New Year’s Greeting from
Gomonsyu Kojun Ohtani

As we mark the beginning of a new year, I extend to you my greetings.

Last year, since having succeeded the Jodo Shinshu tradition in June, I have taken on the posts as the resident patriarch and the Monshu of Jodo Shinshu Hongwan-ji. Living among today’s society in which the conditions are quickly changing, I shall help share the Jodo Shinshu teaching with as many people as possible, so that it will become a principle religious foundation for daily living. To do so, I humbly ask for your support.

The Jodo Shinshu teaching was expounded by Shinran Shonin. Since then, the teaching has been transmitted for well over 790 years, reaching us here today in this present day and age. This is because regardless of time and location, the Nembutsu teaching has always been able to serve any persons as a spiritual guidance to their life. Buddhism detaches from self-absorption and encourages living a life based on the Dharma.

However, due to our own limitations being unable to put this into practice, we are faced with sadness and suffering. Shinran Shonin has taught us that it has been predetermined that we will be led to the Pure Land and attain Buddhahood through the working of Amida Buddha. With the working of Amida Buddha’s infinite wisdom we are enabled to realize one’s true self through the Truth. In closing, let us live a life reciting the Nembutsu as we receive the Dharma.

January 1, 2015

OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwan-ji

(Translation provided by the Hongwan-ji International Department)
In the Jodo Shinshu School of Buddhism, it is customary to hold an annual New Year’s service. If the previous year was difficult, we try to wish for the health and well-being of the next year. In this year, the New Year service is held each year from January 1 to 10, culminating in an all-night Dharma marathon of talks by ministers from all over Japan. The tradition of annual Hokon service was initiated by Shinran’s great-granduncle Yukinobu during the 33rd Year Memorial Service for Shinran. In temples of the Jodo Shinshu tradition, Hokon is considered to be the most important Buddhist service of the year.

At the Nishi Hongwanji Temple in Kyono, Japan, the Hokon observance is held every year from January 9th to 16th, culminating in the recitation of the name Amida in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” is called the nembutsu, and expresses the joyful awareness that sustains the life of a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. Shinran clarified the nembutsu teaching as such that all who follow it can experience the truth of the Buddha’s awakening in our own lives, in the forms of our physical and mental abilities or circumstances in life.

Without Sukarno’s Buddha’s teachings the true Dharma would never exist in this world for me to encounter. Without Shinran Shonin as a guide, I would not be able to act out the thoughts and recommendations of the Buddha’s teaching, and express their joy and gratitude in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” will unfailingly realize the truth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. To be born in the Pure Land is to realize a life of perfect merit and a life that is free from the suffering of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Hoon-ko: Shinran Shonin’s Annual Memorial Service

By Rev. Henry Adams, San Mateo Buddhist Temple

In the Jodo Shinshu School of Buddhism, it is customary to hold an annual New Year’s service. If the previous year was difficult, we try to wish for the health and well-being of the next year. In this year, the New Year service is held each year from January 1 to 10, culminating in an all-night Dharma marathon of talks by ministers from all over Japan. The tradition of annual Hokon service was initiated by Shinran’s great-granduncle Yukinobu during the 33rd Year Memorial Service for Shinran. In temples of the Jodo Shinshu tradition, Hokon is considered to be the most important Buddhist service of the year.

At the Nishi Hongwanji Temple in Kyono, Japan, the Hokon observance is held every year from January 9th to 16th, culminating in the recitation of the name Amida in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” is called the nembutsu, and expresses the joyful awareness that sustains the life of a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. Shinran clarified the nembutsu teaching as such that all who follow it can experience the truth of the Buddha’s awakening in our own lives, in the forms of our physical and mental abilities or circumstances in life.

Without Sukarno’s Buddha’s teachings the true Dharma would never exist in this world for me to encounter. Without Shinran Shonin as a guide, I would not be able to act out the thoughts and recommendations of the Buddha’s teaching, and express their joy and gratitude in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” will unfailingly realize the truth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. To be born in the Pure Land is to realize a life of perfect merit and a life that is free from the suffering of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Buddhist Church of Oakland

At the turn of the 20th century, some early Japanese immigrants who had settled in Oakland, just across the water from San Francisco, ventured a dream to hear and receive the Dharma. Their spiritual needs were provided by the services of Rev. Teitaro Minoki and Rev. Kekyuro Nishijima who would visit Oakland once a month from San Francisco. The mission grew from the group of young local Japanese first generation eventually led to the founding of the Buddhist Church of Oakland in 1901. Property at the corner of Sixth and Jackson Streets in Oakland was acquired and the current two story church building was built and dedicated in 1927. Consecrated in 1926, the church building was given the opportunity to design and build the church as its first projects. With the exception of the 88’ Nimoto Fumio, the church building was relocated. Old part was moved in two sections and put back together at its current location at Ninth and Jackson Streets. Today, the Buddhist Church of Oakland enjoys a rich 113 year history of sharing the Nembutsu teaching with people from all walks of life.

Plans and Resolutions

By Rev. Diana Thompson, Tri-State/Denver Buddhist Temple

The doors of the year open, together and at least try to stay the course. It is a positive time of year when we see that change can be so positive and full of possibilities. Whatever sufferings we have endured in the past year can be somehow slimmer or even resolved, or extraneous to our plans and we look forward to whatever is to come. I enjoy the atmosphere of hope that is in the air during New Years. Everything does indeed seem shiny and new.

As I go through the door of the New Year is a familiar one, I am always interested to see what our Buddhist service can be. A truth that is despite our best efforts and planning, no one really knows what will happen when we cross that threshold. “What do you hold of premonition? When the Buddha had come to know of the truth that despite our best efforts and planning, no one really knows what will happen when we cross that threshold. “What do you hold of premonition? When the Buddha had come to know of the nature of the Buddha’s china from 20 years of study as a monk on Mount Hiei and years of guidance under the Dharma teacher Honen, concluded that he could not realize perfect awakening through the power of his own study and practice. Through his encounter with Honen, Shinran realized that all of the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha’s enlightenment is contained in the words “NAMO A MI DA BUTSU” (Amita Buddha’s name). In his “Hymn of True Entrusting Heart and the Nembutsu” (Shinshin Nohontai), Shinran expresses the inner and outer qualities of the Buddha’s teachings as “I take refuge in the Tatagata of Immeasurable Life! I entreat myself to the Buddha of Immeasurable Light!” Following in the tradition of Honen, Shinran taught that anyone who entrusts his trust in the Pure Land and expresses his joy and gratitude in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” will unfailingly realize the truth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. To be born in the Pure Land is to realize a life of perfect merit and a life that is free from the suffering of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Hello everyone, and Happy New Year! The above quote is taken from a poem entitled “January First” and, though not directly Buddhist, it has always struck me as something that we could all learn from (Shōshin

The doors of the year open, together and at least try to stay the course. It is a positive time of year when we see that change can be so positive and full of possibilities. Whatever sufferings we have endured in the past year can be somehow slimmer or even resolved, or extraneous to our plans and we look forward to whatever is to come. I enjoy the atmosphere of hope that is in the air during New Years. Everything does indeed seem shiny and new. As I go through the door of the New Year is a familiar one, I am always interested to see what our Buddhist service can be. A truth that is despite our best efforts and planning, no one really knows what will happen when we cross that threshold. “What do you hold of premonition? When the Buddha had come to know of the nature of the Buddha’s china from 20 years of study as a monk on Mount Hiei and years of guidance under the Dharma teacher Honen, concluded that he could not realize perfect awakening through the power of his own study and practice. Through his encounter with Honen, Shinran realized that all of the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha’s enlightenment is contained in the words “NAMO A MI DA BUTSU” (Amita Buddha’s name). In his “Hymn of True Entrusting Heart and the Nembutsu” (Shinshin Nohontai), Shinran expresses the inner and outer qualities of the Buddha’s teachings as “I take refuge in the Tatagata of Immeasurable Life! I entreat myself to the Buddha of Immeasurable Light!” Following in the tradition of Honen, Shinran taught that anyone who entrusts his trust in the Pure Land and expresses his joy and gratitude in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” will unfailingly realize the truth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. To be born in the Pure Land is to realize a life of perfect merit and a life that is free from the suffering of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Hello everyone, and Happy New Year! The above quote is taken from a poem entitled “January First” and, though not directly Buddhist, it has always struck me as something that we could all learn from (Shōshin

The doors of the year open, together and at least try to stay the course. It is a positive time of year when we see that change can be so positive and full of possibilities. Whatever sufferings we have endured in the past year can be somehow slimmer or even resolved, or extraneous to our plans and we look forward to whatever is to come. I enjoy the atmosphere of hope that is in the air during New Years. Everything does indeed seem shiny and new. As I go through the door of the New Year is a familiar one, I am always interested to see what our Buddhist service can be. A truth that is despite our best efforts and planning, no one really knows what will happen when we cross that threshold. “What do you hold of premonition? When the Buddha had come to know of the nature of the Buddha’s china from 20 years of study as a monk on Mount Hiei and years of guidance under the Dharma teacher Honen, concluded that he could not realize perfect awakening through the power of his own study and practice. Through his encounter with Honen, Shinran realized that all of the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha’s enlightenment is contained in the words “NAMO A MI DA BUTSU” (Amita Buddha’s name). In his “Hymn of True Entrusting Heart and the Nembutsu” (Shinshin Nohontai), Shinran expresses the inner and outer qualities of the Buddha’s teachings as “I take refuge in the Tatagata of Immeasurable Life! I entreat myself to the Buddha of Immeasurable Light!” Following in the tradition of Honen, Shinran taught that anyone who entrusts his trust in the Pure Land and expresses his joy and gratitude in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” will unfailingly realize the truth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. To be born in the Pure Land is to realize a life of perfect merit and a life that is free from the suffering of greed, anger, and ignorance.

Hello everyone, and Happy New Year! The above quote is taken from a poem entitled “January First” and, though not directly Buddhist, it has always struck me as something that we could all learn from (Shōshin

The doors of the year open, together and at least try to stay the course. It is a positive time of year when we see that change can be so positive and full of possibilities. Whatever sufferings we have endured in the past year can be somewhat slimmer or even resolved, or extraneous to our plans and we look forward to whatever is to come. I enjoy the atmosphere of hope that is in the air during New Years. Everything does indeed seem shiny and new. As I go through the door of the New Year is a familiar one, I am always interested to see what our Buddhist service can be. A truth that is despite our best efforts and planning, no one really knows what will happen when we cross that threshold. “What do you hold of premonition? When the Buddha had come to know of the nature of the Buddha’s china from 20 years of study as a monk on Mount Hiei and years of guidance under the Dharma teacher Honen, concluded that he could not realize perfect awakening through the power of his own study and practice. Through his encounter with Honen, Shinran realized that all of the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha’s enlightenment is contained in the words “NAMO A MI DA BUTSU” (Amita Buddha’s name). In his “Hymn of True Entrusting Heart and the Nembutsu” (Shinshin Nohontai), Shinran expresses the inner and outer qualities of the Buddha’s teachings as “I take refuge in the Tatagata of Immeasurable Life! I entreat myself to the Buddha of Immeasurable Light!” Following in the tradition of Honen, Shinran taught that anyone who entrusts his trust in the Pure Land and expresses his joy and gratitude in the words “Namo Amida Butsu” will unfailingly realize the truth in the Pure Land of Amida Buddha. To be born in the Pure Land is to realize a life of perfect merit and a life that is free from the suffering of greed, anger, and ignorance.
President’s Message

Happy Year of the Sheep/Ram!

On behalf of the Buddhist Churches of America’s Executive Committee and the National Board, I would like to express my sincere wishes for a wonderful 2015 to all BCA temples, ministers, retired ministers, headquarters staff, members, and friends.

During this coming year, I hope to be able to demonstrate to you that the BCA is working hard on being a meaningful resource for temples, ministers, and members. To that end, we have made significant changes to the structure of our upcoming National Council Meeting that will be held in San Diego. This is an ongoing process and one that welcomes your comments and suggestions. Together, I hope that we can all come to appreciate the True Teachings that have been provided by those who came before us. In gratitude for your support and comments, I would like to wish each of you a Happy Year of the Sheep/Ram.

Winter MAP Closes CBE Programs for 2014

The final Minister’s Assistant Program (MAP) of 2014 was held from December 11-13. Fourteen minister’s assistants from six Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) districts braved severe winds and rain to attend, coming from as far away as the East Coast.

Pictured front from left to right are Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) Co-director, Rev. Martin Harada; Dorothy Richeda (Salt Lake), Sensei Anne Spencer (Idaho-Oregon), Erick Ishii (Ekoji), Sensei Paul Vielle (Spokane), and Sensei Akemi Ishida (New York).

In the second row from left to right are Sensei Tadao Koyama (Floint), Michael Tang (Arizona), George Thow (Enmanji), John Hughes (Longmont), Mark VanDyke (Mountain View), James Pollard (Orange County), Rosalie May (Seattle), Sensei Gary Jaskula (New York), Sensei Kory Quon (Gardenia), and Rev. Kyonobu Kuwahara, CBE Co-director.

The MAP continues to grow and progress as another 13 BCA minister’s assistants received Tokudo ordination last November, including Koyama sensei.

Coming in April: “WEHOPE” West & East Hongwanji Overseas Propagation Exchange

The BCA Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) will host the third gathering of international Jodo Shinshu ministers at the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC) on April 14-17, 2015. This year’s seminar is called the West and East Hongwanji Overseas Propagation Exchange (WEHOPE). This is a variation of the International Hongwanji Overseas Propagation Exchange (IHOPPE) started in 2011. The name change represents the fact that there will also be Kaikyoshi ministers of the Shinshu Otsu-ku (Ryogou Hongoji) as well as from the Jodo Shinshu Hongo-ku (Nishi Hongwanji) attending.

This event will provide an opportunity for currently assigned Kaikyoshi ministers, Kyokyoshi ministers, and ministers’ assistants with Tokudo ordination from Hawaii, Canada, South America, Shinshu Otsu-ku, and the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) to come together to study and exchange ideas about the future of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist movement.

The WEHOPE Planning Committee members are: Rev. Kyonobu Kuwahara, CBE; Bishop Tanuya Aski, Canada; Rev. Kojo Kakehi, BCA; Rev. Jay Shingo Okamoto and Rev. David Fujimoto, Hawaii; Rev. Koken Sugao and Rev. Gizeu Kanu, Brazil. The deadline is Feb. 13, 2015. Due to space limitations, priority for registration is as follows: Kaikyoshi, Kyokyoshi and Tokudo ministers/minister’s assistants, in that order. Early registration is advised.

For registration details, please contact Rev. Kiyonobu (email: kojo-suklo-zan@hostmail.comipient.com) or Rev. Henry Adams (email: henry.t.adams@gmail.com).

Winter MAP Closes CBE Programs for 2014

Go-Shoki Ho On-Ko Service

Shinrin Shonin’s Memorial Day

Friday, January 16, 2015 1 p.m.
Jodo Shinshu Temple - 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA

All are welcome to commemorate this special occasion.

Expanded Dharma Events for All 2015 National Council Meeting’s New Format

At the Crowne Plaza Hotel & San Diego Buddhist Temple, San Diego

February 26 (Thurs. 1:00-4:30 p.m.)
“Buddhism & Counseling”
A symposium for the BCA National Council Meeting will be sponsored by the Institute for Buddhist Education (IBS) and the BCA Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, San Diego. The featured speakers are: Dr. Daisaku Kinst, IBS Chaplaincy Program; Dr. David Pating, a Kaiser psychiatrist and BCSF minister’s assistant; Dr. Carmella Javellana Hirano, psychiatrist and founder of SHIN (Sanctuary for Healing and Integration) in Salt Lake City, UT and SLBC minister’s assistant; SHIN counseling staff members: Dr. Robert Wetznel and Dr. David Black; and Dr. David Hirohama, clinical psychologist and counselor, OCBC’s Mindful - Chaplaincy Program; Dr. David Pating, a Kaiser psychiatrist and BCSF minister’s assistant; Dr. Carmella Javellana Hirano, psychiatrist

February 27 & 28 (Fri. & Sat 2:00-4:30 p.m.)
“Dharmathon – Expand the Experience”
As part of the BCA National Council Meeting’s new format, the IBS and CBE will present a series of dharma talks. Speakers TBA. Crowne Plaza Hotel, San Diego. Open to National Council delegates, booster and the interested public.

Contact: CBE at cbe@bcahq.org

“The Qualities & Strengths of Shin Buddhism”

By Rev. Kenji Akahoshi
Buddhist Temple of San Diego

Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka presented an all-day workshop at the Buddhist Temple of San Diego on November 22, 2014, with 70 participants attending. His topic “Qualities and Strengths of Shin Buddhism” was delivered in three sessions: Humor, Metaphors, and Action. It ended in the Hondo with a moving experience of Nembutsu meditation. An active question and answer session followed a group dinner.

Rev. Tanaka graciously signed his popular hook, Osan, for those who had purchased it. Participants enjoyed the clarity of his presentation and will surely share the wisdom of his Buddhist “humor.”

The next day, Rev. Dr. Tanaka and Rev. Natsuko Og were guest speakers at the Haitokyo Service at the Buddhist Temple of San Diego. This event coincided with the conference of the American Academy of Religion. About a dozen San Diego members, among others, enjoyed a very interesting lecture by Dr. James Dobbins, a noted Shin Buddhist scholar. His talk, titled “D.T. Suzuki and the Making of a Modern Pure Land Buddhism,” was hosted by the International Association of Shin Buddhism Studies and held at the Omni Hotel in San Diego.


TechnoBuddhism is an annual conference where you’ll spend quality time reconnecting and networking with amazing young adults between 21 and 39 in the Jodo Shinshu community. With Dr. Jeff Wilson leading the way as one keynote speaker, and exciting and educational workshops, this conference in shaping up to be a blast!

FACEBOOK.COM/TECHNOBUDHISMCENTENNARY

JANUARY 2015
2014 CBE Shinran Shonin Study Tour: Part One

In October, 38 Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) members and friends joined together with Bishop Kodo Unmezu and Brian Nagata for the 2014 Shinran Shonin Study Tour sponsored by the BCA Center for Buddhist Education (CBE). We visited sites associated with Shinran Shonin’s life, and in particular, his exile years.

The official tour started with a visit to the enormous Tsukiji Hongwanji temple in downtown Tokyo. We were greeted by the temple and Hongwanji staff, including some familiar faces who had previously attended our seminars on History of Buddhism Studies (IBS) or other programs at the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC). We enjoyed lunch at the Tokyo-Edo Mu-seum and the beautiful Zojoji Temple, the head temple of the Jodo Sect in Tokyo and main temple for the Tokugawa Shogun family.

The next day we traveled out to Haraichi Prefecture where Shinran spent many years. We visited Sainenji temple, the site of the hermitage where Shinran lived, and Chimeneji Temple which is said to host a rock upon which Shinran slept when he was denied lodging in the middle of winter.

We traveled north to the Naoetsu area on the Japan Sea side. There we walked on Kotagahama Beach, where Shinran first landed after he was sent into exile. We recited Jossan in gratitude for his determination and sacrifices to share the Nembutsu with all. Later that day, we visited Eishin no Sato, the museum and memorial to Eshinni, Shinran’s wife who had resided in this area. That evening we stayed at the Akairu Hotel, a resort owned by a devout Shin Buddhist who placed a huge stone slab in the main lobby sitting area. A staff member said it is still used for services and Dharma talks every year dur-ing Honko season.

“When standing on the sand of Kotagahama Beach…there was a deep sense of the timeliness of our connection with Shinran as we saw the land-scapes that confront him some 800 years ago,” reflected Dexter Mar, a member of the Hawaii Buddhist Churches of America Education Program.

“Travelling through Japan during the early fall allowed us to see the beautiful changing colors of the foliage. We walked across the Kurobe Dam (Japan’s biggest dam) using different modes of transportation.

The Japanese Alps is a very devout Jodo Shinshu area, because Shin Buddhism does not believe in superstitions or amulets, local residents have sought out herbal and chemical medicines which were consumed during the year, and issued a bill for the temple city of Kyoto.”

Gotan-e Service

June 27:

July 3-5:

Visit: www.JSCC.cbe-bca.org for course details

CBE 2015 Tentative Calendar of Events (at the Jodo Shinsho Center unless noted otherwise. Dates and programming subject to change.)

January 16: Hoonko Service

March 7: Winter Pacific Seminar @ Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple. Speaker Prof. Tomoyasu Naito. Co-sponsored by Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS)

March 13-15: TechnoBuddha Conference with Dr. Jeff Wilson * April 4: Japanese Seminar April 14-17: West and East Hongwanji Overseas Propagation Exchange (WEDOPE) Gathering and Ministers Continuing Education (MCE) Seminar

May 21: Gotan-e Service * June 27: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Seminar @ New York Buddhist Church. Speaker: Dr. Jeff Wilson

July 3-5: Summer Pacific Seminar with Rev. Sonami Bhuja Wangdi and Ashma Lama (Co-sponsored by IBS & Summer MAP Seminar

August 1: Jodo Shinsho Correspondence Course (JSC). August Workshop

Why did Shinran Shonin write Kyogyoshinsho, which was far too scholarly for the majority of his followers?

By Janis Hirohama

Orange County Buddhist Church

Although some of Shinran’s writing was accessible for the average person, not all of his works were created for that audience. His output ran the gamut, ranging from hymns (honsen) in Japanese that were short, emotionally accessible, and readily under-stood, to his magnum opus, the Kyogyoshinsho, an intellectually challenging work written in Chinese characters. The more complex and sophisticated writings of Shinran were intended for himself and his key disciples—and for posterity—but not for the general public. The angle of the roof beams thatch houses. They are so named because the angle of the roof beams is tucked in between steep mountains and was founded by Shin Buddhists. From

Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, His Eminence Kojun Ohtani, on October 30, 2014. The Gomonshu is seated in the center,


Jodo Shinsho Correspondence Course • Monthly Essay

This article was written in response to an assignment for the JSCC and reflects the author’s individual understanding of this topic.

Visit: www.JSCC.cbe-bca.org for course details

Website: www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org Email: cbe@bcahq.org Phone: (510) 809-1460

JANUARY 2015
Amida Buddha's Resolution

by Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, CBE Co-director

In the past year, we at CBE coordinated various programs. I appreciate that many people attended them and hope that all attendees had a good time and deepened their appreciation of Dharma. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to all CBE staff members and volunteers who devotedly supported those programs. We will coordinate various programs this year as well. We at CBE look forward to your participation in the programs.

At the beginning of the New Year, I think some of us may have established resolutions. Mine would be this: “Don’t eat too much and do more exercise.” Our resolutions tend to be about ourselves. This is mainly because we know what needs to be improved. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.

In addition to our own resolution, there is another resolution established by Amida Buddha in order for us to live more profoundly and fulfilled lives. It is sometimes called the Primal Vow or Amida Buddha’s Resolution. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.

In a world where confusion about values abounds and where many of the old certainties have collapsed, our spiritual yearnings are more profound and fulfilled lives. It is sometimes called the Primal Vow or Amida Buddha’s Resolution. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.

In a world where confusion about values abounds and where many of the old certainties have collapsed, our spiritual yearnings are more profound and fulfilled lives. It is sometimes called the Primal Vow or Amida Buddha’s Resolution. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.

In a world where confusion about values abounds and where many of the old certainties have collapsed, our spiritual yearnings are more profound and fulfilled lives. It is sometimes called the Primal Vow or Amida Buddha’s Resolution. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.

In a world where confusion about values abounds and where many of the old certainties have collapsed, our spiritual yearnings are more profound and fulfilled lives. It is sometimes called the Primal Vow or Amida Buddha’s Resolution. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.

In a world where confusion about values abounds and where many of the old certainties have collapsed, our spiritual yearnings are more profound and fulfilled lives. It is sometimes called the Primal Vow or Amida Buddha’s Resolution. It is natural that our resolutions focus on that.
Planned giving is a method of supporting not-for-profit organizations and charities that enables donors to make larger gifts than they could make from their income alone. While some planned gifts provide a life-long income to the donor, others use estate and tax planning techniques to provide for charity and other heirs in ways that maximize the gift and/or minimize its impact on the donor’s estate.

1. Charitable Remainder Trust

This is an irrevocable trust that generates a potential income stream for you or one or more nonprofit organizations you select.

Key characteristics
• Potential immediate (partial) tax deduction, based on the value of the charitable donation
• May eliminate capital gains tax for gifts of long-term appreciated securities
• Income may be for life or for a fixed term of no more than 20 years.

A charitable remainder trust (CRT) is structured so that there is a current beneficiary who is either the donor or a named individual and a remainder beneficiary upon the death of the donor.

The CRT can ensure that the named beneficiary receive a fixed amount each year or a percentage of the value of the trust each year, for a period of years that can be for the individual’s life or for a period not to exceed 20 years.

One of the major benefits of the CRT is an immediate potential income and gift tax deduction for a charitable contribution for the present value of the ending balance of the trust’s assets designated for the charity.

A CRT can be an effective strategy for retirement planning as the trust can provide for delayed income distribution. The amount can be paid from the principal of the trust, which can be eligible charitable donations, to the donor, to other beneficiaries or in a way that will reduce the donor’s income tax.

2. Charitable Annuities

This is a contract for a not-for-profit organization, in which you provide a gift and, in exchange, the organization guarantees you income for life.

Key characteristics
• Provides a gift (partial) tax deduction, based on your life expectancy and the anticipated income stream
• Reduces capital gains tax liability for gifts of long-term appreciated assets

A Charitable Gift Annuity is a contract under which a charity in return for a transfer of cash, marketable securities or other assets agrees to pay fixed payments to one or two individuals (beneficiaries or annuitants), for their lifetime. The contract is between the donor and the issuing charity, in which the donor transfers property to an individual or a charitable organization.

For many donors, a bequest offers the opportunity to make a substantial gift that would be possible during their lifetime.

Because of the tax advantages associated with a bequest to a charitable institution, assets from your estate that would otherwise go directly to government treasuries can instead be given to BCA Endowment Foundation to meet BCA and IBS needs.

Types of bequests
• The most common type of bequest is one in which you direct cash or specific assets to BCA Endowment Foundation. Sometimes the bequest is based on a fixed amount or value; it can also be stated as a percentage of your estate.

With a contingent bequest, you direct that BCA Endowment Foundation receive all or any part of your estate remaining after other specific bequests and expenses related to the administration of your estate have been made.

• You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organization.

For many donors, a bequest offers the opportunity to make a substantial gift that would be possible during their lifetime.

Because of the tax advantages associated with a bequest to a charitable institution, assets from your estate that would otherwise go directly to government treasuries can instead be given to BCA Endowment Foundation to meet BCA and IBS needs.

Types of bequests
• The most common type of bequest is one in which you direct cash or specific assets to BCA Endowment Foundation. Sometimes the bequest is based on a fixed amount or value; it can also be stated as a percentage of your estate.

With a contingent bequest, you direct that BCA Endowment Foundation receive all or any part of your estate remaining after other specific bequests and expenses related to the administration of your estate have been made.

• You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organization.

A testamentary trust can be written into your will so that a trust is established upon your death to provide income to your spouse and/or beneficiaries during their lifetimes.

You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organization.

A testamentary trust can be written into your will so that a trust is established upon your death to provide income to your spouse and/or beneficiaries during their lifetimes.

You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organization.

A testamentary trust can be written into your will so that a trust is established upon your death to provide income to your spouse and/or beneficiaries during their lifetimes.

You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organization.

A testamentary trust can be written into your will so that a trust is established upon your death to provide income to your spouse and/or beneficiaries during their lifetimes.

You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organization.

A testamentary trust can be written into your will so that a trust is established upon your death to provide income to your spouse and/or beneficiaries during their lifetimes.

You can designate by beneficiary, providing that BCA Endowment Foundation will be the beneficiary of the remainder of your IRA, KRG, or other qualified retirement or qualified pension, profit sharing plan or life insurance.

Please consult the BCA Endowment Foundation for additional information. Planned gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation can be made by will, trust or living trust and is a transfer of property to an individual or a charitable organi...
浄土真宗センター 桑原 浄信

2014年も色々な方々にお世話になりながら一年を過ごすことができ、本当にありがとうございました。本年もどうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

さて1月8日から16日まで京都にあります西本願寺において報恩講が行われ期間中全国から数千人の方々がお参りされます。報恩講とは浄土真宗の宗祖であります親鸞聖人のご命日に合わせ聖人を偲ぶ法要であり、本願寺の第三代門主であります覚如上人の時代から始まったとされる大変長い伝統を持つ法要であります。

さてこの報恩講ですが「報恩」とありますように、親鸞聖人のご恩に報い、感謝することを目的とした法要であります。ここでの「ご恩」ということが出てきましたが、私たちはどのようなご恩をいただいているのでしょうか。それは浄土真宗のみ教えをあきらかにしてくださったということでありますが、そのみ教えが実際に私たちの日常生活の中で機能していなければ恩に報い感謝すると言われてもあまりピンとこないかもしれません。ではこの浄土真宗のみ教えが実際に私たちの日常生活にどのように関わっているのでしょうか?

浄土真宗のみ教えを深く聴いていくことによって私たちの生活や生き様に何らかの形で変化が現れるわけでありますが、どのような変化が現れるかは人それぞれ色々かと思います。ある開教使の先生は浄土真宗のみ教えを深く聴いていくことで「Coping Skill」が備わると仰っていました。

人生は山あり、谷ありと言われますように単に良い事や思い通りになることばかりであり、時には悪いことや思い通りにならないことにも出会わなくてはいけません。そうした時に仏法の教え、浄土真宗の教えというのは良い事をより深く味わうことのできる身にしていただき、また悪いことや思い通りにならないことに関してはその意義を深く見据え、受け止め、乗り越えていけるような身にしていただくわけであります。浄土真宗のみ教えは浅薄な幸せを説いたり、喜び一辺倒の教えではなく、人生の様々な出来事をより深く味わい、消化していく力としての「Coping Skill」を私たちに与えて下さる教えということができます。

これは浄土真宗のみ教えが私たちの日常生活にどのように関わっているかということの一例であります。親鸞聖人は今から約750年前に亡くなられたわけですが、親鸞聖人があきらかにして下さいました教えは今もなお多くの人々の生活を深く豊かなものにし、そして強く明るく生き抜く力を与えているのではないでしょうか。

この私がそういった素晴らしい教えに出会うことができたのは多くの人々、そして様々なご縁のおかげでありますが、一方でこの私が浄土真宗のみ教えに出会い、深く肯くことができるような身になれるよう何らかの働きかけや願いがそこにあったとも言うことができましょう。その働きかけとは真実の法の世界、つまりお浄土からこの娑婆にいる私に向けられた働きかけであり、願いとは阿弥陀如来様から凡夫であるこの私にかけられた願いであります。我々はお浄土から光に照らされ、阿弥陀如来様からのお慈悲に育まれながらこの境涯を深く強く生きていくのであります。阿弥陀如来様やお浄土がないということになるとそれはまるで真っ暗な大海原を灯台の光なしに航海するようなものかもしれません。

このように浄土真宗のみ教えは我々の日々の生活を深く豊かなものにしてくれますが、しかしそれだけではありません。この命終わった時には苦しみ悩みから本当に解放された存在としての仏に仕上げていただくのであります。浄土教である浄土真宗は死んだら何もないという教えではありません。この娑婆世界で命を残された有縁の方々もまた同じように深く豊かな生活を送ることができるよう働きかけていく存在となるのです。つまり死が単なる終わりではなく、新しい命の始まり、それも他の方々の役に立つための命の始まりとなります。これが仏と成るということであり、この人生を終わった後に私たちがそういう新たなる生を営むようご準備して下さったのも阿弥陀如来様であります。このような仏道をご用意して下さいました阿弥陀如来様、そしてその教え正しく伝えて下さった高僧方に対して親鸞聖人は大変深い感謝の念をお持ちであり、それを詠まれたのが「恩徳讃」であります。

2015年が始まったわけですが、私たち一人一人が浄土真宗のみ教えを深く味わい、そしてその法の悦びを一人でも多くの人と分かち合うような一年にしていただければと思います。そうすることこそ親鸞聖人のご恩に報いるということであり、念仏者としての生き方ではないでしょうか。

今月のインタビューでは十一月の終わりに三ヶ月の研修を終えて帰国したIMOP(国際伝道者養成講座)の参加者から話を伺った。

―研修でもっとも印象に残ったことは何ですか?
一羽諒―サービスのあとに来てくださった方と一緒にお茶やお菓子いただいたことです。日本ではこのようなリフレッシュメントの文化が無いので驚いたのと同時にとてもいいことだなと思いました。
大内深生―Miceです。多くの開教使が集まり、研鑽に励んでいるところをみて、日本の僧侶もかくあるべきであると感じました。仏教に卒業はないという言葉通りに、私たちは日々、学びを深めていく必要性を改めて学ばせていただきました。
禿定心―BCA婦人会大会(アーバイン)への参加とハワイ開教区でのインターンシップ。林斎昭ラジヤン―実際各お寺に滞在して、お寺がどう活動しているかということ、そして法事やお葬式、またはそれぞれのサービスに参加したことも経験として大きく残りました。
―苦労したことを教えて下さい。
一羽―初めて英語の法話をしたことです。慣れてない英語での文章制作、読めない単語の確認、そして話し方の練習など、今でも苦労しますが、初めての時が一番苦労したように思います。
大内―英語の法話です。伝えたいことがあるのに、思うように伝わらないもどかしさを何度も経験させていただきました。いかにシンプルに、分かりやすく、しかし核をはずさないようにするか。これは日本語にも通ずることで、英語にお覚えることもできました。
禿―英語でのダルマトークです。(特に発音)
林―苦労したことは、やはり人とのコミュニケーションです。違う文化違う言語で育ったもの同士でのコミュニケーションを成立させることの難しさを痛感しました。
―好きな英語、こちらで覚えた言葉は?
一羽―Thank you.です。多分今回の研修で一番使った単語だと思います。
大内―No means No.です。言えないと建前で、本音と建前に生きる日本人(私を含む)にこそ覚えて欲しい。この言葉から、はっきりと相手に自分の思いを伝えることが大事であると学びました。
禿―KISS(Keep it simple and short)
林―No,遠慮!
―アメリカの開教使、門徒さんにメッセージをお願いします。
一羽―私たちの研修のために時間を空けていろいろなレクチャーをしてくださった開教使の皆様、そして、私のつたない英語の法話を聞いてよかったよと声をかけてくださったり、発音のアドバイスをくださったような人を支えられていたのだなと気付かせていただきました。皆様の優しさに触れるたびに、感謝の気持ちで胸がいっぱいになりました。今何もお返しするものはございませんが、本当に有難うございました。禿―IMOP研修中たくさんのことを教えて頂き有難うございました。今後ともご指導のほど宜しくお願い致します。林―期間中お会いできた方々には大変お世話になりました。短い期間でしたが、開教使としての責任と使命感をもって日々の研修を行いました。今後もお世話になりたいと思います。
年頭の辞

新しい年の初めにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。
昨年、6月に法統を継承し、本願寺住職・浄土真宗本願寺派門主となりました。社会状況の変化が激しい現代社会において、浄土真宗のみ教えがより多くの方にとって生きる依りどころとなるよう、伝えてまいります。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

浄土真宗の教えは、親鸞聖人にによって説かれました。以来、790年以上にわたり受け継がれ、今日の私たちに届いています。それは、み教えが、時代や場所に関係なく、すべての人にとって生きる依りどころとなり得たからです。仏教は、自己中心的なとらわれを離れ、真理に基づいて生きる生き方を明らかにしています。しかし、そのような依りがない私たちは、様々な悲しみや苦しみを抱えることがあります。

親鸞聖人は、このような私たちを必ず仏にならせようと阿弥陀様がたたえさせて下さると教えてくださいました。この阿弥陀様のたたえによって、私たちは、真理に気づき、わが身の姿を省みることが出来ます。

本年も、み教えを開き、お念仏申す生活を送らせていただきますよう。

2015年1月1日

浄土真宗本願寺派
門主　大谷光淳

ご門主さま新年のご挨拶

尊敬の念を

総長メッセージ

今年の標語は「まことの人生を歩もう」です。仏さまの願いを聞き開き、尊いのちをきづかせていただき、お互いいたわりあいながら今年もおくらせましょう。

米国仏教団　総長　梅津廣道

2015年新年号