Primal Vow (Hongan) 18th Vow: If, when I attain Buddha-nature, sentient beings in the lands of the ten quarters who sincerely and joyfully entrust themselves to me, desire to be born in my land, and call my Name, even ten times, should not be born there, may I not attain perfect Enlightenment. Excluded, however, are those who commit the five gravest offences and abuse the right Dharma.

Winter Pacific Seminar in LA: East Meets West Dharmathon

The culmination of the day were the panel discussions: in Japanese, (left photo) with Rev. Ryuta Furumoto (Senshin Buddhist Temple), Rev. Kodo Umezu (BCA Bishop), and a Rev. Ryoko Osa (Higashi Honganji USA Headquarters); and in English, (right photo, left to right) with Rev. Patricia Uwini (San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (SVHBT)), Rev. Noriaki to (Bishop, Higashi Honganji North America District), and Rev. Bill Bronawa (Pimai Zen, Nishi Betsuin). Photos by Glen Tao. Watch the YouTube videos! Go to YouTube.com and search for BCA Center for Buddhist Education.

By Priscilla Mai, San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

After all the rain, January 28 greeted us with a breezy, clear, sunny morning at the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (a.k.a. Nishi Betsuin), where the 2017 Winter Pacific Seminar was held. Thanks to the Institute of Buddhist Studies, Buddhist Churches of America Center for Buddhist Education (BCA CBE), and the Shinshu Center of America, the 240 attendees to this one-day “East Meets West” seminar were treated to a “Dharmathon” (a series of short Dharma talks), and panels presented by ministers from both Southern District Nishi (west) and Higashi (east) temples throughout the morning and afternoon.

The popular Dharmathon format has been adopted in the last few years at many CBE events because it’s a very efficient and entertaining way for us to hear a variety of Dharma talks. There were English and Japanese sessions, with over 20 ministers in all. Topics in English ranged from the implications in the use of the words “Thank you” and “Please”, to how to listen to a Dharma message; Buddhist vows; accepting one’s actions; nembutsu; Gamelan music of Indonesia; the role of Buddhism in the current state of our country; and how Buddhist chaplains in the armed services can help soldiers cope with their situation and suffering. When I spoke to peers at my temple, it was interesting to hear the variety of what messages resonated with each person and how two people can come away with different messages from the same speaker. Overall, based on the Dharma messages and the panel discussion, a lay person like me could not tell the two schools apart. However, all three panels wished to expand membership beyond the Japanese American community. My friends among the Higashi followers were more politically active, but Rev. Ito stated that whenever he appeared at a political gathering, it was as himself and not as a Higashi minister. In the end, we could see that there was great cooperation and respect for each other.

Thank you to the BCA Southern District Ministers’ Association and Southern District Buddhist Education Committee, which hosted the event, as well as the hard-working volunteers at Nishi who made all the creature comforts possible.

By Rev. Jerry K. Hirano, Salt Lake Buddhist Temple

As a result of Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, approximately 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were forcibly moved off the West Coast of the United States into concentration camps, mostly to remote areas of the country. Of those 120,000 individuals, roughly two thirds were American citizens. In one of those concentration camps, called Topaz, in a desert area near Delta, Utah, near the Nevada border, the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) was formed.

BCA was formed not to organize our temples into a formal legal religious organization; BCA was formed out of fear that the United States government would begin attacking our Sanghas. The name Buddhist “Churches” was intentionally chosen, even though in Japanese the name “Hongwanji” translates to “Temple of the Primal Vow” and not “Church of the Primal Vow.” The leadership of our original organization founded in 1899 was formed by ministers (Kakyoshi), and the lay membership provided the financial support for the organization. In the 1940s, the majority of Kakyoshi were non-U.S. citizens, but the Nisei (second generation) membership were all American citizens. It was during this period that lay members were included in the leadership of BCA.

Executive Orders and the Primal Vow

The United States has had a history of immigration exclusion acts directed at Asian countries. There was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Immigration Act of 1917, and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952. These legal acts of discrimination were based upon the fact that Asians were coming to the United States for nefarious reasons. On Friday afternoon (January 27, 2017), President Donald Trump issued a new executive order titled “Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States.” During World War II Executive Order 9066 was aimed at Japanese Americans on the West Coast, while not very many Italian or German Americans were

360 “Wake Up” at Northwest Buddhist Convention in Tukwila, Washington

The Tacoma Buddhist Temple hosted 360 attendees at the 70th Northwest Buddhist Convention on February 17-19. Rev. Marvin Harada, resident minister of Orange County Buddhist Church, captured the attention of attendees, saying we need to “wake up” our minds and bodies to appreciate our daily lives.

Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America, reminded us that this was not a ping pong tournament. But the convention sure was full of intense and fun activity throughout the weekend!

The central goal of our convention was to involve as many of our students as possible in whichever workshops they felt comfortable in. The students all proved to be confident and poised in their missions and were vital to our weekend agenda.

Workshops ranged from “Making Incentive” to “Intermitten” to “Millennials” to “Waking Up!” We were fortunate to pull Rev. Koso Yukawa and Rev. Don Castro out of retirement, and were able to hear Rev. Sala Sekiya before she leaves our district. The NW Convention ended with Rev. Harada and his puppet, Fred, giving a Dharma Talk with Rev. Kozo Kakihara and his puppet, Freddie (see photo on page 8). A good time was had by all, with many looking forward to our next NW Convention in Spokane, Washington in February, 2018.

Clockwise from left, Shrinran ati, “Kindness Rocks,” sumi-e painting, making butter, learning “Be Happy” on ukulele, youth workshop.
Borders

"Shariputra, in the land of Ultimate Bliss, a pleasant breeze wafts, wowing the rusty colors of various jewels and waving the gauze curtains with little bells, storing an exquisitely melody. This is just as though hundreds of thousands of musical instruments were being played in unison. For all of us, their melody, devotion to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha is spontaneously deepened. Shariputra, in this way the land of Ultimate Bliss is an ideal environment so that whatever one hears will bring about awakening. Shariputra, why do you suppose this Buddha is called Amida? Shariputra, this Buddha emits innumerable light, shedding light upon all the worlds of the ten directions without obstruction." 1

1 The Amida Sutra (Skt: Smaller Sukhavatvayu Sutra) Translated by Karen Mask, Joan of the Jade Buddha Education Studios, No. 14, 2003

The Tacoma Buddhist Temple was established by Japanese immigrants in 1915, with Rev. Hoshin Fuji of the Seattle Buddhist Church conducting services in the homes of the following: Joda Shimizu, Gonda Nakatani, and Hida Nakatani. In 1927, Rev. Denyo Monden founded the Seattle Buddhist Church and the temple registered with the Buddhist Churches of America (precursor of the Buddhist Churches of America) as Tacoma Buddhist Church in 1929. As the Sangha grew, the present temple building was built in 1935.

The temple was closed during World War II when members were sent to various relocation centers in California, Wyoming, and Idaho. Rev. Sunya Pratt, who was a British minister, devoted himself to the English education. During the war, she looked after members’ belongings stored in the temple basement and visited members in relocation centers.

The name was officially changed from “Church” to “Temple” in 1983. The Tacoma Buddhist Temple was designated as a historical landmark in 1995. We celebrated the centennial in 2015.

Like the Buddhist Churches of America
Reflecting on My Past Year

By Rev. Fumiaki Usuki

I was politically active as a young man in the civil rights movement, where I learned to be human—to respect and treat everyone equally. Shin-both being human and humaneness—converts and treats all people regardless of their religion or ethnicity.

Namé Amida Butu. We can demonstrate our kind and loving reflections to everyone.

As Nelson Mandela said so eloquently at the end of his life: “I have walked a long walk to freedom, but it is not over yet. I know that my country could not be free unless my fellow dispossessed Africans could be free and that I could not be free until all those who had considered me an enemy were called to the table and to deal with hatred when it is in our mid.

What weapons can we use to fight against such hatred? We can use love. We can use Namé Amida Butu. We can demonstrate our kind and loving reflections to everyone.

Namo Amida Butu. Thank you.
CBE Temple Leadership Workshop: You Can Do It!

By Darlene Bagshaw, Buddhist Church of Stockton

As I sit before my computer composing this article, I listen to the rain hitting the roof and cascading through the downspout. Residing in Manteca, California, the local news is filled with local flash food warnings, knee breaches, and overflowing reservoirs. From calming to stressful, this is life. You must at least smile, as you find a parallel within the trials and tribulations that face your own temple.

At the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) “Temple Leadership Workshop,” the leaders in attendance did just that. We experienced the calming words of the Dharma, created a new network of Sangha friends, learned about the flow of leadership in the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA), and breathed the subjects of ending membership, the strain of minister shortages, and overflowing financial burdens. But, just like all times of stress, we found unconditional support from Bishop Kodu Umezue, BCA President Ken Tamiruto, several ministers, and the CBE staff. And like evergreens, we were treated to warm and comforting accommodations at the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC), complete with exceptional meals! (Thank you, Reverend Harada!)

At this point you may be tempted to stop reading, thinking, “I’m out. I’m not a leader. I just joined my temple.” Or “My plate is overflowing! I don’t have time for another workshop!” The CBE Temple Leadership Workshop brought together over 30 leaders ranging from new members set to join the temple board, to “recycled” presidents, to the BCA President and Bishop. Everyone came with an open mind, eager to share personal experiences, successful ideas, and most importantly, remember that all of this is life. You must at least smile, as stress is inevitable in any construction zone.

Dharma-centered leadership was the theme introduced by Bishop Umezue. When we lead we must put our “foolishness” aside as the Dharma challenges us to become more compassionate to ourselves, to others, to the world.

Goldstein stresses the importance of having a daily music practice and offers tips, exercises, and techniques to assist you. One of his suggestions is to chant. He uses the example of om, but chanting Na man de to work effectively as well, moving you into a relaxed state and beyond intellectual thought.


Award-winning composer and producer Barry Goldstein asserts that music, sound, and vibration are more than just art and entertainment. They are the secret language of the heart, conveying the divine soul and serving as a powerful vehicle for transforming us at the deepest level of our being. This book is not just for those with musical “talents.”

Goldstein begins by discussing the music that is within all of us—the heartbeat, our breath, and our sigh. He goes on to show how music and sound can affect both the body and the brain, citing research that shows how we benefit physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Ultimately, we become more compassionate to ourselves, to others, and to the world.

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Goldstein concludes with a section titled “Musical Prescriptions for Health.” Though not intended to replace medications or treatment plans, Goldstein shares some extraordinary findings utilizing music for improving specific conditions such as dementia and stroke. He also provides sample playlists to help get you started.

To purchase, go to buddhistchurchesofamerica.org and click on the BCA Bookstore link or contact cbe@bcahq.org or 510-809-1435. This publication will also be available at the Federation of Dharma School Teachers’ League (FDSTL) Conference “Music: A Path to the Dharma,” held on Saturday, April 22, 2017 at the Fresno Buddhist Temple Family Dharma Center.

During our homestay we were able to witness the Fujinkai ladies prepare food for our dies, and several men. Before dinner, we were escorted to the main furii area where we were greeted by Reverend and Mrs. Hata, a group of Fujinkai ladies. After dinner, Jun Hamamoto and I continued on to Hakata Station where we were met by Sadako Kashiwagi and Yasuko Fukuda, who also welcomed us. Even though our language was limited, we somehow were able to get our message across.

Our hosts/friends accompanied us to the 6 a.m. service the following morning, another new experience!

Join us as we explore neither good nor evil, but the Gray Area.

Worksheets to be Included (subject to change)
- Jodo Shinshu Buddhism 101/201
- General Buddhism with Prof. Mark Blum
- Sushi Making
- Presentation by Kirk Akaoshii
- Taiko
- Art / Design

Check out TechnoBuddha on Facebook for registration information, announcements, and more! facebook.com/technobuddha.conference
Dear BCA Members and Friends,

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On the evening of Monday, March 20 and Wednesday, March 22, 2017, 6 - 9 pm, the Institute of Buddhist Studies presents its annual Ryokoku Lecture with guest speaker, Prof. Mazyumi Mitani, who will discuss “The Otani Kozui Expeditions and their Impact on Buddhist Studies.” This takes place at the Jodo Shinsu Center, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA.

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The BCA Endowment Foundation is continuing to work together in a joint effort to raise required funds to advance the BCA Endowment Foundation. The Committee has initiated several coordinated fundraising efforts. The committee has initiated several coordinated fundraising efforts. The committee has initiated several coordinated fundraising efforts. The committee has initiated several coordinated fundraising efforts.

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退職にあたって

ガーデナ仏教会
信雄

この度、40年間お世話になりました米国仏教団をガーデナ仏教会を最後として退職させて頂くことになりました。皆様には本当にお世話になり衷心より感謝させて頂くことを。40年間というと長く聞こえますが、終わってしまうと確かにあっという間だったなという気がします。様々な思い出が沸々とわき上がってきますが、何と言ってもやはり皆様のお世話になってここまでこらして頂いたなという感で一杯です。羅府別院でお世話になっていたころ、毎朝別院の前を掃除して下さった弓削さんというおじいさんが居られました。朝は訳からご苦労様ですと声を掛けると、いやいやこちらこそありがとうございますと返して下さり、何の文句も言わずに黙々と毎日同じことをして下さるその姿に思わず菩薩様の姿を思い浮かべることができました。オグデン仏教会にいる時も、あるファミリーから必ずお正月とサンクスギビングの時に招待して下さった方がありました。先生は遠く日本から来て下さってこちらにはあまり身寄りがないだろうからというて毎年欠かすことなく呼んで下さいました。まだ渡米して日も浅いころでしたから本当に嬉しかったことを思い出します。こういう人たちのお蔭で私たちは大した失敗もなく一応つつがなく開教使生活を送ることができました。本当に有難いことでした。それに付けまでもこのごろ私はやはり亡くなった父や母のことをよく思うようになりました。お念仏の信仰を本当に慶んでいた父は、この尊い教えが海外にもっとも普及すればいいがなとよく言っていました。そんな声を聞いて私たち子供三人全部開教使になってこちらにきました。一番上の兄がカナダ開教区に行きましたが、後の二人はこの米国仏教団にお世話になりました。兄もオレンジ郡仏教会を最後に教団を円満退職させて頂きました。私もその兄を追って今年いよいよ退職となるわけですが、海外布教を夢見ていた父の思いの一端を子供たちが担うことができたことを少し誇らしく思っています。まだこれからだと勢い込んでいますから、この世が夢幻と言われてもそれはまだ少し先のことであるとこの世こそすべてと思い一生懸命になるのです。つまりこの世の他に違う世界などというものがあるのです。しかし、だんだん年を取ってきますと、いやそうではなかった、この世以外の本当の世界というものがあるんだということに気がつかせて来るのです。私は「この世」以外の世界のことを「あの世」と呼ぶことにしています。この世はお釈迦さまの言われる通り、夢幻の世界で実体のない世界なのです。ある意味でそれは死んだら終わりの世界です。ですから、この世のことは...のことで、それを真実の世界というのです。お釈迦さまや親鸞さまが仰ろうとされるのはこの真実の世界のことです。この真実の世界に生きることこそ本当の世界を生きたことになるぞとお教え下さるのです。「根をしめて風にまかせる柳かな」という古歌がありますが、この真実の世界にしっかりと根を占めることが大事なことです。浄土真宗門徒はお念仏にしっかりと根をしめて、後は風に任せる柳のような悠々自適の生活を送らせて頂いたらいいと思うのです。そしてこれこそが私に与えられた退職後の生き方と思い十分に満喫させて頂こうと今から思っているところです。最後になりましたが、もう一度皆様のご理解後援助に対し衷心より御礼申しあげます。合掌

開教使の趣味

【2】藤本デニス開教使、サクラメント別院

昨年8月からサクラメント別院に勤務する職に就任した藤本デニス開教使の趣味は馬をかること。前任地のアイダホオレゴン仏教会で愛馬シャドウと出会った。「馬を飼い始めたのは、6年前にラッフルチケットの当たりくじをひいたからです。」藤本師夫人、シャーマンさんの仕事でネイティブアメリカン主催の、あるカンファレンスでラッフルチケットを購入。そのチケットの賞品が馬だった。「こんな大きな馬をもらって、どうしようかと思いましたが、飼うことにしたのです。」と微笑む。「ラッフルで当たった馬は、ハーフムーンという名前でした。インディアンの方が言うには、ハーフムーンだけだと寂しいので、もう一頭飼うことがよさそうだということでした。そこで、シャドウが来て、二頭飼うことにしたのです。」自宅や寺院の敷地では馬を飼うことができないため、友人が経営する厩舎を借り、頻繁におとずれ、世話をした。二頭が...。「5年前、ハーフムーンが列車に轢かれてしまったのです。」厩舎の近所の犬たちが、若いハーフムーンを威嚇、走って逃げていった先が列車の線路であった。「悲しかったです。特にシャドウが悲しそうでしたね。」師は、馬には心があると断言する。「むしろ人間より賢いと思うこともありますし、人間より思いやりがあるのは間違いないですね。」ある時、シャーマンさんの父が厩舎でシャドウの世話をしたが、なれていない父は尻尾をといでやるときに馬の後ろに立ったという。「後ろに立たれると馬は嫌がって、後ろ足で蹴ることがあってとても危険なのです。けれどもシャドウは、老いた義父を蹴ってしまわないよう、頭をさげてとても注意していました。人間よりリスペクトがあります。」と愛馬の年配の方を取った。これよって言うと仏教的な一如の見方を語ってくださると期待していたのだが、意外にも師は「馬にはあまり乗らないんですよ。」とのこと。「乗りたいけど、落ちたくないからね。」とはにかむ。「馬と私はお寺のメンバーと私との関係に似てると思います。聞くことが大事なのです。」こちらがあまりプッシュしすぎると、プッシュバックされるので、お寺では、メンバーとじっくりとコミュニケーションをとり、心でつながっていくことが大切だと教えてくれた。現在もシャドウはアイダホにいるため、ひと月に一回のペースで会いに行き、走る姿を見ていられようそうだ。
1月25日（土）にロサンゼルス別院において、IBS、仏教教育部、南部教区、真宗センターの共催による、冬季パシフィックセミナーが行われた。テーマは昨年に引き続き「East meets West」で、参加者が西本願寺と東本願寺の教えの相違点を学び、お互いの真宗理解を深めることを目的としている。昨年は同テーマで、東西本願寺の僧侶や研究者による講義が行われ好評を博した。今回は約250名の参加があり、南部教区の開教使と東本願寺の開教使らによる法話大会、ダルマソンが行われた。オープニングサービスでは、梅津総長と大谷派北米開教監督およびロサンゼルス東本願寺別院輪番の伊東憲昭師が挨拶をした。サービス後、日本語と英語とにわかれ、計21名の僧侶による法話がなされた。日本語法話をつとめた開教使は「みなさん熱心にお聴聞されてました。1月なのでお堂は寒かったですが、熱気がありました。」と、法話にもおのずと熱がこもった。参加者は「こんなに多くのご法話を聞いたのは初めてです。いろんな先生がおられて、いろんなお話を聞けるのはとても楽しいです。おもわずお念仏がでてくるのでとてもありがたいです。またぜひ開催してほしいです。」と聞法のご縁を喜んだ。セミナーでの法話はYouTubeのBCA Center for Buddhist Educationで視聴できる。

ウェイクアップ!西北部教区
2月17日から19日の三日間、トゥクウィラのダブルトゥリーホテルにおいて、第七十回西北部教区仏教徒大会が行われた。タコマ仏教会のホストにより、テーマは「ウェイクアップ。」ゲストスピーカーにオレンジ郡仏教会の原田マーヴィン開教使をむかえ、約360名の参加があった。17日にはビンゴ、卓球大会、ウクレレ教室などで、門徒同士が親睦を深めた。18日は午前中に原田開教使による基調講演があり、午後からは分科会が開かれ、現役、引退開教使らがそれぞれワークショップや講義を行った。19日の閉会のサービスでは、原田開教使とタコマ仏教会の柿原開教使が二人でパペットを使っての法話をし、聞法者を楽しませた。参加者は「ここ最近で一番参加者の多い大会となりました。70回目をかざるにふさわしいです。西北地区での浄土真宗の勢いが盛り上がってきているような気がします。」と大会の成功を喜んだ。総長メッセージ
米国仏教団総長 梅津廣道
最近年若い開教使と話していたら、謄写版(とうしゃばん)をしらないということを聞いてびっくりしました。たった三十年ほど前ですが、仏教会の会報は鉄筆を使って、ワックスペーパーに手書きで記事を書いて、ミミオグラフという謄写版で印刷していたのを覚えています。その頃は手紙も郵便で送っていましたし、日本への航空便は往復二週間ほどかかっていました。私が渡辺総長の下で『法輪』を担当していた時には、ワープロというのがあり、それで記事を書き、印刷し、それを原板に貼り付けていたのが真実のようと思い起こされます。今は本当に便利になりました。スマートフォンというものが出てきて今年で十年になるそうです。このおかげで、どこにいても電話をかけられるし、カメラも不要となりました。それだけではなく、地図帳や本、百科事典も買う必要がなくなりました。音楽も聴けるし、映画も観ることができるようになりました。インターネットでみんながつながり、国家体制まで変えていくことができるようになりました。中には信用できない情報もあるので、気をつけなければなりませんが、科学技術の進歩には驚かされるばかりです。振り返ってみますと、どうしたら幸せになるだろうかということを追い求めてきたのが私たちの歩みではないでしょうか。便利に、楽に、そしてできるだけ自分の思い通りになるようにと、周りを変えてきたのが私たちの歴史です。しかし、本当に今がいい時代なのでしょうか。私たちが夢みたことが実現しているのでしょうか。お釈迦さまは、世の中は時代を経るにつれてだんだん悪くなるとおっしゃっておられます。そのことについては親鸞聖人も同じように考えておられたようです。私たちは、自分の愚かさに気づかず、自分の思いと違う人を批判し、家...のがその元にあります。私たちの思いや判断はあてになるものではありません。「生きている」という思いも、本当は「生かされている」というべきでありましょう。そういう世界があり、そういう世界からの呼びかけに耳を傾けなければ、本当のいのちを生きることが出不来ないと、多くの人が教えてくださるのです。その呼びかけが南無阿弥陀仏ではないでしょうか。三月には各地でお彼岸の法要がお勤めされます。是非、仏さまの世界、すなわち彼岸からの呼びかけを一緒に聞かせていただきましょう。