

# WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

1710 Octavia Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

VOLUME 41 • ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2019

## ‘Live the Nembutsu’ Resonates at WBWC Nearly 1,700 Jodo Shinshu Buddhists ‘Bring Hearts to S.F.’



Keynote speakers Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi, above left, and Professor Keiko Toro, center, addressed the crowd Aug. 31 at the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention. (Photos courtesy of Mark Shigenaga)



Transcending barriers of language, culture and geography, the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention's theme, "Live the Nembutsu," resonated throughout the Labor Day weekend in San Francisco.

The convention was hosted by the BCA Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations, a member organization of the World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Associations. The convention is held every four years.

The 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention took place from Aug. 30 to Sept. 1 and drew a total of 1,677 Nembutsu followers. A total of 860 women and men from the BCA attended the convention at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis.

His Eminence Monshu Kojun Ohtani, 25th spiritual head of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, welcomed the huge crowd with an address following the opening service on the morning of Aug. 31.

The first of two keynote speakers, Keiko Toro, an independent scholar of "Everyday Buddhism," gave a dynamic, wide-ranging talk, sharing how to "Live the Nembutsu" -- "which I receive now, not

as a minister and also not as a scholar today." She presented her message in Japanese, with simultaneous translation in English and Portuguese.

She highlighted the Buddhist story of "The Two Rivers and the White Path," quoted in Shinran Shonin's major work, the "Kyogyoshinsho; The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way."

In the story, she explained, the river of fire represents anger and a river of water represents greed and between them lies the single path of the Nembutsu. She shared the difficult decision to pursue the path of the Nembutsu outside of academia.

Toro also touched on how to address the blind passions of anger, greed and ignorance.

"As long as we live in this world, we can't get rid of our blind passions like anger, greed and attachments," she said. "Therefore, whenever we notice our inner blind passions in our daily lives, it is a great chance for us to recite the Nembutsu and listen to the Dharma for us. In reciting the Nembutsu, our evil is transformed into virtue. Then we can follow our hearts with Amida Buddha here and now."

She described sharing one

practical way -- "which I'm practicing now to live the Nembutsu anywhere in the world." It was a collection of Nembutsu poems entitled, "After the diagnosis of cancer," by Ayako Suzuki.

She mentioned one poem in particular:

*The Nembutsu  
Gives me  
The power  
To accept my condition  
As I am*

"Whenever I read this poem, it always gives me the power to live through my life," she said. "Especially when I was in difficult situations, I received the strength to overcome my difficulties. I am determined to live today with the power of Nembutsu."

She ended her keynote speech inviting the estimated 1,700 attendees to join her in reciting the Nembutsu, filling the large room with the sounds of "Namo Amida Butsu."

Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi, resident minister of the Buddhist Church of Stockton, delivered the second keynote speech, in English with simultaneous translation in Japanese and Portuguese. In a talk that was humorous, heartfelt and

highly personal, Rev. Motoyoshi described the role that the Nembutsu and the Buddhist teachings played in helping her decide her Nembutsu path.

She spoke about two people who had a great impact on her Nembutsu life -- her paternal grandmother and her father, who she said made her feel special. She credited both of them for opening the path of the Nembutsu to deal with her inferiority complex as a child and young adult.

"For a long time, I was my grandmother's favorite grandchild," Rev. Motoyoshi said. "One of the reasons, I believe, is that I looked just like my father. There are only three people in this entire world who think he is a handsome person: himself, his wife and his mother ... When I was a baby, I looked exactly like my father. How could my grandmother reject me?"

Rev. Motoyoshi said: "My grandmother embraced me just as I was. If you know there is someone who can accept you just as you are, you feel secure. My existence, how trivial it might have been, was affirmed by my grandmother."

She spoke about her feelings of inferiority rising again as a student at the University

of Wisconsin at Madison and during her time in Japan studying Jodo Shinshu.

"I was not able to sincerely accept Amida Buddha nor recite the Nembutsu," she said. "But I was extremely fortunate. I was surrounded by ministers and members who were not only patient and kind, but also embraced me just as I was. Throughout my ministry, I was always surrounded by so many people who guided and nurtured me. I owe them much gratitude."

"Life is a series of ups and downs -- happiness, sadness, loneliness, despair, and so forth," she said in her closing remarks. "Regardless of what we face in our life, we are responsible to make each moment of our life true and real."

She said she is a person who doesn't make the right decision all the time, but added: "Yet, I am happy with my life because I have met the Nembutsu in my life. I am taking responsibility for my own life, and I am trying to live this precious and valuable life the best way that I can."

The workshops held Aug. 31 covered a variety of topics, including: Lady Takeko Kujo;

Continued on Page 5

## ‘Tokudo Boot Camp’ Was Transformative Experience for Aspirants

By Rev. Maribeth "Smitty"  
Hokai Smith  
Minister's Assistant  
Buddhist Temple of San Diego

During the final Tokudo prep session at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley this past May, Bishop Kodo Umezu talked with me briefly during a break period, reassuring me that I would have no trouble with the upcoming "Tokudo Boot Camp" in July at Nishiyama Betsuin in Kyoto.

He said this because he knew that in a past life, I had endured and emerged successfully from the longer and more demanding Navy boot

camp, just as he had in a past life.

Regimentation, discipline, strict standards of conduct, exacting instructors, attention to detail, rigorous schedules, uniform and room inspections, demanding testing; we reminisced about that shared experience, and Bishop Umezu mentioned that he still folds his socks the way he was taught to in Navy boot camp.

That made me smile. I gave up that practice long ago. I also knew that "Tokudo Boot Camp" wouldn't be easy, but he had put my mind at ease.

Our group of 20 Tokudo aspi-

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The new Tokudo recipients pose for a group photo July 16 at Nishiyama Betsuin in Kyoto. Front row, from left, are: Li Jinyun (China), Amy Umezu (BCA/Gardena), Chan Kaho (Hong Kong), Jeff Haines (Canada), Cynthia Yasaki (BCA/Oakland) and Todd Tsuchiya (BCA/Twin Cities). Middle row, from left, are: Liu Kunyong (China), Caroline Brazier (United Kingdom), Melissa Opel (BCA/Spokane), Anita Kazarian (BCA/Cleveland), David Quirke-Thornton (United Kingdom) and Akiko Rogers (BCA/Berkeley). Back row, from left, are: Landon Yamaoka (BCA/Palo Alto), Tanis Moore (Canada), Enrique Galvan-Alvarez (United Kingdom) Maribeth Smith (BCA/San Diego), CJ Dunford (BCA/Berkeley), Kaitlyn Mascher-Mace (BCA/Denver), Roland Ikuta (Canada) and Louella Matsunaga (United Kingdom). (Courtesy of Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara)





## BISHOP'S MESSAGE

## Appreciating Jiichan's Words of Wisdom During O-Higan



By Rev. Kodo Umezu  
BCA Bishop

*worlds, and unable to escape this burning house ...*

— *Kyo-gyo-shin-sho*

In last month's column, I shared my appreciation of Baachan. This month, I would like to share my appreciation of Jiichan (Grandpa).

He was a Hongwanji-ha Fukyo-shi (a Hongwanji-ha certified speaker) and used to travel throughout Japan. He had a very interesting episode in Hokkaido.

He wanted to catch a train at a local station, but had to wait for hours and would not be able to make it to the next scheduled event. He somehow convinced the station master to stop one express train at the local station, so he was able to get on board and go to the next place.

I remember him being a person of deep wisdom. When I was getting ready to go to Ryukoku University, I needed to find a job that allowed me to make income to support myself. My Jiichan introduced me to a temple in Osaka near Kyoto that was looking for



This is a photo of BCA Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu's Jiichan, taken in about 1960. (Courtesy of BCA Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu)

a live-in student minister to help with their daily services. He not only introduced me to the temple, but took me there and introduced me to the head minister. Before he left, he told me not to be lazy and to work diligently.

"If you want to make a friend, approach the person who is the last one to speak up in a group discussion," he told me.

I wasn't sure what he meant at the time, but I now know

why he said this. One of the reasons is that he knew we are ordinary people with limited wisdom — all that comes out of our mouths is nothing more than our deluded thoughts and ideas.

He also knew that the person who speaks up last in a group discussion is more likely to be the best listener, for he or she is a person who listens to everyone else before making any comments.

In our society today, there are so many loud voices that are expressed by many individuals and groups. We hear some truth in every voice and yet, we often find no real and lasting solutions to our problems.

I, myself, am among these loud voices. Whenever I find myself asserting my view, thinking that I am doing something good for others, I am reminded of Shinran Shonin's passage above about who we are.

I am reminded that I should think twice before I say anything. My Jiichan was a person who truly understood this. He

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*"Better than a speech of a thousand vain words is one thoughtful word which brings peace to the mind. Better than a poem of a thousand vain verses is one thoughtful line which brings peace to the mind. Better than a hundred poems of vain stanza is one word of the Dharma that brings peace to the mind."*

— *Dhammapada*  
(Translated by  
Eknath Easwaran)

*"We realize that we are ordinary beings full of evil passions, with little stock of good, subject to transmigration in the three*

## Let Us Celebrate the Gift of Life by Living in the Nembutsu

## Our Pledge

Breaking out of my shell  
I will share a warm smile and speak gentle words  
Just like the kind Buddha.

Not becoming lost in my greed, anger, and ignorance  
I shall think and act with an open-mind  
Just like the calm and peaceful Buddha

Not putting myself first  
I will share in the joy and sadness of others  
Just like the compassionate Buddha

*Realizing the gift of life I have received  
I shall strive to live each day to its fullest  
Like the Buddha who tirelessly works to liberate all.*

私たちのちかい

一、自分の殻(から)に閉じこもることなく  
穏(おだ)やかな顔と優しい言葉を大切にします  
微笑(ほほえ)み語りかける仏さまのように

一、むさぼり、いかり、おろかさに流されず  
しなやかな心と振る舞いを心がけます  
心安らかな仏さまのように

一、自分だけを大事にすることなく  
人と喜びや悲しみを分かち合います  
慈悲(じひ)に満ちみちた仏さまのように

一、生かされていることに気づき  
日々に精一杯(せいいつぱい)つとめます  
人びとの救いに尽くす仏さまのように



By Rev. Jerry Kyosei Hirano  
Co-Director of Center  
for Buddhist Education

Two years ago at our mother temple in Kyoto, Japan, Shaku Sennyō (Kōjun Ohtani) was installed as the 25th Gomonshu (Abbot) of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji Ha (Nishi Hongwanji).

I was fortunate to have attended the ceremony (Dento Hokoku Hoyo) where Shaku Sokunyo (Koshin Ohtani) and Shaku Sennyō ritually transferred the position and title from father to son. It was a very moving ceremony. At that time, I wondered how Hongwanji would change under this new Gomonshu.

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## 'The Other Side of Goodbye'



By Rev. Sala Sekiya  
Gardena Buddhist Church

Momoe Yamaguchi, a legendary star in 1970s Japan who retired at the height of her popularity, put down the microphone quietly and tearfully left the stage in October 1980 after singing her final song — called "The Other Side

of Goodbye."

At the age of 14, Yamaguchi shot up to stardom, but she announced her retirement at 21 because she was getting married.

Her last song was included with messages to fans and others who supported her.

"You told me that a star billions of light years away has also its life span. You also told me a flower that blooms every season has an endless life. Thank you, I cherish our moments. Here is

my last song for you instead of saying goodbye."

This song streamed into my earphones as the airplane headed back to San Francisco. Looking around, I saw the familiar faces of our BCA Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange youth, sleeping peacefully as their Japan trip was coming to an end.

I met most of them for the first time July 15 in San Francisco when the YBICSE trip began.

From that point on, they dashed through life-deepening experiences every day.

They traveled to Kyoto, where they explored the heritage of the Jodo Shinshu tradition. They had found another family through temple home stays and interacting with members from other international districts. Some of them had received their Dharma names.

When we got on this plane to San Francisco, they looked similar on the outside. But they must have been completely transformed from the day I first met them. They grew up big in their hearts and as people.

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Wheel  
of Dharma

(USPS 017-700)

Official Publication of the  
Buddhist Churches of America

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

www.BuddhistChurchesOfAmerica.org  
Email: WODeditor@bcahq.org

Wheel of Dharma (USPS 017-700) is published monthly by Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109-4341. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to WHEEL OF DHARMA, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109-4341. Subscription free to BCA temple members; \$12.00 annual subscription for nonmembers.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# BCA and Social Consciousness

**Editor's Note:** This article is excerpted from a formal paper presented by Mr. Stambul in 2018 to the 19th Shin Buddhist Conference in Southampton, England, and translated into Japanese and republished this year by Hongwanji-ha in its *Shuho Journal*.



By Richard A. Stambul  
BCA President

In last month's issue, I discussed the existential crisis facing BCA in the near and distant future: As in many other religious organizations, our membership numbers are dwindling, and unless we find ways to reverse this 70-year trend, this downward spiral will continue.

In my column last month, I mentioned that some BCA churches and temples have aggressively sought new members from a more ethnically diverse population. By so doing, they have begun to increase their membership.

Another way we can increase our membership, and retain new members, is to be more involved in the social issues of our time. Of course, BCA's involvement in social issues should not be pursued simply because it might increase our numbers; it should be pursued because it's the right thing to do morally and ethically. It's incumbent upon all religious organizations to confront social ills: poverty, homelessness, inadequate medical care, as well as religious discrimination, racism and hate speech.

The question is: In what ways can Jodo Shinshu take a stand on issues of social conscience? Just last year, in a Shinkyō message, Monshu Kojun Ohtani explained that "economic disparity" is an imminent issue that threatens the existence of all humanity.

"Today's economic dispar-

ity has forced many into desperate poverty, and the socially vulnerable, including children and the elderly, have become easy targets," he stated.

The paper linked the issue of poverty to armed conflicts and terrorist attacks, concluding that "... we must immediately confront such issues in order to realize our organizational purpose, that is, a peaceful society in which everyone can live life to its fullest."

Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, President of IBS, suggested that perhaps BCA has "grown

lunch in an English garden with Zenmon-sama, Koshin Ohtani (Immediate Past Monshu) and our wives.

He urged Shin Buddhists and BCA temples to engage directly with the social consciousness rising in the world today. I think he is right.

Historically, BCA and its religious leaders have taken action on a number of issues of social consciousness. One significant example of political and social action is the life of Rev. Kenryu Tsuji, who served as Bishop of BCA from 1968 to

temples to make our members aware of the great problems of our day, is not new to BCA.

Will our BCA ministers and lay leaders take up this challenge?

Some oppose such involvement as beyond the doctrine and the mission of Shin Buddhism. But when is the time, if ever, that we as Shin Buddhists, as human beings, as people interested in the civil and religious rights of all human beings, should speak out?

Let me be clear. It is part of my vision for BCA that as

*"(W)e must immediately confront such issues (of social consciousness) in order to realize our organizational purpose, that is, a peaceful society in which everyone can live life to its fullest."*

a little too inwardly oriented." He wondered whether BCA wouldn't benefit from being infected a bit by the religious and global spirit of new Buddhist groups engaged in issues of social consciousness, groups "... which place the Dharma and its impact upon the lives and hearts of persons in the world at the forefront of their religious concerns."

In my column published in the November 2018 Wheel of Dharma, I talked about my

1981.

Under Rev. Tsuji's leadership, BCA opposed prayer in public schools, objected to inaccurate portrayals of Buddhism as well as to the inclusion of the unscientific theory of creationism in California textbooks. He issued public statements on important social issues such as abortion.

So, taking up socio-political issues from an altruistic perspective, speaking out in public, and discussing them in our

Shin Buddhists we ought to be involved and engaged with the pressing social issues of our time, but I do not advocate BCA's involvement in politics, in supporting or opposing political candidates.

Every day, we witness poverty, homelessness and inadequate medical care. What can BCA do to confront such social ills?

I think BCA ought to be

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## Rev. Hirano

Continued from Page 2

This past May, I attended a meeting in Kyoto for the overseas districts of Hongwanji and there were posters in many of the public areas with "Our Pledge," which I included at the beginning of this article, posted on the wall.

This pledge was written by our Gomonshu, who has requested that it be added to some of our services. I could read some of the Japanese, but when I returned to the United States, Bishop Umezu sent out an English translation. I believe this pledge is a very good way to introduce some of the basic ideals of our Jodo Shinshu school of Buddhism.

This month, I would like to focus on two of the ideas within of "Our Pledge":

*Realizing the gift of life I have received*

*I shall strive to live each day to its fullest*

*Like the Buddha who tirelessly works to liberate all.*

In July, we observed our Hatsuon/Obon services for the four temples I supervise. For these four temples, there are 28 people on the Hatsuon list. The Hatsuon/Obon service is the memorial service to recognize our continued connection to our loved ones who have died over the past year.

I believe that death does not end the relationships we have with our deceased loved ones. The form may change, but it is a very real living relationship. This service recognizes the "gift of life" we receive as a result of the lives of all those that have lived before us.

This relationship with all those

individuals that have come before me is impossible to really understand. I believe that it is the fact that the entire universe and time itself have conspired to give me the life I have. If any one point were to have occurred in a different way or form, I would not exist. In the Threefold Refuge it says, "Hard is it to be born into human life, now we are living it." It is truly a wondrous gift to have received.

However, just as it says "Hard is it to be born ...," nowhere does it say that life is easy.

In fact, this is at the base for Buddhism with the first noble truth stating, "Life is "Dukkha." Some people translate "Dukkha" as "suffering," but I think of it more as not going as we want. Life does not always conform to our expectations and this can cause immense suffering. As a result, Buddhism prescribes a variety of ways and means to move beyond this suffering which all of us feel. Life can be extremely difficult, but it is a gift that we have received at great cost.

In this passage, it says, "I shall strive to live each day to its fullest." How do we do this? When I was younger, there had been times when I really wondered if life was worth living. I remember in college when there were occasions when I seriously wondered about whether I wanted to live or die. As I grew older, I found that on the occasions that I was able to live a life of service to others, life somehow seemed to get better. As this pledge also states:

*Not putting myself first  
I will share in the joy and sadness of others  
Just like the compassionate Buddha*

Although this idea of putting others first sounds cliché, it is actually one of the truths I have experienced to be absolutely true. This idea of putting others first, to live a life of service, creates a sense that there may have been a reason why the universe moved in amazing ways so that I can be born. It does not create a sense of arrogance, but one of extreme humility.

Life is difficult and there will be times when you may not want to live. But if you strive to live a life as guided in this pledge, I believe it may help with so many of life's difficulties.

This said, there is one more thing I wanted to address this month: suicide. In 2017, Utah had the fifth highest suicide rate in the country for ages 10 years and older. It is a public health crisis. I have spoken with my own children about suicide and the effect I have seen on entire families. I have explained that if they ever have thoughts of suicide, please talk with me. I have told them how many of us, including myself, have had such thoughts.

Buddhism can help, but religion alone is probably insufficient to address its many causes and conditions. I have read in a variety of articles about people questioning whether meditation or religion should be able to overcome a variety of mental health issues. I want to state here and now that neither Buddhism nor any religion can cure mental illness. However, in many cases medical treatment can.

This gift of life is precious, but this gift of life can be extremely difficult. Obon is a time to reflect on the relationships that have given us this gift.

However, if you feel that this

Continued on Page 6

## Student Reflects on YBICSE's Lessons, Experiences



The members of the 2019 Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange participated in a nine-day program in July that was sponsored by the Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto. The exchange program participants are shown posing for a photo. In front row, from left, are: Kellie Lee (Sacramento), Allison Tanaka (Sacramento) and Victoria Shinkawa (Mountain View). In the middle row, from left, are: Rev. Sala Sekiya (leader, Gardena), Stacey Kawabata (Mountain View), Minami Suruki (San Mateo), Megan Miyamoto (San Fernando Valley), Kate Shue (Pasadena), Emi Nakashima (Seattle) and Rev. Matthew Hamasaki (leader, Sacramento). In the back row, from left, are: Jackson Yebisu (Fresno), Brent Sakihara (Southern Alameda County) and Nicolas Karen (Ekoji).

By Emi Nakashima  
Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple

As a part of the BCA, we experience going to our own temples every Sunday to learn about the Dharma and the teaching of the Buddha.

Growing up going to Dharma School, we all knew the basics of what it means to be a Buddhist. However, as a part of the 12 participants of the 2019 Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange trip from the Buddhist Churches of America, we got to experience the true lifestyle of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in its origin country for two full weeks of fun, learning, and new sights, scenes and people. The

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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 written on colored "Bodhi Leaves" corresponding to your donation level (please see donation form). The Bodhi leaves will be put on display throughout the weekend at the World Buddhist

Women's Convention this summer.

To donate and honor the special women in your life, please go to the [wbwc.org](http://wbwc.org) website and click on the "Donation" button to download the form.

For information or question, please contact Terrie Masuda at [terriemasuda@wbwconvention.org](mailto:terriemasuda@wbwconvention.org).

Donors are listed first, followed by the honoree's name(s) in bold print. Thank you to all of the donors, and Arigatou Obaachan and all honorees!

**September 2019 Wheel of Dharma Arigato Obaachan Donors & Honorees**

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**Correction: We apologize for the errors (correction underlined) appearing on the previous acknowledgment: Richard Kaku & Dorothy Sato ~ Tomo Yano Hatakeda (obaachan)**

## 1000x\$1000x4 Program Donor List

Four years ago, the 1000x\$1000x4 fundraising program was established to help replenish the \$4 million borrowed from the BCA Endowment Foundation to settle the remaining bank loans related to the construction of the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC) in Berkeley.

Since the program's inception, BCA members and friends have pledged and contributed more than \$250,000. We are most grateful for their generous support of this program.

Please help us by supporting the 1000x\$1000x4 program. Your pledge allows our temples and the Endowment Foundation to move forward to help create a thriving environment for Buddhism in America. To make your pledge, please contact the BCA Endowment Foundation at [donate@bcahq.org](mailto:donate@bcahq.org) or 415-776-5600 ext. 311.

Thank you for your generous offering. Your vision and support guides the future of the Jodo Shinshu Center.

The donors listed below are the 1000x\$1000x4 donors since last reported to Aug. 7.

### 1000x\$1000x4 Donors

Michiko Murai  
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## Your Dana Helps the Buddha-Dharma Flow

By Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka

Institute of Buddhist Studies Vice President of Development

Your generous spirit of supporting the Dharma growth in America, following the dreams of our early pioneers who focused on education and sharing the teachings of the historical Buddha and Shinran Shonin, is truly heartwarming.

We are grateful in Nembutsu for your ongoing support.

We have received the following amounts in the IBS

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The greatest that we can receive is the gift of Dana. IBS thanks you very much for your generosity.

Gassho,  
Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka,  
Institute of Buddhist Studies  
Vice President of Development



## WBWC Convention

Continued from Page 1

mindfulness and Shin; Buddhist psychology and therapy; line dancing; living the Nembutsu through music; connecting to Buddha through Apps; Shin Buddhism and LGBTQ+; and sexuality.

The event inside the San Francisco Marquis Marriott closed with the passing of the WBWC flag ceremony to the Japan Buddhist Women's Federation. The 17th World Buddhist Women's Convention will be held in 2023 in Kyoto.

"What does it mean to 'Live the Nembutsu?' " said Susan Bottari, Chair of the World Federation and Co-Chair of the 16th WBWC Steering Committee, in her closing remarks on Sept. 1. "As we conclude the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention, it is my hope that all of you have enjoyed your time here in San Francisco and this wonderful opportunity to experience 'Living the Nembutsu' through the words of our keynote speakers, Professor Keiko Toro and Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi."

Bottari also thanked the Gomonsu-sama for his presence; Lady Ruzumi Ohtani for her written greetings; Bishop Rev. Eric Matsumoto of Hawaii, Bishop Rev. Tatsuya Aoki of Canada, Bishop Rev. Mario Kajiwara of South America and Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu of the BCA; the workshop leaders; and all the attendees.

"And last, but not least, thank you to the BCA Federation of Buddhist Women's Association, the BCA ministers, and the many committee members, donors and supporters for your commitment, dedication, time and contribution to help bring about this memorable convention," Bottari said.

However, the festivities didn't end -- they continued outside with the "American Bon Dancing," presented by the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival in coordination with the convention. An estimated 500 attendees danced traditional and contemporary Bon dances, with live koto and taiko presentations on Sept. 1.

## Hundreds Attend 'American Bon Dancing'



An estimated crowd of 500 people attended, danced and participated in the "American Bon Dancing" event immediately after the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention Sept. 1 at the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival in San Francisco. The event featured taiko, koto and dancing. Above right, P.J. Hirabayashi, artistic director emeritus of San Jose Taiko and founder of TaikoPeace, leads a group of dancers, including Rev. Ronald Kobata of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco. (Photos courtesy of Mark Shigenaga)

## YBICSE

Continued from Page 3

group left for Japan on July 15 and returned on July 27.

During our stay at the Monbou Kaikan across the way from Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto, we were able to have an audience with the Gomonsu (and even take a group picture), experience what it's like to wake up for 6 a.m. service after sleeping on our futons, and have short study sessions to deepen our understanding of Buddhism.

We got to visit the most important places within our school of Buddhism like Shinran's birthplace, Mount Hiei, and the Ohtani Masoleum. Being able to see where so many pivotal events took place for Jodo Shinshu Buddhism was a surreal experience. We got to see the town where our founder was born, the mountain where he meditated for years, and the place where his ashes lie.

We got to do all of these things with other Buddhist youth from Canada, Hawaii and South America. We not only learned about Buddhism in Japan, but also learned about the lives of Buddhists in other countries. And

that, in turn, showed us how Buddhism fits into everyone's lives in different ways and helps us become closer as a group because of our commonalities.

These commonalities also helped us bond with the students from Heian High School. A group of students led us on a tour of the grounds to see the different sports clubs, classrooms and common areas. After the tour, we got to play some traditional Japanese games and fold origami while eating snacks and getting to know one another.

Some of the participants described their favorite parts of the trip, including: tea ceremony every morning during the homestay; the interaction with a temple family and experiences such as visiting a ninja museum and cooking Japanese meals together; and seeing the perspective of people who live in small farm towns like Shiga.

The YBICSE program allowed me to understand and see the deep roots Jodo Shinshu Buddhism has in Japanese culture and everyday life. From chanting "Shoshinge" in the early morning to saying Gassho before meals, these short moments gave me a glimpse of living the Dharma. I am so grateful

for everyone who made this experience possible.

The YBICSE trip was a wonderful and educational experience for me as it allowed me to see many of the historical sites of our Buddhist sect as well as visiting Japan.

Although I really enjoyed the entire trip, the most meaningful part of the program for me was my homestay at the Ota family household. I found out that we had many similarities and coincidentally Rev. Ota had attended Sacramento State (where I am from) while he was serving in the BCA.

In Shiga, we grew very close as we toured their town, went to a children's service at their local temple and shared every traditional Japanese meal with them. I am very grateful for this experience and that I had the chance to meet many wonderful Jodo Shinshu Buddhists like me.

The trip displayed life in the major cities of Tokyo and Kyoto, but also gave us the simple pleasure of living in a homestay family's house. I enjoyed the time spent seeing stunning attractions such as the Tokyo Tower, as well as the unique experiences such as onsen that I could not find outside Japan.

## Tokudo

Continued from Page 1

rants from the Buddhist Churches of America, Canada, United Kingdom and China entered the training center as the "foreigners" on July 6.

Upon arrival at Nishiyama Betuin, the commonalities between Navy boot camp and "Tokudo Boot Camp" were immediately evident.

The disorienting environment, fast-paced schedule, long training days, limited rest, yelling instructors, firehose of information, and difficult testing came flooding back. Except this time, I had more awareness and appreciation for what was happening.

We were repeatedly reminded that we didn't have to become

ministers. But I also knew that the tactics and techniques being used were meant to put a stress on us, physically, mentally, and, maybe most important, spiritually.

The thrice daily services, twice daily lectures, and seemingly continuous testing and appraisals weren't meant for us to prove that we had practiced and prepared sufficiently and therefore deserved to be ordained.

They were meant for us to prove to our instructors, and to ourselves, that we had the passion and desire to share the Dharma -- to share Jodo Shinshu Buddhism -- as ministers, not just as laypersons.

Despite Bishop Umezu's assurances, did I have the mental, physical, and spiritual resolve to serve 24/7 as an ordained Buddhist priest? If all I wanted to do was wear a robe, there were certainly

easier ways of acquiring one.

Ultimately, our ability to pass the tests, chant "Shoshinge," and survive the 11-day training regimen wasn't what granted our ordination.

It was our deep desire to share the Dharma and traditions of Jodo Shinshu with others on the Nembutsu path that enabled us to receive Tokudo ordination.

"Tokudo Boot Camp" was about the transformation that took place in realizing that we hold the Jodo Shinshu teachings in our hearts as well as our minds, in striving to live up to the lines of the minister's pledge that state: "I affirm that I will uphold the duties as a Buddhist minister for all of my life," forever being a student of the Dharma and always sharing the teachings of Shin Buddhism. Namo Amida Butsu!

## President's Message

Continued from Page 3

"roaring like a lion" when it comes to ending suffering. BCA should be talking about the pressing humanitarian concerns of our society, and finding creative ways

to be of service to those suffering right in front of our eyes.

As I said, a strong commitment to improving social ills has attracted many people seeking a new religious home. It also appears to be a magnet attracting and motivating a new millennial generation. Can we afford to ignore

these grass-roots social movements spreading around the globe?

I challenge all of you, our ministers, our members and our lay leaders, to pursue new ways in which we can serve those around us who are suffering and by so doing, serve ourselves and our society. Namo Amida Butsu.

**GBC ICHI 味 MI**

## CALL FOR STORIES

**ARE YOU AN LGBTQ INDIVIDUAL OR A FAMILY MEMBER OR RELATIVE OF AN LGBTQ INDIVIDUAL?**

**DID YOU OR YOUR FAMILY ACTIVELY GROW UP IN A JODO SHINSHU TEMPLE ?**

**IF SO, WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Gardena Buddhist Church Ichi-Mi invites you to submit your personal stories to share at our seminar in November so we can learn how to grow as a sangha.

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## A Short Presentation of Shin Buddhism

*Editor's Note: This is the fourth installment of a series of articles that Bishop Kodo Umezu 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

Buddhahood expresses the deep nature of Enlightenment and Nirvana. "Birth in the Pure Land" symbolizes the spiritual focus of man towards the realization of Final Enlightenment. That is why Buddhahood is the perfection of Wisdom, the boundlessness of Compassion and the infinite power of doing what is wholesome.

Thus Buddhism can never be pessimistic about life. It is an integral optimism transcending this world and the suffering that characterized it. Since Buddhahood is the deep basis of

all that exists, the seed of Enlightenment is present in all beings.

This seed only awaits the right moment to awaken and grow.

What then is the place of Jodo Shinshu in the totality of the various teachings dating back to the historical Buddha?

"Shin Buddhism" is the expression used by D.T. Suzuki, the world-famous author, known for his books on Zen Buddhism. He used the term as an equivalent for Jodo Shinshu, literally "the True School of the Pure Land."

Shortly after the passing away of the historical Buddha Shakyamuni, his followers split up in different movements. In short, we can say that "original" Buddhism gradually split into two main currents: the "Smaller Vehicle," in which emphasis was given to individual liberation, and of which only one school still thrives – Theravada, which is active in Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand, in Kampuchea and Laos – and, the "Greater Vehicle" or Mahayana, in

which the emphasis is laid on liberation as a collective realization.

It is within the Mahayana, probably in the second century B.C.E., in Central India, that the Pure Land School originated. In the second century C.E. we already find it in China, where it gradually developed into an autonomous school within general Buddhism, systematized and organized by various patriarchs and masters. In the sixth century, Pure Land Buddhism entered Japan from China through Korea. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a separate school of thought by the name of Jodo Shinshu arose within the Pure Land tradition. The founder of this school, Shinran Shonin, based his conclusions on the entire Buddhist tradition.

Hence, Shin Buddhism situates itself utterly within the teachings and traditions which go back to the historical Buddha. It would not be an exaggeration to affirm that Jodo Shinshu is in fact the loftiest form of Mahayana, its most logical and consequent conclusion.

*Editor's Note: This is the fifth installment of a series of articles that Bishop Kodo Umezu 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

Although Jodo Shinshu, like other great Japanese schools such as Zen and Nichiren, dates only from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, all findings and achievements on religious and philosophical levels present in the generally accepted canonical Buddhist texts can be found within it.

The essentials were transmitted to Shinran Shonin through the teachings of seven masters of India (Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu), China (T'an-luan, Tao-ch'o and Shan-tao) and Japan (Genshin, Honen). So, while Jodo Shinshu has some very singular characteristics, it recognized the great importance and value of all the teachings that go back to the historical Buddha.

Indeed, Shinran Shonin was convinced that the rules and regulations intended for the monastic community where neither effective, nor appropriate for "ordinary people." Consequently, Shin Buddhism focused its attention primarily on those people who want to live their everyday life to the full. The great majority of us are not sages and saints. Ordinary people cannot manage the demands of heavy and intensive meditative and ascetic practices. Not succeeding in the re-

alization of enlightenment we keep on being condemned to the world of suffering.

Therefore, the "priests" of the Jodo Shinshu are neither monks nor priests in the sacramental meaning of the word, but only teachers, pastors, guides, "fingers pointing at the moon."

In this way, Shin Buddhism emphasizes the possibility for "ordinary people" to attain the certainty of realizing perfect Nirvana in the course of their present existence. Not by their own "meritorious deeds," but by way of surrendering themselves to the natural activity of the Infinite Light and Life: Amida Buddha's Compassionate Vow Power that is present in all beings.

But who or what are these "ordinary people"?

They are the weaklings, the sinners, fools and cowards. That is, all those people who, in spite of their deep awareness of their unworthy state, can't succeed in elevating themselves to the subtle and sublime heights of meditation; neither do they succeed in completing the demanding moral or long ritual practices; nor even in being merely "good." Not counting the few exceptional people that are able to achieve Enlightenment by their own power, these "ordinary people" are the majority of mankind. These "ordinary people" are us.

The only and fundamental cause for "Birth in the Pure Land" is thus from neither moral nor ritual practices, not from meditative experiences, but the one moment of total and sincere, deep and joyous surrender to Amida Buddha's salvific activity.

Who or what, then, is Amida Bud-

dha?

It is difficult to give a brief and concise answer to this question without involving the totality of Buddhist teachings written down in the Great Manayana Sutras, and the numerous comments devoted to them for more than 20 centuries.

Firstly, we should take into account that Amida is neither a God who punishes and rewards, gives mercy or imposes tests, nor a divinity that we can petition or beg for special favors.

Historically important is the fact that in India he was given two names: Amitabha or Immeasurable Light, and Amitayus or Immeasurable Life. Light and Life in this context are used as synonyms for Wisdom and Compassion as seen in their Infinity. Therefore, it is not wrong to describe Amida, as the summary of Amita-bha and Amita-yus, as Infinite Buddhahood expressing itself in our mind as Light/Wisdom and Life/Compassion.

In this way, we could also say that Amida Buddha represents the nature of the Absolute: formless, inexpressible, beyond all relativity and discrimination, an Absolute of benevolence and energy. Amida Buddha is unimaginable.

People need to be able to conceive of things in their minds. The ideal conceptualization still accessible to human thought and feeling is the anthropomorphic image of the Buddha – Buddhahood – reduced to an image that we can see depicted in statues, relics, paintings or calligraphy.

Moreover, Buddhahood also has a historical embodiment: Shakyamuni, who taught people the way to non-suffering.

"Okage sama desu." When you ask someone, "How are you?" They will answer "Okage sama, genki desu."

This literally means, "I have the potential to live because of the shadow." This shadow is you in my life. In my gift of life, you are an important part of this gift. I am allowed to fully live this life, because of you. You matter!

When I say Namu Amida Butsu, it is also another way of saying you matter to me, and my gift of life is because of you and vice versa. Let us celebrate this gift of life by truly living in Namu Amida Butsu.

## Bishop's Message

Continued from Page 2

was a person of few words, but his attitude said a lot.

As Shinran Shonin wrote, this world is like a burning house and we are beings who are unable to escape it without help and guidance. That means I need true guidance to help me in this world.

To find this guidance, we need to listen to the subtle voices of Shakyamuni Buddha and Shinran Shonin. Shakyamuni Buddha and Shinran Shonin urge us to hear Namu Amida Butsu, which is Compassionate Wisdom in action that is guiding us.

It makes me realize the truth that this self that I call "I" is confined to this delusive world. This world and "I" are inseparable. The compassionate call of Namu Amida Butsu is coming from the realm known as "Higan" (the Other Shore), which is the realm embraces my selfish world.

My Jiichan's words did not become important to me until I truly heard what he was trying to teach me. In this same way, though the Buddha is calling us, this "I" needs to hear this calling to realize this guidance.

This O-Higan season, let us rededicate ourselves to the Nembutsu which Buddha and Shinran Shonin urge us to hear. If all of us — each "I" — can do this while we are living, we will be able to fulfill our lives and help create better communities and a better world for the present and future.

## Rev. Sekiya

Continued from Page 2

I too experienced quite a change on this trip, a bittersweet change. I had not visited Japan for two years and I was surprised to see many familiar places being reconstructed. It looked like an unknown world to me.

I thought of myself as Urashima Taro, a character in a famous Japanese folktale. In the tale, Urashima Taro, a young fisherman who lives in a Japanese village, visits Dragon Palace under the sea after saving a turtle's life. He is welcomed with delicious treats and fish dances.

After a few days, he decides to return home from the Dragon Palace. When he arrives in the village, all things seem strange to him. He returns to a very different world as an old man. He is hit by reality of change.

It is funny that I was seeing the positive changes in the young participants with fond feelings, while I was seeing my own changes as bittersweet.

It didn't matter that I looked at the changes through the filters of good or bad. One thing was for sure — things are constantly changing and we are never able to come back to the same place. Young and old alike.

Looking around the airplane cabin, I felt relieved though in realizing that we all have the final destination.

Amida Buddha's Pure Land is often expressed as a place we "come back" to even for those of us who have not been there. It is our new home, the place we should truly belong to. So, from Buddha's point of view, we are made to "come back" to it.

Shinran Shonin read the kanji letter "come" as "come back," and said that working of bringing us there ("come") is the Other Power. The Pure Land is not the realm we go to, but instead, is the realm we are made to come.

We can travel through journeys and turbulences with true ease of mind when we realize there is a place that awaits us unwaveringly, the true destination that Buddha had prepared where we would be our true self.

Because we know this, we have the courage to put our microphone quietly on the floor and look up every time. Departure is entry to the new world.

In our case, Jodo Shinshu tradition, which our youth had deepened their understanding through their journey, shows that we will eventually be brought into the world beyond journeys — to the other side of goodbye.

## Rev. Hirano

Continued from Page 3

life is a burden rather than a gift, please talk to someone. If you cannot talk to a friend or family member, please feel free to talk with me. If you do not feel comfortable talking to me, please feel free to call my wife Carmela. Besides being my wife, she is an ordained Jodo Shinshu priest and also a psychiatrist, therefore much more qualified in this area than I am.

My number is 801-819-2648

and Carmela's number is 801-414-1336. There are also national hotlines: Anyone experiencing suicidal thoughts is asked to call the 24-Hour National Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255). Utah also has crisis lines statewide, and the SafeUT app offers immediate crisis intervention services for youths and a confidential tip program.

Obon is a time to celebrate and reflect on this gift of life and the relationships and interconnectedness of all of us. I would not be here without you.

In Japanese, there is a phrase



# 今月の法話

## 「和らかなるをもつて貴しとなす」

オックスナード仏教会 開教使 渡辺正憲



Rev. Masanori Watanabe

今年、「平成」が幕を閉じ、新しい元号である「令和」を迎えるというめでたい年となりました。天皇陛下のご退位は二百年ぶりということ、四月一日の新年号の発表を、私もテレビの前でどきどきしながら見ておりました。「令和」は、『万葉集』の巻五、梅花の歌三十二首の序文からの引用ということで、

「令」はこの場合、「よろい」、「素晴らしい」という意味であり、「和」は「なごむ」、「やわらかく」という意味だそうです。私自身、「昭和」、「平成」、そして「令和」を生きていることができることを本当に喜ばしく感じます。

この元号の発表を見た瞬間に感じたのは、「昭和」で使われた「和」をなぜもう一度選んだのかという素直な驚きです。しかし、すぐに良い元号が選ばれたなと思いました。

そのわけは、この「和」という字が、日本の歴史にとって本当に大きな意味を持っていると考えるからです。例えば、古代中国における日本の呼び名が「倭・和」であること、つまり、「和」という漢字は、それ自体で「日本」を意味しているということです。そして、「和」という字は、聖徳太子の『憲法十七条』の第一条、「和らかなるをもつて貴しとなす、忤(さか)ふることを宗(むね)となす」を思い起こさせます。聖徳太子は、第三十二代の用明天皇の皇子でしたが、仏教に深く帰依して、推古天皇のもと、摂政として政治を行い、仏教興隆に尽力された方です。親鸞聖人は、太子を「観音菩薩」の化身であると崇められました。子供の頃、自坊の内陣に太子のご絵像がなせ掛かっているのかと漠然と疑問に感じていましたが、今はその理由がよく分かります。確かに、観音菩薩のような聖徳太子の大きな慈悲の心と努力がなければ、私たちがこの尊い仏教という教えに、「和の国」で出会うことはなかったかもしれません。

親鸞聖人は、ご著作である『顕浄土真実教行証文類(教行信証)』の総序で、

「ここに愚劣の親鸞は、よろこばしいことに、インド・西域の聖典、中国・日本の祖師方の解釈に、逢いがたいのいま遭うことができ、聞きがたいのいすで聞くことができた。そしてこの真実の教・行・証の法を心から信じ、如来の恩徳の深いことを明らかに知った。そこで、聞かせていただいたところをよるこび、得させていただいたところをたたえるのである。」と、浄土のみ教えに「和の国」で出会えた喜びを表現されております。その尊い仏教のみ教えを、いま聞くことができるのは、それぞれの御寺の護持に勤めてくださるご門徒のみなさまのおかげです。ですから、仏教での三つの宝は、「仏」と「法」、そして、僧侶を含めた教団を表す「僧」なのです。「僧」は、Sanghaの音訳であり、意味は「和合衆」です。仏教を信奉し、護持して下さるご門徒のみなさまが、この世の宝なのです。歴史のある御寺を守られた多くの方々がいてくれたからこそ、いまこの尊いみ教えを聞かせていただくことができ、わたたくせ、それは、決して当たり前なことではありません。三帰依文にもあるように、人として生まれることは難しく、仏法に出会わせていただけることは本当にありがたいことなのです。

普段、忙しくてお寺に行く時間がないという方でも、できる限り時間を作って、聞きがたくしてしま聞かなくて済む尊いみ教えのみ教えに、心静かに耳を傾けていただきたいと切にのぞんでおります。

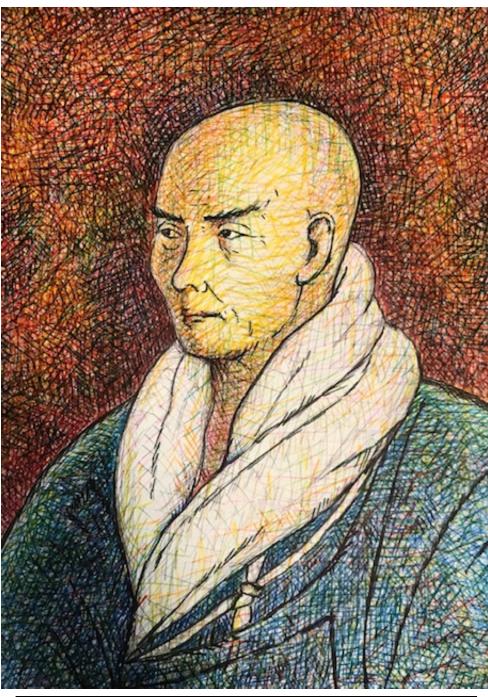
タコマが優勝トロフィーを持ち帰った。果たしてシアトルのリベンジはなるのか、それともタコマが王者の意地を見せるのか、注目の一戦は、8月18日のサンデーサーブスの後に行われた。

第一試合は、老若男女が出場してのレクリエーションゲーム。上は湯川名誉(引退)開教使から、下は楠開教使(シアトル別院)、宮地開教使(タコマ仏教会駐在開教使)の息子たちまで参戦。年の差80歳以上の選手たちが白球を追いかけた。センターへの大飛球を楠開教使の妻がミラクルキャッチするなど、随所に好プレーも見られた。

第二試合は一転して真剣勝負。シアトルは、10代20代の若手を中心にラインナップを組み優勝を目指す。タコマは優勝経験のある百戦錬磨の選手たちを揃えてきた。試合は序盤、タコマが8点を先制し、シアトルの出鼻をくじく。シアトルもホームランで1点を返すも、後が続かない。そこで、楠開教使が奇策に出る。若手中心のラインナップに経験豊富(?)なおじさん(お父さん)たちを次々とバッターボックスに送り出す。その策が見事にはまり、一気に8点を返し逆転。しかし、その後、タコマも意地を見せ2点を取り逆10対9と1点勝ち越し、そのまま最終回を迎える。シアトルの反撃が期待されたが、3者凡退であえなくゲーム終了。今年もタコマが優勝トロフィーを持ち帰ることとなった。

その日42歳の誕生日を迎えた楠開教使は、「試合に負けたが、みんなと一緒に楽しくソフトボールをできたのがなにより。誕生日プレゼントだった。」と負け惜しみもとれるコメントを残しグラウンドを後にした。

年に一度の一番、来年はタコマで行われる予定。来年は両チームの間でどのような熱い戦いが繰り広げられるのか、はたまた、新たなチームが参戦を表明してくるのか、楽しみは膨らむばかりである。



Shinran Shonin by Rev. Masanori Watanabe

## 2019 ノースウエスト甲子園

西北部教区恒例の野球大会が開催された。以下はシアトル別院からのレポート。

今年もノースウエストに暑い夏がやってきた。タコマ仏教会とシアトル別院の因縁のソフトボール大会は、今年もシアトルが主催で行われた。一昨年はタコマが勝利、昨年は引き分けで、過去2年は



Seattle vs Tacoma 2019 Northwest Koshien

## 仏教婦人会綱領

9月にサンフランシスコで世界仏教婦人会大会が開催されたことを縁に、いまいちど仏教婦人会綱領を読みなおして、浄土真宗の門信徒としてのありかたを考えてみましょう。

- 私たちは親鸞聖人のみ教えに導かれてすべての人びとの幸せを願われる阿弥陀如来のお心をいただき自他ともに心豊かに生きることのできる社会をめざしともに歩みを進めます
- 一、お聴聞を大切にいたします
  - 一、「南無阿弥陀仏」の輪をひろげます
  - 一、み仏の願いにかなう生き方をめざします

## 南方リフォルニアでテクノブッダ

9月21日にウエストロサンゼルス仏教会でテクノブッダの集いが開催される。2008年よりはじめられたテクノブッダは21歳から39歳までのミレニアルと呼ばれる世代を対象にしており、通常は浄土真宗センターでカンファレンスが行われているが、南方リフォルニアからの参加者が少なくないため、昨年より参加者の便宜をはかって同地域での開催をはじめた。今回のテーマは「Caused, Conditions, Creativity」で、縁起と創造性に関してLA在住の日本人ガラスアーティスト、タキザワカズキ氏が基講演を行う。登録費は30ドルで、問い合わせは [technobuddasocal@gmail.com](mailto:technobuddasocal@gmail.com)。



## 今月の掲示伝道

信心とは  
凡夫が凡夫と  
メザメル  
ことである

When an ordinary man awakens the Entrusting heart, he is informed that an ordinary man is himself.  
(信心をいただくとは、凡夫が凡夫であったと知らされることである。)

今年8月に広島市内の真宗寺院に掲示されていた法語



# 法輪

2019年9月号

発行所  
米国仏教団  
Buddhist Churches of America  
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San Francisco, CA 94109  
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二〇一九年度教化標語  
「ありがとう  
おぼあちゃん」

あの記事をもう一度!

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

## 第16回 世界仏教婦人会大会開催

8月30日から9月1日に第16回世界仏教婦人会大会が開催された。大会は「Live the Nembutsu (お念仏に生かされて)」のテーマに沿った基調講演をストロクトン仏教会の本好由紀子開教使(英語)、仏教研究家の都路恵子師(日本語)が行った。ワークショップでは念仏の教え、九条武子夫人、仏前結婚式、エコロジー、LGBTQ、仏教音楽に関するものや、ライندگانスなどのエクササイズがあり、北米、ハワイ、南米、日本の約1700名の参加者が受講した。来月号に詳細記事の予定。



World Buddhist Women's Convention at San Francisco

## 二名の開教使がBCAに加わる

8月9日に新任の三瓶悦子(みかめえつこ)開教使と今田法翔(いまだのりたか)開教使がサンフランシスコに到着した。両開教使は2018年4月から7月に行われたIMOP(国際仏教養成講座)を受講し優秀な成績で終了、日本に帰国し開教使に任用されるべく準備をすすめていた。



Revs. Umezu, Mikame and Imada

三瓶師は島根県出身で所属寺院は山陰教区太田東組徳善寺。今田師は広島県出身で所属寺院は安芸教区佐伯東組浄教寺。二人はサンフランシスコ到着後、開教本部へ赴きご本尊へ着任の挨拶、梅津総長から激励の言葉をうけた。その後浄土真宗センターに一週間滞在しオリエンテーションを受け16日より三瓶師はサンノゼ別院へ、今田師はデンバーの山東三州仏教会へ着任した。以下は三瓶師と今田師よりBCAのみなさまへの挨拶。三瓶師「この度サンノゼ

別院にご縁をいただき赴任させていただきました。三瓶悦子と申します。自然豊かな島根県大田市というところで生まれ育ちました。皆様と共に仏教の教え、阿弥陀様のおみりを大切に御聞かせたがたいと思います。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。」  
今田師「この度、Tri-State / Denver Buddhist Templeへ着任いたします。今田法翔と申します。IMOPで見た先輩方の姿にいち早く近づけるよう努力を重ねると共に、皆様と一緒に浄土真宗のみ教えをお味わいさせて頂ける事をとても楽しみにしております。」

## 門主が二教区の寺院を巡回

婦人会世界大会終了後、大谷光淳門主が西北部教区と南部教区の各寺院を巡回された。巡回された寺院はオレゴン仏教会、タコマ仏教会、ホワイトリバー仏教会、シアトル別院(西北部教区)。南部教区はサンディエゴ仏教会、ヒスタム仏教会、オレンジ郡仏教会、洗心仏教会、サテナ仏教会、ロサンゼルス別院、オックスナード仏教会、サンフェルナンドバレー本願寺、ウエストLA仏教会、ベニス仏教会、カーテナ仏教会。来月号に詳細記事の予定。

## YBICSE(青少年国際研修団)レポート

2019年イビクン(青少年国際研修団)として、7月15日から27日にBCAの青少年12名が日本の研修へ参加した。以下は参加者の一人サンマテオ仏教会の摺木美波さんによる研修のレポート。

### Reflection from BCA 2019 YBICSE Trip

今年の夏、私は約二週間の青少年国際研修に参加しました。BCAから12人の生徒が、ハワイ、ブラジル、カナダからの30名話して、その駅には止まる予定のない急行列車を止めてもらって、無事次の場所へと行ったということです。これは、私たち家族のうちで語り継がれているエピソードです。

私は京都の大学への進学が決まったときに、じいちゃんが大阪のお寺を紹介してくれました。そこで住み込みをして学校へ行くことになったのです。じいちゃんは、私と一緒にわざわざ大阪のお寺まで来てくれたのです。そして帰る際に、『怠けるなよ。一所懸命働いて勉強するのだよ。』と諭してくれました。それから、『いい友達を選びたいなら、最後に口を開く人と友達になるがよい。』ともアドバイスをくれました。

このアドバイスは、お釈迦さまの教えに通じるものがあると後

余りと京都で合流しました。西本願寺の朝のお勤めに参ったり、比叡山に行ったり、一日旅行で行った広島では、原爆を体験した方の話を聞くことも出来ました。旅の終わりには、東京で3日間過ごし、私たちの旅は、とても充実したものでした。



YBICSE students, Minami Suruki and Vicky Shinkawa

一番心に残っているのは、3日間のホームステイです。マウンテンビューのウィッキーと私は、滋賀県の安養寺というお寺のご夫婦のところへ行きました。私たちは、「小林おじいちゃん、おぼあちゃん」と呼びました。滋賀へ向かう電車の窓から、美しい田園や、山が見えたことを覚えていきます。着いた日は、小林おぼあちゃんは、料理が下手だから、外へ食べに行こうと言って、外食しましたが、後で、小林おぼあちゃんのお肉じゃがを食べた時には、とても料理が上手だと思いました。朝は、息子さんと一緒に正信偈をお勧めしました。小林おじいちゃんと一緒に門徒の家へ行ったり、婦人会の人たちと、本堂でお盆前のお磨きをしたりしました。

一つ学んだことは、アメリカの虫よけスプレーは、日本の蚊には効かないということです。こんなにたくさん蚊に咬られたことがないくらいに咬られて、小林おぼあちゃんは、私を医者に連れて行ってくれました。

たくさんさんの友達を作り、浄土真宗について、たくさん学ぶ事ができました。私は、小林さんたちのこと、そして、新しい友達と過ごした時間を、ずっと忘れません。

摺木美波

でわかりました。お釈迦さまの言葉を集めた法句経の中に、「無益な言葉を千回語るよりも、聞いて心の静まる有益な言葉を一つ聞くことの方がすぐれている」というのがあります。私たちの口から出る言葉はほとんどゴミと言ってもいいようなものです。自分も例外ではありません。無益な言葉で人を惑わすのではなく、静かに仏さまの言葉に耳を傾けることが今一番求められているのではないのでしょうか。

私たちは大きな世界から願われています。その願いが言葉となり、呼び声となり「阿弥陀仏に南無せよ」と私たちに届いているのだと、親鸞聖人はおっしゃっておられます。できるだけ口を慎み、彼岸からの呼びかけに耳を傾けてまいりましょう。

## 総長コラム

米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道

先月は「ぼあちゃん」への思いを書きましたが、今月は「じいちゃん」のことを書きたいと思います。

じいちゃんは本願寺の布教使として日本全国を回っていました。その当時は、今と違って新幹線もなく、飛行機を使うということはありません。そのじいちゃんが九州から北海道のお寺に布教に行き、それが終わりの次のお寺に行こうとして駅まで行ったのですが、何しろ田舎のことで、汽車の数が限られております。どうしても間に合わないのです。ところが、じいちゃんは駅長に訳を