



WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America

LIVING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

BCA Discusses Reopening Temples — and Concerns

At Special Meeting, OCBC, Vista, Las Vegas Detail Steps

By Jon Kawamoto
Editor, Wheel of Dharma

While BCA leaders and ministers raised several issues and concerns over reopening temples and churches at a special June 19 webinar, one message

was clear: Protect the minister and the Sangha — above all else — in the process.

The BCA held the meeting in light of the continuing decline this year in COVID-19 deaths, infections and hospitalizations in the United States, and the concurrent rise in the vaccination rate among Americans. Since the June meeting, however, the number of new COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths has risen dramatically because

of the Delta variant, primarily from the unvaccinated. But the overall statistics are still far lower than the peak period in January.

As of July 22, 35 percent of U.S. counties are experiencing high levels of transmission, according to the CDC COVID-19 data tracker. COVID-19 cases are on the rise in nearly 90 percent of U.S. jurisdictions, and out-



Members of the Las Vegas Sangha pose recently in front of the city's iconic sign. (Courtesy of Michael Tanaka)

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Above, Umekichi Tanaka, seated in center, poses with family members in 1933 to dedicate his gift of an Onaijin to the Guadalupe Buddhist Church. Right, Yoshiko Miwa, who is circled, is shown with other children and staff at the church's Children's Home. Far right, Miwa, now 107, visits the Onaijin at the 2019 Guadalupe Obon Festival. (Courtesy of Tets Furukawa and Miwa family)



BUTSU BUTSU

Memories of '71 BCA Scouts Jamboree

Editor's Note: Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata returns with a special "Butsu Butsu" column that pays tribute to the BCA's Boy Scouts and their 1971 trip to Japan for the 13th World Scout Jamboree.

By Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata
Buddhist Church of Oakland

It's hard to believe that like many of you, I have inhabited this earth for more than half a century. During this time, I am so grateful that the BCA Sang-

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An Accidental Realization

Editor's Note: Teresa Shimogawa, a new Minister's Assistant at the Orange County Buddhist Church, recently wrote the following article on the EVERYDAY BUDDHIST blog. The article is being reprinted in the Wheel of Dharma with Shimogawa's permission.

By Teresa Shimogawa
Orange County Buddhist Church



I'm a Buddhist convert. I never set out to officially call myself a Buddhist. It just sort of happened by association when I met and married the teacher in the class-

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DONOR APPRECIATION SECTION

The August issue of the Wheel of Dharma contains the special annual Donor Appreciation Section on Pages 6-9, which includes:

- The 2021 BCA donors list who make it possible to continue sharing the Dharma.
- A message from Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada on the meaning and significance of the Dharma Forward campaign logo — which features a monarch butterfly.
- An update on the Dharma Forward's recent successful Panda Express fundraiser.
- Learn about the BCA Endowment Foundation.
- An article on annual giving through the Dana Program and how it supports BCA.

Guadalupe's Onaijin Embodies Storied Past

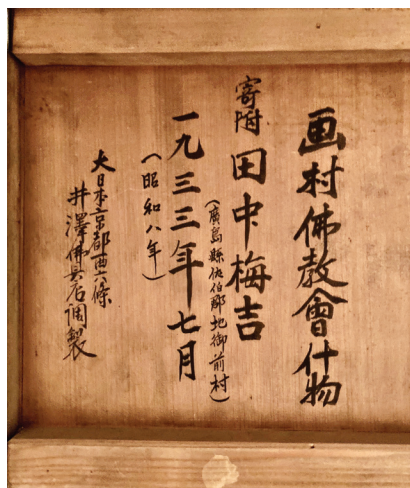
Nearly a Century Later, Immigrant Farmer's Act of Gratitude Continues to Resonate

By Jon Kawamoto
Editor, Wheel of Dharma

The Onaijin at the small Guadalupe Buddhist Church in California's Central Coast is at the center of a remarkable story of causes and conditions encompassing gratitude, joy, perseverance — and heartbreak.

The story spans more than a century and connects Umekichi Tanaka, a Japanese immigrant farmer and widower, with BCA icon Shinobu Matsuura, and with Tanaka's daughter — 107-year-old Yoshiko Miwa. And the thread of events includes Miwa's meeting with another centenarian, Toshiko Iriyama, at Guadalupe's Obon Festival in 2019. Iriyama passed away Feb. 4 at the age of 106.

It also has a tragic past linked to a worldwide pandemic — not the current COVID-19 crisis, but the



The kanji at the Onaijin reads, "Donated by Umekichi Tanaka from Jigozen, Hatsuokaichi-city in July 1933. (Courtesy of Rev. Naomi Nakano; translation provided by Rev. Ryuta Furumoto)"

1918 Spanish flu pandemic.

The story of the Onaijin actually dates back to 1915, when Rev. Issei Matsuura began as the Guadalupe Buddhist Church's minister. His

wife, Shinobu, would arrive in 1918.

The Guadalupe Buddhist Church, established in 1909, holds a storied place among the BCA's churches and temples. It was where Rev. Matsuura served two tenures — from 1915-1928 and also from 1934-1947 — and it was where the family would raise five children. The couple's eldest daughter, Jane, would become an iconic BCA figure herself, spreading Shin Buddhism in the United States with her husband, Rev. Kanmo Imamura. Rev. Imamura was the son of Bishop Rev. Yemyo Imamura, the visionary second Bishop of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

The Guadalupe Buddhist Church's first president was a vegetable farmer named Umekichi Tanaka. He had married a picture

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Ignorance, Third of Three Poisons in Buddhism



Editor's Note: This is the third of three columns by Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada on the Three Poisons of Buddhism — greed, anger and ignorance, or stupidity (GAS).

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

I would like to continue my discussion of the three poisons by discussing the third of the poisons, ignorance.

The Chinese characters for how ignorance is described is quite interesting. In Japanese, the Buddhist term for ignorance is “mumyo,” and it consists of two Chinese

characters. The first character, “mu 無” means “there is no,” or, “it doesn’t exist, and the second character, “myo 明” means “clear, bright, radiant.” So, when you put those two characters together 無明, it means, “there is no clarity, no radiance, no brightness.” It is a very descriptive way of explaining ignorance. When you are in ignorance, there is no light, no radiance, only darkness.

How do we feel when we are in the dark? Have you ever had the power go out in your house and you are in pitch black trying to find your way around? You stumble over the sofa, or bump into the table, or trip over the shoes you left on the floor, all because you couldn’t see them in the dark.

Buddhism is saying to us that our life, as an un-awakened, un-enlightened being, is to live as if we are stumbling around in the dark. We don’t know which way to turn. We run into all kinds of things. A life of ignorance is to have

all kinds of things become obstacles in our life, like floundering around in the dark. We don’t know which way to turn, which way to go. We go left, we go right, but every direction is dark. We cause ourselves and others all kinds of pain because we can’t see where we are going. That is ignorance.

Ignorance is also not referring to education, like failing on a test or having a low IQ. You could be brilliantly smart, and still ignorant in a Buddhist sense. In the same manner, you could have very little education and you could have true wisdom, the opposite of ignorance.

Ignorance means to not see clearly, to not see reality, because we lack light, we lack wisdom. What we can see of the world is filtered through our self-centered viewpoint, like looking at the world through sunglasses.

Because we lack wisdom and cannot see things clearly, it leads to anger, or greed,

which in turn creates more ignorance, more greed, more anger, and we are caught in a vicious cycle of self-created suffering.

Buddhist art depicts this quite strikingly. It shows three animals each biting each other’s tail. The three animals are a rooster, a pig, and a snake. The pig represents ignorance, the rooster represents greed, and the snake represents anger. This image shows how each poison perpetuates each other.

I find the best example of these three poisons being present all at once is the example of gambling in Las Vegas. Have you ever had the experience of playing a slot machine for a long time, trying to hit the big jackpot, but it just never hits. Finally, you give up and walk away, but as you walk away, you look back at that machine you were playing. Up walks a little old lady and on the first pull, “Cha-ching!” She hits the big jackpot.

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By Rev. Jundo Gregory Gibbs
Pasadena Buddhist Temple
Arizona Buddhist Temple

One way or another, each of us needs to figure out how to be at home in the world At peace in our daily lives. Nembutsu, Buddha-recollection, in our stream of tradition means saying, or holding silently in mind, the name of the Buddha of Limitless Wisdom-light

and Endless Life. Our feeling ill at ease in various ways will evaporate in our eventual, Enlightened lives.

The Nembutsu can also help us move towards being more at home even now. The Nembutsu is the direct path (Jiki Do). Nembutsu in its many verbal forms is a direct path to contact with the sacred. “Namo Amida Butsu” gives us direct access to that which is worthy, nurturing and true.

The Nembutsu is the direct path to encountering Amida Buddha’s active fulfilling of the Vow. The Vow of Universal Liberation (Hon Gan), is the promise of a new home which is the fulfillment of

our dreams. The Buddha’s Promise of help for all living beings can also help us to be more at peace even now. Even if our circumstances are dire, the Nembutsu can help us to endure them. Still, I ask, how can we move forward with some semblance of composure?

There are two things that anyone must do to be at home in the world. The one thing we must do to have peace in our lives is to change our attitudes toward the world. We must soften our tone, deflate pretensions, set more realistic goals for ourselves. Buddhists of most schools, styles and persuasions usually understand this obligation. The

other thing that we must do, in order to be at home in the world, is to act to change the world. We must act to change the world so that it comes to accord more closely with the most positive values and aspirations we have developed as Buddhists.

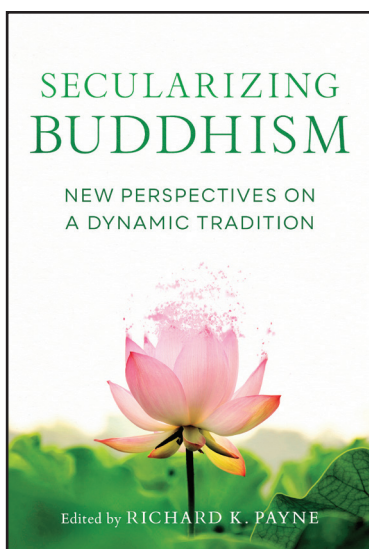
At a minimum, we must speak out in defense of the bullied, oppressed and marginalized. We must oppose tyrants, tyrannical ideas, and garden variety bullies. We must decry blocs to freedom of all sorts. We must, at a minimum, make it clear that we insist:

Stop Asian Hate

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‘Secularizing Buddhism’ Explores Range of Modern Meanings of Buddhism

By Richard K. Payne
Yehan Numata Professor
of Japanese Buddhist Studies,
Institute of Buddhist Studies



This collection is called “Secularizing Buddhism” in order to emphasize the dynamic processes of change that are transforming the way Buddhism is understood and practiced in the present.

This choice also avoids the fruitless debates over what is or isn’t “secular.” At the same time, many of the proponents of change have taken the label of “secular” to identify their own efforts, but there is no

agency that can impose orthodoxy on those who choose

to call themselves “secular Buddhists.” In other words, there is no particular form of secular Buddhism, but rather a variety of efforts to create a form that isn’t constrained by what the proponents consider to be the religion of Buddhism.

The collection includes 14 chapters. The first is an introduction by the editor, and this is followed by essays written by some of the leading scholars of the English-speaking Buddhist world today.

In the opening chapter, Sarah Shaw’s essay examines


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FYI

“Secularizing Buddhism: New Perspectives on a Dynamic Tradition”
Edited by Richard K. Payne
www.shambhala.com/secularizing-buddhism.html
Shambhala Publications,
2021, \$24.95 paperback,
360 pages

Shambhala Publications has created a 30 percent discount code for “Secularizing Buddhism.”

The discount code is: SB30. Code valid on www.shambhala.com/secularizing-buddhism.html for orders of “Secularizing Buddhism” through Aug. 31, 2021. Enter code in shopping cart. Cannot be combined with other offers.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



By **Dr. Kent Matsuda**
BCA President

This month, we wish Rev. Earl Ikeda from the New York Buddhist Church a wonderful retirement. Rev. Ikeda served both the BCA and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. I'm sure the Eastern District will miss his culinary skills.

We are beginning to discuss the opening of the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC) and the BCA headquarters building. Like many of our temples, the

buildings have been closed since the start of the pandemic and we have restricted entry for the tenants who normally work there. However, as more people have been getting vaccinated against COVID-19, I believe that we can now start discussing reopening our buildings and start working on conducting business as usual.

We see that the Delta variant of the coronavirus is becoming more prevalent in the entire world. Vaccination with the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines is proving to be essential in preventing infections and severe disease. The Johnson and Johnson vaccine may be slightly less effective in this regard, but we need to see more data before making a decision on booster shots.

As we consider opening the JSC and headquarters, we have to be aware that some people may not be vaccinated or may

not be able to take the vaccine. We need to be able to accommodate both people in our buildings. We are aware that some temples need to consider the same when dealing with temple ministerial staff and office staff.

During the BCA's reopening temples Zoom meeting that took place in June, we were reminded by Minister's Assistant Rev. Elaine Donlin from the Buddhist Church of San Francisco that local and county rules on reopening need to be followed. Sometimes, your county may require a written reopening plan in place before re-opening your doors.

I am happy to announce that the second floor of the BCA headquarters building will be rented out to the Japanese Community Youth Council (JCYC). This San Francisco-based organization deals with programs for youth.

One of the founders of this organization was the recently retired Rev. Ron Kobata. We are also in the process of getting the former Bishop's parsonage in Belmont ready for renting. After Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu and his wife, Janet Umezu, moved out of the former parsonage, we have been busy making repairs and renovating the house.

Many thanks to the BCA ad hoc real estate committee, chaired by Steve Terusaki and Glenn Inanaga for doing a lot of work in getting the headquarters building and the former parsonage ready for renting. Also, many thanks to Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada for allowing BCA to rent out what would have been his office space in the headquarters building and the former parsonage. Rev. Harada will be using an office at the JSC and will stay at the JSC when he is in Northern

California. Although repairs to the headquarters building and the former parsonage are substantial, we hope to recoup our costs via rental income.

I would like to thank the late Helen Matoi from San Francisco and the late Katsumi Tanino from Seattle for their generous gifts to the BCA. Both were active members of their local temples and both included BCA in their estate plans.

Please explore the BCA's recently revised website. There, you will see the many BCA temples that are holding virtual or hybrid Obon celebrations. I suspect that many temples will be holding in-person celebrations next year. Also, be aware that the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) is putting on two seminars a month for our members. Prior seminars can be viewed on the CBE YouTube channel.

OCBC'S Katie Ikemoto Is FDSTL's Nitta Scholarship Recipient

She Led Jr. YBA Members in Virtual 'Obon at Home' in Tribute to Late Dad

By **Darlene Bagshaw**
FDSTL Nitta Scholarship
Chairperson

The 2021 Nitta Scholarship has been awarded to Katie Ikemoto, who helped lead Orange County Buddhist Church through the lack of in-person events by designing videos on Mother's Day and by creating a virtual "Obon at Home."

Katie helped her teenage peers design, script, and ad-

vertise a series of 22 videos posted on YouTube and Zoom to keep the Sangha connected with the essence of Obon. Containing everything from food to games to Obon odori, this virtual festival was viewed by more than 25,000 people.

Perhaps Katie's most striking quality is her passion for life in the face of adversity and her use of Buddhism to negotiate life's rocky road. The COVID-19 pandemic affected all of us, but hit Katie and the Ikemoto family especially hard, claiming the life of her father, Klete Ikemoto.

A 2019 Southern District YBA conference represented a turning point in her under-

standing of the Dharma.

"The part of the conference that stuck with me the most was our closing service," she said. "(CBE Youth Director) Koichi Mizushima read, 'In silently contemplating the transient nature of human existence, nothing is more fragile and fleeting in this world than the life of man.' I left the conference in awe of the wisdom of such words and expressed it when my dad picked me up and drove me home. I told him how exciting the conference was but, more important, how awestruck I had been from the 'White Ashes' and its notion of impermanence and gratitude in our lives.



Katie Ikemoto, of the Orange County Buddhist Church, is the 2021 Nitta Scholarship recipient. She has been accepted at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and will study communications. (Courtesy of Katie Ikemoto)

"Flash forward to April 2, 2020, and my dad's heart stopped," Katie continued. "He had been battling

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Social Welfare Committee Awards \$20,000 to Umenoki Gardens

Editor's Note: This article by the BCA Social Welfare Committee spotlights recipients of SWC grants, and how the grants help benefit organizations.

By **Naoko Fujii**
Palo Alto Buddhist Temple

The BCA Social Welfare Committee has awarded a \$20,000 grant to Umenoki Gardens Senior Home, located on the grounds of the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church in Union City, California.

Umenoki provides 24-hour palliative care for seniors who can no longer care for themselves and require more assistance than their families can provide. The care philosophy integrates Buddhist principles and Japanese culture to maintain the spirit of the Japanese American culture



Naoko Fujii and her daughter are shown with her parents, who were residents of Umenoki Gardens on the grounds at the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church in Union City. (Courtesy of Naoko Fujii)

and community. People from all backgrounds and religions are welcome at Umenoki.

The grant will help cover a shortfall caused by the

COVID-19 pandemic when the number of residents at the home was reduced by 50 percent. Each resident was given a single room to minimize the

risk of spreading COVID-19.

Umenoki is the only senior care facility located on the grounds of a BCA temple. It was founded in 2006 by members of the Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity.

The founders had a vision to create a place filled with positive energy with an acceptance of death at the end of

life. The residents and families have the opportunity to participate in services, celebrations and activities at SACBC.

The Japanese food and culture are especially important for residents with memory loss or dementia who light up with happy memories of celebratory foods and Japanese American traditions from the past.

For more information, go to: www.umenokihome.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that "Quest of Life" was one of the first English gathas to result from an English lyrics writing contest by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii in the early 1960s?

This BCA gatha recording has been added to the Chanting and Music webpage www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/chanting-music for August.

The lyrics for "Quest of Life" were written by the late Geraldine Hamai when she was a teenager. Music was composed by Toshiro Mayuzumi, commissioned by Hawaii Music Committee.

— BCA Music Committee



IBS Thanks Donors of 2021 Friends of IBS Annual Giving Program

The Institute of Buddhist Studies, its students, faculty, Board of Trustees, and the IBS family, wishes to extend its deepest gratitude to each and every donor for your generous support of the 2021 Friends of IBS Annual Giving Program.

From Jan. 1, 2021, to June 30, 2021, a total of \$366,750 was gratefully received in the first half of the year.

Our generous donors are as follows:

The donors list is available in the printed Wheel of Dharma issue.

Butsu Butsu

Continued from Page 1

ha has been such an integral part of my life.

Fifty years ago in July, I joined 31 Buddhist Boy Scouts from all eight BCA districts plus four adult leaders and embarked for Japan as the BCA's contingent to the 13th World Scout Jamboree.

Japan was emerging from the post-war recovery years and was making its presence felt on the world scene. One year earlier, Japan hosted Expo '70 in Osaka and before that, the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, but this was the first time that the world jamboree, held every four years, would be held in Asia at the foot of majestic Mount Fuji.

Participating BCA scouts and leaders besides myself included: Alan Hayashi, Wesley Kaihara, Wesley Koga, Michael Koga, Warren Higa, Neil Tsubota, Wayne Sutow, Fred Omai, Bryan Ono, Ralph Honda, Mike Iseri, Peter Adachi, Stephen Tomita, Dean Hiyama, Alan Yoshimura, Steve Omori, Glen Okuma, Bryan Maruhashi, Michael Yamane, Marshall Ota, David Hasegawa, Ben Yamane, Takeshi Yamanaka, Russell Uchiyama, Ken Suechika, Hiro Ouchi, Kaz Furukawa, Ken Yoneta, Mark Noguchi, Ken Ogami, Jim Taketa, Tom Suechika, Tak Obata, Shunkichi Ego, Tom Nagata and Rev. Hogen Fujimoto.

Just as the activities of the jamboree were getting underway, the weather suddenly changed and it started to rain, but little did we realize that Typhoon Olive was approaching Japan and our jamboree site would experience a direct hit!

After a few days of sitting



Buddhist Boy Scouts from all eight BCA districts and four adult leaders, including Rev. Brian Nagata, are shown in this 1971 photo in Japan. The BCA group attended the 13th World Scout Jamboree. (Courtesy of Rev. Brian Nagata)

in the drenching rain, we were evacuated from the jamboree site to the nearby city of Mishima thanks to the connections of assistant scoutmaster and Pasadena temple member Tom Suechika who had maintained friendships with Mishima officials through the Mishima-Pasadena Sister City program.

For most of us, this was our first visit to Japan, our first world jamboree and our first typhoon! Highlights included climbing Mount Fuji, meeting then Shinmon (now Zenmonsama) Koshin Ohtani, who, himself, was involved with the Japan Scouting program and meeting some of the more than 24,000 fellow Scouts from throughout the world.

After the typhoon and jamboree ended, we went on to Kyoto and had an audience with Monshu Kosho Ohtani and Shinmonshu Koshin Ohtani. Then we headed on to Hiroshima where we met with atomic bombing survivors residing at the Atomic Bomb Victims Hospital.

This was my first experience in realizing what it meant to be a Japanese American, an American with Hiroshima blood running through my body.

This year actually marks the 101st year of the BCA's involvement with the Boy Scout movement. The first Boy Scout Troop sponsored by a BCA temple was Troop 4 started by the Fresno Betsuin in 1920. Since that time, thousands of BCA youth have been a part of the BCA's Scouting program as Boy or Girl Scouts or Campfire Girls and fortunately, the Scouting program continues today in BCA temples 100 years later.

Hopefully, those of us who went through the BCA Scouting program have lived our lives being trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thirty, brave, clean and reverent.

Let me close by expressing my gratitude to all those who have led and supported our BCA Scouting program over the last century.

Honpa Hongwanji Lay Associations Convention to Feature BCA's Stambul

Past President Will Be Keynote Speaker on Sept. 10-11 at Hawaii event

The Hawaii State Federation of Honpa Hongwanji Lay Associations will be holding its 58th annual convention on Sept. 10-11.

This convention offers an opportunity to bring together lay members of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to discuss key issues and opportunities facing island temples.

The keynote address for the convention will be delivered by Richard Stambul, past president of the Buddhist Churches of America. The topic of Mr. Stambul's talk will be "Shin Buddhism: A Response to Anti-Asian Racism and Hate in 21st Century America."

While registered convention participants will hear Stambul's talk via the Zoom virtual platform, Lay Convention planners would also like to give non-registered individuals an opportunity to listen to his talk as well. Stambul's talk will be livestreamed on YouTube. To access his talk, go to: Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's YouTube channel

The livestream of



BCA Past President Richard Stambul (Courtesy of Richard Stambul)

Stambul's keynote address will begin at 9:15 a.m. HST (Hawaii Standard Time) on Saturday, Sept. 11. If you are not able to view his talk at that time, his message will be available for future viewing on YouTube.

Stambul was a foot soldier during the Civil Rights Movement, a past President of the Buddhist Churches of America, and a lawyer with a career focus on issues of social justice. He will ask you to be courageous in your thinking, to dare to see a Shin Buddhist path that calls out to you to confront the anti-Asian racism and hate we find in 21st century America, and how we use love, and not hate, to confront this racism and elevate ourselves in the process.



Reopening

Continued from Page 1

breaks are being reported in parts of the country that have low vaccination rates.

As of July 22, about 187.2 million people, or 56.4 percent of the total U.S. population, have received at least one dose of vaccine and about 162.2 million people, or 48.8 percent of the total U.S. population, have been fully vaccinated. Tragically, COVID-19 has killed more than 607,000 people now in the United States.

The BCA does not have a uniform policy addressing reopenings — that decision is left up to each individual temple and church which must adhere to the myriad of unique COVID-19 regulations, ordinances and emergency orders within its particular city, county and state.

In-Person Services Held

Indeed, some temples and churches have already begun resuming in-person services, and the list is expected to grow. Orange County Buddhist Church, Ekoji Buddhist Temple, Buddhist Church of Sacramento and the Midwest Buddhist Temple have recently held in-person services.

But the vast majority of temples and churches remain closed for in-person services. Some, including the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, are planning to reopen this fall.

The webinar led off with a slide show by BCA Vice President Glenn Inanaga and BCA President-Elect Terri Omori about what OCBC and Vista Buddhist Temple have done to prepare for reopening, and to provide a set of guidelines that other temples and churches would be able to modify and implement.

“Obviously, it’s about ensuring the safety and secu-

rity of our ministers and our Sangha,” Inanaga said.

Their wide-ranging presentation covered several topics including: COVID-19’s history, statistics, trends and variants, particularly the worrisome Delta variant; California’s colored tier of restrictions; criteria OCBC used to establish a Risk Management Committee; policies covering affiliated organizations like the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts that use OCBC; steps to provide proper ventilation; having face masks, hand sanitizers and temperature checks at the Hondo; and creating a social project to welcome back the Sangha. OCBC recently installed a project of origami cranes — folded by Dharma School students — in the Hondo atrium.

“These are guidelines only — the BCA is not dictating that temples and churches must reopen,” said Inanaga, who is also chair of OCBC’s Risk Management Committee. “But we are recognizing that there is a demand for reopening and we’re providing the source and the guidelines that hopefully you’ll be able to adapt for yourself.”

Inanaga advised creating a Risk Management Team “that really specializes in the issue at hand and avoids the politics of the situation” and focuses on “science, exposure mitigation, and not just doing what everyone else was doing.”

Omori said the Vista temple reopening was done in phases, beginning with allowing essential activities for some affiliated organizations. For example, if Dharma School teachers would need to work on lessons, they could come in for an hour to prepare their supplies. No more than six Sangha members would be allowed at any one time.

OCBC decided to reopen for in-person services in June, and Inanaga stressed the need

to be flexible with policies.

“We have to be realistic,” he said. “Some of our members have not seen each other or have not met each other for the last 18 months. Therefore, the first thing they want to do is to get close to talk to each other. It’s very, very challenging. I don’t think our job is really to police that per se or to tell people they can or cannot do that.”

The meeting also included: statements by BCA Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada and Ministers Association Chair Rev. Harry Bridge on the current ministerial shortage; a presentation by Michael Tanaka about resuming in-person services at the Las Vegas Sangha since June 2020; comments by BCA President Kent Matsuda; and a question-and-answer session.

A Call for Caution

Speaking on behalf of the BCA ministers, Rev. Bridge reiterated “what’s already been said in keeping the safety of your minister, your members, your visitors as your top priority.

“There may be pressure from outside sources like funeral homes (to hold memorial services in the Hondo),” he said. “We don’t have to give into that pressure necessarily. Don’t feel like you have to do what someplace else is doing. I think you really want to do it in a way that your temple is comfortable with your minister ... your minister may be going to a room filled with 200 people and you really need to keep on top of that and not let a minister feel pressured into that. Each minister is different in terms of vulnerability and age.”

Rev. Bridge stated his concerns about the ministerial shortage affecting the BCA, first raised at the National Board meeting in June. The BCA currently has 35 full-time Kaikyoshi ministers

covering its 58 temples and churches and most ministers are responsible for several temples. The ministers are tasked with preparing online Dharma messages and Sunday services, and some also teach online classes with IBS.

“Just be aware of this potential increased workload for your minister,” he said. “Please work together, work with your minister, work with your district temples.”

In addition, Rev. Bridge urged that, for the time being, temples have only the minister chanting and that there be no singing of gathas.

Michael Tanaka, a critical care nurse and a Ministers Assistant at the Las Vegas Sangha, spoke about the temple holding hybrid services since June 2020 and the precautions taken by the Sangha.

On Saturday, the day before the Sunday service, Sangha members would clean and sanitize the building, and limited attendance at 25 percent capacity. Attendees were required to fill out a form about their COVID-19 status. Temperature checks were required, hand sanitizers were available, face masks were mandatory and people had to socially distance six feet apart.

As for food items, everything had to be individually wrapped and people couldn’t eat inside — they had to have their snacks outside in the parking lot. Beginning in June 2021, the Las Vegas Sangha is now 100 percent open, without the social distancing rules. Face masks are still required for those who are unvaccinated. For its Sunday services, held twice a month, Las Vegas usually attracts about 30 people, Tanaka said.

“The procedure we put in place was very effective,” Tanaka said. “How do we know that? Because no one person came down with COVID.”

BCA President Kent Matsuda, who is a physician, vouched for the effectiveness of wearing a mask to prevent COVID-19.

“I’ve had situations where I’ve had patients in an examination room who subsequently turned out to have COVID-19,” he said. “And that person was wearing a mask and I was wearing a mask, and even though we know the COVID-19 virus can penetrate these surgical masks, at least that protected me from getting COVID-19.”

Issue of Restrooms

Matsuda brought up the issue of temple restrooms and said temples may have to set a policy on restroom use. He noted that most BCA temples he’s visited have small restrooms.

“You may go all the way from saying, ‘Well, if people need to use the restroom, they can go ahead to use the restroom’ or having a system where only one individual or one family is allowed in at a time,” he said.

Other related issues, he said, have to do with disposing of toilet seat covers, which can potentially clog pipes, sanitizing “high touch areas” like toilet handles, and determining how often a restroom should be cleaned during a service or event.

Matsuda also addressed a question about unvaccinated Sangha members.

“Temples can establish whatever guidelines that they feel is the most prudent and the safest,” he said, saying Pasadena Buddhist Temple’s plan of having an unvaccinated section for services is a good idea. “At the very minimum, I think you would want to have social distancing and the person wearing a mask.”

Inanaga spoke about the importance of the BCA’s

Continued on Page 10

Shimogawa

Continued from Page 1

room next door to mine, who happened to have been born and raised Buddhist.

Even though I was willing to sometimes attend service with him, as a disenchanting former Catholic, I had no intention of formally subscribing to anything. I refused to chant. I didn’t bow. I never pressed my hands together. It reminded me too much of Catholicism, reciting “Hail Mary” and “The Lord’s Prayer” and making the sign of the cross.

Once we had children, it was important to my husband to raise them as Buddhists. He would take the children on Sundays, and I would often stay home with the baby. It was his gig, his responsibility.

And then, unexpectedly, he passed away, leaving me and the kids behind. There were three big questions my 6-year-

old had: Who will do the dishes?; Who will make mommy’s coffee for her?; And who will take them to Dharma School? Children are so practical.

I remember floundering to get all three of them to service on time, squeezing past the people sitting on the benches, listening to the Sangha chant as I tried to catch my breath. I had no idea what anything meant.

Half the time I didn’t even know what page we were on, or I was too busy trying to prevent the baby from leaping out of my arms and grabbing the person in front of us. I struggled with an obligation to continue their Buddhist upbringings while feeling self-conscious about being somewhere I didn’t think I belonged.

So, I just listened.

And listened.

Week after week, listening.

I was much more diligent about attending family service

FYI

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than my husband ever was. We were there almost every Sunday. I got a lot of listening in.

This led to an accidental realization. Despite feeling like a fish out of water most of the time, there was something very comforting about being enveloped in the sounds of everyone’s voices mixing together as they chanted, drowning out all of the other noise and chaos in my head — if only for that hour.

Still, even after I realized the benefits, I did not neces-

sarily participate right away. I spent months — maybe even that first year — just listening and observing. Then one day I opened my mouth and chanted, too.

I could have ended my husband’s gig right then and there. It was such a hassle wrangling children on my own and being the parent whose baby kept making noise during a Dharma talk, but for some reason, I kept coming back. I couldn’t logically explain it, but there was comfort in the Nembutsu. Doing it with the Sangha made me feel like I wasn’t alone with my suffering.

Through listening, I eventually learned to let go of my assumptions about chanting, particularly around Namu Amida Butsu. It took a long time for my Western self to not compare it to worshiping a higher being. I had to build a lot of context around the chanting before I could release

my preconceived notions.

One of Shinran’s teachings is that *shinjin* — a sincere recitation of the Nembutsu — is something the layperson could practice in order to access Buddha-nature. The skeptic in me had difficulty accepting the idea of entrusting. It sounded awfully like faith, which I had rejected as a Catholic dropout.

In the book “Jodo Shinshu: A Guide” — which my husband left behind in our bookshelf — I read that *shinjin* is not faith. *Shinjin* is “something based on fact that can be ascertained through practice.”

That’s when I knew. It was something I felt inside of me — a physical and mental release. I didn’t need to simply believe someone else’s words. It was not a matter of faith. I had already tried it out every Sunday. I can verify that chanting has a positive effect on my mind and body. The proof is in the pudding.



Thank You for Your Generous Offerings

The following list includes offerings made by Buddhist Churches of America members and friends that were processed by the BCA Endowment Foundation between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021. Donation levels reflect cumulative amounts given across different programs and campaigns; please see notes for further details.

The donors list is available in the printed Wheel of Dharma issue.





ngs to BCA Endowment Foundation





Thank You, BCA Donors, for Your Dana

Dharma Forward Campaign's Using Image of Monarch Butterfly

By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

Dharma Forward



The graphic image of a monarch butterfly is incorporated in the new Dharma Forward campaign logo. (Courtesy of Gordon Tani)



Once again, may I take this opportunity to thank our many, many generous donors to the BCA over the course of this past year.

The first of the Six Paramitas is Dana, or "giving." It is one of the most fundamental practices in Buddhism. The BCA, and all of our local churches and temples, cannot survive without the generous "dana" of our members.

Thank you so much for your support and con-

tributions this past year, especially as we faced the terrible COVID-19 pandemic. All of our churches and temples have had to cancel major fundraisers, but despite that, through the generosity and support of local members and the greater community, donations were received to compensate for the lack of fundraisers. On top of that, many of you have donated to the BCA as well. The only word I can say to express our gratitude is, "Namuamidabutsu."

This year we have launched the Dharma Forward campaign, to raise \$15 million for the BCA. This

is a lofty goal, but one that I know we can fulfill, in order to truly "move the Dharma forward," for future generations and for those who have yet to encounter the Shin Buddhist teachings.

The graphic image we are using for this campaign is the monarch butterfly. The monarch butterfly has a yearly migration that takes it first from places in Mexico, flying north, all the way to the northern parts of the United States and into Canada. The butterflies then migrate back to the south, eventually returning to not only the same area of Mexico, but in some cases, to the exact same tree. This journey takes four generations of butterflies to complete over the course of one year. The butterfly that returns to Mexico, is four generations after the butterfly that first left the tree in Mexico. Each generation does its part to complete this annual migration.

Now is our time. It is our generation's turn to do what we can to insure that the Dharma continues and grows in this country. With your generous dana, I know that we can accomplish our goal.

Help Give to BCA Endowment Foundation

BCA Endowment Foundation is the evolution of a call to build an "unshakeable foundation" for Buddhism in America.

Established as the Zaidan Fund nearly 100 years ago, several generations have carried on the dreams of our pioneers as their generous gifts expanded the fund into the Endowment Foundation.

Earnings on Endowment investments currently provide 20 percent of BCA's annual operating budget, greatly aiding BCA in its mission to share the Buddha-dharma with everyone. Growing the Endowment is crucial, as income generated from investments reduces our reliance on dues assessments to fund operations.

Your gifts ensure that the 800-year legacy of our tradition prospers. Jodo Shinshu teachings about self, others, and Amida Buddha's acceptance of everyone are exceptionally valuable. In these challenging times, it is our mission to maintain and enhance

our resources for sharing the Dharma.

With the launch of the Dharma Forward campaign, the Endowment Foundation is playing an

With the launch of the Dharma Forward campaign, the Endowment Foundation is playing an important role in administering and receiving donations from the campaign.

important role in administering and receiving donations from the campaign. Further, the Foundation oversees how donations are allocated and how they are invested to maximize the value that these contributions will make to the future of BCA and IBS.

The BCAEF office is available

to assist you and your family with legacy planning through bequests, real estate, annuities, life insurance, and retirement accounts.

There are ways to make a difference today: If you are an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) holder aged 70.5 years and older, you may issue a direct transfer of all or part of your annual required minimum distribution from your IRA or 401(k) to a qualified charity such as BCA. This is called a qualified charitable distribution and is not counted as taxable income (up to \$100,000).

The Endowment Foundation asks all members and friends to support the future of BCA and the Institute of Buddhist Studies, which will benefit all of us. Please participate in any way you can.

To learn more about our programs, go to buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/donate, or contact Michiko Inanaga, BCAEF Development Director, at minanaga@bcahq.org.



Dana Program Provides for Buddhist Education

The Dana Program was introduced six years ago as an important way to help provide the financial resources to make the Buddha-dharma available to everyone.

Last year, your generous donations contributed to a growing base of support that has raised nearly \$850,000 since 2015 and which has gone toward BCA's annual operating expenditures in support of Buddhist education.

Approximately \$94,400 from last year's Dana Program was part of the 2022 BCA budget passed at this year's National Council meeting. The Dana Program contributions were the fourth largest revenue contributor to the budget at 3.4 percent of a total budget of \$2.65 million. Those dollars support annual operating expenditures, including the allocation to the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) and programs and payroll of the Center of Buddhist Education (CBE).

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that now, more than ever, we must focus on technology and digital media to guide new seekers to Shin Buddhist communities, connect members to innovative virtual programming,

Last year, your generous donations contributed to a growing base of support that has raised nearly \$850,000 since 2015 and which has gone toward BCA's annual operating expenditures in support of Buddhist education.

and highlight the inspirational messages of our ministers. Dana Program supports these annual operating expenses that will allow Shin Buddhist teachings to

reach a wider audience.

We ask that you continue to support building upon our vision for the public, our temples and our ministers to walk the Nembutsu path together.

It's simple: The more we grow, the more we can support our programs each year. Together, we can accomplish great things, one step at a time.

Our annual letter to request support for the Dana Program will be mailed to your home shortly. While we are grateful to receive donations by mail, our office access remains limited because of the pandemic. We kindly encourage you to set up a one-time or recurring donation today at:

buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/donate

For more information, contact Michiko Inanaga at the BCA Endowment Foundation at minanaga@bcahq.org or call (415) 651-5164.

BCA Donors

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BCA Donors

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Donation levels reflect cumulative amounts directed to the following programs and campaigns: Dharma Forward, Jodo Shinshu Center, Dana Program, Center for Buddhist Education, 1000 x \$1000 x 4, JSC Debt Relief, Social Welfare Fund, Disaster Relief, Zaidan, WABL Koromo Fund, special programs and requests, or unrestricted use.

Donors include individuals, temples and organizations, foundations, trusts, and bequests. In some cases, listed temples have bundled individual donations. Dharma Forward donations reflected here may be part of larger pledge commitments. Though some donations to BCAEF may be connected to IBS, the Institute of Buddhist Studies' giving programs and gifts to BCA's Student Financial Assistance Program are managed separately and are not included in this list.

To learn more about supporting IBS, contact Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto drmatsumoto@shin-ibs.edu. Written acknowledgements are provided for all donations processed by BCA Endowment Foundation.

If you would like to receive a record of a specific donation, did not receive an acknowledgment for a recent donation, or have any other questions, please contact BCAEF. Our intention is to honor your contribution, so we ask that you kindly allow us to correct any errors.

Contact BCAEF at 415-776-5600 or donate@bcahq.org for further assistance and review. Corrections will be published as soon as possible.

Buddhist Book

Continued from Page 2

the history of the modernization of Buddhism, particularly in Southeast Asia, but points further back in the history of Buddhism to point out aspects of the tradition that would today generally be considered secular.

David L. McMahan considers the nature of subjectivity in the present, secular age, and the tensions between traditional Western ideas of a singular self, and a postmodern conception of the self as multiple. He extends this analysis to describe two different approaches to the practice of mindfulness.

The significance of racism in the introduction of mindfulness practice into the American school system is examined by Funie Hsu. She points out that the central rhetoric of Buddhist modernism is returning to original Buddhism, and dispensing with whatever is judged to be "cultural baggage." This is code for "foreign," and in the case of Buddhism, "Asian." It is a strategy that firmly places the authority for defining Buddhism in the hands of white protagonists.

The way that Buddhism is presented in museums is the focus of Pamela Winfield's essay. Taking Buddhist statues

and paintings out of temples and out of the religious life of adherents decontextualizes them, converting them from part of a living tradition into pieces of art. As art they are then judged by the canons of Western beauty, rather than for their function in a setting of lived Buddhism. Winfield nuances this argument in a subtle way, however, pointing out that the museum itself becomes converted from an institution displaying the spoils of empire, into a kind of sacred space itself. As indicated by Sarah Shaw, the modernization of Buddhism, which leads to the current secularizing forms, began in Asia.

Charles B. Jones examines the contributions of the early 20th century Chinese figure Taixu, and specifically his ideas regarding making this world the Pure Land. For her part, Kate Crosby dives more deeply into the shared background of both traditionalism and secularism in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. The historical background of imperialism in Southeast Asia over the 19th century and early 20th century created social turmoil that was the ground for both strains to emerge out of the preexisting forms of Theravada.

Bhikkhu Bodhi argues that there are three different kinds

of Buddhism in the West that have been shaped by the 20th century. Two of these he calls "Traditional Buddhism," and "Secular Buddhism." The third he considers to be in fact more prevalent, and he calls this "Immanent Buddhism," by which he means an interpretation of Buddhist goals in terms of increased well-being in the present life, rather than transcendence of rebirth, that is, nibbana.

Stephen Batchelor is probably the best known figure promoting Secular Buddhism on the global stage today. Philippe Turenne engages in a critical conversation with Batchelor's negative characterizations of Tibetan Buddhism, and by implication all of "traditional" Buddhism. Rather than dismissing or deriding Batchelor, however, Turenne seeks to refine out of Batchelor's criticisms what might be of use for the future development of the Dharma.

Ron Purser, known for coining the phrase "McMindfulness," examines the ideology of neoliberalism that is basic to much of the secularizing of Buddhism. The dominance of a focus on the autonomous individual characteristic of neoliberalism runs counter to the longstanding commitment to sangha and community found throughout the Buddhist tradition.

Congruent with neoliberalism modern Western culture presumes a psychotherapeutic orientation — an individual's problems originate in their own orientation toward the world, and their psychology can be healed so that they no longer create their own problems. Kathleen Gregory's essay looks at how the concepts of psychological and spiritual interact with those of secular and religious, forming a kind of secular Buddhism that is a kind of psychology.

A contentious issue for many modern Buddhists is that of rebirth, whether it is literal or symbolic, and whether it can meaningfully serve as a basis for morality. Roger Jackson starts by examining a now famous debate between Robert Thurman and Stephen Batchelor on this very issue, and goes on to explore the possibility of living between the two extremes of literal or symbolic.

Similarly, Gil Fronsdal presents his own interpretation of the Dharma, which he calls "Naturalistic Buddhism." This is a Buddhism that does not require any belief commitment to transcendent realities or eternal truths, but rather a focus on consistent and gradual transformation of one's being in the world in accord with the descriptions of the path. Fronsdal finds

support for his interpretation in a very early Buddhist text called "The Book of Eights."

The final essay, by Richard K. Payne, demonstrates that the conceptual ground of secularizing discourse is the creation of an opposite, that is a religious form of Buddhism. This opposition is deeply rooted in Western intellectual culture, from the early 19th century, and today provides the dichotomy between religious and secular that many secular Buddhists presume. Ironically, then, secular Buddhist arguments help to create a feedback loop reinforcing a religious conception of Buddhism.

This is a rich collection, and the summary presented here only touches on some of the "high points." While only a snapshot of an ongoing process, it can provide a more informed community of Buddhist adherents with an image of what is happening. It also enriches our understanding and enables informed participation in the future of the tradition as well.

Richard K. Payne is Yehan Numata Professor of Japanese Buddhist Studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, California. He began teaching at the IBS in 1991, and for many years served as the Dean.



Guadalupe

Continued from Page 1

bride from Japan, Masu Ohama, on June 5, 1903. At the time, he was 31 and she was 17, and the couple had seven children — two sons and five daughters.

Tragedy struck the Tanaka family during the Spanish flu epidemic, which lasted from 1918 to 1920. Masu Tanaka gave birth prematurely to a boy — and both she and her infant son would die on Jan. 26, 1919, from complications of the flu, according to the Santa Maria Times.

After she died, Umekichi Tanaka was unable to take care of all of his children. He sent his son (George) Minoru, who was the eldest child, to Japan, to be raised by his grandmother. The oldest Tanaka daughter, Tsuruko, who was an invalid and was bedridden since birth, stayed at home on the family farm, cared for in part by a hired cook and housekeeper.

Children's Home Opened

Tanaka placed his other four daughters — Toshiko, Akiko, Yoshiko and Sueko — in the care of the Matsuuras, who despite having no experience in such matters, decided to open the Guadalupe Children's Home in the spring of 1919.

"My husband could not bear to see the families broken up," Shinobu Matsuura wrote in "Higan," her 1971 memoir. "He wanted to care for the children at the temple, teach them the Japanese language while they attended public school and he wanted to raise them in an atmosphere centered around the Buddha.

"The parents were in such a dilemma that this arrangement was happily welcomed," she continued. "The first to come was Mr. Umekichi Tanaka, who lost his wife in the infamous flu epidemic."

The Guadalupe Children's Home soon became a bustling center of home care for about 20 children. But the routine was jolted unexpectedly when a state inspector ordered it closed, citing building code violations. The children were temporarily scattered and housed with relatives and friends.

The Guadalupe Sangha was undeterred, and raised funds to build a second floor and a fire escape. A license to operate the facility was granted, and the Guadalupe Children's Home reopened. In time, the home served 36 children between the ages of 6 and 16.

"Racial prejudice was severe



Centenarians Yoshiko Miwa, right, and Toshiko Iriyama, are shown at the Guadalupe Buddhist Church's Obon Festival in 2019. (Courtesy of Miwa family)

in those days, but everyone persevered in body and mind," Matsuura wrote. "When the children returned, and we were all reunited, it was a supreme joy and all we could do was to smile gratefully."

In spring 1926, Lord Sonyu Ohtani toured the temples in Hawaii and the United States, including the Guadalupe Buddhist Church. He visited the Guadalupe Children's Home and spoke with the children.

"Later, we heard from Bishop Yemyo Imamura of Hawaii Hongwanji that the Lord has described to him, 'At a countryside temple on the Southern California coast, I was moved to see many children in the temple close to the Dharma, and growing up in a happy family atmosphere,'" Matsuura wrote.

After his son finished high school in Japan, Tanaka sent for him to come home and help on the farm, and he took his daughters out of the Guadalupe Children's Home to reunite the family during the 1920s.

A Gift of Gratitude

Tanaka became successful as a farmer and, in a show of gratitude, bought a gold altar in Kyoto and donated it to the Guadalupe Buddhist Church — where it remains to this day as the Onaijin. Tanaka and his family members gathered at the church on Oct. 15, 1933, to celebrate the Onaijin — minus daughter Yoshiko, who was away as a student attending the University of California, Berkeley.

Another tragedy would strike the Tanaka family on

Dec. 7, 1941, with the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor — this time, directly affecting Umekichi Tanaka.

He was removed from his home and sent to Fort Lincoln, the federal Justice Department internment camp in Bismarck, North Dakota, which housed U.S. civilians of Japanese and German descent. After his release from Bismarck, Tanaka rejoined his family at the Poston internment camp in Arizona during World War II.

When the war ended, the Tanaka family didn't have the resources to move back to the Guadalupe area. Instead, the family went to Fresno because that was where his son's wife was born. The family ended up staying at the Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple until they found a place to rent.

Umekichi Tanaka would live in Central California for the rest of his life. He would never remarry and died in Sanger on May 7, 1966, at the age of 94.

A Return to Guadalupe

Fast forward to July 2019, and the Miwa family was planning a family outing in Pismo Beach at the time the Guadalupe Buddhist Church was preparing for its Obon.

"Mrs. Miwa wanted to stop in Guadalupe to see her old stomping grounds," Rev. Nakano said. "I was shocked that people even heard of Guadalupe.

"Mrs. Miwa remembered the Onaijin, even after all the years away," Rev. Nakano said. "At Guadalupe, both sides of the Onaijin have two paintings. They are very old, but Mrs. Miwa remembered them. She read the kanji. She knew exactly where to find the signature of her father. My mouth dropped. Plus that personal relationship with the church and with Mrs. Miwa makes me proud to be a minister at Guadalupe."

Rev. Nakano, aware of Yoshiko Miwa's age, thought about some of the Keiro members at Guadalupe — and then thought of Toshiko Iriyama. She contacted Iriyama's son Teruo, explained that Miwa was visiting and convinced him to bring his mother to the Obon Festival.

"The day of Obon, they met and sat in a corner in the dining hall and got reacquainted with each other," Rev. Nakano said. "After a few hours, their friendship was renewed. I was so happy that two 104- and 105-year-olds still had peers and memories of living in Guadalupe."

local individual temple, is really based on this idea of having safety and security in mind."

In conclusion, Matsuda addressed the priorities the temples and churches should consider before reopening.

"One of the key points that we really want to drive home is that your temple needs to have a reopening committee and they need

to consider what works best for your Sangha, what works best for your minister, what works best for your Minister's Assistant," he said.

"Sometimes the decisions you make may not be popular, and sometimes you may have to take the heat for things that protect your minister, so you have to be a little strong and resist the urge to do away with all the restrictions."

Nitta Scholarship

Continued from Page 3

COVID-19 for two weeks and I had hoped he would come home soon. My mother and I were isolated from my sisters, leaving no room for grieving together. As I was crying in bed, I remembered the 'White Ashes' that had moved me that past summer. It was in this and the teachings that I was able to heal and appreciate what I had. Even as I was upset, saddened, and hopeless, the Buddhist teaching reminded me that our lives are impermanent. Nothing lasts forever. So I was able to find happiness and gratitude for my father's life, healing those sad emotions.

"I had really needed Obon for my own personal healing and happiness in such a despairing year. My goal for 'Obon At Home' was to provide families with an Obon festival, but also a greater appreciation for these moments with families.

"I miss my father but I

hope he is proud of me," Katie said. "Impermanence expresses how nothing lasts forever, this pandemic being no exception. I dedicated the Obon to my father. I do Gassho while thinking of him. The teachings have guided me through happy and sad, good and bad, and have shown me my father's everlasting presence in my life."

Katie has been accepted to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, where she will begin her studies in communication. Her current career goal is in the field of marketing or creative directing.

In 1964, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Nitta of Watsonville bestowed a generous gift to the Federation of Dharma School Teachers League by establishing a scholarship. This award is to honor and give recognition to an outstanding Buddhist youth.

Congratulations to Katie Ikemoto as our 2021 scholarship recipient. We wish you the best in all of life's endeavors.

Rev. Gibbs

Continued from Page 2

Black Lives Matter Palestinian Lives Matter LGBTQ Lives Matter

Speaking out in these ways against observed forms of prejudice and violence is a start. If you see unfairness, say something. After saying something, do something. Get into John Lewis' style of good trouble. Fight the fight that is good but that is also gentle. Despite being a struggle for what is genuine and fair, Buddhist skirmishes remain non-violent.

We must do the work of including those who are marginalized. When those who have been excluded are more at home, we can be more at home. Buddhists who have centered their lives upon the Nembutsu want to share our home with all those who

need one.

The Nembutsu, being the active compassion of the Buddha, will lead us both to humility and to the heroic project of reshaping the world in the light of the Dharma. The two aspects of genuine entrusting to the Nembutsu are simply these: the urge to change oneself and the aspiration to remake the world.

At least, this is what I see in Shinran, in all the most impressive teachers in the Jodo Shinshu lineage, and in my own still-unfolding engagement with the Nembutsu. You may say that I'm a dreamer, but John Lennon, John Lewis and I are not the only ones. One day so many of us will live up to both of these responsibilities — change oneself in all humility, change the world with deep conviction — that "the world will be as one."

Bishop's Message

Continued from Page 2

You think to yourself, "That lady hit my jackpot!" Now you are greedy, angry, and stupid all at the same time. I often tell people that at least a couple of times a year, I have to go to Las Vegas to really experience Buddhism. It is the best place to experience the three poisons. To show how even more ignorant we are, on the drive home after a losing trip to Las Vegas, I am already thinking about the next time that I can go back again.

Greed, anger, and ignorance, like drinking poison, can destroy our good life. How do we deal with these powerful emotions? Are we destined to be victims of them forever?

I think that we could say that "seeing is everything." We have to see them within ourselves. We have to see how we become victims of them. Now, having seen them, we move towards transcending them. They never totally go away, because that is our nature as human beings, but by seeing them deeply, in light of the Dharma, we transcend them.

Reopening

Continued from Page 5

reputation in complying with local, county, state and federal laws on COVID-19.

"It's not just legal liability risks that we should watch out for," he said. "It's also reputational risk, and I think the ability for our members to trust the BCA, trust our

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今月の法話

「大悲の願船に乗じて」

山東三州仏教会 開教使 今田 法翔



Rev. Noritaka Imada

八月はお盆 法要や盆踊り などの仏事が あります。私 の故郷の広島 では、お盆の 時期になると お墓が色とり どり飾られま す。残念な

がら今は写真を持っていないのですが、もし気になる方がおられましたらインターネットの画像検索で「広島お盆お墓」等と調べて頂くとその景色をご覧頂けると思います。何故、お墓が色とりどりになるのかといつとお墓参りに来られた方が盆燈籠（ぼんとうろう）と呼ばれるものをお墓にお供えして行かれるからです。それは綺麗な色の紙と竹で作られています。その起源は江戸時代に遡るようで、一説によれば、あるお母さんが子供を亡くされた時に子供の為に手作りカラフルな飾りを作られてお墓に置かれたのが始まりだと聞いたことがあります。

お盆という言葉の由来といわれる仏説孟蘭盆経には釈尊の十大弟子の一人である目連尊者と彼の母についての話があります。目連は神通力と呼ばれる超能力のようなものを持っていました。仏教では六つの神通力があるとされています。1、望むところに行く力（神足通）2、運命を予知する力（天眼通）3、鋭い聴力（天耳通）4、人の心を知る力（他心通）5、過去世の心を知る力（宿命通）6、真理を悟る力（漏尽通）

ある日、目連は、亡くなった母がどの世界にいるのかが気になり、母を探するためにその力を使いました。すると、目連の母は六道（迷いの世界）の一つである餓鬼道

に落ちて苦しんでいました。餓鬼道といえは、空腹を満たそうと食べ物や水を口にも運んでも全て火に変わってしまい、餓えに苦しむ続ける世界です。目連は目を疑いました。目連の母は我が子をとても可愛がり、釈尊の十大弟子になるほど立派に育て上げたにも関わらずなぜ餓鬼道に落ちたのでしょうか。実は彼女は我が子を溺愛し過ぎた為に、他人の子や他人をないがしろにしていた。そのせいで彼女は餓鬼道に落ちたというのです。餓鬼道で苦しんでいる母を見た目連は、どうにかして母を助けようと神通力を使い食べ物や水を届けようとしたがそれも全て火に変わり、逆に母を苦しめてしまえばかりでした。

その後、目連が釈尊に相談すると釈尊は「三宝（仏、法、僧）を大切にし、法要をしなさい」と仰いました。目連が言われた通りに実践したところ、餓鬼道で苦しむ母は救われたそうです。三宝の中の僧とはサンガであり「仲良くする姿」でもあります。この仲良くする姿が目連にも母にも重要であると釈尊は教えられました。目連は「世界一やさしいお母さん」がなんで餓鬼道に行かなければならないのかと不思議でしたが、それは「世界一」目連だけに「優しいお母さん」だったからです。我が子には何でも施しますが、他の子には何も施さないという事は、言い換えれば他人の子には厳しいという事になってしまいかもかもしれません。

例えばもし、私たちが海で溺れている人たちを見つけた時、その中に自分の家族や友達がいたら、まず自分の家族や友達から助けようと思いませんか。慈悲の心を持つ仏さまは、まず溺れそうな人から救っていきます。

目連が神通力で見えたのは餓鬼道で苦しむ母の姿でした。しかし餓鬼道には目連の母以外にも多くの人々が苦しんでいました。目連の母は他人の子をないがしろにして目連だけに施しを与えた事により餓鬼道に落ちましたが、目連もまた同様に、他の苦しむ人をないがしろにして母だけを救おうとしていたのです。これを見た釈尊は「自分の愛する者だけを救いたいという気持ちがある他の命を見えなくしている」という事を教えました。人間は慈悲を持って愛を持ち、仏は慈悲を持って愛を持たないという言葉を聞いた事があります。仏教において愛は執着とさせないのが人間の姿です。愛は失う時に苦しみの原因となり、時には憎しみの原因にもなります。

例えば愛する夫が突然亡くなり愛が悲しみに変わり生

きる気力がなくなりそうなる時、お葬式に夫の愛人と名乗る女性が現れると、今度は妻の悲しみは憎しみに変わり逆に生きる気力が湧いてきたり…と、私たちの心は常にコロコロ移り変わります。その悲しみや憎しみも包み込んで下さるのがお慈悲の心であり、仏さまだけがそれを持っています。

宗祖がお書きになった正像末和讃に「小慈小悲もなき身に 有情利益はおもふまじ 如来の願船いまずずは 苦海をいかでかわたるべき」とあり、小さな慈悲の心すら持たないこの身ですらお浄土に生まれさせていた。だく時には仏さまのお慈悲の心をそのまま頂けるのです。歎異抄には「親鸞は父母の孝養のためとて念仏、一返にても申したることいまだ候わず。」という言葉があります。仏にならせて頂いたら父も母も関係なく仏縁のある人から救っていくという事を仰っています。たとえ神通力があっても、全ての命を平等に見れる慈悲の心があれば、かえって苦しみの原因になってしまうのかもしれない。その後の目連の入滅についてのお話の中に自らの神通力を捨てる話があります。

釈尊が絶大な信頼を寄せていた弟子の一人である目連は、めざましい働きにより他の弟子たちと協力して仏教教団を支えました。目連の説法により仏の教えを信じる人が沢山増えましたが、一方で信者を失う教団もあったそうです。そのせいで目連は何度も襲撃を受けました。1、2回目の襲撃は神通力で事前に察知し、無事に回避しました。3度目も事前に襲撃を知ることができました。

目連は「これほど何度も襲われるという事は何か深い理由があるに違いない」と考え、神通力を使って自分の前世を見てみました。すると前世で目連は、目の見えない親を殺そうとしていた事が判明しました。馬車で親を連れ出した彼は、盗賊を装って自分の親に襲いかかりました。親はその時、目が見えないながらも盗賊の襲撃を察知し大声でこう叫びました「私の事はいいから早くお前だけでも逃げなさい」親は目連を守ろうとしたので盗賊を装った前世の目連は深く後悔し、振り上げた剣を下ろしました。目連は遠い過去世に親を殺そうとしたことを神通力によって知り、その報いで自分が今襲撃を受けていると知りました。自分の業を知った目連はその後襲撃から逃げる事をやめ、次の襲撃で盗賊に襲われた後襲撃から逃げる事が出来ました。傷ついた体で神通力を使い釈尊のところへ飛んでいき、涅槃に入る許可を

求めました。釈尊から許しを得た後、目連は人々に別れを告げてから入滅しました。

目連のお話は母が餓鬼道に落ちたり、前世で親の命を奪おうとしたりと衝撃的な出来事がありました。私たちがこの命を生きている人間という世界も餓鬼道と同じ六道の一つであり、輪廻を繰り返す中で過去に餓鬼道にいた事があるかもしれません。お浄土で仏とならせて頂いたら、もう餓鬼道に落ちる事もなく、苦しんでいる人を平等に救いたいというお慈悲の心を頂きます。

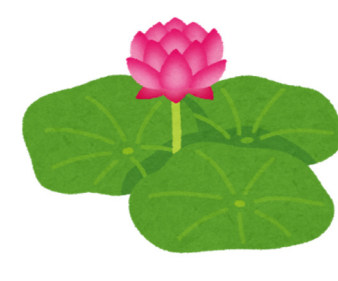
正信偈の中の「遊煩悩林現神通 入生死園示応化」という部分に「神通」という言葉が出てきます。お浄土に仏として生まれた人は、苦しんでいる人をじっと見ている事ができず、再びこの娑婆世界に還ってきて、苦しんでいるすべての人を救う為に、色々な姿ではたらいで下さっています。このお盆の時期を縁として仏法に遇わせて頂いている事を喜び、感謝のお念仏を申す日々を送らせて頂きたいと思えます。お盆の事を「歡喜會（かんぎえ）」とも呼びます。先にお浄土へ生まれ行かれた方々は仏となり私達を心配し、南無阿彌陀仏となつてここに還つて来られます。その事を喜んで踊ったのが盆踊りの始まりという説（諸説あり）も聞いた事があります。「恋しくは南無阿彌陀仏を称すべし、我も六字の中にこそ住め」という言葉があるように、お盆だけでなくいつでも一人ではないのがお念仏と共に歩ませて頂く念仏者の道ではないでしょうか。

ダイヤルザダルマで日本語法話

コロナウイルスの世界的な感染拡大を受けて、BCAは電話で5分間の法話を聞くことができる「ダイヤルザダルマ」プログラムを継続している。

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(800) 817-7918に電話すると、原田総長の声で英語の方は1を日本語の方は2を押すように促される。2を押すと約5分間の日本語の法話を聞くことができる。法話は毎週水曜日午後更新される予定。



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総長メッセージ

三毒の煩惱、「愚痴」

米國仏教団 総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

今月は三毒の煩惱の「愚痴(ぐち)」について書いてみます。

「愚痴」は「無明」

(むみょう)とも言うて、その意味はとも興味深いです。一文字目の「無」は「ない」、つまり「存在しない」という意味で、二文字目の「明」は「澄む、明るい、輝く」という意味です。つまり「無明」とは、「澄んでいない、明るくない、輝きがない」という意味で、「愚痴」または「無明」の状態では、光も輝きもなく、暗闇だけが広がっているということです。

暗闇の中で困った経験をされたことがあると思います。家で急に停電になると、真っ暗闇の中で自分がどこに進んでいくべきかわからなくなってしまう。暗闇で目が見えず、ソファやテーブルにぶつかったり、床に置いた靴に踏まざりたりするのです。

仏教は、目覚めていない者の人生は、暗闇の中でつまづくように生きることだ、と言います。どの方向に向かえばいいのかわからない中で、いろいろなものにぶつかるのです。無明の人生とは、あらゆるものが人の障害となることであり、暗闇の中であたふたするようなものなのです。どちらに向かえばいいのか、どちらに行けばいいのかわからないのです。左に行ったり、右に行ったりしますが、どの方向も暗いのです。

自分がどこに向かっているのかわからないために、自分自身や他人に様々なトラブルを起こします。それが「愚痴、無明」なのです。

また、「愚痴」とは、テストに落ちるとか、IQが低いとか、そういった教育のことに関する「愚かさ」ではありません。頭が良くても、仏教的には「愚か」であることもあります。また、ほとんど教育を受けていなくても、「愚痴」の反対である真実の智慧を持っていることもあるのです。

「愚痴」とは、はっきりと見えないこと、現実が見えないこと、光がなく智慧がない、ということ。私たちの見方は、サンングラスをかけて世界を見ているようなもので、自己中心のフィルターをかけてものごとを見ています。

智慧がなく、物事をはつきりと見ることができないために、怒りや欲が生じ、それがさらなる愚痴を生み、そしてさらなる欲と怒りを生みます。自分で作り出した苦しみの悪循環に陥ってしまうのです。

ある仏教の絵画では、このことが非常に印象的に描かれています。その絵には三匹の動物がお互いの尻尾を噛んでいる様子が描かれています。その三匹の動物とは、雄鶏、豚、蛇です。豚は愚痴を、雄鶏は貪欲を、蛇は瞋恚(怒り)を表しています。この絵は、それぞれの毒がお互いを永続させることを示しています。

この三毒の煩惱が同時に存在することを教えてくれる例が、ラスベガスでのギャンブルです。スロットマシンで大当たりを狙って長時間プレイしたにもかかわらず、一向に当たらないという経験をすることはありませんか? そんなとき、最終的にはあきらめてスロットマシンから立ち去るしかありません。立ち去ってふと自分がさっきまで長い時間プレイしていたマシンを振り返ると、どこからか小さな年配の女性がやって

きて、そのスロットマシンに座るのを見ます。そしてなんと、彼女は最初の1回目の引きで、「チャチャーン!」と大当たりをだしたのです。そんなことが起こると、「あのおばあさん、俺のジャックポットを当てやがった!」と思うでしょう。それが、欲深く、怒りっぽく、智慧が無いということなのです。

私は年に2、3回はラスベガスに行きますが、それは本当の意味での仏教体験をするためだ、とよく人に言っています。ラスベガスは三毒の煩惱のはたらきを理解するには最高の場所だと思います。ギャンブルに負けたにもかかわらず、帰りの車の中で、すでに次はいつラスベガスに行こうかとも考えているのですから。

貪欲(どんよく)、瞋恚(しんに)、愚痴(ぐち)は、毒を飲むのと同じように、私たちの人生を破壊してしまいます。それでは、これらの強力な感情とどのように向き合えばよいのでしょうか。私たちは永遠に三毒の煩惱によって苦を受け続けなければならないのでしょうか?

「百聞は一見にしかず」ということわざがあります。私たちが、自分自身の中にある三毒の煩惱に気づかなければなりません。自分がどのように三毒の煩惱から苦を受けているのを見なければなりません。そして、その様子を見ると、それを超越する方向に進めるようになっていくのです。けれどもこれは煩惱が完全になくなるということではありません。煩惱があるのは人間としての性質だからです。けれども、法の光に照らされて、煩惱のはたらきを深く見つめることによって、それらを超越することができるようになります。

バックトゥー1992年8月

1992年の法輪8月号には、現ご門主の大谷光淳さまが満15歳を迎えられ、得度式を受けられたことや、BCAの青少年国際研修団が日本を訪れた記事が掲載されている。また、英語欄の見出しの記事には、名誉開教使の故赤星真月師と故竹本アーサー師がアーカンソー州ローワーとジュロームに所在した日系人収容所の50周年のイベントに参加、先亡者追悼のお勤めをされたことが書かれている。以下は、当時法輪の編集をされていた福間誠幹名誉開教使が書かれた編集後記の抜粋。

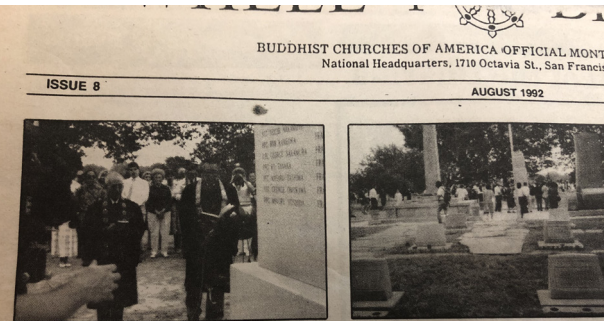
編集後記

八月の声を聞くと、毎年のことながら、六日と九日は広島と長崎の原爆忌である。今年は47回目を迎える。(中略)
今春本山において「浄土和讃」が英訳発刊された。浄土和讃は過去、龍谷大学仏典訳部で英訳刊行されたものがあるが、このたびのものは、より親しみやすいという評価がある。

米國仏教団では毎日午前八時から朝の礼拝があり、久しい間、三部経の繰り読みがなされていたが、英訳浄土和讃発刊を記念して、去る五月から浄土和讃の繰り読みにきりかえ、正信偈念仏和讃六首引きで声明の声高らかに読誦することになっている。やはり机の上でただすらすらと目で読むのと、お勤めとして礼拝時に、声明(梵唄)の節よろしく、拍を整えて、『清風宝樹をふくときは、いつつの音声いだしつ、宮商和して自然なり、清浄勲を礼すべし』のごとく、一字一字かみしめて、いわゆる身読するのでは格段の差のあることに気付いた。

ただ普通読む時は文献を読むのと等しく、ここは仏身論に関係の深いところだ、これは仏性論の問題、ここは現生不退説の論拠だというように、教学上の視座に立つて読むことが多い。

ところがアマミ仏の前にぬかずき、お参りする礼拝者の立場で、勤行として体を通して一字一字読誦するとき、今まで軽く目で読んでとらえていた和讃が、まったく逆転、仏の方より「とらえられる」というと大げさかも知れぬが、仏のハタラクに包まれる側の自己を見出し、一首一首美に「ありがたい」と和讃として読め



Retired Minister Reverend Shingetsu Akahoshi, prominent lecturer of Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto, returned to for this remembrance of his war-time incarceration. He is shown with Reverend Ari Takemoto who represented at the ceremonies. BCA participation was made possible by financial support of the Sustaining Membership

Return to Arkansas Relocation S

Wheel of Dharma, August 1992

てくるのが不思議である。こんなところに不思議という言葉を使うべきかとも思うが、これも「弥陀の誓願不思議」のおんハカライの中のことであろう。ただ「ありがたい」を繰り返している今日のごころである。