“Together in Gassho” was the theme of this year’s Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Ministers Association and National Council Meetings (NCM), hosted by the BCA Northern District at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Sacramento, CA from February 21-25. BCA delegates passed the annual budget, installed the Executive Committee, and resolved other BCA organizational business.

As in previous years, the NCM included Dharma-focused activities as well: a special chanting ritual and a Dharmathon (series of short Dharma talks) by BCA ministers; and a symposium sponsored by the Institute of Buddhist Studies and the Center for Buddhist Education on “Religiosity and Social Consciousness in the BCA” with Dr. Tetsuden Kashima as the keynote speaker. More NCM coverage will appear in the April Wheel of Dharma.

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Rev. Henry Adams (at the podium) delivers the keynote speech at the 71st NW District Buddhist Convention. Photo by Sophi Mosbruker.
There are many Buddhist stories that we can share with people. I would like to share one of them with you this month.

One day, some young men and women were playing in a pool. A thief came from outside, took all of their clothes and jewels, and ran away. Seeing this, some of the young men got out of the pool and ran after the thief, but they lost him.

It so happened that Shakyamuni Buddha was nearby. They stopped and asked him if he saw a man running away with a bundle of clothes. They explained what had happened and asked him if he had seen the thief.

Shakyamuni Buddha, looking at these young men, asked them, “What is more important; your belongings or your own lives?” They looked at each other and replied, “Our lives, of course!” Shakyamuni Buddha said to them, “Then, sit down here.” He continued, explaining how we pay a lot of attention to things that are not very important or crucial and hardly any attention to our lives. The men listened intensely to what he had to say and became his disciples.

This story makes me think about my own life. I personally spend too much of my time watching TV, talking about political issues, thinking about the Buddhist Churches of America’s organizational issues, and other nonsense.

We pay too much attention to things that are not crucial to our true wellness. The Dharma urges us to pause and think about our lives: our lives, meaning our selves. Who are we? What is the purpose of our lives? Where are we going? Without contemplating these fundamental issues of our lives, we cannot truly live.

What was it that Shakyamuni Buddha and Shinran Shonin wanted to share with us? Let us find it out by looking at the Nembutsu teaching.

During the O-Higan season, let us pay a little more attention to our lives, which are precious and irreplaceable. By doing so, we will be able to live with fulfillment and joy.

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

Are You An Evil Person?

By Rev. Yushi Mukojima, Mountain View Buddhist Temple

Do you often argue with others? I am afraid that I have often argued with my wife. In Japan, when we don’t get along with others or have difficulties in personal relations, we call this situation a “bump.” I imagine many of you also have difficulties in personal relations.

The reason why we bump into others is that we cannot see what is around us very well. If we could see the path ahead of us clearly, we would never run into anything. The fact that we bump into things all the time indicates that we are not living in the world of delusion and cannot see what is really in front of us. Because we walk assuredly everywhere as if we own the place, we cannot actually see anything often bump into each other too much.

In Buddhism, the “world of darkness” refers to the foolishness which prevents us from seeing our true selves, which are full of self-centeredness. Selfishness can be divided into three minds. First, there is the mind of believing, which is certain that “I alone am enlightened.” Second, there is the mind that wants to have its own way in everything. And third is the mind that loves only itself. All of us are constantly confused by our selfish minds. Even if we are wrong, we cannot accept others’ suggestions. We take for granted the kindness of others, so we cannot show our thanks. And because we cannot forgive the faults of others, we always complain about them. It is our sad nature that when we accuse others, we brush aside our own shortcomings. We unconsciously see ourselves as the standard of justice, and this situation makes us angry.

In contrast, from the Jodo Shinshu point of view, an evil person is one who is humble and self-illuminated by the light of wisdom who is aware that the self is filled with self-centeredness and arrogance. An evil person in Jodo Shinshu is one who can see and reflect deeply on his foolish way of living that is ruled by selfishness. He lives cultivating the mind that respects others.

Because we are living in darkness, we tend to believe, “I am a good person.” But a socially established good person can only be hellish.

A society which embraces the Nembutsu teaching is not a world full of arrogant good people who only judge other people and criticize other people’s faults. We need to become evil people—namely, those who are able to feel shame when they acknowledge our shortcomings and mistakes and are able to apologize to one another. The Nembutsu teaching is the light of wisdom.

Please remember that those who always believe that they alone are right, are actually creating hell, which is currently ruled by evil people; namely, a community and families filled with peace and harmony who rejoice in the light of Nembutsu.

Are you a good person? Or an evil person?

Wheel of Dharma

Refurbishing the Enmanji Buddhist Temple Naijin

The naijin (altar) at the Enmanji Buddhist Temple has served its Sangha for nearly 85 years. It has a beautiful, large shrine building and throne enshrining an image of Amida Buddha, with implements and decorations donated by many members through the years. In late February this year, staff from Kyoto’s Wakayabashi Buddhist Temple came to disassemble the altar with the help of Enmanji members so that it can be refurbished and have time to “rest and relax” for a few months before it is refurbished.

Enmanji Buddhist Temple in Sebastopol, CA has a very unusual history. The 1933 Chicago World’s Fair Japanese Hall (BCA Buddhist Altar) for the Enmanji Buddhist Temple has served its Sangha for many more years to come. The conclusion of the altar’s Fair, through the efforts of the late Bishop Kenju Ma- naijin and Revs. Tatsui Terakawa and Tokio Yamamori of the Buddhist Mission of North America (founder of the Bud- dhist Churches of America), the Manchu- ren Pavillon was offered to the BMNA and eventually became the bando (main hall) for the Enmanji Buddhist Temple.

BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Hiroshi Akibo stated at the “Temporary Farewell Service” for the naijin, “It is time for a vacation for the ‘parent’ (top) of the En- manji Buddhist Temple.” The members gratefully decided to have the naijin refurbished so that it can serve the Enmanji Sangha for many more years to come. The dedication of the altar is scheduled to take place in December of this year.

By Rev. Kodo Umezu, BCA Bishop

Like the Buddhist Churches of America

MARCH 2018
President’s Message: My 3 A.M. Meetings with Taiko and Shinran

By Kan Tanimoto, BCA President

Being the BCA President the last two years has been a rewarding as well as interesting journey. It has taken me to places I would have never gone to, and I have met many Sangha members who have felt humbled by their dedication to the Dharma. I will never forget their generously taking the time to talk about their issues. They felt important. As BCA President, I felt my mission was to listen to the opinions of our Sangha members, new and old, of all ages.

The other day I was asked at a district council meeting what was the most important achievement I had accomplished as president. The question was hard to answer because I had never really thought about it. The truth of the matter is, it is very difficult to achieve anything great in two short years. What would I love to have achieved? I would have liked to solve the financial issues that BCA is constantly facing. I would have loved to find a way to increase the sense of community membership, offer full scholarships to those interested in entering the BCA ministry, hire more BCA staff to better operate the organization, hire a BCA youth director to develop our young, and bring in a marketing specialist to help us spread the word of the Dharma for peace and compassion.

Through my travels to many temples, I found that listening to what our members have to say, and sometimes addressing their needs, was very important. I have always said BCA’s most valuable assets are the “grassroots.” Sangha members who have committed much of their lives to the Teachings of the Dharma. My goal was to reach out and hear their stories and to thank them for helping support their temples and the BCA.

But as you can imagine, two years was not enough time to cover many things directly and give trouble to others. These shadows make us suffer because I had never really thought about them. The truth of the matter is, it is very difficult to achieve anything great in two short years.

Do You Have a Home Altar?

By Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, Berkeley Buddhist Temple

I have three sons: Takayo, Eigo and Hiroto. At home they know where to go when they are hungry. They usually open the refrigerator or pantry to find food. When they get sleepy at night, they know where to go. They go to their bed to sleep. We have a supper room like a gym where they really appreciated. For those who have a home altar, please take good care of it, especially if you inherited it from your parents or grandparents. It must have been a special place for them. As parents or grandparents, they might have even thought of you, putting their hands in the Buddha’s hank, or obutsudan. It is not just a mysterious box, but it is an important thing that enshrines your inner and spiritual life at home, inherited from your ancestors.

For those who do not have a home altar yet, I strongly recommend getting one because it is the most important thing that you don’t need to get a permit from the city to add this special space to your home.

A Dana Lesson

“But the true compassion of the Pure Land path consists in calling the Nembutsu, ‘Namo Amitabha,’ which is true. They sit patiently accepting me until eventually I say, ‘Sangha members who made me up in the middle of the night, who could I turn to and talk about the things that are troubling me?’ This was when I would go to my best advisors. These two advisors, having a statue of Shinran and Shonin given to me years ago by my father when we traveled together to Kyoto, and my dog, Taiko.

It may seem rather simplistic to think that a statue of Shinran and a dog could help me resolve my concerns, but it is true. They sit patiently accepting me until eventually I find my own truth.

This past January when I traveled with Bishop Umezu on a once-in-a-lifetime experience of the Hoonko Service at the Nishi Hongwanji, I bought a similar statue of Shinran and gave it to our next BCA President, Dick Stambol. I know Shonin will also guide Dick to listen to Buddha’s wisdom and guidance in helping you, our temple find joy within the Nembutsu.

To everyone.
At Zen River, we often talk about Zen practice as a way to find one’s specific function in life. According to the Mahayana tradition, we all have something to offer to this world, even though we may be confused about what that could be. Everyone has buddha-nature, which means that each one of us is endowed with excellent bodhisattva qualities. But those qualities are not always apparent or wisely used, and they can flourish only if we are willing to let go of the highly conditioned narratives we have of ourselves and others. This process involves challenging and unexpected yet enlightening transformations that over time allow for more self-reliance, giving us a better sense of how to navigate life with wisdom and compassion. It’s no wonder Buddhist practitioners are called “followers of the Way.”

The Western approach to Zen usually emphasizes individual responsibility: “Nobody is going to practice for me; I have to do it. I have to sit for many hours a day, make bows, recite sutras, follow the precepts, and realize The Way for myself. Ultimately, it’s all up to me.” However true this may be, there is a lot of ‘’and’’ and ‘’or’’ in this approach, and that can become a hindrance in itself. Jodo Shinshu, a form of Pure Land Buddhism that is also known as Shin Buddhism, refers to this as jiriki, or ‘’self-power’’, and contrasts it to tariki, or other-power – meaning the reliance on Amida Buddha. It emphasizes the basic Mahayana tenet that, indeed, each one of us someday experience enlightenment, but only if we are willing to ask for help. Shin means ‘’faith’’, and Shinran (1173-1263), the founder of Shin Buddhism, made faith the foundation of his teaching. According to him, we live in a degenerate age of the dharma, far removed from Shakyamuni’s life, and are on our own to realize and act upon the Way all by ourselves. Fortunately, we can call upon Amida Buddha, who is happy to welcome us into his Western Paradise where conditions are much more beneficial for attaining realization. That is why Shinran said that Shin Buddhism has a strong devotional character and relying on jiriki is seen as a form of pride.

This approach has more in common with the Zen teaching of Dogen Zenji than many of us may realize. In Genjo-kuan, he clearly states that the ‘’I’’ we usually identify with is not the one who can become enlightened; in fact, it is the one we are supposed to forget! What is required is a leap of faith into the unknown. Interestingly, Dogen was a contemporary of Shinran and both had a Tendai background. Some scholars even believe that they may have met.

It is indeed fruitful to compare the approaches of Zen and Shin Buddhism, as I have often noticed in conversation with Rev. Jerry Hirano, the head priest of the Shin Buddhist Temple in Salt Lake City. He became a close friend when Myoho Sensei and I lived there in the nineties, and since then we’ve maintained an ongoing discussion on exactly this topic. I saw him again last September after the inauguration of the new zendo of Senseis Musho and Musha, and he said a few words in his talk about the ceremony. That is why Shinran and Dogen have a very strong devotional character and relying on jiriki is seen as a form of pride.

It is always interesting to compare the approaches of Zen and Shin Buddhism, as I have often noticed in conversation with Rev. Jerry Hirano, the head priest of the Shin Buddhist Temple in Salt Lake City. He became a close friend when Myoho Sensei and I lived there in the nineties, and since then we’ve maintained an ongoing discussion on exactly this topic. I saw him again last September after the inauguration of the new zendo of Senseis Musho and Musha, and he said a few words in his talk about the ceremony. That is why Shinran and Dogen have a very strong devotional character and relying on jiriki is seen as a form of pride.

March 24 ~ Bay District Buddhist Women’s League Ecology Workshop: “Mottainai,” at Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, 2751 Louis Road, Palo Alto, CA, 8:30 am-3 pm, $30 includes continental breakfast and lunch. Mottainai means “don’t be wasteful.” Visit pudolca.org and register by March 10.


April 5-7 ~ Spring Minister’s Assistant Program (MAP) Seminar. Talks include Talks with Rev. Dr. David Magone; Seven Patriarchs: Vasubandhu with Rev. Kiyoshi Kuwahara, and Chanting with Rev. Anan Hatanaka.

April 20 ~ International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP) begins. Three ministers from Japan, Rev. Eisako Mikame, Rev. Hikibi Murakami, and Rev. Noritaka Imada will begin a three-month training. Sponsored by the Hongwanji Office.

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April 27-29 ~ FDSTL Conference: “Intersections” in Foster City, CA. Contact Carl Yanari at fdstl2018conference@gmail.com. Registration and schedule available at buddhistchurchesofamerica.org. Scroll down for flyer and links.

SAVE THE DATE:

2018 BCA Educational Events
Programs subject to change. Events at the Jodo Shinshu Center unless otherwise noted.


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SAVE THE DATE:

BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org E-mail: cbe@cbahq.org Phone: (510) 809-1460
Thank You to 2017 BIS Donors

The Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) wishes to extend its heartfelt appreciation for the generosity of the groups and individuals that have contributed to the 2017 BIS Annual Giving Program. (A listing of January 1 to July 31 was published in the October issue of the Wheel of Dharma.) As IBS continues to move forward to become recognized as an accredited educational institution of higher learning, the continued support received is decisive for its future.

For 2017 we have received in gifts a total of $256,736 in the following categories: BIS Ministerial Scholarships, Chaplaincy/ Research Scholarships, Institutional Development, Access/Inclusion, Buddhist Churches of America's 2018-2019 budget, and General Donations.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following persons and organizations for their generous gifts. We apologize for any errors. Please contact s.yamaoka@bcahq.org or phone (415) 776-5068.

Letter from the BCA Endowment Foundation

Dear BCA Members and Friends:

The Buddhist Churches of America Endowment Foundation (BCAEF) continues to invest funds to benefit from the growth in income and gross assets for donors, BCA, Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), numerous affiliated groups and temples. Funds are invested in long term investments to benefit from the growth in financial markets over time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was around 20,000 a year ago and it now has reached over 26,000 in 2018. Although this type of growth cannot be depended on, it does come routinely over time and can only be enjoyed if the investments are made in the market when growth occurs.

BCAEF investments are placed with Angeles Investment Advisors who select investments managed by successful groups of professionals that have shown the ability to perform over time. Through a moderate approach, Angeles has exceeded all of its benchmarks in 2017 and is returning a return of 16.8% in the Growth Fund, 13.1% in the Growth and Income Fund and 5.9% in the Income Fund that are maintained by the Endowment for investments.

There are now 24 affiliated groups that have chosen to establish BCAEF investment accounts with the BCAEF. The BCAEF has provided these groups with an opportunity to participate in having their investments professionally managed. If your group or temple is looking for investment alternatives, please consider this service provided by the BCAEF.

The BCAEF received a total of $628,161 in donations in 2017, disbursed $1,614,064 to BCA and IBS for programs and collected a net gain of $528,161, which is more than double the results of 2016. Of the donations received, $100,000 was contributed towards funding COBCP scholarships and $528,161 was given for programs.

The efforts of the Joint Development Committee to conduct coordinated fundraising on behalf of BCA and BCAEF are continuous to bear fruit as opportunities for memberships and friends to contribute are created and implemented. Please participate in any way that you can and if you need any assistance contact Hideaki Mizuno, Executive Director at the BCA Endowment Foundation. He can be reached at kmizuno@bcahq.org or phone (415) 776-5068.

The other day I was having a serious discussion with a close friend who was in a terrible bind. I was trying to share a different perspective of things to help him out. But no matter what I said, he kept responding “I know, I know…”

Our conversation then turned to his situation of having to listen to and deal with people who think they know it all. And that was exactly what I was trying to point out to my friend was his mistake!

But then both of us broke into laughter, realizing that this is exactly what the Buddha is trying to teach us—we, ourselves, are walking around with blindfolds over our eyes, and that we each live in our own little “I know, I know” delusional world…

Whatever I do I know and truly wish is that I could grasp the infinite wisdom and compassion of the Amida which embraces this imperfect and foolish me who really doesn’t know…NamMyohoRengeKyo…
アメリカでの開教伝道生活「LIFE in an America」

小杭 好臣

今年4月、アメリカ生活を終えて日本に転住することにしました。思えば、1962年10月に渡米して、56年の歳月が流れてしまった。9日間の船旅をへて、サンフランシスコに着いたのが、昨日のように思いだされる。22歳の若き年齢であった。九州、佐賀の、専念寺の信徒は、明治時代に渡米しようとして、連れ戻された祖父、願海の生まれ代わりといって私を送り出してくれた。確かに、私は、海の向こうのアメリカという大きな国に、不思議に、幼少の頃から興味をもっていた。

バークレー仏教会で、研修をうけた後、ロサンゼルス別院に着任した。毎週の英語による法話は、思うように出来ないし、会話もスムーズに通じないし、神経質となり、自動車事故を起こして、上司と、喧嘩をしてしまった。「役に立たない奴、生意気な奴、、、」ということで、京都の西本願寺の海外担当総務に通知をされたらしく、デンワで呼び出された。「頭がおかしくなった、、、と連絡があったが、ほんとか?」と聞かれた。「生まれた時から可笑しいです!」と応えたら、大声で笑われ、「大丈夫、短気と女には、気を着けろよ!」と言われて、デンワは終わった。

そのときの総務、湯川汝劼師、現在、ワシントン州タコマで引退されている湯川孝紹師の父親、この人の受け取りが無かったら、今の私はアメリカには存在し得なかったといえよう。

その後、花山信勝、九代目総長の監督下におかれ、米国佛教団本部のブックストアーで働く事となった。ここで、鈴木俊隆老師と出会った。当時、老師は、サンフランシスコ禅宗、桜港寺の住職であった。

情けない私の姿をみて、座禅に誘ってくださった。「元気になれば、如来さまも喜ばれるだろう!」といわれた。

不安な状態より立ち上がれない、情けない私は、自殺することばかり考えていた。老師に相談すると、「急がなくても、必ず死ぬ、その時に死ねばよい!浄土真宗では、如来さまの命に生かされるというのではないか!勝手に、自分の命と思うのは、思い上がりではないか!」と、一喝された。

その声は、今も、私の中に生きている。

老師と、座禅と、そして、ヒッピー族との体験談は、傑作で、尽きない話だが、他の機会に譲ろう。

1965年4月、オックスナード仏教会に赴任辞令を受けて、仏教会の信徒数は80余名、信徒の40パーセントは農業を営む農場主で、日系アメリカ人であった。聖堂の裏には鉄道線路が敷かれて居て、貨車が通過する度に、開教使住宅は揺れた。寝室の天井からは、時々、ゴミが落ちて来た。独身でよかったと思ってしまった。

同じ通りにはメキシコ人用のレストランやバーが並んでいて、葬儀の最中にマリヤッチのトランペットが響いて、泣き笑いとなったこともあった。

3年過ぎて、仏教会も大きくなり、キリスト教会を購入し、新地に移転した。アメリカで、アメリカ人に開教伝道をするなら、アメリカ東部で勉強しなさいという、日系二世の助言を得て、コネチカット州、エール大学神学部に修学し、キリスト教学を専攻した。

在学中に、友達になった神学部の生徒であり、カトリックの神父であった友人が恋に落ちた、悩んだ上に神父を止めて、大学の教授への道を選んだ。二人の結婚の儀式を依頼されたことは、いまも記憶に新しい。仏教の教えは素晴らしいと感動してくれた神父であった。

大学の休みには、ニューヨークの町に出て、ニューヨーク仏教会を尋ね、関法善先生にお会いする事が楽しみとなった。ニューヘブンの大学町からは2時間半のドライブであった。マンハッタンのタイムスクエアーにたつと、道行く人々から世界の言葉が聞こえた。ニューヨーク市はまさしく世界の大キャピタルであった。

関先生は、アリゾナ仏教会設立後、1936年、日系二世の運転する単発飛行機で、ロッキー山脈を越え、ニューヨークに飛来された。そのとき、懐に持参されたものが南無阿弥陀仏の六字名号であったという。

1968年の夏休みに、シカゴから、中西部仏教会の創設者、河野行道先生、デンバーから、ロッキー山脈の親鸞聖人と称された、玉井好孝先生の3人の大先輩が揃い、同席する機会をえた。

河野先生が、「アメリカは、大きい!」と、いわれると、関先生が、「いや、世界は大きい!」。そして、「いや、阿弥陀如来の世界は、無限である!」と、玉井先生が笑われた。親鸞聖人や蓮如上人を伝統という檻の中から解き放し、今、アメリカに、英語を話す宗祖として生きていられたら、何をされるのであろうか、、、と考えなければいけないと、3人は同意された。

仏教の教えも、念仏の教えも、大きく、広く、すべての人が納得し、感動するように説かなければならないと、同和される3人の姿に28歳の私は感動し、感激した。今も、強く印象に残って、私の試練となっている。

1970年7月、辻顕隆総長の辞令によってサンフランシスコ仏教会に着任し、7年間駐在した。禅宗、桜港寺の森山大行禅師、日蓮宗、法華寺の菅原隆岳上人、そして、浄土真宗の私は、3人の傑僧と評されて、よく飲んで、よく話した。宗派の違う3人が一緒に活躍できたことは大衆の敬意を得ることとなった。3人、それら、違っていたが、不思議にも仏法の中に一つになれたといえよう。
去る二月二十一日より二十五日までカリフォルニア州サクラメント市で米国仏教団開教使会と年次総会が開催された。開教使会では『開教使アシスタントプログラム』の新しいガイドラインが承認され、また任期満了に従い宇宿パトリシア師が平野ジェリー師に代わり議長に選出された。

続く総会では多くの議題が討議されたが、予算を除く主な争点はサンフランシスコ仏教会に隣接する本部の建物が古くなり、その改修に多くの費用がかかることから、浄土真宗センターにその機能を移すという案が提示され、その是非が問われた。討議の結果、新しく委員会を結成し、教団のこれからの方向性を来年の総会までに示すということが決定された。

この会議の期間中、多かったプログラムも用意されて、二百名の参加者が多くのことを学ぶことができ喜ばれていた。晩餐会では、谷口瑞渓開教使と宮地信雄開教使の二人が表彰され、長年の開教生活に感謝の気持ちがおくられた。また、新しく開教のチームに加わったタコマ仏教会の宮地崇師とオレンジ郡仏教会のジョン・ターナー師の二人にも同じく教団と仏教婦人会連盟より『お衣』用にとギフトが贈られた。

最終日には教団総代経法要が厳修され、谷口瑞渓名誉開教使による熱のこもったお取次がなされ、五十年を超える長い開教生活の思い出や、本願の真髄、これからの教団の将来への希望が語られた。そして最後に、リチャー・ド・スタンブル会長をはじめとする新幹部の就任式が執り行われ、諸行事を成功裏に終了することができた。これらの行事の準備に力を注いだ北カリフォルニア教区の関係者に感謝決議が行われた。また、来年はアリゾナで総会が行われると南部教区の代表者から招待のアナウンスがなされた。

写真提供、Cathy Fujimori

2月9日、10日に教師資格取得のための研修会が浄土真宗センターで行われた。同研修会は得度を持った開教使アシスタントや将来開教使を志すIBSの生徒らが受講し、勤式作法や宗門法規、住職としての僧侶の心得など、教師資格を得るために必要な知識やスキルを習得する。IBSからの参加者は「ご法話の講義がとあるのに、自分がそれを忘れないように。」と指導を受け、法話の大切さを深く心に刻んだ。同研修会は、昨年11月に第一回目が開催され、今回が二回目となる。今年9月にもう一度研修会を受講した後、11月に京都へ行き教師研修を受ける予定にしている。

「ダーナ」という言葉をご存知ですか。元々はインドのパーリ語で「与える」とか「施す」ということです。仏さまに感謝の気持ちを表すのに「お布施」という言葉を使いますが、その元となる語が「ダーナ」です。この言葉を冠した新しいプログラムが米国仏教団維持財政のための募金活動を支援する「500クラブ」といっており、それぞれお願い状を各仏教会の会員に送り、それからの収入を教団の運営の一部としていました。ところが、本部から依頼状が送られ、依頼内容は不明確なこともあり、二つを一つにして「ダーナプログラム」という新しい形で、会員のみなさまや有縁の方のサポートをお願いすることになったのです。これによる収入は年次予算に組み込まれ、仏教教育部を含む、教団全体の活動を支援することになります。ご寄付される方が教団だけではなく、寄付金の半分を、援助したい仏教会を指定することで、その仏教会をも援助できるということです。例えば、クレジットカードもしくは銀行口座から毎月20ドル寄付するなど、教団と各仏教会がお互い助け合える仕組みとなっています。詳しくは、開教使または会長にお問い合わせください。コンピュータで米国仏教団のホームページから申し込むこともできます。どうか是非、ご協力、ご支援をお願いいたします。ホームページのアドレス、http://www.buddhistchurchsofamerica.org/bca-dana-program/