Chaplains have long served in the various branches of the United States Armed Forces, including the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

On August 3, 1987, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) became the official endorsing body given the authority by the U.S. Department of Defense to appoint Buddhist chaplains to the military. This was the culmination of 43 years of attempts to have the government approve the inclusion of Buddhist chaplains. The application was created by Col. John Mann, Pentagon Chaplain, the late Rev. Kenkyu Tsuji, former BCA Bishop, Kenison Nakamura, and Shig Sugiyama. On October 7, 1988, Rev. Hiroshi Aihiko (who retired from the BCA ministry in 2013) was appointed the first part-time regular Chaplain for the Veterans Administration.

On July 22, 2004, Rev. Jeanette Shin, a U.S. Navy reservist, was appointed the first Buddhist military chaplain for the U.S. Navy and is assigned to duty to naval ships in San Diego, California. Since then, the chaplaincy field has opened up and the BCA has endorsed eight chaplains in different service branches. Each chaplain, regardless of his or her ordination, is also required to perform services for a number of religious and denominational organizations.

The official insignia for the Buddhist Chaplaincy is the Dharma wheel, which was approved by the World International Buddhist Conference.

"The Bishop of the BCA serves as the Ecclesiastical Agent for the Military Chaplaincy. He is also a member of the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCFMAP), and the Endorsers Conference for Veteran’s Affairs Chaplaincy (TECVAC). Anyone who is interested in being endorsed as a military chaplain needs to contact the BCA Office of the Bishop.

My Journey into Chaplaincy

By Rev. Somya Malasri

I am Chaplain (Captain) So-my Malasri, a Buddhist chaplain in the United States Army. I am originally from Thailand. My turning point to a religious life came about because of my love for my mother. My mother was physically and mentally ill because her first daughter committed suicide, her second daughter attempted suicide, and I was a son who behaved badly. I was 17 years old, I lost myself to very bad things: drinking, smoking, and partying. At that time, my mother was very sick. Her face was pale with depression, anxiety, and worry. It seemed she would pass away very soon. Her death situation made me make up my mind to turn to a religious life.

I had to study the Buddha sutras, the Pali language (the scriptural language of Theravada Buddhism), and the Pali language (the scriptural language of Theravada Buddhism). The more I studied and meditated, the deeper became my sincerity regarding spiritual life. At first, I wanted to become a monk for a short period of time as I had promised my mother, but after learning the sutras and practicing meditation, I really enjoyed meditation. Buddhism transformed my life completely and made me a more religious person.

In June, 2001, I was invited by the Thai Buddhist Sangha Council in the US to serve at the Buddhist Temple in various states such as Colorado, Utah, and Nevada. While I was at the Layton Buddhist Temple in Utah, I met a Buddhist soldier who had come to the temple to get a blessing before his deployment. This was when George Takei appears in photos on the “Senjushi bus” that took them to the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Service and Conference in San Francisco. There, he listened to Rev. Tetsuo Unno’s dharma talks on impermanence and one’s true self. Mr. Takei has always been an activist supporting meaningful and real opportunities for Asian American citizens, from civil right to disregard the non-Asian Americans incarcerated during World War II, to his current passion for equality in marriage. He married his husband Brad in 2008 in a Buddhist ceremony symbolic of both his and Brad’s heritage. The wedding was officiated by Rev. William Bronson of Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Betsuin Buddhist Temple.

Mindboggling” is a humble description of Mr. Takei’s meteoric rise to social media popularity. “Technology is amazing,” says the crew member of the groundbreaking sci-fi series Mr. Takei would tell people that even the science fiction world of Star Trek has been surpassed in certain areas. “Trekkies” can recall the communicator of the USS Enterprise crew carried, but they only allowed voice communication. Today, people carry “communicators” in their pockets that not only carry their voices, but also send pictures, videos, and audio clips.

George and Brad Takei will share their life journey (27 years, six of them in marriage), and their story that started this summer called “To Be Takei.” It includes footage of their marriage ceremony. Mr. Takei will also speak at the BCA Center for Buddhist Ceremonies and at change of command ceremonies, sponsoring Gay, Being Buddhist, on June 28, at the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Church (JSC) in Berkeley.

My new life as a Buddhist has made all of this possible. My turning point to a religious life was when I joined the temple to get a blessing before his deployment. This was when I considered becoming a Buddhist. I have been a Buddhist for nearly 20 years. In 2004, I met another Buddhist soldier who had just finished basic training and had come to visit the temple. This soldier told me that on Sundays, soldiers attended religious services according to their denominations. This soldier wanted to attend a Buddhist service but a chaplain assistant told him to find a quiet place to meditate by himself because there were no Buddhist chaplains in the Army.

There had been a position open for a Buddhist chaplain since 1991. To become a chaplain, I had to get endorsed by the Buddhist Churches of America, the only endorsing agency for Buddhist chaplains in the US. Fortunately, I received their endorsement in May, 2006. I subsequently went to University of the West to pursue a Master of Divinity degree in Buddhist Chaplaincy. I graduated in May, 2010. I became an active duty chaplain in October, 2010.

As a chaplain, I provide various kinds of services for soldiers and their families such as counseling, visiting soldiers at their work sites, visiting hospital inpatients, conducting retreats for families, conducting religious services for soldiers and for single soldiers, conducting interfaith briefings, performing wedding ceremonies, leading prayers at deployment and redeployment ceremonies, conducting Buddhist ceremonies, and providing Buddhist stress reducing workshops. I am glad to lead religious services for the inmates. Many inmates thank me for transforming their lives from suffering, depression, anger, and anxiety to mindfulness and inner calm. They become happier and calmer people by discovering inner peace through their religious practice.
Happy Parents’ Day.

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

Father’s Day is observed on Mother’s Day at the Buddhist Church of Oakland. This is because the church has its annual fundraising bazaar on Father’s Day weekend every year. I really want to thank all the Oakland fathers for sacrificing their special day for the church.

This year, I received an early Father’s Day gift from my youngest daughter, Michelle, in April. She visited her sister, Amy, who has been working for a few months in Atlanta, Georgia. Michelle came home with some local souvenirs for all of us. My gift was a glass bottle of Coca Cola with ice wrapped saying “Happy Father’s Day.” Yes, Atlanta is the home of Coca Cola.

Well, it is not the Coke that made me happy, but Michelle’s thoughtfulness. I really appreciate her concern for something for me. Parents become parents when their children think of them. The spiritual interaction of parents, parents and children, children.

Speaking of parents, our founder’s name is Shinnan. His name is composed of two Chinese characters; Shin and Nan. The first character Shin was taken from one of the Seven Pure Land Masters. The second character Nan was from Nan Dao, the third master. Shinran religion is an incarnation of the notion of gratitude. This emphasis on “receiving” is differentiated from the perspective of “giving.” This “receiving” is acknowledged by a response of “thank you,” which is a simplified introduction to the basic notion of the Nembutsu. Although this is very simplistic, this introduction is compelling to new seekers, as well as other members who have been confused by longer, more complicated explanations.

Our common attitude of “please” focuses on what we don’t have and would like to “achieve.” We are unsatisfied with what we have and base our life in the past. This is less productive to focus on the future public good by turning sayings “Happy Father’s Day” into “Happy Parents’ Day.” Let’s celebrate this special day for all those who care about our wellness and happiness.

What did Albert Einstein Think about Future Religion?

By Rev. Koki Nakagawa, Rinban Fresno Buddhist Temple

Recently the so-called “God Letter” written by Albert Einstein, one of the most brilliant minds of the 20th century, was placed on auction by a Los Angeles-based auction agency. The opening bid: $3 million.

The letter contains his own strong opposition to the idea that Jews, or any people, might be “chosen.”

“For me the Jewish religion like all other religions is an incarnation of the most ridiculous superstition. I am a Jew of the Jewish people in whom I gladly living and with whose mentality I have a deep affinity, but have no different quality for me than all other people. As for my experiences, you, are also no better than other human beings...I cannot see anything “chosen” about Jews.”

The letter provides a window into the famous gentile religious beliefs. However, I am afraid that between us makes parents and grandparents, children, children...

Einstein also wrote in his last books, Albert Einstein, The Human Side. “The religion of the future will be a cosmic religion. It should transcend personal God and avoid dogma and theology. Covering both the natural and spiritual, should be based on a cosmic view arising from the experience of all things natural and spiritual. Religion can be described as philosophy answering this question: If there is any religion that could cope with modern scientific needs it would be Baha’i.”

Thank you, Mr. Albert Einstein, for your insights. And to my dear BCA sangha, please realize the responsibilities we carry on less than 15,000 people’s shoulders to bring the true and real Buddhism into the future communities in the United States of America. We should enjoy our privilege of contributing to the future public good by sharing the essence of Dharma. Thank you!”

By Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi

It has been the basis of life for our Shin pioneers. With meager possessions and a less secure material life, they were rich in their appreciation of relationships and life itself. This emphasis on gratitude is unique to our lives. The response to this introduction to Shin Buddhism has been overwhelming. Many new seekers and returning Shin members have expressed an appreciation for this relevant access to our treated teachings. From this position of gratitude, the deeper elements of the Shin Teachings become available. “Thank you” allows the Light of Namo Amida Butsu to enter our lives.

In Gaisho,

We are improving the quality of our lives and contacts... I am picking up saying “Happy Father’s Day.”

PAGE 2 WHEEL OF DHARMA JUNE 2014

2015 WORLD BWA Convention

“Embraced by the Oneness of Life”

2015 WORLD BUDDHIST WOMEN’S CONVENTION CALGARY, CANADA MAY 30-31, 2015 Please visit: www.wbwconvention.com Registration is open Contact temple BWA representatives for important details.
Japan during the Kamakura Period: Shinran might have eaten: a bowl of steamed rice, amekochi, tofu, horseradish (in the form of a pickle), which is very rare in medieval Japan, and healthy. Workshops followed. Deliberations were divided into groups. Each group contained at least one minister who acted as an expert advisor. My group was fortunate to have two ministers and one minister-in-training. There were three workshop sessions, each lasting about 90 minutes. One covered Shinran’s life and key events that influenced us, using a timeline to visualize its chronology. Particulars is, “knowledge of Shinran’s life and journey and the causes and conditions that led him to become a disciple of Honen and to establish his Nembutsu teachings and beliefs. It is clear that Shinran was a humble, principled man with a desire to share his knowledge and beliefs. It is clear that this was a revolutionary idea as it meant that anyone, rich or poor, good or evil, could reach enlightenment.” Session Two engaged the participants in journaling. We were requested to select up to three key events of our lives and tell our story in writing. Journaling aids in allowing one to reflect on and document these events. This process was and is important, as it was by this means, through the letters of Eshinni, that we were able to gain a personal perspective of Shinran and his family. In the final session, participants shared experiences and related commonalities. We were able to see how Shinran’s path and many of our paths did intersect. The bravest among us agreed to be videotaped relating a key life turning point in front of a camera—an example of recording oral history. Journaling in some form, be it on paper or via electronic formats, is a tool we teachers can bring back to our classrooms. The day ended with a closing service, a bento dinner, and a rousing game of Family Feud. Contestants had to guess the most popular responses Dharma School students gave to (mostly) basic church questions. I participated as a member of a team of six. Our team won! I guess after nearly twenty years as a Dharma School teacher, maybe we can think of a student. This conference was dedicated to Rev. George Shihara who devoted 30 years of service as an advisor to the FDSTL. Rev. Shihara was in attendance and spoke a bit on his service to the BCA and his passion for nurturing our Dharma Schools. Thank you, Rev. Shihara.

Many thanks to the Coast District FDSTL for the wonderful job they did in planning and actualizing this conference. The committee chair is Jill Kunishige, conference, Carol Harbin and Mas Nishimura (workshops), June Trach (registration), Marie Ochi Jacobs (food), Judy Nagatomi (publicity), Lisa Usuki (treasury), Ken Tanimoto (master of ceremonies), Lisa Schindler (vendoring), Teresa Nagatomi, and Duane Kubo, Mas Hashimoto, and Tel Nakano (videotaping).

There was a huge effort to make this conference a “green” as possible. Coffee mugs and portable lamps were distributed and reused; cloth table covers and only compostable or recyclable items were used. Another reason this conference was completely conducted online.

In summary, this year’s FDSTL conference provided us with a cupped format and a program of the founder of our Jodo Shinshu sect. Each of our journeys is unique but, like Shinran, we all stand on our own. In the end, we are all on the same path and journey. Each of our journeys is unique, but we can work together to share and help each other to pass our Dharma Schul practices on to our Dharma Schul students.
Minister’s Assistants Prepare for Tokudo Ordination
Twenty Attend Spring MAP Training, March 27-29, 2014

The combined Spring Minister’s Assistant Program (MAP) and first Tokudo preparatory session at the Jodo Shinshu Center ran two programs concurrently, but meet on separate tracks. Thirteen people are preparing for Tokudo ordination. Unlike the “hybrid” Tokudo groups of 2010 and 2012, this group will attend the full 11-day training in Japan from November 4-14, 2014.

Along with chanting practice and lectures, the Tokudo aspirants began getting familiar with how to wear and fold their attire.

Being Gay, Being Buddhist: The LGBTQ Community & Shin Buddhism
June 28, 2014 from 10 am – 3 pm
Keynote Speaker: George Takei — Guest Speakers: Pieper & Lois Toyama
Registration: $40 Deadline: June 23. Limited seating; register early.

Pacific Seminar Sea of Suffering, Ocean of Compassion July 4-6, 2014
Speakers: Rev. Tetsuo Unno, Rev. Dr. Mark Ty Unno, Rev. Harry Bridge
Honored Guests: Rev. Dr. Taitetsu Unno and Mrs. Alice Unno
Register soon! Deadline is June 21 or until filled.

Gotan-e Celebration of Shrinan Shinshin’s Birthday
Gotan-e is commemorated at the Nishi Hongwanji and affiliated temples in Japan, where various traditional forms of Japanese entertainment such as gagaku, mingei, rikyū, and tea ceremony are held in addition to special services.

Here at the Jodo Shinshu Center, the Center for Buddhist Education presented a unique Gotan-e evening service on May 21, 2014. Special chanting and Brungye was led by Rev. Katuyuki Koushoku; a Dharma message delivered by Rev. Kodo Umezu; Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, and skobahito master Masayuki Koga played inspiring music. About 40 people attended the event.

Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Course - Monthly Essay
Visit: www.jscc.cbe-bca.org for course details
What did Honen Shonin Mean When He Said: We Are Saved Simply by Reciting the Nembutsu?
By Dennis Madolekoro
Toronto Buddhist Temple

To understand the depth of this phrase “saved simply by simply reciting the Nembutsu” in this question as it applies to Master Honen, we must first trace his life until he uttered this phrase.

He was Seishimaru until the age of nine. The text describes the attack and mortal injury of his father by henchmen hired by a political rival. His father’s dying wish was that Seishimaru not take revenge but become a priest. This lamarckic event set Seishimaru on his spiritual journey rather than a path of revenge. From the age of nine until fifteen, he lived in a local Buddhist temple. Then he went to Mr. Hiei, a renowned center of Buddhist studies. There he chanced his name to Honen-ho-Geru. From the age of nine to twenty four, Honen studied with great ability but he did not find enlightenment. Honen left Mr. Hiei to study at various temples in Nara and Kyoto. Again, he found nothing that satisfied his search. Thus another nine years of his life yielded no results.

Honen then focused on Master Genshin’s Essentials for Attaining Both with little success. For ten more years, Honen read and re-read the entire contents of Mt. Hiei’s library five times through. Then came the thunderbolt, that flash of awareness on reading Shan-tao’s concise paragraph in the Commentary on the Contemplative lattice. We must recall that Honen had searched for enlightenment for almost twenty-five years, almost half a human’s total life span at that time. We can feel the joy and wonder on Honen’s face on reading Shan-tao’s words.

The text states that these words moved Honen greatly. Little wonder, for Honen had been searching for almost twenty-five years and suddenly these words meant to him, “You will be saved simply by reciting the Nembutsu. That is Amida Buddha’s desire, his absolute promise to us.” We too, like Honen, must diligently search until we are fortunate to encounter that one good teacher who can point us in the right direction. Jodo Shinshu is a solitary journey; we must go alone until the right causes and conditions lead to our awakening. Until then we can recite the Nembutsu with our limited abilities, trying for a sincere heart and mind. The so-called “Easy Path” is not so easy. For me, it is one step forward, two steps back. On a good day it is two steps forward and one step back.

To understand the “we” in the question, “What did Honen Shonin mean when he said that we are saved simply by reciting the Nembutsu,” that “we” is us. We are like Honen searching, searching for the path to enlightenment without success. All our questions and more questions never seem to yield any answers. But if we just give up our struggles to gain enlightenment through our own efforts and if we simply recite the Nembutsu with a sincere heart and mind, then through Amida’s great compassion, we reach the stage of the truly settled and our birth in the Pure Land is assured. How fortunate we are at that moment. Until that moment, we struggle, we struggle.

Recall Honen’s thunderbolt, that flash of awareness after twenty-five years of effort, his whole body responding joyfully and tearfully and the Nembutsu flowing without effort from his mouth. Honen was embraced by Amida. Amida and Honen were one.

May each one of us in our spiritual quest have that moment of wondrous joy, and then tearfully have the Nembutsu flow from our mouths without our effort.

Name Amida Butsu, Name Amida Butsu, Name Amida Butsu.
Dennis and his family converted to Jodo Shinshu in 1990. For 21 of those years, he volunteered at the Toronto Buddhist Temple in various positions including president. For the past three years, he has been serving as a minister’s assistant.

Gotoh’s 3rd Annual Ministry for Jodo Shinshu Day Celebration of Shinran Shonin’s Birthday
Gotoh day is commemorated at the Nishi Hongwanji and affiliated temples in Japan, where various traditional forms of Japanese entertainment such as gagaku, mingei, rikyū, and tea ceremony are held in addition to special services.

Here at the Jodo Shinshu Center, the Center for Buddhist Education presented a unique Gotoh evening service on May 21, 2014. Special chanting and Brungye was led by Rev. Katuyuki Koushoku; a Dharma message delivered by Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, and skobahito master Masayuki Koga played inspiring music. About 40 people attended the event.

Interdependence… Discover the breadth and depth of WHO you really are, WHY the unfortunate is fortunate, and WHERE your potential lies.
Rev. Patricia Usuki
San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
Saturday, September 6
8:30 am - 8:00 pm
Jodo Shinshu Center
2145 Crest Avenue, Burbank, CA 91504
General Registration: $75 Deadline: August 31
BACA Member Rate: $60
For online registration and forms: BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org
Information: (510) 809-1460
Email: cbe@cbebhq.org

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Above: Rev. Katuyuki Koushoku of the Buddhist Church of Lodi performs the Toraiban ritual to begin the evening’s chanting. Left: Masayuki Koga, founder of the Japanese Music Institute of America, answers questions from the audience during his skobahito performance.
The Dharmakara Series: Our Lifelong Learning Challenge

On Sunday, May 25, the Buddhist Council of Northern California, Institute of Buddhist Studies and CBE co-sponsored a Vesak - Hanamatsuri event at the Jodo Shinshu Center. Chanting, song, poetry and praises to the Buddha were offered in various languages, including Sri Lankan, Thai, Cambodian, and Vietnamese. Rev. Seigan Yamawaki gave the Dharma Talk. Everyone bathed the baby Buddha with sweet tea in the lavender flower altar.

In last month's article I began to talk about the meaning of Dharmakara Buddha-sha's name, and ended the article by asking why is Dharmakara, a name that literally means Buddha-storekeeper or, only a Bodhisattva and not a Buddha? Why, for example, is somebody who has the entire BuddhaDharma stored within them not automatically a Buddha? This question is also alluded to by Lokavatara Buddha, who tells the Bodhisattvas that they should not only know how to achieve his goal of Buddhahood without an explanation from the Buddha. As the narrative is told, however, the Bodhisattva tells the Buddha that the Dharma is too broad and deep for him to figure it out alone.

The first thing we must do is determine that Dharmakara gave up his Kingdom and his Kingship for the Dharma. Although part of the meaning of this explanation is to inform us that the Buddha, or the truth, is far greater in value than human beings, fame or prestige. The reason that we are called to understand that the Dharma is not meant to be treated as a possession is the reason why the water of the ocean has to be taken out one scoop at a time. If it is treated as possession, or something that we can choose or not choose to show or share, then it does not “fear” as the Buddha. If the Dharma is not valued, then one is, by definition, not a Buddha. It is probably also for this reason that one of the ways to distinguish between the status of a Bodhisattva and a statue of a Buddha is to see if the figure is decorated with jewelry or not. A Buddha has no jewelry. A Bodhisattva, on the other hand, is often depicted with jewelry or possessions that are meant to distinguish self from others.

The name Dharmakara, then, is telling us that the entire Dharma is stored within the Bodhisattva. Although the Dharma is meant to be protected, at the same time, however, it can be stored or hidden away. For the Dharma to have any meaning, it has to be shared openly with others. This aspect, in particular, is emphasized by Mahayana Buddhism. In having established the Primal Vow, Dharmakara Bodhisattva promises to fully realize this ideal of Mahayana Buddhism. Through the Primal Vow the Bodhisattva has vowed and promises the following:

If, when I attain Buddhahood, the sentient beings of the ten directions, with sincere mind entrusting themselves, aspiring to be born in my land, and saying my “Name” perhaps even ten times, should not only be born in my Pure Land, but also be able to attain the Anuttara Samyak Samadhi. That is how important my life is. The only reason a Buddha shares the Dharma is to help us to understand this meaning of our lives. Without this sharing, there is no Dharma. I believe that the point of this story of understanding that the Bodhisattva was able to declare that the Larga Sutra is both “the True and Real Teaching” and “the True Essence of the Pure Land” because it is in the Larga Sutra that the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha was revealed. This promise was expressed directly by Shinran Shonin when he is quoted in the Taimoku as having said: When I consider deeply the Vow of Amida, which arose from five kalpas of profound thought, I realize that it not only gives thearks of nirodha in the Pure Land, but also expresses the gratitude for the Primal Vow, in which Amida resolved to save me, though I am hardened with such heavy karma. (CWS, p. 67).

To put the second half of Shinran Shonin’s quote into a more contemporary perspective, please allow me to quote Martin Luther King, Jr. who is quoted as having said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” In considering what Martin Luther King, Jr. said, how often do we overlook what is fair and just? How many of us have not broken rules or have become upset when we, instead of another person, get caught for having broken a rule? How often do we consider how the Dharma is more valuable than all the power and riches that a King may have. As a Buddha, the Bodhisattva has promised to give up the ultimate realization of the Dharma or Enlightenment for each and every one of us. The only words, in other words, that are truly important are one to another. Is that how important my life is? The only reason a Buddha shares the Dharma is to help us to understand this meaning of our lives. Without this sharing, there is no Dharma. I believe that the point of this story of understanding that the Bodhisattva was able to declare that the Larga Sutra is both “the True and Real Teaching” and “the True Essence of the Pure Land” because it is in the Larga Sutra that the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha was revealed. This promise was expressed directly by Shinran Shonin when he is quoted in the Taimoku as having said: When I consider deeply the Vow of Amida, which arose from five kalpas of profound thought, I realize that it not only gives thearks of nirodha in the Pure Land, but also expresses the gratitude for the Primal Vow, in which Amida resolved to save me, though I am hardened with such heavy karma. (CWS, p. 67).

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Debt of Gratitude
By Landon Yamako
San Mateo Buddhist Temple

At the 2014 Federation of Yoga Bhakti Sanghas National Conference, Right Reverend Ji Long Turner provided a very thought-provoking topic: we discussed and reflected on Shinten Shinran’s path. We were over his life’s journey and major life experiences and discussed how we might learn from his struggles and endeavors. We discussed how his experiences helped him to find such great meaning in the Dharma. We were asked to consider how we might be able to, and I believe this was to help us appreciate our own experiences. Like Shinran, we search for a greater appreciation for the Dharma so we can better influence our youth. We participated in a journaling session, and to me it showed how our experiences were not separate, but intertwined and connected. In the journey of life we end up in the world and make the circumstances we go through. This is the idea to write down major events in our life and see what major life changes we have had. My reflections were all connected to how I rediscovered Buddhism; so while my memories were separate, they are all part of my big push to help me help myself. Shinran’s life had ups and downs, but all of those experiences helped reinforce his faith in Buddhism and in his teacher, Honen. Had it not been for his teacher’s influence on his Buddhist practice and his life struggles, perhaps Shinran would not have become the religious and spiritual leader that he was.

Growing up I had a teacher named Carl Yan, who was a teacher in my life. Not only was he my teacher, but he also helped me get into the Temple as his assistant teacher. He also had circumstances that forge us for better or for worse. When I reflect on all the major life changes I’ve had, they’ve been both bad and good. I don’t see myself as good, but because of that I understand how fortunate I was to have had a teacher like Carl. I have read a translation for meaning your, kagai means shadow; do means of; so, the translation is “because of the shadow, I have the means of.”

I cannot repay Carl for allowing me to help him teach. I was not a shining example of a student much less teacher material, but he always provided me with compassion. I am grateful for this gift. I know I cannot repay his kindness; the closest thing I can do is to try and to not plant the seeds in the next generation of the Buddhist Churches of America.

I feel that, by the process of studying Shinran as well as looking at our own life experiences, we were being asked to remember what led us to being who we are. We teach the children because all it takes to be a teacher is being the person that we are. We are Shipit, and as a Buddhist teacher, even a sensei, I really enjoyed the FDSTL Conference because it made me remember how lucky I was to have had a teacher that helped me through my whole life, and guided me down my own path with the Dharma.

In Gassho.

Las Vegas Bookstore News
By Gayle Naguchi

Buddhism. “A dynamic speaker, Reverend Bridge stresses the importance of understanding the unique history of the Dharma Real and its significance in our lives.”

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Orange County Buddhist Church

After a history of over 30 years as a Sangha that has met in the homes of members and various rental facilities, the Las Vegas Sangha Center (LVSC) held its first meeting in its new "home," a building in North Las Vegas that has been custom-built for use by their Sangha. At that time a dedication service of the new building as the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, the Las Vegas Buddhist Sangha. A very special guest speaker that will be featured at our National Conference, the Orange County Buddhist Church (OCBC) in Costa Mesa, California. We like would take this opportunity to elaborate on our Buddhist teachings and school’s history. The Orange County Buddhist Center (OCBC) in Anaheim, California and Reverend Gakuji Sanjuro from the Buddhist Church in Oakland in Oakland, California. OCBC’s own Reverend Jon Turner fits very well into our theme of different viewpoints of Buddhism. Raised as a Christian, Reverend Jon Turner offers his own way to the Dharma Real and all the various traditions of Buddhism, which he communicates through his dharma talks. Being a musician on top of all this, Reverend Bridge is a diverse individual on the path, as expected. What is important is “I have refuge from the sun.”

I cannot repay Carl for allowing me to help him teach. I was not a shining example of a student much less teacher material, but he always provided me with compassion. I am grateful for this gift. I know I cannot repay his kindness; the closest thing I can do is to try and to not plant the seeds in the next generation of the Buddhist Churches of America.

I feel that, by the process of studying Shinran as well as looking at our own life experiences, we were being asked to remember what led us to being who we are. We teach the children because all it takes to be a teacher is being the person that we are. We are Shipit, and as a Buddhist teacher, even a sensei, I really enjoyed the FDSTL Conference because it made me remember how lucky I was to have had a teacher that helped me through my whole life, and guided me down my own path with the Dharma.

In Gassho.

Does Your Employer Offer Matching Gifts for Charitable Contributions?

Matching gifts may be available to you, but it is one of the areas that many of us are unaware of as a benefit provided by your employers. If you are a “Friends of IBBS,” employee or a member corporation with any matching gift program for their employees, the process is simple:

• To the Human Resource Department or Finance Department and inquire if they have a matching gift program.

• Inquire if they will match your gift to the Institute of Buddhist Studies.

• You may find that your employer will not match gifts to a religious based seminary.

How is the Institute of Buddhist Studies recognized? If you want to have your contribution to the Institute of Buddhist Studies matched by your employer, your employer must have this kind of contract in place or the gift can still be made to us through the Graduate Theological Union with the designated endowment, “Institute Student Scholarship Fund.” The Graduate Theological Union is an accredited consortium of religious seminaries, of which IBBS is a participant.

• The Human Resources representative at your company can provide you with a form to fill out. You will need to request that your gift be sent to the Graduate Theological Union, 2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley, CA 94709, with the designation, “Institute of Buddhist Studies Minister Student Scholarship Fund,” or “IBBS-MSSF.”

• Upon signing up with your company’s Matching Gift program, the IBBS will be able to receive double the donation that you make!

I hope you will take the time to check this out with your Human Resources department. You may be pleasantly surprised, and can join us in supporting our ministerial students.

Gasho,
Seigen Yamako


It has been more than three years since the triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdown in northern Japan. At the annual International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) Executive and Advisory Committee Meeting, the group drafted and adopted an official statement on nuclear energy. Lotus in the Nuclear Sea was published in 2012 by the Buddhist Church of America (BCA), and the Kodo Kyodan Buddhist Fellowship, in an effort to carry out the action platform of this declaration.

Lotus in the Nuclear Sea documents the heartache and trauma of those who have remained as well as those who evacuated. The book includes edited transcriptions from talks given by Fukushima residents that the INEB group visited in November 2012. It also looks at the work of a wide variety of Buddhists who are confronting and dealing with the crisis. The last section offers an in-depth perspective with essays by Deep Ecology pioneer Joanna Macy, environmentalist David Loy, as well as Japanese Buddhist activists.

To order, go to www.bcabookstore.com or sales@bcabookstore.com/510- 809-1435. The BCA Bookstore is open Wednesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Like us on Facebook.

Plug Into Buddhism
By Troy Yamaguchi, OCBC Publicity Chair

The 2014 Southern District Jr. YBL National Conference, “Plug Into Buddhism,” is just around the corner on Aug. 30-31st at the Hilton Costa Mesa in Costa Mesa, California. We would like to take this opportunity to elaborate on our special guest speakers and how they will be featured at our National Conference, Reverend Jon Turner from the Orange County Buddhist Church (OCBC) in Anaheim, California and Reverend Gakuji Sanjuro from the Buddhist Church in Oakland in Oakland, California.

OCBC’s own Reverend Jon Turner fits very well into our theme of different viewpoints of Buddhism. Raised as a Christian, Reverend Jon Turner offers his own way to the Dharma Real and all the various traditions of Buddhism, which he communicates through his dharma talks. Being a musician on top of all this, Reverend Bridge is a diverse individual on the path, as expected. What is important is “I have refuge from the sun.”

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In Gassho.
今月の法話

テリエリエリエ

渋谷区役所庁舎

4月

毎月最下部予定

読者=
法輪

本願寺派宗務所から
視察団が訪来

タコマ仏教会

ラスベガスに
念仏の声

BCAブックストアの営業時間

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