shimajima, In honor of Ruth Harada**, Yukiko Hirata - **Tsui Hirata, Takiko Kabumoto**, Yumi Yasuda - **Mitsu Carl**

What Is a Minister's Assistant?

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series on the BCA's Minister's Assistant Program.

Rev. Jerry Kyosei Hirano
Salt Lake City Buddhist Temple

Through this two-part article, it is my intention to help clarify the important ecclesiastical relationship we have with our mother organization, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan, and the role the BCA plays within this big picture.

I also hope to help dispel any confusion as to who the religious leaders of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) are, and the roles they play especially as they relate to the BCA Minister's Assistant Program and the programs at the Jodo Shinshu Center. As Director of the BCA Minister's Assistant Program (MAP), I am hoping these articles will bring some clarity to these areas.

The origins of the Minister's Assistant Program goes back to the time of BCA Bishop Hakubun Watanabe, and was further developed under the tenure of Bishop Koshin Ogui. As with so many of our BCA programs, it has taken some time to fully evolve and implement. I am happy to announce that this program was approved by the BCA Ministers' Association.

What is a Minister's Assistant?

The BCA Minister's Assistant Program was established to fulfill exactly what the name implies: to assist ministers. It was started over 20 years ago as an experimental program. Having developed and evolved over the years since, the Minister's Assistant Program has now been approved by the BCA Ministers Association.



The Eastern District welcomes Tammy Wetzel of the Seabrook Buddhist Temple as the newest Certified Minister's Assistant during the recent Eastern District Council meeting held in Cleveland, Ohio. The Seabrook Buddhist Temple is a small rural Temple in southern New Jersey where the famous Seabrook Farms is located. Rev. Earl Ikeda of the New York Buddhist Church is the Supervising Minister of Seabrook.

The levels of BCA Minister's Assistants are:

Minister's Assistant with Kyoshi: Title "Reverend"
Minister's Assistant with Tokudo: Title "Reverent"
Certified Minister's Assistant: No title
Minister's Assistant: No title

The BCA Minister's Assistant Program falls under the jurisdiction of the BCA Ministers Association. This program is open to BCA temple members who are specifically recommended by their resident or supervising Kaikyoshi minister. Members recommended for the Minister's Assistant Program must also have the approval by their local

temple board.

It should be noted that Minister's Assistants who have received Tokudo and/or Kyoshi, but have not received the status of "Kaikyoshi" or "Kaikyoshiho" shall be considered "Minister's Assistants" and not "Assistant Ministers."

Perhaps this is where much confusion lies. When an individual, regardless of their country of origin, is ordained as a Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha priest (Soryo), he or she receives the title "Reverend." This person is registered as a priest to one of the 11,000 Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha temples worldwide.

Most American-born priests are registered with the Buddhist Church of San Francisco under the jurisdiction of

the BCA. Those individuals born in or from Japan, in a majority of cases, will be registered under a temple in Japan (i.e., their home temple).

However, to be ordained as a priest for the BCA, the BCA requires that the following qualifications be met:

- All non-Japanese nationals must:
1. Complete the two-year Correspondence Course administered by Jodo Shinshu International Office (JSIO);
 2. Be certified as BCA Minister's Assistant for a minimum of two years and receive a favorable interview by the Office of the Bishop; and
 3. Successfully complete a minimum of four of the eight IBS courses required for Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Kyoshi Certification.

To be accepted into the BCA Minister's Assistant Program, the following criteria must be met:

1. Individuals must be recommended for the program as a Minister's Assistant by their resident Kaikyoshi minister (or supervising minister), and must work for a minimum of two years under their supervision while completing the two-year Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course, and learning the rituals, doctrine and history of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

This process helps to establish eligibility for becoming a Certified Minister's Assistant; upon the recommendation by the temple Kaikyoshi and approval by the local



Year in Japan Filled With Challenges, Gratefulness

By Rev. Tadao Koyama
BCA Ministerial Student

I have now been living in Japan for over a year and I have learned so much in that time.

I am very grateful for my experience at Chūō Bukkyō Gakuin (Hongwanji's Central Buddhist Training Seminary) and would like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers and my fellow students for taking care of me and encouraging me all the way through.

When school first started, classes were quite challenging as my level of the Japanese language was rusty at best. I could understand about 40 percent of the lectures given by the teachers. Thankfully, the teachers wrote a lot of their main points on the board, so I could try to quickly copy the kanji and translate them when I returned home.

However, as time went on, I began recognizing more and more and remembering key phrases the senseis would often repeat in the lectures.

In addition, many of the senseis and my fellow classmates would take me aside from time to time and check in with me to make sure I was doing alright and that the lectures weren't going too fast for them. I am forever grateful for their kindness.

The schedule at Chūō Bukkyō Gakuin was incredibly busy. In a week, we had 18 classes to attend and that did not include morning service, and rehearsals if

our group was scheduled to perform service.

Despite the tough schedule and often stressful speed of the classes, I am still incredibly happy and grateful I went through this process. It is because of the efforts and the encouragement from the senseis and fellow classmates at Chūō Bukkyō Gakuin, that I was able to graduate and was somewhat prepared for Kyōshi Kyōshu (Kyōshi certification training).

For me, Kyōshi Kyōshu was an incredibly difficult and challenging experience. I did not realize how attached and dependent on my friends and family (as well as modern technology) I was before I went in for the 10-day training period.

Not being allowed to communicate with my loved ones was extremely difficult and I found myself in times of extreme loneliness and sadness.

There were even moments during Kyōshi Kyōshu when I wondered if I was really able to do this. Before -- and I am sure my close friends and family would agree -- I would display large amounts of overconfidence and bravado. Foolishly, I thought that I would take Japan by storm since I studied so much of the history and of Buddhism in the past, this experience would be easy! How wrong I was.

So while I am definitely still in recovery mode, and am quivering with anticipation before I start my schooling at Gonshiki Shidō Sho (Hongwanji's Ritual and Ceremony Training Center), I am very grateful that I was given this opportunity to teach me just how much more I need to continue bettering myself and



Rev. Tadao Koyama, a BCA ministerial student, reflects on his time in Japan and his experience at Chūō Bukkyō Gakuin (Hongwanji's Central Buddhist Training Seminary).

the way I carry myself as an aspiring minister for the BCA.

One of the main messages the senseis would say during Kyōshi Kyōshu was that this does not mean we stop learning.

I would like to once again thank the BCA for supporting me and the many wonderful friends and family for their continued love and support.

'After Mindfulness' Retreat Set June 29-30 in Berkeley

Mindfulness has become so popular, it's now become a personal lifestyle brand.

On June 29-30, Buddhists and non-Buddhists will join in Berkeley to ask, "What's After Mindfulness?"

The two-day urban retreat will feature talks from a diverse group of teachers, meditation, yoga and shar-

ing where you can put new insights in practice.

The Buddhist Churches of America is excited to be a partner organization for this event, and encourages BCA temples and affiliates to volunteer and/or register for the event.

The roster of international speakers will include Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara,

resident minister of Berkeley Buddhist Temple, and program coordinator of the Hongwanji Office. Reiko Iwanaga (Hanayagi Reimichi), a coordinator of the Buddhist Church San Jose Betsuin Bon Dancing, will introduce and teach Bon Dancing for all to join in.

BCA members and friends are invited to participate in this community-

building gathering.

Regular registration is \$108 for the two-day event and BCA members may receive a 10 percent discount with a special registration code by contacting BCA Center for Buddhist Education at cbe@bcahq.org or at 510-809-1460.

For more information, go to Aftermindfulness.org

Minister's Assistant

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temple board, the minister's assistant is certified by the Office of the Bishop. Unless the individual wishes to move to the next level, the Minister's Assistant can stay at this level indefinitely.

2. A Certified Minister's Assistant (MA) is then be eligible to attend the BCA Minister's Assistant Program (MAP) seminars. Certified Minister's Assistants are required to attend at least one BCA MAP seminar every year in order for certification to remain active. Failure to do this can result in revocation of certification by their temple Kaikyoshi or the Office of the Bishop. The individual may also opt to remain at this level unless they choose to move up to the next level for Tokudo ordination.

3. An MA with Tokudo ordination aspirations must have the intention to pursue eventual Kyoshi certification. Because Tokudo ordination requires the oath of a Jodo Shinshu priest, commitment to this path is only the beginning, not an end of itself. It is one's personal commitment to study and train in Jodo Shinshu tradition for oneself.

It is not a status, or even an accomplishment, but rather the manifestation of one's acceptance of the Nembutsu teachings and desire to share these teachings formally.

To qualify for this level, the individual must enroll at the Institute

of Buddhist Studies and interview with the Office of the Bishop. The Tokudo aspirant will be asked if they intend to complete the Shin Buddhist Certificate program (eight courses at IBS, which can be taken online).

To be eligible to receive the Tokudo ordination, they must complete at least four of the eight required classes. Upon completion of the IBS Shin Buddhist Certificate Program, the Tokudo Minister's Assistant will be eligible to conduct all services required at the local temple, with the supervision of a BCA Kaikyoshi minister.

4. This brings us to the final level of a Minister's Assistant. This is the Minister's Assistant with Kyoshi. This person will be qualified to perform all the rituals necessary at a BCA temple, with the supervision of a BCA Kaikyoshi minister. They will have served as a Minister's Assistant for a minimum of four years, received the recommendation of their local resident Kaikyoshi minister under whom they have been training, and will have received Tokudo and completed the Jodo Shinshu Certificate program through the IBS.

5. In theory, anyone ordained is a "Soryo" of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha; those serving in BCA shall fall directly under the jurisdiction of the BCA Office of the Bishop. Unless such individuals have received Kaikyoshi-ho or Kaikyoshi status, they shall follow the same rules established for all Minister's Assistants, such as attending one MAP seminar per year, etc. In this way, they

will be much better equipped to serve the needs of their Sangha under the supervision of the local Kaikyoshi.

Because of the anticipated shortage of Kaikyoshi in the next several years, together with our desire to expand the reach of our ministry and sharing the Buddha's teaching throughout the world, the need for capable and well-rounded ordained priests cannot be emphasized enough. The current Minister's Assistant Program, approved and endorsed by the BCA Ministers Association, is being fully implemented by Bishop Kodo Umezu and his administration.

Notably, this training program is the only English language program that meets the ordination requirements as set forth by the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha. Two of our recently conducted MAP seminars held on Jan. 24-26 and April 4-6, 2019 at the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC) in Berkeley, California, were attended by many BCA Minister's Assistants, as well as five individuals from the United Kingdom and three from Canada.

The upcoming World Buddhist Women's Convention from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1, 2019, in San Francisco, California will be considered a MAP certification continuing education seminar. Following the world convention, the next MAP seminar will be held on Oct. 3-5, at the JSC. All of these seminars are organized and conducted under the direction of the Office of the Bishop, the BCA Center for Buddhist Education and the Minister's Assistant Program.

Should you have any questions, please contact the BCA Center for Buddhist Education or Rev. Jerry Hirano at jkhirano@msn.com

Rev. Usuki

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my last year as a BCA minister after nearly 20 years — and much of that time seems to be a blur because of the busy days and nights.

Life is an ongoing endeavor filled with trial and tribulations, wisdom and compassionate encounters, and perhaps awakening. At later years, we seem to be asking many sincere, profound and deeper questions which go beyond the relative engagement of everyday life. But the answers for such awakening have always been there for us.

Even D.T. Suzuki and his followers have encountered such moments:

To whom do I owe my present state of mind?

To the founder, Shinran, and to his successor Rennyo.

Being taught by these spiritual leaders,

I have now come to this realization.

My knowledge has come through all the good teachers

Who have successfully transmitted this teaching

How praiseworthy they all are!

*While worrying over my daily life,
Fretting about things wanted and wanting,*

I am, all the time, in company of Amida himself.

How grateful I am!

— D.T. Suzuki, "Buddha of Infinite Light," Page 79



A Short Presentation of Shin Buddhism

Editor's Note: This is the third installment of a series of articles that Bishop Kodo Umezū would like to share with the readers of the Wheel of Dharma. It was written by Rev. Shitoku A. Peel of Belgium some years ago and published as a small booklet. Rev. Peel has influenced many people in Europe. Please enjoy his appreciation of Jodo Shinshu teaching.

By Rev. Shitoku A. Peel

In the Buddhist context, the notion of "sin" doesn't mean the violation of divine command or taboo. After all, no creator-god or divine standard of good and evil is recognized – it is not even mentioned.

"Sin" is every action, every word – but primarily every thought and feeling – that springs from hate, desire or ego-illusion. "Sin" is, in the first instance – no matter what it is – whatever

hinders us from experiencing unity with all other beings, whatever blurs our clarity of mind.

Although terms as "sin" or "good and evil" are not appropriate from this point of view, great importance is given to the intention of avoiding all "evil or unwholesome acts, words and thoughts" and to doing what is "good or wholesome." This, however, is not based upon fear or punishment nor on the desire for reward, but on a deep conviction about the need for a natural,

spontaneous and boundless harmony with all beings.

The true meaning of life for a Buddhist is not in seeking wealth, comfort, honor, power or other personal pleasure. The meaning he wants to give to his life comes from spiritual growth towards wisdom and ego-less love.

He knows that the Light of right understanding can enlighten his world of suffering, once the dark clouds of hatred and desire, and the persistent mists of ignorance and delusion have disap-

peared from his mind.

In this Light, he experiences the true nature of all beings. This true nature is nothing other than Buddhahood.

Hence, for a Buddhist, the purpose of life is simply to "become a Buddha. After all, Buddha is not "god" as is often claimed, but the embodiment of the Perfect Enlightenment Being: Wisdom and Compassion.

He is a being of perfect harmony, and seen from our human perspective, the ideal of being human.



By Melissa Opel
Spokane Buddhist Temple

My Sangha Is With Me — and I'm With Them

Editor's note: Melissa Opel is a Minister's Assistant at Spokane Buddhist Temple. She and 18 ministerial aspirants from BCA, Canada, and the United Kingdom are currently training for their Tokudo ordination this July in Japan.

Our second Tokudo training was intense.

Rev. Jerry Hirano reminds us several times throughout the weekend that we don't have to do this. We can quit and there would be no shame. Later, during our chanting, we're told it's just not good enough. Our teachers are not being mean or trying to beat us down: This is a reality and we're asked to really think about why we want this.

During our time in Berkeley, my friend snaps a photo of me in my robes to text home to my wife, Becca. Later that day, Becca sends back photos from our temple's spring fundraiser, which I'm missing to be here. She tells me a few people teared up at the photo of me, and they asked Becca to take their picture so I would know they are with me.

When I think about why I want to embark on this journey, I think about my Sangha. They're my support and they're my family. From the moment I stepped foot in our temple, my Sangha welcomed me. They don't care that I'm gay, or overweight, or that I was a little broken by

organized religion. I feel embraced and they teach me so much all the time.

I want my Sangha to have everything the larger temples have that we can't afford. This last year, our only minister with Tokudo retired and although he is always there for us, it left a hole. I plan to complete Tokudo and continue my studies toward my Kyoshi certificate, and I hope my temple will at least be able to have a Kyoshi minister.

Tokudo is not easy. I'm stressed most days about the memorization, amongst other things, as I balance work, school, temple and family. I wish I could say there was no ego involved, that I don't want this for myself, but I do. I want to be part of a lineage that filled the spiritual void in my life, and I want the Dharma to be here for others to have the same opportunity, the same chance to encounter Namō Amida Butsu.

Our causes and conditions have brought us to this path for a reason. I understand what Rev. Hirano means when he says it's okay to quit, and it's an attractive offer some days, but my Sangha doesn't quit. They've kept Jodo Shinshu going for years, even when it came close to dying out in Spokane, and I won't quit on them.

Bottari

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Attending temple regularly, listening to the Dharma messages, trying to understand what the teachings meant, provided me with a new perspective on life. I felt encouraged because I realized that the teachings had a direct impact on how I should live my life.

I try to apply the teachings to my everyday life – raising a family, interacting with those I am not familiar with, managing employees, as well as teaching others about Jodo Shinshu. It certainly is not an easy path, but one that allows me to focus and provides me with the tools to be compassionate, loving and understanding.

I appreciate that we can live the Nembutsu in our own way, through our own life experiences. The Nembutsu path enables us to share happiness and joy, while at other times, we share sadness and sorrow.

Whether we live in San Francisco, Honolulu, Vancouver, Sao Paulo or Kyoto, we follow the same Nembutsu path in similar but unique ways.

I invite you all to join us for the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention which will be held on Aug. 30 through Sept. 1 in beautiful San Francisco, and hosted by Buddhist Churches of America Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations. I look forward to welcoming members and friends from throughout the world to the City by the Bay!

Rev. Akahoshi

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love and care that we experienced as infants. Now, as adults, we can appreciate this reality of support that has not been earned. We receive this support as a natural response of humans.

This is the basic message of the 18th Vow in the Larger Sutra. Voicing the Buddha's Name as "Na Man Da Bu" is acknowledging Amida's gift of compassion which we receive from our fellow humans. Although these concepts allude to the spiritual aspects of awakening, it is the human experience of the limited ego in illness, that can provide a sense of the deeper meaning.

For many of us, the act of receiving may be difficult. But it is an opportunity to experience the insufficiency

of self-power. It can open us up to acknowledge the efforts of others. For those who are able to give, there is joy in knowing that we have something to offer others. The act of giving connects us with others. Caring for others could be considered a burden.

However, a shift in perspective reveals the noble human quality of serving others. Giving and receiving permeates our daily lives. The voicing of "Na Man Da Bu" infuses a spiritual quality of joy that enhances our lives.

"Na Man Da Bu" awakens us to the beauty and beneficial reality of interdependence and is an experience of awakening to the pure realm of human life.

Wilson

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among our nation's young women and, to a non-Christian Scout, conveys a positive message about the worth of all religious traditions.

At the closing ceremony of the Girl Scouts 1993 National Convention, after the proposal passed, the Promise was recited.

"I was overcome with tears of joy when 211 Girl Scouts had the opportunity for the first time to make the pledge in acceptance with their beliefs," Jean Wilson wrote in the Wheel of Dharma issue of February 1994. "I feel a great sense of pride in being a member of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. which demonstrated by the overwhelming vote of the delegations, that the membership acknowledges the diversity of religious belief and culture of all its members."

Jean Wilson's leadership in BCA included over 15 years as a member of the BCA National Board and six years as the Chairperson of the BCA Scouting Committee.

She served as a Director at Large, and as a part of her campaign, wrote that she "believes in the Buddhist Churches of America, that Jodo Shinshu training along with the Boy and Girl Scout Leadership Training, is key to the retention of youth in the future of the BCA, that she will support the goals of BCA, that it is our responsibility as Buddhists to provide the Dharma and to propagate the Teachings of Nembutsu on America and that she is committed and prepared to devote her energy and expertise to assist in any program which will further our Teachings of the Nembutsu."

Jean and Warren Wilson, through the San Jose Betsuin, published a booklet titled, "Young Buddhist Pocket Service Book."

Jean Wilson's commitment to Jodo Shinshu and to Girl Scouting was an inspiration to many who knew her.

Rev. Hogen Fujimoto recognized that the Boy Scouts had a religious Scouting award, the Metta Award, and he and Reiko Iwanaga began work on an award for the Girl Scouts. Jean Wilson later joined them, and the Girl Scout Padma Award was created. She received the award recognized by the National GSA. Jean Wilson was also a recipient of the Wisteria Award, the adult Scouting recognition award.

"Jean was an excellent role model, and she exemplified a Southern lady with her polite demeanor and friendly manner and always with a sweet smile," said Jeanne Nakano, who succeeded Jean Wilson as the San Jose Betsuin Youth Director.

Others described Jean Wilson as a person with compassion, who was kind, well-organized, and a gracious human being. One person said that Jean Wilson was always in full Girl Scout uniform, indicative of her pride in Girl Scouting.

Jean Wilson is survived by her husband of 60 years, Warren, and daughter, Erika. Warren lives in Georgia and Erika resides in Nebraska. We will all miss Jean Wilson and her devotion to BCA. She was a Scout leader, mentor, volunteer, and a friend to all she met along her life's journey. Namō Amida Butsu!

Submitted by Sumi Tanabe, atanabe@hotmail.com, and Rose Takamoto, gtrt1300@gmail.com.

今月の法話

「浄土真宗と結婚」

シアトル別院開教使(輪番) 楠 活也



Rev. Katsuya Kusunoki

今年の1月、Youth Ministers, Assistantsを連れて、別院の向かいにある真言宗シアトル高野山を訪ねました。座禅に参加させてもらったり、真言宗のことを教えていただいたりと、貴重な体験をさせていただきました。彼らにとっても私にとっても、違う宗派に触れることで、より浄土真宗の理解が深まりました。シアトル高野山の太定先生が、次のような質問をしました。「浄土真宗と他の宗派との決定的な違いは何ですか?」 Youth MAのみんなも「浄土真宗は、Gratitudeを大切にします。」「浄土真宗は、そのままでのままの受け止められる教だ。」と一生懸命答えていました。ただそれらの答えは他宗派の教えにも含まれているところがあり、決定的な違いはあってもありません。私があんなに考えていたのですが、太定先生の答えは次のようなものでした。「浄土真宗は、宗祖親鸞聖人が結婚し、家庭を持たれた。そのような宗派は他にはありません。本来、仏教では、僧侶が結婚したり、家庭を持つたりすることは戒律で禁止されています。親鸞聖人は、それを承知の上で結婚された。私から見たら、仏教界の大革命者です。」

親鸞聖人の結婚に関する詳しい記録残っていません。9歳でお得度をされ、比叡山に入られた親鸞聖人は、20年間修行をなさいます。20年の修行中でも仏教徒としての「ゴール」である悟りへの道が見えませんでした。様々な悩み苦しみを抱えながら、親鸞聖人は京都市中の六角堂を訪ねます。その悩みの中の二つは、結婚や家庭を持つということもあつたのかもしれません。六角堂では、救世観音菩薩から夢のお告げを受けます。

「仏道修行をするものは女犯は厳禁されているが、前からのいろいろな縁によつて毒をするようなことになった場合は、私(救世観音)が玉のような女の姿になってつれそつてあげよう。そして、一生の間よくおごそかに飾ってあげて、醜態になったら極楽へつれて行ってあげよう。」(御伝鈔上巻第三段)

この夢のお告げが一つのきっかけとなり、比叡山を離れ、法然聖人の元へ行き、今度はここで佛法を学ぶ始めます。法然聖人の教えは、老若男女、出家在家を問わず、阿彌陀仏の教えを聞き、南無阿彌陀仏のお念仏を称えて、お浄土に生まれさせていただき、そこで、悟りを開くという教えです。その法然聖人のお言葉を二つ紹介します。

「現世をすべべき様は、念仏の申されんようにすべし。念仏のたまげになりぬべくは、なによりともよぶてすてて、これをよむべし。いはく、ひじり申されば、妻をもつて申すべし。妻をもつてもうされば、ひじりにて申すべし。」

法然聖人は、念仏を生活の軸としたい。戒律を守った生活をした方が念仏しやすいのであれば、そうすればいいし、妻や家庭を持った方が念仏しやすいのであれば、そうしたらいいとおっしゃっています。出家か在家かということが問題になってくるのではなく、どのような生活スタイルであっても、南無阿彌陀仏のお念仏を中心とした生活を送ることが、阿彌陀仏の浄土への道であり、悟りへの道であることを教えてくださっています。

法然聖人の教えを受けた親鸞聖人は、いつの頃から恵信尼さまと結婚されました。お二人は、お子様方でも、お念仏満ちた人生を歩きました。当時、悟りへの道は出家者中心に開かれていました。在家の者にとって、仏教とは、自分とほかけ離れた存在だったことでしょうか。そのよつた中、親鸞聖人は、在家の者、家族持の者にも仏道を歩むことができるということをご自身の生き様を通して示してくださいました。私たちのような戒律を持たない仏教徒にとって親鸞聖人と恵信尼様の生き方は、一つの目指すべき姿です。もし親鸞聖人が結婚されなかったら、今も、在家の者の悟りへの道は開けていなかったかもしれ

ません。ですので、浄土真宗の結婚とは、親鸞聖人と恵信尼様が歩まれたように、夫婦がお念仏のお悟りへの道を歩む門出といえるでしょう。

5月号の法輪を読みました。向嶋先生ご夫妻、結婚15周年おめでとうございます。末永くお念仏に満ちたご家庭であつてくださいます。私事ですが、今年には妻と結婚して10年になります。2年半前には長男も生まれてきました。妻には法話の内容や英語の発音、僧侶としての言動にちよちよち助言を言われ、1つとするとともにありますが、そのおかげで僧侶として成長させてもらいました。おかげでこの10年、ぶつぶつ文句を言ひ合ひながらも楽しく開教生活をやってこられました。そう思うと私にとって結婚は、お念仏の道を歩むよい機縁となつて下さつていただくと感謝あるのみです。 合掌

第16回世界仏教婦人会大会 開催が3ヶ月後

今年8月30日から9月1日「Live the Nembutsu (お念仏に生かされて)」のテーマで行われる第16回世界仏教婦人会大会の開催が迫つてきた。大会へは約2000名が参加する見込み。参加受け付けは、5月31日までの申し込みで登録費500ドル(それ以降は450ドル)、ワイ

第16回 世界仏教婦人会大会

基調講演者

もとよし ゆきこ
本好 由紀子
常駐開教使 ストックトン仏教会
米国仏教団

ハワイ大学を卒業後、ウィスコンシン大学にて仏教学修士号取得。1978年からハワイ教団開教使としてヒロ別院に赴任。1981年から83年に行信教団で学んだのちミラマール本願寺、リフエ本願寺、ハワイ別院と勤める。2011年より北米開教区のストックトン仏教会に就任している。

日程

月日	8月30日(金)	8月31日(土)	9月1日(日)
時間/会場	マリ奥特・キース	マリ奥特・キース	マリ奥特・キース
8:00		会場オープン 挨拶	会場オープン
9:00		開会式	各開教区による体験発表
10:00		基調講演	休憩
11:00			閉会式
12:00		昼食	
13:00			13:00~ 公共イベント
14:00		★ワークショップ	
15:00	大会参加登録開始	※事前登録必要	『アメリカの盆踊り』
16:00		フリー 交流・展示開覧 マーケットプレイス	
17:00	オープン ワークショップ		
18:00	大会 マーケットプレイス	夕食懇話会	
19:00		各国からの余興 ギフト交換	
20:00			

★ワークショップについては裏面参照

とろ けいこ
都路 恵子
仏教研究家
元仁愛大学専任講師
(仏教・浄土真宗担当)

京都大学大学院・博士課程(宗教学)修了後、アメリカのIBS(仏教大学院)に客員研究員として留学。仁愛大学在学中に海外の浄土真宗の寺院状況を視察。そこで日々の生活で実践できる浄土真宗をわかりやすく日英両語で発信することをライフワークにしたいと思ひ、2017年独立。

2019年8月30日(金)-9月1日(日)
カリフォルニア州・サンフランシスコ市
サンフランシスコ マリ奥特 マーキース ホテル

クシヨップのほか、食生活や食文化交流会への参加費も含まれている。参加希望者は所属寺院の開教使か婦人会、またはBCA本部へ連絡。

1000人が1000ドルを寄付

浄土真宗センター建設にかかった費用四百万ドルを返済するべく、「1000x1000x4」ファンドレイジングプログラム」が設立されている。四百万ドルは現在、BCA エンドウメントファンドから借付しており、このプログラムは原田マージン開教使(オレンジ郡仏教会)とBCA A(仏教教育局ダイレクター)の「1000人のBCA員や有縁の方々が、1年間に1000ドルを寄付して下さると、4年間で四百万ドルを返済できる」との発案から始められた。現在のファンドレイジングをサポートしている方々約2500万ドルの寄付が約束されているが、目標金額返済のため多くの人々の協力を呼びかけている。原田開教使は「浄土真宗センター建設には多額の出費を伴いましたが、今やその存在意義を疑う人は誰もいません。高い価値があり、皆にとって有益なものです。エンドウメントファンドへ返済を終わらせてしまえば、親鸞聖人の教えをより多くの方々にシェアするためのプログラムをより一層充実させることができます。」と、エンドウメントへの

返済がBCAの将来のための投資となる」と語る。このファンドレイジングプログラムに参加して下さる方は、開教本部内(donate@bcqa.org または 415-777-6500 ext. 311へ連絡。英語欄に詳細と寄付者が掲載。

サンノゼでダルマスクール大会



Dharma School Conference in San Jose

4月下旬にサンノゼホテルを会場としてタルマスクール教師大会が開催され、全米各寺院の開教使とタルマスクール教師が集った。テーマは「I am a link... Heal ourselves. Heal the world」(基調講演は米国内観法の実践と普及に努める)のArdo Institueのダイレクターのクレッチ・グレック氏が招かれた。氏は自己の心を観察することによって心の癒しを得る内観と浄土真宗の教えに関して述べ、ワークショップでは内観のやり方を指導した。参加者は「他人からしてもらったことを思い出すよつに言われ、トライしてみました。集中力がなかなか続きませんでした。それでも多くの方のおかげで今の私が成り立っていることがわかったよつに思ひます。」と受けてきた恩を刻んだ。

ご門主メッセージ

親鸞聖人御誕生八百五十年
立教開宗八百年 についての消息

来る2023年には、宗祖親鸞聖人のご誕生八百五十年、また、その翌年には立教開宗八百年にあたる記念すべき年をお迎えするにあたり、2023年に慶讃法要をお勤めいたします。

親鸞聖人は承安3年・1173年にご誕生となり、御年九歳で出家得度され、比叡山で修行を重ねられましたが、二十九歳の折、山を下りて法然聖人の御弟子となられ、阿弥陀如来の本願念仏の世界に入られました。その後、専修念仏停止によって越後にご流罪になられ、赦免の後には関東に赴かれて他力念仏のみ教えを人々に伝えられるとともに、『教行信証』の執筆にとりかかられました。他力念仏のみ教えがまとめられた本書は、浄土真宗の根本聖典という意味でご本典と呼ばれています。そして、そのご本典の記述によって、その成立を親鸞聖人五十二歳の時、すなわち元仁元年・1224年とみて、この年を立教開宗の年と定めています。

仏教は今から約二千五百年前、釈尊が縁起や諸行無常・諸法無我というこの世界のありのままの真実をさとられたことに始まります。翻って私たちは、この執われのないおさとの真実に気づくことができず、常に自分中心の心で物事を見て、悩み、悲しみ、あるいは他人と争ったりしています。釈尊は、このような私たちをそのままに救い、おさとの真実へ導こうと願われたのが阿弥陀如来であることを教えてくださいました。そして、親鸞聖人は、この阿弥陀如来の願いが、南無阿弥陀仏のお念仏となってはたらき続けてくださっていることを明らかにされたのです。

ありのままの真実に基づく阿弥陀如来のお慈悲でありますから、いのちあるものすべてに平等にそそがれ、自己中心的な考え方しかできない煩惱具足の私たちも決して見捨てられることはありません。その広大なお慈悲を思うとき、親鸞聖人が「恥づべし傷むべし」とおっしゃったように、阿弥陀如来のお心とあまりにもかけ離れた私たちの生活を深く慚愧せざるをえません。しかし、この慚愧の思いは、阿弥陀如来の悲しみを少しでも軽くすることができればという方向に私たちを動かすでしょう。

それは、阿弥陀如来の願いを一人でも多くの人に伝え、他人の喜び悲しみを自らの喜び悲しみとするような如来のお心にかなう生き方であり、また、世の安穩、仏法弘通を願われた親鸞聖人のお心に浴う生活です。み教えに生かされ、いよいよお念仏を喜び、すべのいのちあるものが、お互いに心を通い合わせて生きていけるような社会の実現に向け、宗門総合振興計画の取り組みを進めながら、来るべき親鸞聖人ご誕生八百五十年ならびに立教開宗八百年の慶讃法要をともにお迎えいたしましょう。

平成31年

2019年 1月9日

龍谷門主 釋 專 如

親鸞聖人御誕生850年・立教開宗800年慶讃法要 期日について

専如ご門主様は4月15日、立教開宗記念法要のご親教で、2023年ご修行の「親鸞聖人御誕生850年・立教開宗800年慶讃法要」の法要期日をお示しになりましたので、お知らせいたします。法要期日は同年3月29日から5月21日まで、5期30日間。各期の期日は以下の通りです。

第1期	3月29日(水)	～	4月3日(月)	6日間
第2期	4月10日(月)	～	4月15日(土)	6日間
第3期	4月24日(月)	～	4月29日(土)	6日間
第4期	5月 6日(土)	～	5月11日(木)	6日間
第5期	5月16日(火)	～	5月21日(日)	6日間

以上



2019年6月号

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このご門主メッセージは大谷光淳門主が親鸞聖人ご誕生850年および立教開宗800年に関する消息が英訳された。(英訳は英語欄)

総長コラム

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

少し前のことですが、忘れられない経験がありました。それは日本から帰ってくる時の飛行機の中での出来事です。日本に行くとき、時差をあまり感じないのですが、こちらへ帰ると、時差の調整が苦しいです。それで、帰りは飛行機に乗るたびに寝るように心がけているのです。もちろん夕食はスキップします。

その時の帰りのフライトは満席でした。私の席は後ろの方でウトウトしながら眠りにつきました。数時間して目が覚めてキョロキョロしていると、客室アテンダントが私のところまでやって来て、「お目覚めですか。お食事の時に休みになられていましたので、夕食を取っておきました。もしよろしかったら今お持ちいたしますでしょうか」と優しく丁寧に声をかけてくださいました。その心遣いに感激してしまいました。アテンダントは全ての乗客一人一人に注意をしてくださっているのです。自分はヒズネスでもない、満席のフライトの乗客の一人でしかないのに、そこまで気を使ってくださったことに驚き、感謝の思いでいっぱいでした。

この時、日本の熱心なご門徒さんたちがよく「口」にしている「もったいない」という言葉を思い出しました。それは、お念仏を喜ぶ時、「ああ、もったいない、なんなんだ、なんなんだ」という言葉が自然に口から出てくるのです。この時の「もったいない」の意味は、「恐れ多いことです、自分みたいなものにも心をかけていただいて、すまないことです、あがたいことです」ということだと思います。田舎の片隅にいる人たちにとっては、この上ない喜びであります。どんな業を持っていても、「引き受けたぞ、心配するな」と声をかけていくたてるお心を喜ばすにはおれないのであります。

世界には色々な宗教がありますが、多くの教えは色々な条件がついているようです。しかし、親鸞さまの喜ばれたお念仏のみ教えはそのようなものではありません。私たちの本当の姿を知っておられる親鸞さまである阿弥陀如来が、「そのまま帰って来い」と呼び続ける親がこの世にいてほしいと願うのであります。お念仏を喜ぶことは「仏さま、ありがとう」ということです。名前を呼ぶという行為は、そこが心を通い合っているということです。

私のようなものためにご本願が建てられたと聞かせていただく時、ただ念仏申させていただくのみであります。全ての世界の隅々まで知見されて、決してだれ一人も漏れることなく、お浄土に迎え取ろうとしてくださる仏さまのお心は、本当にもったいないことです。これからも一緒に聞法を続けてまいります。

如来の作願を たつぬれば
苦悩の有情を すてすして
回向を首と したまひて
大悲心をば 成就せり

(現代語訳) 阿弥陀さまは、どのようなお心から、願いをお建てになつていらっしゃるのか、ということがありますが、それは、煩惱に振り回されて、苦しんでいる私たちを救済し、苦悩を断つておこなうことができず、その身に備わった徳のすべてを、私たちに注いで、そのまま救い取りたいという大いなる慈悲のおこころから、起されたものである。

