



WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America



Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa, Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka and Rev. LaVerne Sasaki pose at the Cortez Buddhist Church's 88th anniversary on Jan. 9, 2010. All three ministers served at the Buddhist Church of Stockton. (Courtesy of Catherine Fujimori)

Jodo Shin Buddhism Hongwanji-ha Issues Statement Calling for Ceasefire in Gaza

Honzan Urges End to War Between Israel, Hamas

Editor's note: Nishi Hongwanji is the Honzan, or mother temple, of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha branch of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. This statement from the Governor General was originally distributed in Japanese on Nov. 17, 2023. The Buddhist Churches of America received an official English translation on April 16.

On Russia's aggressive invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, we, the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist organization, adopted the following resolution on the occasion of our annual General Assembly (March 4, 2022); "As people of Japan, the only nation that has been hit by atomic bombs, as Buddhists who cherish every life, and as Nembutsu followers who aspire for peace across the world, we con-

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Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa Fondly Remembered

Minister Served Hawaii Kyodan, IOBT, Stockton Temples; Recalled as Beloved, Respected, Revered Figure

By Jon Kawamoto
Wheel of Dharma Editor

Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa, whose career as a Kaikyoshi minister spanned 36 years from Hawaii to the mainland United States, was remembered as a congenial and popular "regular guy" who was beloved by both Sangha members and the general public.

The BCA Minister Emeritus was the first son of a 21st generation Jodo Shinshu minister family. He grew up in Hawaii and served as a minister for temples in the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) from 1974 to 1983 before joining the BCA in 1983. He was Resident Minister of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple (IOBT)

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Bishop: Revering the Sangha: In Memory of Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa. Page 2.



Noriko and Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa are shown at their daughter Eri's wedding on May 12, 2007. (Courtesy of Hasegawa family)

from 1983 to 1996, and then at the Buddhist Church of Stockton from 1996 to 2010. He retired in 2010.

Rev. Hasegawa passed away on March 16 in Stockton

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BCO Dharma School Students Demand Ceasefire in Gaza

Inspired by Courage of Shinran Shonin, Eshinni and Kakushinni

By Joemy Ito-Gates, Melyssa Minamoto,
Jun Hamamoto and Daniel Bissonnette

Buddhist Church of Oakland
Dharma School teachers

At the Buddhist Church of Oakland's Dharma School, our students have been learning about the courage of Shinran Shonin and his wife, Eshinni, and their daughter, Kakushinni, who made what some may consider the unpopular or even radical

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BCA Task Force Addresses Mental Well-Being of Sangha

Members Are Invited to Take Anonymous Survey

By Gregg Krech
ToDo Institute

I have been following the Buddhist path for nearly 50 years. My Pure Land journey started at Ekoji Buddhist Temple in Virginia while studying the Dharma with the



Gregg Krech

late Rev. Kenryu Tsuji.

One of the key elements that has kept me on this path all these years is the importance of making a connection between the Buddha-Dharma and my daily life.

The Dharma can be a source of support and wisdom regardless of what challenges I may be facing. So the question of my well-being includes my spiritual practice, my state of mind, my personal health,

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The Buddhist Church of Oakland raised a "Love Demands a Permanent Ceasefire" banner in solidarity with the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity. (Courtesy of Joemy Ito-Gates)



BISHOP'S MESSAGE



By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

I would like to remember and honor the late Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa, whose funeral I conducted April 13 at the Buddhist Church of Stockton.

Rev. Hasegawa served as a minister in Hawaii, in our BCA, at the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple, my home temple, and at the Buddhist Church of Stockton.

I got to spend a lot of time with Rev. Hasegawa when he served at my home temple in Ontario, Oregon. Whenever I would go home to visit my parents or for a family vacation, I always spent time with Rev. Hasegawa.

Sensei was an avid golfer and often golfed with the members. I played with him numerous times and also had many late night cups of coffee with him at the local coffee shops.

Rev. Hasegawa was a most beloved minister when he served there and I am sure he was like that when he served in Hawaii and at Stockton. My memories of Sensei were from those years that he served in

Revering the Sangha: In Memory of Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa

Ontario.

For my message at his funeral, I shared how Sensei was a minister who respected and revered the Sangha, and in turn, was respected and revered by the Sangha.

Rev. Hasegawa was always one with his Sangha. He golfed with them. He bowled with them. He played cards with them. He had coffee with them. He worked alongside them at the Obons and festivals. He even enjoyed the casinos with them.

Sensei was a minister who respected and revered the Sangha, and in turn, was respected and revered by the Sangha. Rev. Hasegawa was always one with his Sangha. He golfed with them. He bowled with them. He played cards with them. He had coffee with them. He worked alongside them at the Obons and festivals. He even enjoyed the casinos with them.

As a minister, we all want to be respected by the Sanghas that we serve. But we have to understand that as a minister, first we have to be the one that respects and reveres our Sanghas. If we do that, then we will naturally be respected by our Sanghas.

I think this is true for all occupations. A teacher who respects and reveres students is in turn respected and revered by the students. A nurse who

respects and reveres patients is also respected and revered by the patients. A business person who respects and reveres customers and clients is also respected and revered by the clients.

The Larger Sutra, which Shin Buddhism is based upon, begins with Shakyamuni Buddha speaking to 12,000 followers before him. In most sutras, the Buddha is the enlightened one, sharing the Dharma, speaking to the unenlightened followers before him.

Rev. Haya Akegarasu has a unique way of interpreting this scene from the Larger Sutra. Rev. Akegarasu feels that in the Larger Sutra, Shakyamuni does not see the 12,000 people before him as unenlightened people, but instead, the Buddha saw everyone in front of him as Buddhas, as emanating the radiant light of enlightenment. The Buddha revered the Sangha in front of him as Buddhas, and the Sangha in

turn revered Shakyamuni as the enlightened Buddha.

Rev. Hasegawa's life as a minister teaches me this noble lesson to respect and to revere the Sangha. In so doing, one is naturally respected by the Sangha.

No matter what our occupation or role of life is, this is essential. To respect one's students as a teacher, to respect one's players as a coach, to respect one's clients in business, to respect one's patients as a doctor is how one receives respect from them.

This even applies to a farmer. Once, Rev. Gyomay Kubose spoke at my home temple many years ago. At that time, most of the members were farmers.

In his sermon, Rev. Kubose said: "Tomorrow, you farmers should go out to your onion fields and gassho to your onions."

All of the farmers laughed and chuckled, but Rev. Kubose said, "Your onions are the source of your good life. Without your onions, you do not have your life as a farmer."

As I fondly recall and remember the late Rev. Charles Hasegawa, I will forever remember the lesson I learned from him about what it means to serve as a minister. Only when a minister respects and reveres a Sangha does that minister receive the respect and reverence from the Sangha.

MINISTER'S MESSAGE



By Rev. Gerald Sakamoto
Rinban

San Jose Betsuin Buddhist Temple

The Buddha-Dharma begins with a fundamental question: "How do we resolve the difficulties we cause and experience?"

Buddhism suggests these difficulties result from our tendency to see the world through our preferences and our prejudices. We hold on to what we want and push away what we don't want. We divide our world up into good, bad, right, and wrong, offering opportunities for opposition and difficulties to arise. If we can begin to see things as they are, we might begin to soften the boundaries that separate and begin to recognize the

profound relationship we share with all life.

There are and have been practices prescribed to cultivate the mind that are free of prejudice. Many of these practices flow from the Fourth Noble Truth; the Eightfold Path. If we are able to follow the prescribed practices and cultivate the mind that sees things as they are we might begin to resolve the difficulties we cause and experience.

What happens if we are unable to follow the prescribed practices? For those who lack the discipline and skills there is the Vow of Amida Buddha. Amida's Vow assures us, as we are, of the resolution of difficulties. That assurance allows me to recognize more deeply the consequences and depth of my prejudices. Whether I think of Amida as mythical or real, I am changed as I rely on that assurance. If I misunderstand the assurance of Amida, Amida is not changed, Amida's assurance continues. And I am not changed, I continue to cause and experience difficulties for

myself and others.

I am always amazed at how difficult and chaotic the times of Shinran's life were. His life spanned the period of 1173 to 1263. In 1180, war between the Taira and Minamoto clans erupted in the streets of Kyoto. The Gempei War would end in 1185 and usher in the Kamakura Period and the Tent Government of Kamakura. The Gempei War came to a halt in 1181 due to the Yowa Famine, which began in 1181 and ended in 1182.

Kamo no Chōmei records his observations in his "Hojoki," which he wrote in 1212. In the "Hojoki," which is still required reading in many schools in Japan, Chomei describes the streets of Kyoto. So many corpses were left where they died. Along the riverbanks, bodies were stacked like cord wood. In a section of Kyoto alone, more than 40,000 dead were counted.

Many more had died before and beyond these boundaries. The famine was throughout the country, but most heavily

experienced in the Kyoto area. The Gempei War that began in 1180 and halted between 1181 and 1182 because of the famine began again in 1182 and ended three years later in 1185. In the midst of this, Shinran, at age 9, entered Heizan. I cannot imagine that the circumstances around him did not influence this decision.

For the next 20 years, Shinran was committed to understanding the Dharma, but eventually decided to leave. He began his studies with Honen until 1207, when the group was banned, two disciples were executed, and Honen and Shinran were sent into exile in opposite ends of the country.

In Echigo, Shinran began a family with Eshinni. There as neither a priest nor layman, Shinran's life seemed to have settled down. In 1214, after receiving a pardon, he decided to go to Kanto rather than return to Kyoto. He taught and shared the Dharma there for nearly 20 years until he decided to return

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

'The Right Time Is Now' for the BCA



By Steven Terusaki
BCA President

Writing for the Wheel of Dharma offers the opportunity to acknowledge and convey the exciting efforts that are happening around the BCA. Being in the President's position also gives me a unique perspective on how all these efforts are interrelated and working to make a difference for each and every one of us. I hope to bring these efforts to the forefront in this and future articles of the President's message.

This year began with the theme, "The Right Time Is Now." It is now halfway through the year and the mes-

sage rings even more loudly. In less than three months, the BCA will formally celebrate our 125th anniversary with events on Sept. 1.

The right time is now to express our gratitude to Rev. Dr. Shuye Sonoda and Rev. Kakuryo Nishijima, who arrived in San Francisco on Sept. 1, 1899, responding to Issei immigrants who sought to hear the Dharma in their new home. The time is now to also honor our Issei and Nisei pioneers, who created the network of our 60 temples and fellowships across the United States.

The day begins with the Founding Day Service to be held at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco and streamed live for everyone to enjoy. The service will be officiated by Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada and the ministers of the Bay District. A video production by our new Film and Video Committee led by Glenn Tao (Los Angeles Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple) will spotlight each of our 60-plus temples and fellowships that have been part of BCA's his-

tory.

The new gatha, "Storms and Peace," composed by Francis Wong with lyrics by Skylar Lam, will also debut at the service. "Storms and Peace" and "In Amida's Light," composed by Shinji Eshima with lyrics by Gayle Kono (Sacramento Betsuin) that were debuted at the 2024 National Council Meeting Eitaikyo service are musical compositions created especially for the 125th anniversary by the BCA Music Committee's efforts under the leadership of Kemi Nakabayashi (Seattle Betsuin).

Directly following the Founding Day Service will be the BCA 125th Anniversary Telethon. Hosted and streamed from the Jodo Shinshu Center by Michiko Inanaga (Orange County/BCA Endowment Foundation Development Director) and Koichi Mizushima (Sacramento/CBE Youth Coordinator), the program will knit together the many pieces that show the richness of BCA today and the promise of BCA for the future.

Terri Omori (Vista/past

BCA President) and Darlene Bagshaw (Stockton/FDSTL President and BCA Secretary) lead a team who are responsible for the Founding Day activities as well as organizing many other events that celebrate BCA's 125th anniversary. Stay tuned for more information on anniversary activities, including Bonbu Stories' new Obon dance, "Lantern Song," at your temple Obon festivals this summer.

The "Right Time Is Now" is not only a time to reflect on the past, but also a time to make a commitment to the future of Shin Buddhism. Through the Dharma Forward campaign, we have the opportunity to contribute to a future that focuses on the campaign's Four Pillars:

- Buddhist Education
- Outreach and Technology
- Ministerial Support and Scholarships; and
- Facilities investments

Dharma Forward donations have supported and continue to support BCA initiatives such as travel subsidies for participants to the recent

Tokudo ordination in Kyoto; a program for website upgrades for local temples; new music compositions; waterproofing of the parking deck at the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC); air filtration system upgrades at the JSC to new building standards; renovation of the elevator at the BCA Headquarters building in San Francisco; and renovation and upgrades to the Bishop's parsonage in Belmont, California, that now provides lease income to the BCA.

IBS donations have increased the endowments for the legacy professorial chairs; provided support for faculty salaries and new positions; scholarships; and renovation and improvements to the IBS dormitory building in Berkeley, among many others.

Through April 30, the Dharma Forward campaign has received nearly \$10.4 million — 70% of the goal. We are looking to fulfill the remaining 30% in the next 18 months. Your contributions have already made a difference

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FDSTL Conference Draws Nearly 100

Coast District Dharma School Teachers' League Hosts In-Person Meeting

By Brent Izutsu

Mountain View Buddhist Temple

The flowers were all a'bloom at Mountain View Buddhist Temple as nearly 100 participants gathered for the 2024 Federation of Dharma School Teachers' Leagues (FDSTL) Conference that was hosted by the Coast District Dharma School Teachers' League on April 27.

It was the first fully in-person conference since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a great reminder of the power of meeting and engaging with one another in creating community.

The conference theme was "Nurturing Shinran's Seeds," a recognition that Dharma School teachers carry forward the rich legacy of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism even as they bring a newfound realization of the Dharma and appreciation for the Nembutsu to new generations of young Buddhists.

The conference was focused on highlighting perhaps lesser-known figures in Jodo Shinshu's history — those whose life stories are only briefly touched upon in Dharma School lessons, but whose words and actions have had a profound and remarkable impact upon how we perceive, appreciate, and live the Nembutsu in our own daily lives.

Dr. Paula Arai, the Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of



Dr. Paula Arai, the Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), shares her path to learning about Jodo Shinshu Buddhism as the keynote speaker. (Courtesy of Alex Tsukahara)

Women and Buddhist Studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), shared her path to learning about Jodo Shinshu as the keynote speaker.

She reminded the attendees of the important contributions of Eshinni and Kakushinni, Shinran Shonin's wife and daughter, respectively. From their sincere belief in the Amida Buddha's 18th Primal Vow, Eshinni and Kakushinni not only memorialized Shinran

Shonin's teachings and created the foundation of the Jodo Shinshu sect, but provided a place for women in Japanese Buddhism and Amida's Pure Land.

Dr. Arai also emphasized the importance of recognizing and celebrating the "hidden gems" who enjoy working in the background that we have not yet fully acknowledged

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Logo Created to Honor BCA's 125th Anniversary

A logo commemorating the BCA's 125th anniversary has been unveiled.

"Thanks to the assistance of (BCAEF Director of Development) Michiko Inanaga, the logo design was created to depict the many individuals, the many hands, and dedicated support BCA has received throughout its 125 years," said past BCA President Terri Omori. "It is now our turn to continue the legacy and ensure the Dharma will continue to be shared and accessible to all."

The logo will be used on the BCA website, all social media platforms, including BCA Connect and the BCA's Facebook, Instagram and X accounts, as well as the Wheel of Dharma.

It will also be shared with BCA districts, temples, affiliated organizations and committees.



Nonprofit Beautifies Seattle Betsuin's Park



Volunteers from the nonprofit organization Plant Amnesty pruned trees in Seattle Betsuin's Wisteria Park and along the adjacent parking strips. (Courtesy of Ann Oxrieder)

By Ann Oxrieder
Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple

Thirty volunteers from the nonprofit organization Plant Amnesty spent all day on April 26, pruning trees in Seattle Betsuin's Wisteria Park and along the adjacent parking strips.

The mission of Plant Amnesty is to "provide education, resources, and advocacy to prevent mal-pruning and preserve urban greenspaces."

Plant Amnesty volunteers take on two projects for free each year; the first is on Arbor Day. The temple's cost is in providing sandwiches and drinks to the pruners and purchasing several trees to replace ones that had to be removed.

Alan Hoshino, the temple's liaison to the group, estimated the savings to be in the range of \$20,000 to \$30,000.

Many thanks, volunteers of Plant Amnesty, for your generosity of time and expertise.

President's Message

Continued from Page 3

and your continued contributions will make future programs and initiatives possible. Pledges, recurring contributions, legacy giving and donations made "in memory of" are a few ways to ensure that our future is secured.

For those who can take advantage of tax-efficient charitable giving, the Endowment Foundation can work with you to make that happen. Please contact Michiko Inanaga for more information at: minanaga@bcahq.org

"The Right Time Is Now" also means that with June upon us, we have entered our summer festival season with temple bazaars and Obon festivals around the BCA.

It is time to reinvigorate our local sanghas and work on member engagement to support these important events. Coming out of the pandemic, many temples are innovating with new ways to orchestrate these events.

Since 2019, when we were last able to have summer festivals without restrictions, many members have passed, others find it difficult to sustain the level of energy required to put in 12-to-15-hour days, and the five years that have passed have precluded the mentor-

ship of a new generation of younger members to take on critical organizing tasks.

I look forward to hearing the innovations that are happening across the BCA as we explore new ways of holding these events, enlisting new younger leaders to take ownership and broadly engaging our Sangha members to make these festivals a success.

This year began with the theme, "The Right Time Is Now." It is now halfway through the year and the message rings even more loudly. In less than three months, the BCA will formally celebrate our 125th anniversary with events on Sept. 1, 2024.

As we celebrate this summer festival season, let us share in the new Obon music and dances that have been created for BCA's 125th anniversary and remember that the "Right Time Is Now" to keep moving forward.

Finally, the "Right Time Is Now" also helps me keep the focus on BCA leadership issues. In my previous articles, I wrote about governance as a key leadership issue. Organizational changes to place responsibility and authority where it is best effective continue to happen.

Furthermore, the Vision

and Strategic Planning Committee under the leadership of John Arima (Mountain View/BCA Vice President) and Andrea Chapman (Ekoji/Vice Chair) have been making great strides into the updates to BCA's 2006 Strategic Plan.

Recent efforts to solicit "A Wish for BCA" through the Bodhi Leaf outreach at both the National Council Meeting

and the recent Federation of Dharma School Teachers League conference have provided valuable data to inform a new vision statement for the BCA.

Our target to have an updated plan for approval at the 2025 National Council Meeting is aggressive, but so important to the future of BCA. For as the theme of this article states, "The Right Time Is Now."

Thank you for your input and comments. My inbox is always available at: sterusaki@bcahq.org I look forward to hearing from you.



BCA Music
Committee

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that craftspeople in the Gila River concentration camp in Arizona during World War II made a taiko for Bon Daiko (Obon drumming) from an animal skin stretched over a keg?

Did you also know that women started playing Bon Daiko on a regular basis in the 1970s?

Read more about Bon Daiko in Wynn Kiyama's recent articles on the Discover Nikkei website: <https://discovernikkei.org/en/journal/author/kiyama-wynn/>

Kiyama is a member of the BCA Music History and Bon Odori Taiko subcommittees.

CALL FOR ENTRIES
4th Annual BCA Virtual Art Exhibit

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/ARTBCA](https://tinyurl.com/artbca)

Open to all members of our BCA Sangha Community!

Submission Deadline: Aug 31, 2024

Buddhist Churches of America

ART BY MAYU GARNER

Celebrating
WOMEN OF THE BCA
Seminar
all are welcome!

PATHS IN JODO SHINSHU

Women have long played an important supportive and largely "behind the scenes" role in the expansion of the Dharma and at BCA. Today we have many opportunities to grow in leadership, engage in our Sanghas, and share the Dharma.

SEPT. 28, 2024, SAT
9:30AM-5:00PM
optional activity Friday & Saturday evenings

Keynote Speakers

REV. CANDICE SHIBATA & REV. MELISSA OPEL

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Register by Sept. 15, 2024 * <https://forms.gle/8m7BysFcYpZRZfwM9>
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Some rooms available to stay overnight at the JSC

*Supported by the Hemera Foundation and the Buddhist Churches of America's commitment to Women in Buddhism



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Sakaye Aratani Is Remembered for Philanthropy, Leadership, Vision

She and Late Husband George Aratani Established IBS, BCA Programs; She Passed Away at Age of 104



The Rafu Shimpo and
Wheel of Dharma

Sakaye Aratani, the elegant matriarch of the Aratani family, was recalled for her philanthropy, leadership, and support of numerous institutions that left an indelible mark on the Japanese American community — as well as impacting the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS).

Sakaye Aratani, the wife of the late George Aratani who founded Mikasa china and the Kenwood Electronics corporation, passed away March 18 at the age of 104. A private memorial service was held on March 27 in Los Angeles.

Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada and Institute of Buddhist Studies President Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto issued statements on the passing of Sakaye Aratani, praising her and George Aratani for their contributions to the BCA and IBS.

“The Buddhist Churches of America has been most fortunate to be the recipient of the generosity and spirit of dana from George and Sakaye Aratani over many years,” Rev. Harada said. “Through their generosity, our Buddhist education programs, the Institute of Buddhist Studies, and our BCA Endowment has been able to expand and develop. We are truly indebted to the Aratanis for all they have done not just for the BCA, but for the greater community as well.”

Rev. Dr. Matsumoto added: “George and Sakaye Aratani were visionaries who established groundbreaking IBS (Institute of Buddhist Studies) and BCA programs dedicated to making Jodo Shinshu understandable and relevant for people today.”

The Aratanis founded the Center for Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies at IBS in order to create scholarly programs, publications, and educational opportunities. In 2008, they established the George and Sakaye Aratani Professorial Chair Endowment Fund to enable IBS to offer Shin Buddhist instruction and research from a contemporary perspective for our future ministers, scholars, and the public.

Today, the GSA Professorial Chair Endowment is fully

funded and will support an IBS professor into perpetuity.

“Being appointed the George and Sakaye Aratani Professor of Contemporary Shin Buddhist Studies was one of the greatest honors I have received in my life,” Rev. Dr. Matsumoto said. “Mr. and Mrs. Aratani, and the Aratani Foundation, have been instrumental in allowing IBS to foster the understanding and development of Shin Buddhist thought in engagement with the issues and perspectives of contemporary life.”

George and Sakaye Aratani supported a number of institutions that are a part of the Little Tokyo district of Los Angeles. Among the institutions named in their honor are: Japanese American Cultural and Community Center’s Aratani Japan America Theatre; the Japanese American National Museum’s George and Sakaye Central Hall; and the Union Center for the Arts’s Aratani Courtyard.

Sakaye Aratani was born on Dec. 11, 1919, to Eijiro and Katsu Inouye and grew up in Gardena, where her parents were in the nursery business.

She was sent, along with other Japanese Americans, to the mass incarceration camp at Poston, Arizona, during World War II. She met George Aratani a few years before the war. He was interned at Gila River, near Phoenix, Arizona, and enlisted in the Military Intelligence Service as an instructor teaching Japanese to U.S. Army personnel.

Before leaving for Minnesota to report for duty, he proposed to Sakaye. She and her future mother-in-law traveled to Minnesota to join him. The couple were married in 1944 among close friends in Minneapolis.

After the war, the family moved to Boyle Heights in Los Angeles. It was during this time that Aratani became involved in philanthropy. Her first involvement was with a group of women in Los Angeles, both Japanese and Caucasian, whose mission was to help starving war widows in Japan. They reached out to women’s groups and churches throughout the United States, requesting discarded nylon hosiery. The group sent the hosiery to the war widows, who created thread and ornaments to sell in order to survive.

Aratani was a board member of the Japan America Society, holding the post for 20 years. She organized the first JAS golf tournament, which continues today.

In a statement on its website, Japan America Society said Aratani had a profound influence on the organization and its mission: “Sakaye’s heart was always devoted to serving others and was a lifelong advocate for the Japan America Society that promoted building U.S.-Japan relationships. Her kindness and generosity knew no bounds,



On behalf of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto presents George Aratani an Honorary Doctorate at his home in Hollywood, California, on June 17, 2010. Present at the ceremony were Sakaye Aratani, as well as the late Rev. Hiroshi Abiko, Rinban of the Los Angeles Hampa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, and the late Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka. (Courtesy of Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto, Sakaye and George Aratani)



Sakaye and George Aratani were known for their philanthropy and for positive, impactful contributions to the Japanese American community. (Courtesy of Rafu Shimpo)

FYI

For more information about the life of Sakaye Aratani, go to: <https://www.rememberingsakaye.com/>

Should you wish to make a donation in her memory, please consider JANM, Keiro, Japan America Society, or JACCC.

even welcoming a JAS member recently to her home and providing a full tea-ceremony service even though she was weak from age.”

In the early 1950s, she and a group of women golfers organized the first Nisei Women’s Golf Club, which met monthly to play and socialize. She was its first president.

She helped form a group of

women from Japan who created a forum for young musicians to perform in an orchestra, now known as the Asia America Symphony Association. Many Japanese youth have had the opportunity to perform under conductor Dr. Akira Kikukawa. Aratani was one of the founders of the Asia America Symphony Women’s Guild, which organizes fundraising events to support

the association.

Aratani was also one of the founders of the Japanese American Montebello Women’s Club, a philanthropic group that organized many fundraisers for the City of Hope, and raised money to purchase wheelchairs for Keiro Nursing Home.

“There were about five or six of us who got together and decided we should form a club because there’s nothing like that over there in Montebello,” Aratani recalled in a 2017 interview with Densho. “So we decided, well, we’ll make plans to raise funds and get the ladies interested. And I think even till this day, there’s no club like the Montebello Women’s Club. We were so active, we did so much for the community, and I’m so proud of being part of it.”

During the 1960s, Aratani helped Miki Sawada, an heiress to Mitsubishi Japan, to create a large orphanage for biracial children born after the war. They were shunned by society. Sawada took them in and created the Elizabeth Saunders Home. When she decided to transport many of these children to South America, where they were guaranteed work on the coffee plantations, she was very concerned the children would not have shoes. Aratani immediately went to work collecting discarded shoes from schools and gymnasiums. Sawada found that Aratani had fulfilled her request beyond what she anticipated.

At UCLA in 2004, the Aratanis endowed the first academic chair in the United States to study the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans and their efforts to gain redress. The late Lane Ryo Hirabayashi was the first to hold the endowed chair.

In 2013, the Aratanis sup-

Continued on Page 9



Learning to Live With Others

Editor's note: Rev. Igor Makasyuk was among a group of BCA members who received Tokudo training and ordination in December 2023 at the Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan. Rev. Makasyuk has written his thoughts and reflections of that time. The Wheel of Dharma is honored to publish this article by Rev. Makasyuk.

"Hence, I am now neither a monk nor one in worldly life. For this reason, I have taken the term Toku ('stubble-haired') as my name."

— Shinran Shonin, postscript to "Kyogyoshinsho"

By Rev. Igor Makasyuk
Palo Alto Buddhist Temple

Tokudo training is not the time for quiet contemplation. The schedule at Nishiyama training facility is tight, and days are 18 hours long.

Your living space is one-fourth of an average size bedroom — barely enough to spread and fold your robe. One shelf assigned to you is taken by the tray where your robes and hakama are kept neatly folded. The remaining 10 inches to the right can be used only for books and notes.

Your belongings must be kept in the suitcase, which must be always closed. All of your electronics are taken away. A 20-minute break is barely enough to get back to the room, change, fold your other robe, prepare the materials for the next class, and wait for the gong.

In this training, we were so far from perfect — chanting out of tune, forgetting the proper rituals, and making hundreds of other mistakes. I felt inept and foolish more than ever before, but at the same time, closer to the Buddha than ever before. Miraculously, when you are exactly where you are supposed to be trying to do your best and be in harmony with others, things fall into places. The Hongwanji patiently corrected our mistakes and accepted us the way we were.

Speaking to us from Canada, Bishop Rev. Tatsuya Aoki brought up the Japanese term "totonoreru" — "put in order, tidy up, prepare, adjust, work out." He added: "This is the time when you learn to live with others." This is the time when only your ego distracts you from getting to know yourself, too.

Our training begins with the trip to Hieizan, the stronghold of Tendai school, where Shinran Shonin, as most of the prominent teachers of Kamakura Buddhism, started as a monk.

We walk through the chambers of Shoren-in where Shinran Shonin was ordained. We step inside the Jogyo Zanmai-do that we heard so much about and walk around the statue of Amida Buddha where Shinran Shonin walked thousands of times. We touch the bamboo rail that his hand touched during the 90-day walking meditation, the rail polished by thousands of hands of monks who have cir-

cumambulated the statue over the centuries.

At Nishiyama, we have been given an honor of conducting services in the altar of the betsuin, which used to be the Amida Hall of Nishi Hongwanji since 1618 until the permanent hall was completed; it is the oldest building in the Hongwanji complex. The magnificence of this temple is in the gold-plated pillars, mirror-like naijin floor, and the Edo-period decorations on the ceiling and on the altar screen doors, the only surviving paintings by Tokuriki Zennune, the cultural heritage.

The grounds of Nishiyama Betsuin are the resting place of Kakunyo Shonin, Shinran's great-grandson, the third abbot of Hongwanji. It was his commitment and energy that made the institution of Hongwanji a reality. His brush created the "Godensho" — the illustrated

biography of Shinran Shonin. The drawings from that biography, the "Goeden," are displayed on hanging scrolls in Nishi Hongwanji during the Ho'on-ko week.

This training is the time when they test your ability to share your space and time, put other people first, and be under some pressure. This is the time when you test how you can adjust, listen, and do what you are told.

Our living conditions at Nishiyama were very different from what we were used to. But human life changes in an instant because of wars, natural disasters, illness, death of a loved one, or other reasons. Many millions of people on Earth right now would give anything for being able to sleep in a warm safe place, have an unlimited supply of clean water, and food put in front of them three times a day.

Shinran Shonin's life changed dramatically when he entered priesthood at nine,



Above, Rev. Igor Makasyuk of the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple is shown at the Nishiyama training facility as he and other BCA members underwent Tokudo training and ordination in December 2023. Center and bottom left are the only existing paintings by the Hongwanji temple illustrator of the early Edo period, Tokuriki Zennune, on the eight-panel sliding door of the Onajin. The center photo depicts pine and wisteria and the bottom photo shows cherry blossoms and red peonies. (Courtesy of Rev. Igor Makasyuk)

cannot be redone.

In this training, we were so far from perfect — chanting out of tune, forgetting the proper rituals, and making hundreds of other mistakes. I felt inept and foolish more than ever before, but at the same time, closer to the Buddha than ever before. Miraculously, when you are exactly where you are supposed to be trying to do your best and be in harmony with others, things fall into places. The Hongwanji patiently corrected our mistakes and accepted us the way we were.

We have been honored on multiple occasions in this 11-day training. We have not done anything yet to deserve that. Tokudo ordination is not an award for something you have done. It is an opportunity to begin living up to everything that is symbolized by the wisteria crest embroidered on your o'kesa.

The training is over, and we say "Goodbye" to Nishiyama. We are back to the office of Hongwanji International Center where we change out of our robes back into everyday clothes. I have been allowed to wear this robe during many sessions at the Jodo Shinshu Center and in Nishiyama for training. Today, Dec. 16, 2023, is the first day that I officially have a right to wear it, and I am in no rush to take it off. I have the rest of my life to prove that I deserve to be wearing it.

Namo Amida Butsu

left Mount Hiei at the age of 29, went into exile and learned to be a villager at 35, left the countryside and returned to Kyoto in his 60s. As his path was taking sharp turns, he had to adjust and learn to live with others. The founder gave us more than the teaching. His image with a staff and villager's hat is a symbol of his path of a lifelong seeker — neither a layman nor a monk — the path that granted us this unique opportunity to be following Buddhism without having to leave the worldly life.

Shinran Shonin was profoundly influenced by Master Shan-tao whose words he quoted extensively including the two aspects of deeply entrusting mind in the chapter on Shinjin of "Kyogyoshinsho":

"One is to believe deeply and decidedly that you are a

foolish being of karmic evil caught in birth-and-death, ever sinking and ever wandering in transmigration from innumerable kalpas in the past, with never a condition that would lead to emancipation. The second is to believe deeply and decidedly that Amida Buddha's Forty-eight Vows grasp sentient beings, and that allowing yourself to be carried by the power of the Vow without any doubt or apprehension, you will attain birth."

This is the statement of faith and salvation, as well as of the reality of a human life. We make mistakes, judge, discriminate, and do things that we are not proud of. Sometimes conditions of our world simply do not allow for a good decision, or action. What happens due to our foolishness, ego, and attachments often



50+ Years in the Dance Circle: Marilyn Ozawa of Mountain View

With the return to Obon festivals throughout the BCA this summer, the Wheel of Dharma also takes pride in welcoming back Dr. Wynn Kiyama's series, "50+ Years in the Dance Circle." The series pays tribute to the extraordinary dance instructors who taught Bon Odori at BCA temples for 50 or more years. This month's article is a tribute to Marilyn Ozawa (Kanyoshi Sanjo) of the Mountain View Buddhist Temple.

By Dr. Wynn Kiyama
BCA and Honpa
Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



Marilyn Ozawa, Aiko Sugimoto-Miyamoto, Toshiko Uyehara, and Gail Satake-Nakamura are shown at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple Obon in 2019. (Courtesy of Eric Arakaki)

Marilyn Ozawa (Kanyoshi Sanjo) studied Japanese classical dance with Miharu Bando (Kanya Sanjo V), performed in San Francisco and Los Angeles, choreographed numerous dances, and taught Bon Odori at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple for over five decades.

Nisei couple Yoshio Nishimoto and Miko Shinta were married in San Jose, California, and their first child, Audrey, was born in 1941. During World War II, the young family was incarcerated at the Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming.

Upon returning to California after the war, Yoshio and Miko had two more children — Marilyn, who was born in 1946, and

Bryan, born in 1956 — and established the Nishimoto Nursery in Mountain View, specializing in chrysanthemums and roses. The family lived on the same plot of land as the nursery, and Marilyn, when not playing with her paper dolls or watching television, enjoyed exploring the family's barn, fields, and orchards.

Following the example of a younger cousin, Marilyn began taking Japanese classical dance lessons at the age of 9 with Miha-

ru Bando (Kanya Sanjo V), who lived in Los Angeles but traveled throughout California to teach. Marilyn performed in recitals at the San Francisco War Memorial and Performing Arts Center and in Los Angeles, where she also participated in the Nisei Week Ondo Parade. She received her professional dance name, Kanyoshi Sanjo, in 1962.

In 1969, Marilyn met Irving Ozawa at a Japanese American dance at the Bold Knight restaurant in Sunnyvale. The two were

married at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple in 1971 and lived in Santa Clara, where Irving worked as an accountant and Marilyn was a special education teacher. They moved to San Jose in 1973, Fremont in 1978, and Mountain View in 2012, and had three children — Ashley, born in 1974, Amber, born in 1977, and Austin, born in 1982.

The Nishimoto family was active at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple for generations. Yoshio served as the tem-

ple president in the early 1970s and Marilyn participated in Sunday School and YBA, played piano for services on occasion, and led Bon Odori at the temple beginning in 1971.

She retained some of the dances taught by the previous instructor Kimiko Fujimoto Yamakoshi, and choreographed "Arigato Ondo," "Hanabare Kappore," "Kawachi Otoko Bushi," and "Ueomuute Arukou," all of which have become temple favorites.

At the temple's Obon, you would find Marilyn working in the goldfish game and chicken teriyaki booths, changing into her Sanjo yukata, and joyfully leading the community in the dance circle. After 53 years of teaching Bon Odori at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple, Marilyn retired following last summer's Obon.

To view a full list of 50+ teachers, follow the link: www.bit.ly/fiftyplusyears. If you have an additional dance instructor for the BCA Music Committee to consider, please email Wynn at wynnkiyama@gmail.com.

Dr. Wynn Kiyama lives in Honolulu, Hawai'i, with his family and is a member of the BCA and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. He is currently working on a history of Bon Odori in the continental United States.

EBL Conference Returning to In-Person Event at Ekoji

By Cheral Tsuchiya
Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha
and **Andrea Chapman**
Ekoji Buddhist Temple

This fall's Eastern Buddhist League Conference will return to an in-person format for the first time in five years and will be a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with Dharma friends and enjoy the greater Sangha.

The event will be held from Oct. 18-20 at Ekoji Buddhist Temple in Fairfax Station, Virginia, outside Washington, D.C. The temple's state-of-the-art Zoom technology will be available so participants can join virtually for a robust, interactive experience.

The Eastern Buddhist League is comprised of the following BCA temples: Midwest Buddhist Temple, New York Buddhist Church, Ekoji Buddhist Temple, Seabrook Buddhist Temple, and the Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha.

Other member temples include:

Toronto Buddhist Church, Manitoba Buddhist Temple, and the Buddhist Temple of Chicago.

Planning of this year's conference has been a collaborative effort, with representatives from each of the participating sanghas contributing their time and talents.

The highlight of the conference will be keynote speaker Dr. Scott Mitchell of the Institute of Buddhist Studies, who will discuss his acclaimed book, "The Making of American Buddhism," and answer participant questions.

Other sessions over the weekend will include: a naikan gratitude training, a build your own butsudan workshop, a fireside chat with the ministers from member temples, and daily meditation walks in the beautiful Ekoji garden.

Also planned is sightseeing in Washington, D.C.

All are welcome. Early bird pricing will be available beginning in June.

For more information and to register, go to: <https://ekojibuddhisttemple.wildapricot.org/events>



The 2024 Eastern Buddhist League Conference Planning Committee poses for a group photo. Shown, from left, in front seated, are: Andrea Chapman, Jason Matsumoto and daughter, and Cheral Tsuchiya. Standing, from left, are: Jane Blechman, Rev. Chiemi Onikura Bly, David Brady, Rev. Kurt Rye, Rev. Ron Miyamura, Rev. Todd Tsuchiya, and Roger Suekama. Not shown is Michael Huff, the event co-chair with Chapman. Shown on the Zoom screen are Erick Ishii and Susan Jacques. (Courtesy of Andrea Chapman)

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Reflections on a Japanese Vacation: Arigato in a 7-Eleven

Editor's note: This article by Teresa Shimogawa, a Minister's Assistant at the Orange County Buddhist Church, first appeared in the EVERYDAY BUDDHIST blog at everydaybuddhist.org and is being reprinted with the permission of Teresa Shimogawa.



By Teresa Shimogawa

Orange County Buddhist Church

This past summer, I took my kids to Japan for vacation. We had a great time, loving everything from temples to Disney Sea curry popcorn, the Ghibli Museum, cat cafes, claw machines, catching a baseball game in Fukuoka, and many visits to Shinto shrines to buy good luck charms.

Yet perhaps the most memorable parts of my trip didn't require reservations nor did they come with a price tag.

Perhaps that is what I sensed in Japanese culture: the fragrance of gratitude emanating from their beings. It is something I recognized in my Japanese father-in-law when he was still alive; a settled peacefulness within him and a thankfulness for his simple existence, something that was so natural to him that he didn't even try to show it, he merely lived it The United States is an individualistic society with almost no recognition of interconnectedness. But I know that I'm not here solely because of my own merits. There have been innumerable experiences with other people and places and conditions that have made me who I am, for which I am deeply grateful.

One aspect about Japanese culture that impressed me (again) on my second visit to the country was the way they say thank you. It is unlike anything you experience in the United States, where public manners often seem like a pleasant surprise when interacting with strangers. But in Japan, I found myself drawn to the intentionality and tradition of how they thank one another.

Arigato gozaimasu.

The expression of gratitude accompanies a bow that is not too fast, not too slow — something that feels deliberate, kind, respectful, and steeped in history.

From the slouchy country where I come from, watching

the straightness in their backs, the degree of the bow, and the consistency of their enthusiasm displayed from even a 7-Eleven worker, impressed me beyond all expectations.

I left each interaction feeling like the person was genuinely happy about the moment we just shared, even if it was me paying them for a pack of Pokemon cards in a convenience store as my kids roamed the aisles begging for more candy like the loud Americans that they are.

Rev. Taitetsu Unno explained in his book, "Bits of Rubble Turn Into Gold," that "arigato" is based "on the Buddhist worldview that any happening is the product of countless causes and conditions ... beyond our comprehension or imagination."

He goes on to talk about the humility that we experience when we don't fully understand the scope of the blessings we experience. He quotes Shinran:

"Such persons are like those who, imbued with incense,

Bear its fragrance on their bodies.

They may be called

Those adorned with the fragrance of light."

Perhaps that is what I sensed in Japanese culture: the fragrance of gratitude emanating from their beings. It is

something I recognized in my Japanese father-in-law when he was still alive; a settled peacefulness within him and a thankfulness for his simple existence, something that was so natural to him that he didn't even try to show it, he merely lived it.

It stands out to me as a person raised in American culture, where gratitude has never been the focus. I've grown up in this place where they tell you if you work hard, you'll succeed, and that it's because of your efforts of pulling yourself up by your bootstraps.

The United States is an individualistic society with almost no recognition of interconnectedness. But I know that I'm not here solely



Teresa Shimogawa, a Minister's Assistant at the Orange County Buddhist Church, and her children traveled to Japan last year on vacation. Above, the Shimogawa family poses for a photo after samurai training in Kyoto. At left, Peter Shimogawa is in front of a 7-Eleven with his Pokemon haul. At bottom, Teresa and daughter Eloise Shimogawa are shown at Nishi Hongwanji. (Courtesy of Teresa Shimogawa)

the act of wallowing won't accomplish anything. It won't restore life to factory settings. It won't contribute to any progress.

But gratitude will, and it's not just Buddhists who believe so. Science has backed up the benefits of gratitude for quite some time.

Gratitude has physical and mental benefits, such as decreasing depression and anxiety, increasing happiness and life satisfaction, strengthening relationships, sleeping better, and lowering blood pressure.

The New York Times recently published an article written by Christina Caron entitled "Gratitude Really Is Good for You. Here's What the Science Shows." In it, Caron writes that gratitude arises from acknowledging "you have goodness in your life and that other people — or higher powers, if you believe in them — have helped you achieve that goodness."

Here, I thought about Namo Amida Butsu. Rev. Unno describes it as being aware of our self-centered ego and "being touched by the light of the boundless compassion that is Amida Buddha. This light not only illuminates our darkness, it transforms it, so that we try to be compassionate with a sense of humility and gratitude, mindful of our karmic limitations."

Thus, when we recite the Nembutsu, we are grounding ourselves in a practice of gratitude, a life of humility, and ultimately opening the doors of possibility for ourselves and those who we share this world with. It is a way that we can make a difference from within every single day.



because of my own merits. There have been innumerable experiences with other people and places and conditions that have made me who I am, for which I am deeply grateful.

For someone like me who didn't grow up as a Buddhist, gratitude has been something I've had to work at. My mind would often go straight to the reasons why gratitude was silly, like how can I be grateful that I'm sick? Or how can I be grateful that my husband died? Why would I be grateful

that the air conditioner just broke?

Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi spoke about the benefits of a Shin Buddhist life in his March 2023 BCA talk, and he said, "Shin Buddhism is about appreciating what I have to balance the desire for what I don't have."

This was a powerful way of explaining gratitude to me. Gratitude is strategic thinking. If I sit here wallowing in my agony of loss, I may have good reasons to be sad, but



MVBT MA: 'I Can't Look Away' From the Ongoing Suffering in Gaza

He Describes His Thoughts About Activism, Student Protests in U.S., Around the World

Editor's note: Rev. Devon Matsumoto, a Minister's Assistant at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple who received Tokudo certification in December 2023 from the Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, is Senior Program Coordinator at the Asian Law Caucus's Community Safety Program.



By Rev. Devon Matsumoto
Mountain View Buddhist Temple

I have been struggling to write an article for some time now about the ongoing genocide of Palestinians in Gaza.

Sometimes I wonder, "What can I do? I am just one person." Sometimes I wonder, "What can I say?" Words alone feel inadequate.

I have honestly been scared of getting in trouble for sharing my thoughts and feelings, and, because of that, have had a difficult time processing everything going on.

We often condemn these young activists and organizers, but I think we have a lot to learn from them. Right now, I believe that it is very important that we hear them out and listen to what they are asking of us. People may tell them not to rock the boat, but I will let you know they aren't the ones who are rocking it. They merely pointed to the waves crashing down on us.

However, the recent uprisings across college campuses around the world and the student activism showing up in high schools and middle schools around the United States have been a source of inspiration for me.

I wish I was as brave as them and can only hope I live up to their example. These

students are selflessly putting their safety and futures on the line to call for an end to the genocide and for a liberated Palestine. How can I not show my support for them and the people of Gaza, even in this small way?

We often condemn these young activists and organizers, but I think we have a lot to learn from them. Right now, I believe that it is very important that we hear them out and listen to what they are asking of us. People may tell them not to rock the boat, but I will let you know they aren't the ones who are rocking it. They merely pointed to the waves crashing down on us.

As difficult and as heartbreaking as it is, they are asking us not to look away. As of now, over 34,000 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli regime, and over 15,000 of those killed are children. They are asking us not to look away as Israel has dropped more than 25,000 tons of bombs on Gaza, which is more than the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima. They are asking us not to look away as the Palestinians in the West Bank are evicted from their homes. They are asking us not to look away as Palestinians are starved by Israel's humanitarian blockade. They are asking us not to look away.

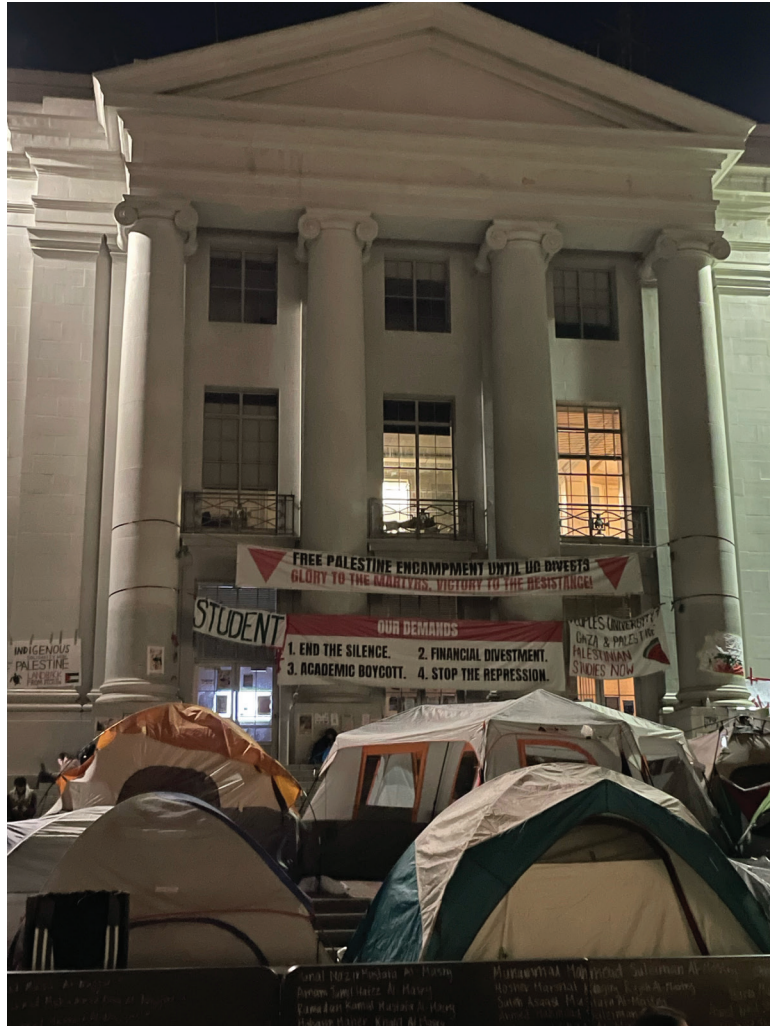
As these young people face repression at the hands of the police, school administration, and even our communities, I cannot help but think of the

last line of "Sanbutsuge" from the "Sutra on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life."

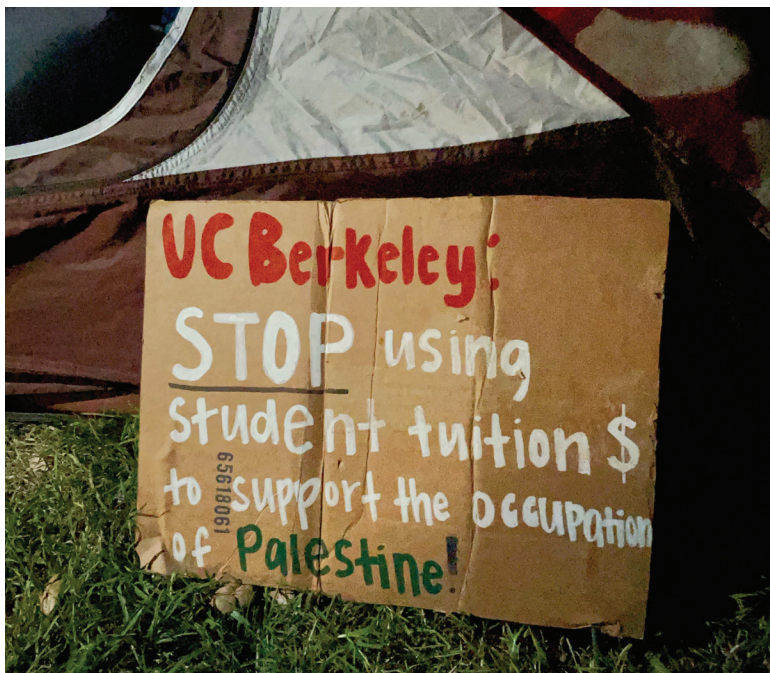
In this gatha, Bodhisattva Dharmakara states vows to become a Buddha and save all beings who are suffering in the world of delusion. Bodhisattva Dharmakara, in speaking to the Buddha Lokeśvararāja, declares that "even if I should

community and strengthen ties between the community and UCLA. The couple also endowed the George and Sakaye Aratani "Community Advancement Research Endowment," or Aratani C.A.R.E., Awards.

Aratani was the first Japanese American woman to be recognized by the Japanese



The "Free Palestine Encampment" is shown in front of Sproul Plaza at the University of California at Berkeley. Below, a student protest sign at UC Berkeley's "Free Palestine Encampment." (Courtesy of Rev. Devon Matsumoto)



be subjected to all kinds of suffering and torment, continuing my practice undeterred, I would endure it and never have any regrets."

I see Bodhisattva Dharmakara's words in the unrelenting struggle that these students have embarked upon. I see Bodhisattva Dharmakara's words in the Palestinian people fighting for their humanity. And I see Bodhisattva Dharmakara's words in my own reflection as I try to make sense of the Buddha's teachings and how they relate to this world of samsara.

One of the most important

things I have learned from these students is that the struggle for liberation will not be perfect, nor does it ask for perfection.

Rather, like the Nembutsu teachings, the movement teaches me to deeply reflect upon my imperfections, learn, and then grow from them. It teaches me to complicate the narratives and seek out the root causes of suffering and injustice. It teaches me that only through doubt, which is to question the reality we see around us, can I fully commit myself to the struggle for liberation.

As I sit in the privilege and comfort of my own home, I have been thinking a lot of Dr. Ayesha Khan's words, "Is peace a lie?"

What I think Dr. Khan is saying is not that there is no such thing as peace, but is instead asking us to deeply reflect and question if true peace exists today. Does peace exist for the millions who starve around the world when we have enough food to feed everyone? Does peace exist for the millions who die from a lack of adequate health care when a few countries and companies hoard the resources? Does peace exist for the millions who have become climate refugees or are poisoned by their environments due to climate change exacerbated by global corporations? Does peace exist for the millions living under a 76-year apartheid system as their humanity is denied?

When Dr. Khan is asking us, "If peace is a lie," she is asking us, "What does peace mean to me." When I ask for peace, am I seeking true peace or am I seeking to be comfortable as my house burns around me?

And so I ask myself, contemplating on Shinran Shonin's writing, "we, an ocean of beings in an evil age of five defilements" — "What is peace?"; "What is violence?"; and "Who decides which side is violent and which is peaceful?"

Shinran Shonin finishes this line by saying "should entrust ourselves to the Tathagata's words of truth." How can we envision a world of peace through the guidance of the Buddha? When the River of Fire looks like genocide and the River of Water like apartheid, what does peace look like? As the waves of the rivers crash on me, what violence am I capable of? What other questions should I be asking myself? I do not know these answers, but I should not let it turn me away from seeking them out.

It is easier for me to look away. It is easier for me not to see what's happening because it pains me to see how cruel and hateful we human beings can be. I wanted to look away, too, hoping reason and kindness would prevail. But over seven months have gone by and I cannot look away anymore.

Sakaye Aratani

Continued from Page 5

ported the UCLA Department of Asian American Studies, creating the Aratani Endowment, which is designed to promote projects to benefit and advance the Japanese American

government, receiving a Kunsho in 1963. In her later years, she served as president of the Aratani Family Foundation, following in the footsteps of her husband George Aratani, who died in 2013 at the age of 95.

In her leisure time she enjoyed chigiri-e, the art of paper-tearing. She also excels

in sumi-e and has won several awards for her work.

In lieu of gifts, the Aratani family has suggested making a donation to the organizations that were a large part of Sakaye's life: Japan America Society of Southern California, Japanese American National Museum, Keiro, or Japanese Cultural

& Community Center. You can find links to donate to these organizations from her guest book page: <https://www.rememberingsakaye.com/>

This article was based on several news reports that appeared in The Rafu Shimpo and the Wheel of Dharma.



BUTSU BUTSU



Above left, attendees gather at the BCA's 75th anniversary at the San Francisco Civic Center in 1974. Above right, Dharma School students from throughout the BCA give a presentation at the 75th anniversary in San Francisco. (Courtesy of Buddhist Churches of America archives)

BCA's 125th Anniversary Is Our Last Chance to Honor Nisei Members

By Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata
Buddhist Church of Oakland

When the BCA celebrated its 75th anniversary, I was still a teenager. When the BCA celebrated its 100th anniversary, I was in midcareer, and now with the 125th anniversary upon us, I am now a senior citizen.

I'm sure those of you who participated in the BCA's grand 75th anniversary remember the thousands of members who joined together to celebrate

this most auspicious occasion and perhaps was the last opportunity for us to honor our remaining Issei (first generation) pioneers who sacrificed and dedicated so much to ensure that the Nembutsu teachings would be heard for the past 125 years in the United States.

When you think about the history of the BCA and the Japanese American community and the scar of World War II internment which ended in 1945, it took less than 30 years for the Japanese American

community and the BCA to totally reestablish themselves. Look at all the temple buildings and facilities which were constructed in the 1950s through the 1970s. How could our community and the BCA Sangha start over from zero and accomplish what we did?

It is because of the Nisei (second-generation) BCA members, who, despite all odds, remained faithful to this nation and their parents' desire for the continued transmission of the Nembutsu.

They believed in hard work and sacrifice for the sake of our families, our Sangha and our community and they built the foundation of the BCA's 125th anniversary that we are celebrating this year.

But just look at each of our temples. The remaining number of Nisei members are dwindling so very quickly. This is our last chance to honor and remember each and every Nisei member of our BCA and to thank them for ensuring that the Nembutsu teachings con-

tinue to be heard from coast to coast for all who desire to hear the call of Namo Amida Butsu.

The BCA's 150th anniversary will be in 2049. To be honest, most of the Sansei (third generation) BCA members, as well as myself, will have probably returned to the Pure Land by then.

Will this year's 125th anniversary be the final hurrah for Sansei members to celebrate and express gratitude for our Nembutsu heritage? Namo Amida Butsu

A Zen Candle?

Editor's note: This article by Rev. Jon Turner, Resident Minister at the Orange County Buddhist Church, first appeared in the EVERYDAY BUDDHIST blog at everydaybuddhist.org and is being reprinted with the permission of Rev. Turner.



By Rev. Jon Turner
Orange County Buddhist Church

In popular culture, the term "Zen" has lost almost all meaning.

Sadly, it is no longer a noun that refers to a Japanese school of Buddhism. Instead, it is now an adjective that connotes anything that is "cool" or "relaxing" or "minimalist." It is an aesthetic type of design element. It also refers to a commodified form of self-help through mindfulness.

As a lay person, I understand this, but as a Buddhist minister, it still frustrates me.

Recently, a Zen candle appeared on my kitchen table. I like it and it smells great, but it still provokes a negative reaction within me. It is sad that a great Buddhist tradition has been reinvented in America as a candle.

How this happened to Zen and not to Shin is very interesting and is discussed in two recently published books: "Mind Sky — Zen Teaching on Living and Dying" by Jakusho Kwong, and "The Promise of a Sacred World — Shinran's Teaching of Other Power" by Nagapriya.

First, we will hear from the Zen side of the house:

"The misuse of mindfulness, without a spiritual basis, people hope to be acquiring something. In mindfulness, instead of giving something up, there can be a goal of gaining something, like relief from stress or chronic pain — or blissful happiness. I think we have to be careful about this." (Page 4)

"People find that this form of meditation is a way to ease anxiety and stress, and it has become hugely popular and widespread. Ever since Time magazine devoted its cover and full issue to the 'Mindfulness Revolution' in 2014, there have been endless articles and bestselling books — even monthly magazines — devoted to



the subject of mindfulness. But without some spiritual foundation, meditation practice doesn't go very far. Mindfulness programs are marked commercially and are found in large corporations, public schools, and government agencies. Corporate mindfulness programs are intended, essentially to increase workers' productivity through stress reduction. Mindfulness has become commodified to such an extent that I am reluctant now even to use the term." (Page 4)

Second, the Shin response:

"In contrast to Zen ... Pure Land has attracted limited attention outside East Asia. It is worth reflecting on why this might be Many converts to Buddhism are either consciously rejecting Christianity or else have never had a religious sensibility. They see in Buddhism tools that they can make use of in their process of personal growth, their search for well-being and peace

of mind. They are looking not for redemption or salvation but for adjustment. Richard Payne has suggested that Shin Buddhism doesn't offer a 'compelling religious product.' It's focus on a seemingly external locus of awakening (Amida Buddha and their Pure Land) 'preludes it from being easily commodified and marketed within the religio-therapeutic marketplace.'" (Page 17)

because it has burnt itself out. It requires us to surrender the ambition to redeem ourselves and to recognize that liberation occurs when ego-driven effort collapses." (Page 18)

One solution, some may say, is to start marketing Shin candles as soon as possible, but, of course, this is the wrong approach.

We are actually very lucky

Sadly, it ("Zen") is no longer a noun that refers to a Japanese school of Buddhism. Instead, it is now an adjective that connotes anything that is "cool" or "relaxing" or "minimalist." It is an aesthetic type of design element. It also refers to a commodified form of self-help through mindfulness. As a lay person, I understand this, but as a Buddhist minister, it still frustrates me.

"The reason for this is that Shinran's vision is, in some ways, brutal. It is an assault on the notion of personal growth and self-development. It is an assault on human autonomy. It is an assault on the idea that I can redeem myself. Unlike Zen ... which emphasize personal effort and discipline as a means to 'advance' on the spiritual path, the Shin perspective only becomes relevant to someone prepared to abandon this self-directed project. Better, it speaks to those who have no choice but to abandon this project

that, as Shin Buddhists, we still have control of our message, our brand is still intact. We still have the opportunity to connect with others. We are free to infuse the term "Shin" with meaning that is authentic to our tradition.

We might say that our candles represent the light of wisdom and the warmth of compassion which embrace all beings just as they are. I think the message of wisdom and compassion is much more appealing than the scent of white ginger and amber.



The Origin of Education in Religious Values

Background of Scientific Perspectives and Ways of Thinking

Editor's note: Rev. Giei Sasaki was the 2023 International Ministers Orientation Program (IMOP) minister. Rev. Sasaki holds the position of Bishop at the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto, Japan, where he is involved in training students, and has the special title within Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha of "Shikyo," which literally means "conduct training" in English. "Shikyo" is the second-highest academic position in Jodo Shinshu studies. Rev. Sasaki teaches at Ryukoku University and the Central Buddhist Institute.

Rev. Sasaki will submit future columns on occasion and the BCA Wheel of Dharma is honored to publish them.



By Rev. Giei Sasaki
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

I would like to bring up a trendy topic: neuroscientific child raising.

I recently read a blog that could be summarized as follows, "The purpose of parenting methods based on neuroscience is to enable children to lead wonderful lives by enhancing development of their brain, which could bring out their infinite potential abilities. It covers a wide range of methods from the tone of voice when you speak to a baby or how to present things to them, to how to hold or carry a baby. It is no doubt that many of you would like to raise your children through such methods."

These social media posts can be cited everywhere today. What do you think of them? To

tell you the truth, I feel a sense of fear seeing many people easily give their full trust to the word "neuroscience." To me, they look like they are seeking only "methods" without seeing the true nature in them. Why do they grapple with it without any hesitation when it is labeled as science? What lies in the scientific perspective? Does science really bring us a "wonderful life"?

How can an infant recognize parents? How do they learn how to speak and walk? Do they acquire these skills because of neuroscience?

No, they learn them following the instincts of nature. They naturally want to identify themselves as well as their parents. It is their instinct to examine the circumstances and inform others what they think. In that process, they naturally say their first term, which could be "mommy" or "daddy."

The infant uses the words they have just learned to let others know that they know who they are and understand what is going on around them. Babies are eager to collect information and communicate to others so as to survive. It is the natural order. Advanced scientific information may enrich our life, but it does only when this natural order is fulfilled.

Science is cultivated by discovering and collecting natural laws through objective

observation. However, we must not overlook that we as humans are sometimes so obsessed with science that we are inclined to give it absolute trust.

Humanity may be the most superior species on the Earth. It may be also true that we have the potential to solve a number of problems. Having said that, the more we become proud of our ability, the further we are apart from the modest attitude of learning from nature or viewing things with scientific objectivity.

The way of thinking that only science is trustful would also make us look away from the fundamental issue, such as, what is birth, what is death, and where we are going to when we die. Shinran Shonin left us with the following words cited in "Tannisho":

"I know nothing at all of good or evil. For if I could know thoroughly, as Amida Tathagata knows, that an act was good, then I would know good. If I could know thoroughly, as the Tathagata knows, that an act was evil, then I would know evil. But with a foolish being full of blind passions, in this fleeting world — this burning house — all matters without exception are empty and false, totally without truth and sincerity. The Nembutsu alone is true and real."

— "A Record in Lament of Divergences,"
Jodo Shinshu
Hongwanji-ha Shin
Buddhism Translation Series

The essence of this passage is: "Those who behave as if they know what is good or bad, in fact, do not know them and just pretend to be so."


The only one who can discern what is right or wrong is Amida Buddha, who possesses the true wisdom to see things

as they are. The more firmly attached to one's own idea or view, the more entangled we become in the world of illusion, and we cannot break free from it. Scientific views could change with time. Thus, science is merely a means to understand the structure of this world, but not the ultimate truth itself.

What constantly gives hu-

manity this sort of warning is the Buddha-Dharma, the true teaching. We are incapable of gaining true wisdom, but the object of the salvific working of the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha is nothing but foolish beings like us. In this sense, the origin of education of religious value should be found in our effort of spreading the teaching of Amida's Primal Vow.

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FBWA Conference Set Oct. 4-6

The 47th BCA Federation of Buddhist Women's Association (FBWA) National Conference will be held on Oct. 4-6 at the San Jose DoubleTree Hotel near San Jose International Airport on Friday and Saturday, and at the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin on Sunday.

The conference theme is "Ichi Go Ichi E, Each precious moment, a precious treasure."

The English keynote speaker is former U.S. Rep. Colleen Hanabusa from Hawaii, and the Japanese keynote speaker is BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Yukiko Motoyoshi.

The Japanese monpo will

be conducted by Rev. Yushi Mukojima, Resident Minister of the Mountain View Buddhist Temple, and the English monpo by Rev. Motoyoshi.

Activities include services, workshops, a Friday prepaid tour of San Jose Japantown, Saturday banquet, general FBWA meeting, Odori activity, homecraft items for sale, optional prepaid Sunday obento, and optional prepaid Sunday boxes of manju.

Workshops include: "Liberating Buddhist Women," led by Dr. Paula Arai, Eshinni and Kakushinni Professor of Women and Buddhist Studies at the Institute of Buddhist Studies

(IBS); "The Future of the Buddhist Sangha," moderated by Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada; "Parliamentary Procedure," presented by Gayle Kono, esq.; "LGBTQ+ Community Workshop," with Hoshina Seki and Rev. Ko'e Umezu; "Handmade Cards, The Art of Modern Lettering," with Nicole Santo; and "Soul Line Dancing," with Juanita Croft.

The 47th BCA Federation of Buddhist Women's Association (FBWA) National Conference is hosted by the BCA Coast District Buddhist Women's League (CDBWL).

For more information, go to: <https://fbwasconference.org>



一期一会

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At left, Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa, with leis, is shown at his Waiialua High School graduation in 1959. His years before were spent at Pahala High School. Above, Rev. Hasegawa is standing next to his sister, Nancy Hasegawa, in front of the Hilo Betsuin. Above right, from left, Todd Chin, Rev. George Shibata, Rev. Hasegawa and George Yamamoto pose at a golf tournament in May 25, 2006. (Photos courtesy of Hasegawa family and Catherine Fujimori)

At right, Rev. Hasegawa is with Bishop Rev. Koshin Ogui and Mrs. Mayumi Ogui at the Buddhist Church of Stockton centennial celebration on June 24, 2006. At far right, Rev. Hasegawa is all smiles in front of the Stockton temple.



Rev. Hasegawa

Continued from Page 1

at the age of 84.

He was recalled fondly as a personable and well-liked man with a ready smile who was both revered and respected. He loved playing golf with friends and enjoyed trips to the Jackson Rancheria Casino Resort.

"He was a very sincere person and selfless and never forgot to show us a smiling face," said BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Eijun Kujo at the April 13 funeral service for Rev. Hasegawa at the Stockton temple. Rev. Kujo first met Rev. Hasegawa in the fall of 1960 at the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii (HHMH) in Honolulu.

Rev. Kujo credited Rev. Hasegawa's wife Noriko for serving as his caretaker in recent years.

"He always appreciated his wife's loving care and patience and was able to live a life of gratitude under the guidance of the Buddha's boundless Wisdom and Compassion," Rev. Kujo said.

Stockton Sangha member Kiyoshi Morodomi was among the group of golfers that included Rev. Hasegawa, and Morodomi recounted a telling quote from Rev. Hasegawa.



Rev. Hasegawa is shown at his retirement party at the Buddhist Church of Stockton on Aug. 21, 2010.

"He would tell the guys, 'Don't call me reverend. Call me Chuck.' He always just wanted to be one of the guys," Morodomi said.

He asked the members of the golf group what they most remembered about Rev. Hasegawa and "the overwhelming consensus from everyone is that they remembered all the kindness."

Morodomi described Rev. Hasegawa as a good golfer with an 18 handicap, and recalled the time the minister made a hole-in-one with a new hybrid golf club.

"In closing, I would like to say from the golfers, 'We miss

you, Chuck,'" Morodomi said.

The third person who gave words of appreciation for Rev. Hasegawa was Roy Hasebe, who met the minister in Hawaii 42 years ago, establishing a lifelong bond that extended to their families and children.

"Sensei was a very personable minister," Hasebe said. "He would never turn down coffee. I talked with a Sangha member and he told me when he was in the U.S. Army, Rev. Hasegawa always knew when he was coming home. He would call him up and say, 'Let's have coffee' every time. Another friend said he always went to Rev. Hasegawa's ser-

vices because he enjoyed the message. He said it was always meaningful because Rev. Hasegawa spoke from the heart. My greatest gratitude to Sensei for 42 years of friendship and I certainly miss his laughter."

In his Dharma message, Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada recalled the times when Rev. Hasegawa served as Resident Minister at Rev. Harada's home temple — the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple — from 1983 to 1996.

"At that time, I was still studying in Japan, but then began serving the Orange County Buddhist Church from 1986," Rev. Harada said. "Whenever I went home to Ontario, Oregon, for a visit or on vacation, I got to spend a lot of time with Sensei. I golfed with him countless times. I bowled with him more times than I can remember. I even have some casino memories with Sensei that are very special to me."

Rev. Hasegawa was "the most beloved minister, not just by the Sangha members but by the whole community," Rev. Harada said.

As an example, Rev. Harada described an anecdote from Rev. Jerry Hirano of Utah when he was invited to be a guest speaker at IOBT.

Rev. Hasegawa took Rev. Hirano out for coffee one night at a neighborhood restaurant. A big, burly, rough-looking guy started heading toward their table, worrying Rev. Hirano, who thought the man was possibly coming over to pick a fight.

"But when he got to the table, he said, 'Rev. Hasegawa, how are you doing?' And Rev. Jerry asked, 'Was he a temple member?' Rev. Hasegawa said, 'No, I just happen to know him,'" Rev. Harada said.

Rev. Charles K. Hasegawa was born in Hiroshima, Japan, in 1940 at the Hasegawa Zen-tokuji Temple.

His father, Rev. Kenryu Hasegawa, moved to the Big Island of Hawaii in 1940 to serve as a minister just two weeks after the birth of his son. However, he was unable to bring his young family to Hawaii because of World War II and was sent to an internment camp from 1941 to 1945.

After World War II, Rev. Kenryu Hasegawa returned to the Big Island to continue his ministry at Pahala Hongwanji. In 1952, he was finally able to bring his family over from Japan.

Rev. Hasegawa grew up in

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BCO Dharma School

Continued from Page 1

decision for their time to make Buddhism accessible to all people no matter their status in Japanese society.

As the world has been watching suffering unfold in Palestine and Israel, our Dharma School teaching team felt called as Buddhists, as Japanese Americans, as educators, as parents and grandparents, and by the legacy of Shinran Shonin and his family — to call for peace, to call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

To that end, our team, along with the compassionate support of our Dharma School families, raised a “Love Demands a Permanent Ceasefire” banner in solidarity with the organization, Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity and many other temples, synagogues, and mosques across the Bay Area.

This past winter, we were humbled to welcome faith leaders from the Christian and Jewish traditions to support our banner raising ceremony and were extremely proud of several of our Dharma School students who felt moved to make speeches inspired by our Jodo Shinshu values in front of our Sangha as part of the ceasefire banner raising ceremony.

These are their words:

“Hi! My name is Solina. I’m 9 years old and I’m a student in Dharma School. My family has been part of the Buddhist Church of Oakland for five generations. I wanted to speak today because I wanted the kids in Palestine to not feel alone and I hope they see this banner. There’s a quote



Buddhist Church of Oakland Dharma School teachers pose with the BCO’s banner calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. Shown, from left, are: Joemy Ito-Gates, Jun Hamamoto, Melyssa Minamoto and Daniel Bissonnette. (Courtesy of Hank Williams)

I heard from a Palestinian journalist named Wael al Dahdouh that was: ‘We are being killed twice. Once by the bombs and second by the silence.’ I am proud that we are not being silent.

“I stand up for people because if it were me, I would be so happy to be stood up for. And the people of Palestine really need people to stand up for them. They need a ceasefire now, but they will only be safe when they are free. And that’s why we say free Palestine. Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. also talked about silence, saying, ‘In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends.’

“When I was in second grade, I had a best friend who joined an exclusive classroom club called the finger knitting club. The

group said I could not join. And my best friend was silent. That made me feel sad and left out. I wished that she had stood up for me.

“I’m so impressed by the kids in Palestine who are staying so strong, finding ways to have fun even though it’s so scary, and wishing people well across the world. I hope that there’s a ceasefire soon so that the people can go home. I’m grateful that people came to this event today and that the other speakers spoke too. Thank you for listening.”

— Solina Katayama Bissonnette, elementary school student

“Hello my name is Jiyo and my name is Tomu. We are stu-

dents in Dharma School. We believe that the killings in Palestine and Israel are terrible and there should be an immediate and permanent ceasefire. One reason we believe that there should be a ceasefire is that 30,000 citizen lives have been lost. We are glad that the Buddhist Church of Oakland is putting up a banner to support a cease fire so that we can help convince and put pressure on the U.S. government to stop funding the Israeli government’s war. This aligns with our Buddhist value, kindness to all living things. Thank you.”

— Jiyo Yee Hoshida and Tomu Imai-Hong, middle school students

“As Jodo Shinshu Buddhists,

we try to embrace the principles of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism daily as we are dedicated to extending support to those enduring struggles beyond our own. We aim to foster compassion and understanding for a world in desperate need. Although the idea of compassion has been instilled in us from a young age, it became extremely personal during this crisis.

“When I witnessed the images and stories from the conflict, it made me feel the reality of how in my daily routine, it becomes easy to take simple comforts for granted. The privilege of waking up in a home, enjoying ample amounts of hearty food, and having access to education opportunities unknowingly becomes unseen. However, recent events in this conflict have led others, including myself, to collectively step back. We all have to face the devastating reality and realize that at this very moment, individuals in Palestine and Israel, who are the same age as me, your children, and yourself, endure the harsh impacts of this conflict.

“Through the viewing and reading of this conflict, it became evident how easily people can succumb to prejudice, hindering the ability to wholeheartedly embrace compassion and understand the suffering of others.

“In following the principles of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, we must commit to continue to fight for a world with compassion in the face of hardship. With this commitment, our voices rise in unity: ceasefire now. Together, let’s stand in our dedication to supporting those enduring hardships in the world around us.”

— Jordan Kim, high school student

Honzan Statement

Continued from Page 1

demn this aggression by disapproving the self-righteous excuses made by the authoritarian government. As learning from human history, we wish for this war to end at once.” Sadly, we must restate this passage once again as another armed conflict now takes place.

Triggered by Hamas’ October 7, 2023, missile attack, the warfare between Israel and Hamas has brought about a hellish situation to the Gaza Strip. A devastating attack by Israeli military of a hospital in Gaza City has stood out as an outrageous example of warfare’s cruelty and unlawfulness. This is a battle between armed forces who uses unarmed civilians as their human shield and the world’s leading powerful military who doesn’t mind victimizing those people.

Lost in such battle are civilians’ lives, many of whom are women and children. As of November 11, 2023, it was reported that 11,000 people have been killed, of which more than 40 percent or 4,506 were children.

During a November 6, 2023, interview, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the situation, saying, “Gaza is becoming a graveyard for children,” and hearing so has struck our hearts greatly.

Shinran, the founder of the Jodo Shinshu teaching, had also lived during a warring age in which many people suffered. Identifying himself as one (of) them, he described the most marginalized people as “they are ... none other than we, who are like stones and tiles and pebbles.”

Shinran never wished for his own happiness only, and in reference to himself and others as “we,” represents

studies and graduated in 1963, after which he entered a master’s program at the University of Kansas.

News of his mother’s passing prompted him to return to Hawaii in order to bring his mother’s ashes back to Zen-tokuji in Japan. He decided to stay in Kyoto to complete his master’s degree at Ryukoku University in 1971 and then received his

Kyoshi in 1972.

While he was in the doctorate program at Ryukoku University, he met Noriko and they were married in 1972. The following year, they welcomed their first child, Eri, to the family. In 1974, he and his family returned to Hawaii, where they welcomed their second daughter, Aki, in 1975 and their son, Jyotis, in 1982.

As the saying goes, “Nobody wins a war.” In the first of the Forty-eight Vows that says “there should not be hell, the realm of hungry spirits, or the realm of animals in my land,” Amida Tathagata pledged to guide us to a world that is free from suffering.

his deep feeling of bond with all humanity tied together through the Nembutsu teaching. It is a matter, of course, that we would like to have his teaching as the basis of our lives, but it is also necessary for us to learn from his way of living.

As the saying goes, “Nobody wins a war.” In the first of the Forty-eight Vows that says “there should not be hell, the realm of hungry spirits, or the realm of animals in my land,” Amida Tathagata pledged to guide us to a world that is free from suffering.

As Nembutsu followers who have encountered this Buddha’s wish, we naturally come to aspire for a world in which everyone can live in peace and harmony. In accord with the Buddha’s vow, in consideration of those who have been suffering from this battle, we call for immediate ceasefire and an end to war.

November 23, 2023
Governor General IKEDA Gyoshin
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

Rev. Hasegawa

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Pahala, Hawaii, and moved to Waialua on Oahu for his senior year in high school, graduating in 1959. He received his Tokudo that same year.

After high school, he attended the University of Hawaii at Manoa for his undergraduate

From 1974-1983, Rev. Hasegawa served at various temples in the Hawaii Kyodan, including Wahiwawa Hongwanji Mission, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, Waimea Hongwanji Mission, and Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin.

In 1983, he moved to the BCA and was assigned to Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple and after that, the Buddhist

Church of Stockton.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Kenryu and Kaori Hasegawa, and his sister, Nancy Yayoi Hasegawa. He is survived by his wife of 52 years of marriage, Noriko Hasegawa; stepmother, Atsuko Hasegawa; three children, Eri (Micah) Furuyama, Aki (Brian) Zeck, and Jyotis Hasegawa; and three grandchildren.



Rev. Sakamoto

Continued from Page 2

to Kyoto.

The Kanki Famine of 1230 to 1231 may have influenced Shinran and Eshinni's decision to separate. Shinran would return to Kyoto and Eshinni would return to Echigo. Eshinni was born in 1182 and may have known of the Yowa Famine only through stories told to her. But she experienced the Kanki Famine with her family and was well aware of the hardships everyone endured.

In a verse of the "Shoshinge," Shinran wrote:

"When a foolish being of delusion and defilement awakens shinjin,

He realizes that birth-and-death is itself nirvana:

Without fail he reaches the land of immeasurable light,

And universally guides sentient beings to enlightenment"

There is no separation of samsara and nirvana, no two sides of the same coin. Samsara is nirvana. I experience nirvana as samsara because of my tendency to engage the world through my prejudices.

I am not certain about how Shinran engaged his world. It is amazing, however, how his gratitude for Amida and the Buddha-Dharma continued to deepen in the midst of the turmoil and difficulties he encountered throughout his life.

Note: "Hojoki" is an essay by Kamo no Chomei (1153 or 1155–1216). There are many translations available. Chomei was a contemporary of Shinran who lived in and around Kyoto. His record of events offer a glimpse into what may have shaped Shinran's appreciation of the Dharma.

Well-Being

Continued from Page 1

my relationships, and the practical tasks of life. These elements of life are completely intertwined like a net. I've never seen them as separate compartments.

Last year, Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada invited me to serve on a task force focused on "Buddhism and Spiritual and Psychological Well-Being."

Specifically, Rev. Harada and BCA leaders had perceived a growing need to support the overall well-being of Sangha members. Perhaps this is of particular importance in the wake of COVID-19 along with concerns about climate change, an increasingly divisive political environment, and countless other factors.

Whatever the cause, many more people today need mental health care and spiritual support than have access to it. In light of this, our task force discussed how Buddhist organizations like BCA might help meet this need.

We realized the first step is to assess the needs of the Buddhist community. We



have designed a short survey intended to help identify what the members of our sanghas need most, and then consider how we can best support them. I hope that you will help with this important project by sharing your thoughts through this survey.

The survey should take you less than 10 minutes to complete. It is completely anonymous, so your identity and answers are protected. You can access the survey via the QR Code or through this link: <https://forms.microsoft.com/r/nTMmakcQ2U>

This is the first time such a survey has been done and I think it will provide a great deal of insight and understanding into the needs and concerns of Buddhists throughout the country. So please take a few

minutes and share your experience and ideas with us in order to shape this innovative project.

Thank you for your help and I hope to keep you apprised as we move forward with our plans to provide support to the members of our community.

The members of the Buddhism and Spiritual and Psychological Well-Being Task Force are:

Nancy Clifton Hawkins (Orange County Buddhist Church)

DJ Ida (Tri-State Buddhist Temple)

Dee Dee Just (Vista Buddhist Temple)

Lewis Shaw (Longmont Buddhist Temple)

Rev. Candice Shibata (Buddhist Church of Stockton)

Sydney Shiroyama (Palo Alto Buddhist Temple)

Morris Sullivan (Bright Dawn Dharma Center)

For questions and more information, email: wellbeing@bcahq.org

Gregg Krech is Chairperson of the BCA Task Force on Buddhist Spiritual and Psychological Well-Being.

Can We Grow Relationship Lotuses from Muddy Conflicts?

Strategies for Working with Conflict & Disagreement

August 10, 2024 | 11:00-12:45 PM, Online



GUEST SPEAKER

Gregg Krech

[Thirtythousanddays.org](http://thirtythousanddays.org)

Author of five books, and founder of the ToDo Institute, an Education and Retreat Center for Japanese Psychology in Vermont. He is one of the leading authorities on Japanese psychology in North America.

Conflicts are often muddy. Relationships are tricky. Issues can be sensitive. How do we navigate this landscape without sinking into the mud? Is it possible to grow a lotus under these circumstances? Managing a conflict offers the prospect of increased suffering, but the promise of growth, greater understanding and, in the end, a stronger relationship.

In this seminar, Gregg will offer some ideas of what to do and what not to do, based on his experience with Japanese Psychology and Buddhism.

Register for Free:

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REVEREND JOHN PARASKEVOPOULOS

Buddhist priest from Australia ordained at Nishi Hongwanji in 1994. Holds a first-class honours degree in Philosophy. Publications: "Call of the Infinite" "The Fragrance of Light" "The Unhindered Path" "Immeasurable Life"



REVEREND DR. TAKASHI MIYAJI

H.E. Kosho Ohtani Professor of Shin Buddhist Studies, Assistant Professor of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Studies. Resident Minister of Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church.



REVEREND KIYONOBU KUWAHARA

Program Director for the Jodo Shinshu International Office, and resident minister for the Berkeley Buddhist Temple, and Supervising minister for Buddhist Temple of Marin.



Jodo Shinshu Center

2140 Durant Ave, Berkeley, CA 94704

<https://tinyurl.com/SUMPAC>

FDSTL Conference

Continued from Page 3

publicly. To have Dharma School students seek them out and listen intently to their stories is a way that their wisdom can be transmitted across generations. As a powerful example, she then played a song that Larry Long created with fourth graders in honor of Helen Tsuchiya from the Twin Cities Buddhist Sangha.

The conference workshops built upon Dr. Arai's keynote and also included Lady Takeko Kujo, who lived several hundred years later and founded the Buddhist Women's Association (originally known as the "Fujinkai") and immersed herself in social and societal concerns, including the foundation of Asoka Hospital, founding of the Kyoto Womens' College and the reconstruction of Tsukiji Hongwanji in Tokyo after the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923. Each workshop built upon each other, from providing more information on the lives of these three ladies of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, to identifying with their lives and their struggles, and then collaborating in groups on lesson plans that could then be taken back to each Dharma School.

The conference concluded with a special presentation of

Great-Grandfather's Drum and a "talk story" with Kay Fukumoto from Maui, Hawai'i. Fukumoto is one of the founders of Maui Taiko, a group that preserves the Fukushima Ondo tradition on Maui, and more broadly, across the United States. The film traces Fukumoto's family heritage and celebrates Japanese American culture and history in Hawai'i. Fukumoto also expressed the importance of sharing stories and passing knowledge from generation to generation.

As part of the FDSTL general meeting, San Mateo Buddhist Temple Resident Minister Rev. Henry Adams installed the following members of the 2024-2026 cabinet:

President — Darlene Bagshaw, Northern District

Vice President for Education — Mas Nishimura, Coast District

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also recognized and gratefully acknowledges the following teachers for their many years of dedication and support in nurturing and spreading the Dharma for our future generations:

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A heartfelt thank you goes to the Mountain View Buddhist Temple and San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin sanghas for their many contributions in supporting the conference. And finally, おつかれさまでした and mahalo nui loa for a job well done to the small but mighty conference planning committee:

Rinban Rev. Gerald Sakamoto

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Brent Izutsu is Chair of the 2024 FDSTL Conference Planning Committee and President of the Coast District Dharma School Teachers' League.

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今月の法話

「阿弥陀様に抱かれて生きる」

サンフェルナンドバレー本願寺
開教使 鳥居 友佳里



Rev. Yukari Torii

この4月からサンフェルナンドバレー本願寺仏教会へ開教使として赴任して参りました。I M O Pの期間や、赴任してからのこの1か月半

の間、初めてお目にかかる方々から多く尋ねられたのは、お寺の出身なの？そうじゃないの？ではどうして真宗の教えと出会ったの？という問いでした。今回はこちらでの初めての法話記事ですので、自己紹介も含めて浄土真宗との出会いをお話しできればと思います。

私が真宗と出遇ったのは、母の死をとおしてでした。15年前、東京で一人暮らしをしていた私が、徐々に母と再会した翌日、母はくも膜下出血で倒れ、起きることのないまま、二週間後に息を引き取りました。当時20代の私にとって、「死」とは縁遠いものでしなく、別世界でのお話かと思っていました。

実家の菩提寺はお他宗でしたが、祖母が大切にしているお仏壇があり、「仏さま」という言葉も比較的馴染みがあるものだったと思います。しかしながら、母の死に際しては、通夜葬儀で聞いたお経も、誰の何の言葉も耳に入らず、何の慰めにもなりません。ただただ気持ちの整理がつかず、「もう二度と母に会えないのだ」と、突然の母との別れにやりきれない思いで、悲しく寂しい思いで日々を過ごしていました。

母の死からしばらくして、1通のハガキをいただきました。母の親友で、私のことも小さい頃からよく知っている、Sさんという方からでした。私の近況を気遣う文面に加えて、「一言こう添えられています。」「友佳里ちゃんママはお浄土にお生まれになったのね」。私はその言葉を目にした時、「ああ母にまた会えるのだな。もう心配はいらないのだな」となぜか急に安心できたのです。その時は、浄土真宗のみ教えについて何も知らなかった

のですが、不思議なことにこの一言で、それまで不安や悲しみがすっきりと晴れていく気がしました。

これが、阿弥陀さまのおはたらき、と言われるものなのだと理解したのはそれからだいぶ後になってのことでした。「あなたをしつかり両手に抱いていて、かならずお浄土へ連れて行くよ、仏に育て上げるよ」というお慈悲のおはたらきです。

母のお友達のSさんですが、単にご自身の思い付きで、この言葉をかけてくれたわけではありません。Sさんは真宗のお寺に嫁がれた方でした。阿弥陀さまのおはたらきによってお浄土へ向かう命を私たちがいただいているということをご存知だったので、それが真宗のみ教えとの私のファーストコンタクトです。「母とまた会える」と思えたことが悲歎から立ち直る大きな支えとなりましたが、この時はそれが「浄土真宗」の教えに基づくものだと意識していませんでした。

それから数年して、たまたま浄土真宗のお坊さんと知り合う機会があり、彼らとイベントを企画しました。2011年の東北大地震の直後です。私が暮らしていた東京の被害は少なかつたですが、街がすごく暗くなって、誰もが沈んでいました。これまでの日々の生活では、特に若い方は、死に直面することがほとんどなかった。ところが、突然の地震と津波により一瞬で終わる命を目にして、どう気持ちを保っていたらよいかわからなかつた方が多かつたのではないかと思います。

私自身も数年前に仏教に救われたことを思い出し、もしかしら、お坊さんと話したら、仏教の教えを聞いたら、少しは気持ちが楽になるのではと考え、小さなイベントを始めました。お寺ではなく、街中の小さなアートギャラリーを使って、DIYのお仏壇とお荘厳を用意して、お経を読んだり、法話を聞いたり、お酒やおつまみを囲みながら、お坊さんと自由にお話ししましょうという会で、「僧職男子に癒されナイト☆」という名前を付けさせていただきました。仏教に触れるのは初めてという方がほとんどで、このイベントで、初めて「なんまんだぶ」とお称えし、これをご縁にお寺にお参りされるようになった方、得度をされた方もいらっしゃいました。結局、毎月1回、7年ほど続けたこのイベントでしたが、

きました。そのうちに、もつと浄土真宗を勉強したいと思ひ、広島市の教専寺に所属させていただき、中央仏教学院の通信教育を受け、得度、教師、そしていまに至ります。

領解文には、「この御ことわり聴聞申しわけ候ふこと、御開山聖人御出世の御恩、次第相承の善知識のあさからざる御勸化の御恩と、ありがたく存じ候ふ」というお言葉があります。親鸞聖人が生涯を懸けてあきらかにされた、如来さまからいただいた信心をもつて、同じお浄土への道を共に歩ませていただきましたという思いを吐露するのが領解文であると私はいただいています。いま私がこうして受け止めるようになるまでに、教を護り、伝えてきてくださった方々（善知識）がおられます。

この15年を振り返りますと、その間のすべての出会いがとて貴重なご縁で、私をお育てくださった善知識であると思っています。母、母の親友のSさん、一緒にイベントを続けてくださった僧侶の方々、その彼らがつないでくださった多くの僧侶の先輩方や先生方、そして、BCAで新たにご縁をいただいた方々が、皆、阿弥陀さまに抱かれるなかで、私をここに導いて下さっていることをありがたく思うと同時に、「有難い」ことが事実起こっている不可思議に感嘆せずにはおられません。さらにもっとさかのほれば、お釈迦様がおられて、七高僧、親鸞聖人、そして、宗祖以降教をこまめつないでくださった多くの方々…と、お念仏のみ教えが受け継がれて、それをいま私がいただいています。阿弥陀さまは、私たち一人ひとりにこう呼びかけ、はたらき続けてくださっておられます。「もうあなたをしつかり抱きとっているからね。何があっても一緒にいるからね。安心して命を全うしなさいね。どうぞそれを信じて私の名前を呼んでくださいな。」そのお名前が「南無阿弥陀仏」です。阿弥陀さまの願いと誓いとそのはたらきが込められたこの6文字の「南無阿弥陀仏」の呼びかけが、私に届き、「阿弥陀さまのお心を頂戴します。おまかせいたします」という思いとなつて、私の口から「なんまんだぶ」がこぼれ出ます。

苦しい時、悲しい時、どんな時も私に寄り添い、抱きかかえてくださる仏さまがいる、そのことに気づかせてくれたのが、母、そして、多くの善知識の方々です。安心してこの命を生き、この命を終えていける大きな拠りどころを私はいただくことができました。

この度、BCAの開教使というご縁をいただきました。この一か月半、サンフェルナンドバレーのメンバーの方々と一緒にするなかで、皆さんが、如来さまのはたらきのなかで命を歩んでいるというありがたさをお感じながら日々を送っていただけるのを強く感じています。

サンフェルナンドバレー、そしてBCAの皆さまと、これからお念仏のみ教えを共に聞かせていただき、お浄土への道を一緒に歩ませていただける喜びを抱きながら、サンフェルナンドバレーの日々を過ごしております。

南無阿弥陀仏。

沿岸教区で北米開教125周年慶讃法要

5月19日（日）、五月晴れのさわやかな空の下、サンノゼ別院に於いて沿岸教区主催による宗祖降誕会並びに北米開教125周年慶讃法要が勤修されました。式典には導師・原田総長を筆頭に沿岸教区の開教使、得度僧侶、開教使アシスタントが一堂に会し、多くの参拝者とともに宗祖讃仰作法をおつとめいたしました。

さらに26名の日曜学校の子供達が稚児行列に参加し法要を大いに彩りました。講師は7月いっぱい引退される新関デニス先生が務められ、師の開教生活を振り返りながらお念仏のみ教えの大切さを改めて伝えて下さいました。



Coast District BCA 125th Anniversary Service

本堂は多くの法友の念仏の声で溢れ、沿岸教区で行われた慶讃法要は大成功の裡に幕を閉じました。（記事、向嶋裕史 開教使）

法輪

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教化標語

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総長メッセージ

サンガを敬うこと、長谷川師を偲んで

米国仏教団総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

4月13日にストックトン仏教会で長谷川チャールズ名誉開教使の葬儀を執り行いました。

長谷川師は、ハワイ教団とBCAで開教使をされ、私が育ったアイダホ・オレゴン仏教会、そしてストックトン仏教会に駐在されました。

師がオレゴン州オントリオにある私の故郷のお寺に駐在されていた時、私はもうオントリオには住んでいなかったのですが、実家に帰省した時など、いつも師に会いに行っていました。

師は熱心なゴルフファーで、お寺のメンバーたちとよくゴルフをされていました。私も何度も一緒にプレーしましたし、よく近所の喫茶店に行つて夜遅くまで一緒にコーヒーを飲んで話しました。

長谷川師がアイダホ・オレゴン仏教会におられた時は、メンバーにとっても好かれていましたし、師がハワイのお寺やストックトン仏教会におられたときも、きつと皆に好かれていたと思います。

4月13日の葬儀での法話では、師はサンガのメンバーをたいへん尊敬され、そして、サンガのメンバーも師をたいへん敬っておられた、ということをお話しました。師はいつもサンガと一体でした。一緒にゴルフをし、一緒にボーリングをし、一緒にトランプをし、一緒にコーヒーを飲み、一緒にお盆やお祭りで働き、一緒にカジノで楽しんでおられました。

私たち僧侶がサンガのメンバーから尊敬されるには、まず私たち僧侶がメンバーを尊敬するべきです。そうすれば、自然とメンバーから尊敬されるようになるのです。

これはすべての職業に言えることだと思います。生徒を尊敬する教師は、生徒からも尊敬されます。患者を尊敬する看護師は、患者から尊敬されます。顧客や取引先を尊敬するビジネスパーソンは、取引先から尊敬されるのです。

真宗の根本経典、『大無量寿経』は、釈迦牟尼仏が目の前の1万2千人の信者に語りかけることから始まります。ほとんどの経典では、釈尊は悟りを開いた者として法を伝え、目の前の悟りを開いていない信者に語りかけるというように書かれています。

ところが、暁烏敏師は『大経』のこの最初の場面にユニークな解釈をされています。暁烏師は、釈尊は目の前の1万2千人を悟りを開いていない人々として見ているのではなく、目の前にいるすべての人々を仏陀として、悟りの光明を放つていると見ているのだ、といただいておられます。釈尊は目の前のサンガを仏と仰ぎ、サンガは釈尊を悟りを開いた仏と仰いでいるのです。

長谷川師は、サンガを敬うという素晴らしい生き方を私に教えてくれました。そうすることで、僧侶は自然にサンガから尊敬されるのです。

どのような職業であれ、どのような役割であれ、これは大切なことです。教師として生徒を尊敬し、コーチとして選手を尊敬し、ビジネスで顧客を尊敬し、医者として患者を尊敬するのです。

これは農家の人々にもあてはまることです。何十年も前、久保瀬暁明師が法座でお説教をされたのですが、当時、サンガのメンバーのほとんどは農家の方でした。

お説教の中で久保瀬師は、「明日、皆さんはタマネギ畑に働きに出るでしょう。その時、タマネギに合掌なさい。」と言われました。

参加者たちは皆笑っていましたが、師は、「玉ねぎがなければ、農家としての生活はできないのですよ。」と言っていました。

私は長谷川チャールズ師から学んだことをいつまでも忘れません。僧侶がサンガを尊敬し、敬う時のみ、その僧侶はサンガから尊敬を受けるのです。

「他力の信心」とは何か

本願寺派司教 佐々木義英

他力の意

浄土真宗で説かれる「他力の信心」について考えてみましょう。

このうち、「他力」の「他」とは「他の人」という意味ではなく、「わたしたち人間に対する者」「煩惱に苛まれていたわたしたちに対する者」という意味であり、それは「さとりを開いている者」「仏」を表しています。また、「力」とは「他人の力」という意味ではなく、「さとりを開いている者の力」「仏の力」という意味であり、それは「さまざまの煩惱を抱えて苦しんでいるわたしたちを救う阿彌陀仏のはたらき」を表しているのです。

その「他力」すなわち「阿彌陀仏のはたらき」は、しばしば「大きな船」に例えられます。「大きな船は、重い荷物であつても、大きな物であつても、どのようなものでもそのまま乗せて、目的地まで運ぶ」という性能を有しています。このように「船」は「物の重さや大きさに関わりなく、そのまま浮かせて、目的地まで運ぶはたらき」をそなえています。

この例えの中で、「大きな船」とは「阿彌陀仏」を指し、「重い荷物」「大きな物」とは「さまざまな煩惱を抱えて苦しんでいる人々」という意、「どのようなものでもそのまま乗せて」とは「わたしたちをそのまま受け入れる」という意、そして「目的地まで運ぶ」とは「彼岸に渡してさとりを開かせる」という「阿彌陀仏のはたらき」を表しています。

「船」に「重い荷物」や「大きな物」を積載しても、それらの質量や大きさに変化がないように、わたしたちが「船」に乗つても、わたしたちの煩惱がなくなつたり、無くなつたりすることはありません。しかし、その「船」は「わたしたちをそのまま受け入れて」「彼岸に渡してさとりを開かせる」という「阿彌陀仏のはたらき」に満ちあふれているのであり、それを「他力」と呼んでいるのです。

信心の意

それでは「他力の信心」の「信心」について考えてみましょう。

その「信心」とは「清らかな心」「疑いのない心」という意味です。しかしながら、「清らかな心」というのも「わたしたちの心が清らかなる」という意味でも、「疑われない心」というのも「わたしたちが信じる心」という意味でもありません。「信心」とは「阿彌陀仏のはたらきに身を託す」ということです。

ということについて、もう少し詳しく考えてみましょう。例えば、わたしたちが、人生初の海外旅行を計画し、サンフランシスコから友人の居る東京へ、大きな船を利用して渡航するとしましょう。わたしたちは、旅の準備をしながら、乗船を楽しみに待っています。そして、その時が訪れたなら、友人との再会を楽しみにして、はじめに訪れる東京に期待を膨らませながら船旅を満喫することでしょう。

この例えの中で、「大きな船」とは「阿彌陀仏」を指し、「乗船」とは「阿彌陀仏のはたらきに身を託す」という意、「友人との再会を楽しみにして」とは「彼岸に居る懐かしい人々との再会を期している姿」、「期待を膨らませながら船旅を満喫する」とは「人生という荒波に揉まれながらも安心して乗っている姿」を表しています。

「さまざまな煩惱を抱えているわたし」として、もっとも大切なことは「乗船する」「阿彌陀仏のはたらきに身を託す」ということであり、それが「信心を得る」ということです。そして「人生という荒波に揉まれながらも安心していられる」のは、「わたしたちをそのまま受け入れ、彼岸に渡してさとりを開かせる」という「阿彌陀仏のはたらき」の上に、わたしの身を乗せていただいているからなのです。

佐々木義英師は真宗学や仏教学に通じた僧侶に与えられる学階の司教に任じられ、龍谷大学、中央仏教学院で講師をされています。昨年、師が米国に滞在された時にアメリカの門信徒の方々とお念仏のみ教えをシェアされたいと強く思われ、法話を寄稿して下さっています。英語欄にも掲載されています。

ダイヤルザダルマとポッドキャストで聴聞

電話で聴聞ができるプログラム「ダイヤルザダルマ」がポッドキャストでも聞くことができるようになった。

(800) 817-7918に電話すると、原田総長の声で音声ガイドが始まる。英語の法話を聞きたい人は1を、日本語は2、スペイン語は3を押すと、それぞれの言語で約5分間の法話を聴聞できる。英語は原田総長のメッセージ、日本語は日本語スピーカーの開教使によるメッセージ、スペイン語は英語のメッセージをスペイン語に訳したものになっている。法話は毎週水曜日午後11時に更新される予定。

ポッドキャストで聴聞したい方は、BCAのウェブサイト <https://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/podcasts> やスマートフォンのポッドキャストアプリなどで聞くことができる。(ポッドキャストの使用方法が分からない方は、みなさんのお寺の開教使に聞いてみてください。)