Accession for BCA Bishop Kodo Umezu

Continuing a BCA tradition starting at the turn of the 19th century, Rev. Kodo Umezu was appointed as the 14th Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America by Gomonshu Koshin Ohtani in May 2012.

While in the U.S., the formal accession ceremony and transfer of authority was held on June 2 in the BCA Hondo at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco. BCA Executive Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada was chairman of the service, assisted by Rev. Ron Kobata. Mrs. Misaye Abiko was the organist and the Northern California Gagaku group provided the musical accompaniment throughout the service.

After the procession of BCA ministers into the Onaizan, Socho Koshin Ogui entered the Onaizan and before the Amida Buddha he announced the conclusion of his term as BCA Socho/Bishop. Rev. Umezu then entered the Onaizan and Socho Ogui passed the Egen (long handled incense burner) to Rev. Umezu as a symbol of the transfer of authority. Rev. Umezu then ascended onto the Officiant’s seat (toroiban) and announced before the Amida Buddha that he was accepting the position as the 14th Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America. This was followed by the sangha’s chanting of San Butsu Ge and after serving for four years, he returned to Japan.

Each BCA District Council, the national affiliated organizations, as well as a representative of the BCA National Board and the BCA Ministers’ Association then offered incense.

Socho Ogui then introduced Rev. Kodo Umezu as the next BCA Bishop and this was followed by an Accession Address by Bishop Umezu.

Rev. Kodo Umezu was born in Fukushima, Japan. He graduated from Waseda University in 1973 and immediately made his voyage to the United States to become a BCA minister. He was first assigned to the Fresno Betsuin and at that time, continued his studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies where he received his Master’s Degree in 1976. Later that year, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and after serving for four years, he returned to the BCA ministry and was assigned to the Los Angeles Betsuin in 1980. In 1987, Rev. Umezu was assigned to the Buddhist Church of Oakland and in 1996, he was appointed as the Executive Assistant to the Bishop under Bishop Hakubun Watamabe. He was then appointed Director of the Center for Buddhist Education in 2006 by Ogui Socho and on April 1, 2012, he assumed the position as the 14th Bishop of the BCA sangha. Rev. Umezu is married to Janet Teraoka, and together they have three daughters, Amy, Stacy and Michelle.

Following the Accession Ceremony, an Appreciation and Celebration Banquet was held at the San Francisco Buddhist Church.

Rev. Kodo Umezu (right) during the accession ceremony held at the San Francisco Buddhist Church.
**Don’t Forget About Us**

**By Rev. Kurt Rye**

Fresno Betsuin

_Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m._

_431 Elerufi St._

Phone: (510) 809-1441

Fax: (510) 987-6543

Berkeley, CA 94704

Tel: 510-809-1414

_bca@bca.org

**BCA National Board Meeting Report**

**By Kent Matsuda**

Emunji Buddhist Temple

_Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m._

_431 Elerufi St._

Phone: (510) 809-1441

Fax: (510) 987-6543

Berkeley, CA 94704

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_Summer is approaching and, with it, Bon Odori season. The BCA Scouting Committee is proud to sponsor the “Scout the Way” program for all Scouts and Camp Fire youth who participate in Bon Odori._

_The requirements for earning the patch are simple as in previous years. They include learning about the meaning of Obon, learning about the music and equipment used in the dances, attending practice and dancing in a Bon Odori. Dancers earn a large patch and “rocker” the first year they participate in the program. Each year after that they earn a “rocker” patch with the year of participation. Of course, continuing dancers can order large patches for their new uniforms as they move up in scouting or Camp Fire level. We hope you will encourage your youth to participate in the Bon Odori patch program as it is a fun way for youth to learn about Obon and the joys of participating in the Bon Odori._

_For more information or an order form, contact Tara Mochizuki at tamarochizuki@bca.org or calling (415) 731-8873._

_Bon Odori Patch Program_

**New Book at BCA Bookstore**

Now available at the BCA Bookstore: _The Sweet Potato_ written by Ekoji Buddhist Temple member Reiho Odate Matsumoto, with illustrations by Nora Asaji, paperback, $14.95.

_The Sweet Potato_ is the touching story of a boy named Ten. Ten dreams of a Japanese roasted potato, or _yaki kutsu_ but, he cannot afford to buy one. His father barely can afford to buy food for the family. Ten’s mother’s clothes are too small for him, his shoes have holes he mends with thread, and he is often hungry. Despite his yearning, Ten discovers the rewards of showing others compassion and generosity. This delightful story provides rich material for teaching about compassion and generosity. This delightful story provides rich material for teaching about_ Obon and the meaning of Obon. To order, go to wwww.bcabookstore.com or phone (510) 809-1435/email gayle@bca-bookstore.com

_The BCA Bookstore is open Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m._

_Sharing Success- Small Successes..._ Untitled

**By Rev. Ron Miyamura**

Midwest Buddhist Temple

The Midwest Buddhist Temple happened upon something that became a small success that would like share. In the past year, we have started to have our local “book store” available on every Sunday. We have a selection of books on Buddhism as well as some religious articles like juns, incense, candles, etc. We have two tables of items on display, usually handled by our Lay Dharma Leaders and other volunteers.

What we discovered is that the book store was much more interactive with visitors, new members and everyone. In particular, the book store was a way to talk to visitors in a relaxed and friendly way. Books are always fun and non-threatening, so it has become a way to talk about the Temple in an indirect way and increases our ability to expose people to the Buddhist Church.

Actually, the book store has replaced our “welcome committee” which was not always successful because it was usually difficult to determine how much or how little interaction a visitor really wanted. The additional benefit is that we are selling more books and things, and we order most of the material from the BCA Bookstore, which in turn, helps the BCA.

_Gasha_

_We gratefully acknowledge contributions to the Wheel of Dharma by the following donors:_

Yuri Mochizuki

Berkeley, CA 94704

Tel: (510) 809-1441

Fax: (510) 987-6543

_bca@bca.org

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_Continued on Page 5_
On Saturday, June 23, a group of thirty women participated in the CBE’s first program especially for women: “Jodo Shinshu Buddhism: A Women’s Dharma Gathering.” In addition to a fascinating talking by keynote speaker, Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi of the Stedman Buddhist Temple (far right in the main panel), the program included a panel discussion on the theme “Our Life Journeys in Nembutsu,” personal stories about the Dharma in our lives, mindful meals, reflections on food, community, and Dharma, and cultural activities.

The seminar will take place at the Jodo Shinshu Center. See ad on this page.

Everywhere enjoys a good story. A good story is remembered and retold, over and over again. Drawing upon Shakyamuni’s tradition of using stories to make the Dharma understandable and relevant to diverse audiences, this seminar will look at the many ways that storytelling can make the Buddhist teachings relevant to Dharma school students of all ages.

Guest speaker, Rev. Marvin Harada, will present an overview of “Buddhist Stories,” accompanied by his popular Dharma assistant, “Freddie the Frog.”

A special presentation by Kiyo Masuda, educational resource specialist and advisor to the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple Dharma School, will include a sample curriculum framework for temple Dharma schools which outlines “essential teachings” for each grade level in a concise and usable format. She will also present “Making the Dharma Connection in Children’s Books” (see ad in right).

The seminar will take place at the Jodo Shinshu Center. See ad on this page. For more information, visit www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org

July 2012 • News and Highlights

Listening to the Dharma
Rev. Marvin Harada, CBE Co-Director

In Shin Buddhism, we are taught that the most important thing we can do is listen to the Dharma. Through listening, the teachings enter our hearts and minds, and Buddhism becomes one with our life. It cannot be overemphasized how important listening is.

I would like to share with you a true story about a real listener of the Dharma that I heard in a lecture by Professor Takamaro Shigaraki, under whom I studied at Ruokakai University. In his lectures and Dharma talks, Shigaraki Sensei would often tell the most compelling and heartfelt stories about Shin Buddhists that he had known in life, or had read about in his extensive study of Buddhism.

There was a Shin Buddhist minister that Sensei knew in Japan who had the following experience. He had scheduled a service and Dharma talk at his temple on a particular evening. He had notified all of his members about the event, but the day of the event, there was a huge storm. This minister went to his temple to conduct the service and to give the Dharma talk, but because of the storm, no one came. When he returned, his wife asked him how the service went. He replied that because of the storm, no one had come.

His wife said, “But if no one came, why didn’t you come home earlier?”

The minister replied, “Oh, I still did the service.”

“But if no one was there, did you still give the Dharma talk?” she asked.

“Yes, I gave the Dharma talk.”

“But there was no one there! Who listened to the Dharma talk?” the wife asked in utter dismay.

The minister replied, “I listened to the Dharma talk.”

What an amazing listener of the Dharma this minister was. We should not misunderstand this true story. The minister was not being stubborn or arrogant, thinking, “Well, I put all this time and trouble into preparing a Dharma talk. Even if no one comes, I’m going to give it anyway!” That is not what he was doing.

This minister had such a sincere and real spirit of listening to the Dharma, that he presumed the posture of a listener, even as he gave his own Dharma talk. As he listened to his own Dharma talk, perhaps he questioned his own understanding, his own sincerity. Perhaps he reflected on his own message, thinking, “Do I really practice what I preach? Do I really understand what I am talking about, or is my message just hollow words?” What a tremendous listener of the Dharma this minister was.

I am not like that. If I were to schedule a service and Dharma talk and if no one came, I would wait, maybe 15 minutes, and then I would go back home, thinking, “Gee, now I can watch the Lakers game.” I doubt if I would do the service and give the Dharma talk, if no one came.

When we listen to the Dharma with that kind of sincerity and seriousness, we receive the Dharma as a deep and profound truth in our lives. The first step in Buddhist education is having the right attitude and sincerity in listening to the Dharma.

If there is even one listener of the Dharma like that in a temple or Sangha, the whole Sangha is affected. Soon others will listen with the same sincerity, the same earnestness as that sole listener. May our BCA temples and Sanghas become places where real listeners of the Dharma are nurtured.
T

The above passage is a poem that was written by Shin- ran Shonin over 750 years ago. It is one of two poems that is appended to what is often called the "Shinran Shonin's The Larger Sutra of Immeasurable Life..."

Shinran Shonin's words, his letting us know that he too is the same. We are all different. That is why I think Namo Amida Butsu has vowed to embrace or grasp us. We are all unique and special. The English word "electricity" was first used in the 13th century, even the concept of electricity did not exist (that was possible until 1646). In other words, there is a power outage. We panic, for example, when there is power outage. In the 13th century even the concept of electricity did not exist (that is possible for another four centuries)

The English word "electricity" for example, didn't appear in English until 1646. In other words, there was no power to have an outage of back then. The other difficulty is found in the fact that we all are different and have varied backgrounds. For example, how many people, even back in the 13th century, were able to experience life as a monk on Mount Hiei? How many people could experience this thing like especially this if it is the first time we have even heard of Mount Hiei?

There are, however, many things that we probably do share in common. For example, it probably does not take too much time to have everyone agree that we all need or want to be recognized and affirmed. We want need this so much that at times we will even lash out to get attention. I wonder if there is anyone who has not done this. At the age of 88, I hear in Shinran Shonin's words, his letting us know that he too is the same. We are all different. That is why I think Namo Amida Butsu has vowed to embrace or grasp us. We are all unique and special. These differences are also worth protecting. But, we also share many of the same weaknesses. I think this is why Namo Amida Butsu has vowed not to let us go or abandon us. It is why, I think that Shinran Shonin wrote his poem. I think he wrote this to remind us that even while we can celebrate our differences, we also do not need to fear the weaknesses we may share and those that we try to hide from ourselves and others.

Choir Festival -- A Choral Gathering of Mindfulness

Choirs from five temples presented a shared service and shared singing. The English word "electricity" was first used in the 13th century, even the concept of electricity did not exist (that was possible until 1646). In other words, there is a power outage. We panic, for example, when there is power outage. In the 13th century even the concept of electricity did not exist (that is possible for another four centuries)

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Dedication of St. Shinran Statue at SABC

Shinran statue was Mr. Shiba's gift to mark SABC's 95th Anniversary, which will be celebrated this year on Sunday, September 23.

At that time, a formal Dedication Service will be done to commemorate the 95th Anniversary of SABC, and the 750th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin.

The 400-pound bronze statue of St. Shinran was shipped from Kyoto in October of 2010, and arrived at the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church, directed by Toshiko Nishimoto, accompanied by Amy Yoshida; the Saza Shinran Shonin, the founder of Shinran Shonin, the father of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

In honor of her husband, Mr. A. Shiba, and his parents, My and Mrs. Zenjuro Shiba, the St.

We Are All Different

I am such that I do not know right and wrong and cannot distinguish false and true; I lack even small love and small compassion, and yet, for fame and profit, enjoy teaching others.

(CWS, p. 429)

By Rev. John Isehara
Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

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IBS Intensive Seminar

Dr. Mark Blum, professor of Japanese Studies at the University of Albany, SUNY, East Asian Studies Department, will conduct an IBS Intensive Study Program on the subject of “Shinran and the Nirvana Sutra (Mahaparinirvana Sutra)” on Monday, July 9 to Thursday, July 12, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, daily, at the Jodo Shinshu Center, 2140 Durant Avenue in Berkeley.

This is a new professional development and continuing education program. The course will cover Shinran’s quest to understand himself and the human condition, which led to the study the Nirvana Sutra, which he relied upon to develop his major work, the KyoGyo shinshi.

This sacred reading course (SRC 9999) will provide graduate students with 1.5 unit credit with the completion of the requirements of the study program. Registration fee is $390 for graduate students, $375 for auditors, and $385 for seniors who wish to take the course. For more information, check online at www.beactivities.net/2012-Pac-Sem-Intensive, or call (510) 809-1444.

The rhythm of life and death, like the waves on the ocean keep lapping to and fro 28 individuals gathered in Eugene, Oregon.

A fleeting moment, in the ebb and flow of life.

We gathered for the retreat, to share our Dharma Journey

The theme for this year being “The rhythm of life and death.”

The reality of life struck us like lightning.

As we learned of the passing of one of our peers, the wave of her life going out to the sea of eternity.

We grieved at the loss of a Dharma friend.

In an instant the tone of the retreat had been defined.

No longer just a theme to be discussed.

The rhythm of life and death was our reality.

In the midst of such loss, we learned of grace and humility.

As her husband had said: “It was my wife’s final wish to be here in Eugene, to share together in this Nembutsu retaigo.”

To fulfill our shared wish, I would like to stay ‘til the end.”

He was truly grateful that he was amongst Nembutsu friends.

Yet it was he, who gave us all so much.

Through his gentle demeanor and grace, he taught us the true strength of the Nembutsu being embraced in great compassion.

Accepting both life and death with palms together in Gassho.

In the long journey of life, our time together was but a flash,

The rhythm of life and death, like the waves on the ocean keep lapping to and fro.

To the Una families, Taitotou & Alice, Mark & Megumi, we express our deepest appreciation for your generosity of hosting a retreat that those fortunate enough to attend will remember for a lifetime.

In Gassho, Grant Ilaga, Bishop Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada.

The Rhythm of Life and Death

Rev. Ryee continued from Page 2

graduated from college and was working in the mental health field. It is a difficult age to get on your feet, trying to make ends meet, and it is often confusing what it means to be a “grown up.” I had been raised as a Christian, and still not knowing what it means to be a Buddhist were able to affirm their identity in a more positive manner than just attending a lecture at the temple. This group and others like them are essential in building a bridge between the Japanese “deserved” last year’s earthquake and Tsunami because they were Buddhist.

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bedrooms in time for Sunday School without disturbing the members, especially because some of the stairs squeaked!

To this day, Lincoln, is gone but I’m glad that Lewis and Clark High School has survived, although there is now a freeway that passes right in front of it.

As for me, when I returned to Spokane after the war, it is easy to understand that we found safety and security to live, worship and socialize with mostly other Japanese Americans. While school revolved around JUSE, a Japanese girls’ social club, the acronym for “Just Us Girls.” The Japanese boys club, the Esquires, said that JUSE students were “too weak.” One of the highlights in high school being selected to be a part of the Ti-Girls marching unit. During the war, students belonging to the Ti-Girls was a way to be accepted into the greater community at Lewis and Clark and to be able to socialize with non-Japanese.

I also recall my father telling me to study hard so I would do well and prove that we were just as good as the “hakujin” or White Americans. I remember reading about a study that was done postwar on children and higher education that showed that the Japanese American had the highest graduation rate. I think many Japanese American parents pushed their children toward higher education as the door in the Asian-American community was closed. Their children were being treated as less valuable.

The late Bishop Hanyama called Dad in Spokane and asked if I would consider moving to the Alameda Buddhist Temple. Dad had a family meeting and asked us if we would like to move to California. My brother was still in school, so I would do well and prove that we were just as good as the “hakujin.” I’m glad that Lewis and Clark High School has accessioned me despite all of his physical limitations and suffered, expressed total happiness and could not move any part of his body.

Rev. Bhuuta noticed that Mukaibo-san, despite his physical limitations and suffered, expressed total happiness and could not move any part of his body. He started his training at the summer Fuken. Bishop know that I wanted to attend college in a community that was the doorway to success and also to prove that we were non-Japanese.

I’m glad that Lewis and Clark High School has accessioned me.

**Accession**

He started his training at the age of three and eventually rose to a high ranking position in his Buddhist sect. However, he always felt something was missing in his spiritual quest. While visiting one of the Shakuyamuni Buddhist sacred sites in India, he would come to meet a Shin Buddhist follower by the name of Harashana. The young monk, Kira-kyushu, who at the age of 21 was in a car accident and became totally quadriplegic, told Bhuuta that he would not move any part of his body.

Rev. Bhuuta noticed that Mukaibo-san, despite his physical limitations and suffered, expressed total happiness and could not move any part of his body.

**President’s Message**

**NB Report**

brances and comments from several temple members that had been collected in the first few months of the templatization event. It was great to see him smile while watching the video and afterwards we talked about temple members who attended the event as well as others who weren’t able to attend. I came up with this idea last year and I’m happy with the results. Today we met for a very enjoyable and memorable day to exchange information and enjoy each other’s company.

Looking back at the June 2012 National Board Meeting I can appreciate the attention to the

It can be a common occurrence for San Francisco to be the temple in the midst of an urban area and is prone to having visitors, but it is a situation I previously had not seen to this extent.

While it provides challenges for the temple to take this transition to be a very positive one since it offers the opportunity for more people to gain an appreciation of the BCA’s work and to benefit from the teachings. The number of interactions for more people to gain an appreciation of the BCA’s work and to benefit from the teachings.

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小杭総長から梅津総長へ リーダシップの継承

2012年7月号

去る六月二日に米国仏教団の本堂でもあるサンフランシスコ仏教会にて総長の交代式が挙行され、第十三代総長・小杭好臣師から第十四代総長・梅津広道師へのリーダーシップの継承が行われました。小杭好臣前総長は二期八年にわたり総長職を勤め、米国仏教団をリードされてきました。任期中は浄土真宗をアメリカでメジャーな宗教にすべく試行錯誤を繰り返し、様々な挑戦を行ってきました。中でもミニスターアシスタントプログラムは百名以上ものアシスタントを輩出し、その多くが各地の仏教団で今も活躍しています。このためには小杭前総長のご尽力が欠かせません。

米国仏教団次期総長として梅津広道師が選出され、四月一日よりその職に就かれました。米国仏教団総長は浄土真宗本願寺派北米開教区開教総長も通例的に兼務することとなっているため、三月二十二日に京都の本山にて任命式(親授式)が行われ、梅津新総長が御門主様より北米開教区開教総長として任命されました。小杭前総長に感謝の意を表し、梅津新総長へエールを送るために六月二日に教団として総長交代式、並びに記念晩餐会を開きました。交代式には各方面から多くの方々が参列され、サンフランシスコ仏教会の本堂が満堂となりました。式の冒頭に小杭前総長から梅津新総長へリーダーシップの継承を象徴的に表すために柄香炉が手渡されました。前総長から託されたその柄香炉を手に梅津新総長が阿弥陀如来様の尊前で総長就任の決意を述べられました。そして梅津新総長、参列した開教使やメンバーの方々と共に讃仏偈をお勤めし、その声は本堂いっぱいに響きわたりました。

読経後、講台に立たれた梅津新総長よりメッセージが述べられました。「その当時、まだ外来の宗教であった仏教を積極的に取り入れ、広める努力をされたのは聖徳太子でした。そして日本に根付いた仏教を鎌倉時代に念仏の教えによってより多くの人々に生活に即した教えへと発展させたのが親鸞聖人で... たように、私たち米国仏教団も古いものに固執することなく、常に新しいものを求め、教団を活性化していきましょう。」これからの米国仏教団がどの方向に進む、どう発展していくべきかといった新総長の思いの込められたメッセージに一同真剣に耳を傾けていました。

サンフランシスコ仏教会での交代式の後、会場をホテルカブキに移し記念晩餐会が行われました。サンフランシスコ領事館の猪俣総領事、真宗大谷派の伊東北米開教監督等の来賓の方々をはじめ三百名以上の参加者がありました。来賓の一人で北米の日本舞踊の大家である花柳道弥師は素晴らしい舞を披露して下さり、この晩餐会では八年間の総長職の労をねぎらうため、ロン・村上教団理事長より小杭前総長、真由美夫人へ記念品の贈呈が行われ、またこれから総長職に就く梅津師、ジャネット夫人には日本からお祝いに駆けつけた親族の方より花束が贈られました。

ネパールより参加して下さったカトマンズ本願寺駐在開教使のソナム・ブティア師からはお祝いのメッセージがおくられました。ソナム師は三歳でチベット仏教の僧侶となり、青年期はひたすら修行に励みチベット僧として高位まで登られましたが、あるご縁でお念仏の教えに出会われ浄土真宗の僧侶となられました。自らカトマンズに浄土真宗のお寺を建て、念仏を広めるため日々尽力していらっしゃいます。ソナム師は阿弥陀仏の名号の素晴らしさについて話され、そのメッセージは大変情熱的で力強いものでありました。

最後に司会のケン・谷本氏のリードにより参加者全員で梅津新総長へエールが送られ記念晩餐会は幕を閉じました。これから梅津新総長の新しいリーダーシップのもとで開教使、メンバーが一団となって様々なことに取り組み、浄土真宗の教えの素晴らしさが一人でも多くの人へ伝わっていくことが期待されます。