



WHEEL OF DHARMA

Official Publication of the Buddhist Churches of America



Sacramento Betsuin Rimban Rev. Yuki Sugahara, shown at right performing on his bass guitar, uses a variety of new approaches to share the Dharma teachings and reach more people. Above, Rev. Sugahara and Rev. Matt Hamasaki, Minister, Sacramento Betsuin, at right, began Wednesday morning services for seniors last year. A shuttle bus brings seniors from a couple of assisted living centers. Rev. Sugahara is talking with Joan Nishikawa and the person whose back is facing the camera is Alma Koyasako. (Photos courtesy of Karen Adachi)



Dorothy Shimizu Fondly Recalled as Enmanji Icon

Ultimate Multitasker Helped Temple, Community Thrive



Dorothy Shimizu

By Bill Teague
Buddhist Temple of San Diego

When she died on Aug. 19, 2011, Dorothy Aiko Shimizu was surrounded by more than 40 loving family members and friends, taking turns at her bedside. She was 82, a pillar of Enmanji Buddhist Temple and greater Sebastopol.



Continued on Page 13

Rev. Yuki Sugahara Amplifies the Dharma

Sacramento Rimban Uses Music, Social Media, New Approaches to Spread Teachings

By Dennis Akizuki
Wheel of Dharma Correspondent

FYI

To listen to Rev. Yuki Sugahara's daily Dharma messages and to hear his music videos, go to his YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@yukisugahara2259>

When Yuki Sugahara would strap on his electric bass 20 years ago to play with a rock band in Tokyo, he would dress casually in jeans and a shirt.

Now when he plays, he wears the robes of a Jodo Shinshu minister, “fuho” (black robe) over “hakue” (white robe). His audience is the Sangha of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento and those who watch online.

Since joining the BCA in 2011, Rev. Yuki Sugahara has amplified his Dharma talks with the same talent he used to pursue a musical career when he was in his 20s in Japan. The 44-year-old Rev. Sugahara, who

became Sacramento's Rimban in the summer of 2023, combines music with social media savvy and an openness to try new approaches to share the teachings and reach more people.

“Even though I play music as entertainment after my Dharma message, I try to connect the title or the lyrics of the songs with the Dharma so that people who listen to the music again next time might remember the Dharma I shared at the service,” he said.

One of the songs he has played in Sunday service is “Ichigo Ichie” by ukulele virtuoso Jake Shimabukuro.

“‘Ichigo Ichie’ means ‘one meeting in a lifetime.’ So I talked about treasuring the moment,” Rev. Sugahara said.

Another is “Pretender” by the rock group Foo Fighters.

“I often pretend as if I am a good person, but actually I possess afflictions within,” he said. “But Amida Buddha established the vow for people like me. So with self-reflection and gratitude, I recite the Nembutsu.”

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Rev. Sugahara, who was then at the Oregon Buddhist Temple, began live streaming a daily virtual morning

Continued on Page 11

With Gratitude

By Michiko Inanaga
BCA Endowment Foundation
Director of Development

Through our Buddhist teachings, we learn that we live together in community.

This rings resoundingly true at the Buddhist Churches of America. Through our collective strength, each of us individually in common purpose, we share the Dharma.

Today, we print our annual Donor Appreciation Issue beginning on Page 7, recognizing your yearlong efforts.

In addition, we update you on our largest effort — the Dharma Forward campaign. We invite you to read the articles inside that share our structure, progress and support.

We truly appreciate the journey together.

UCLA Students Learn About Jodo Shinshu in US

Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul Contreras deGuzman Teaches Buddhism in and Beyond the Classroom

By Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul Contreras deGuzman
San Fernando Valley Hongwanji
Buddhist Temple and UCLA

Buddhism in the United States is often shrouded in misconceptions and misunderstandings, with Asian American Buddhists often stereotyped or outright erased in popular discourse.

As Funie Hsu wrote in the Winter 2016 issue of Lion's Roar: “Asian and Asian American Buddhist practices have often been dismissed as superstitious, inauthentic (yet authentically exotic!) forms of Buddhism.”



Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul Contreras deGuzman

To remedy these errors, this past academic year, several UCLA students had the opportunity to learn about the sheer richness of Buddhism through both its historical developments and contemporary landscape.

What follows is a reflection on building the spaces for that learning to occur and gratitude for all the lives who made it happen.

Last spring, I taught a class that



Rev. Devon Matsumoto was one of the speakers in a UCLA class on American Buddhism. (Courtesy of Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul Contreras deGuzman)

Continued on Page 12



BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Buddhism and Humor



By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

I would like to reflect on Buddhism and our sense of humor. I think that having a sense of humor is not just a healthy thing for us, mentally and physically, but I think that one could say that a Buddhist life is one of having a sense of humor. Especially if we can laugh at our own foolishness, that is a very Buddhist quality to have.

Over the years, some of my favorite ministers to listen to all had an acute sense of humor. Rev. Tetsuo Unno and Rev. Mas Kodani used to give Dharma talks that sometimes had everyone rolling in laughter, but their talks also had great depth and meaning to them as well. They were not just entertaining talks.

I will never forget one funny story that Rev. Tets shared in a talk. He recalled when he was a young minister first starting to serve at the Seattle Betsuin. I believe it might

have been the first funeral that he participated in.

He had to wear the formal robes for a funeral service, which consists of a garment called a "hakama" that is worn underneath our robes. A hakama is like a pair of very baggy pants. Rev. Tets put the hakama on, but mistakenly put both of his legs into one leg of the hakama. When he had to go up to the altar, he had to walk like a penguin. It is hilarious just to picture that in one's mind.

was wide open! Talk about not being able to see yourself. Something so close to me and I couldn't even see it. How kind that member was to pull me off to the side to tell me my zipper was down.

If we can laugh at ourselves and at our own foolishness or even be able to laugh at our own ego-centeredness, I think that is a very healthy quality to have and very Buddhist. If you can't laugh at your own foolishness, then how else would you react? Maybe you

times it came from the ABA group making the chicken. Throughout the day and into the evening, laughter could be heard.

I can't cite any quotations from sutras or Shinran Shonin that actually state that one should maintain a sense of humor, but that is how I see and interpret Buddhism in our modern context. We can laugh with others. We can laugh at funny stories in Dharma talks. We can laugh at ourselves.

If we can laugh at ourselves and at our own foolishness or even be able to laugh at our own ego-centeredness, I think that is a very healthy quality to have and very Buddhist. If you can't laugh at your own foolishness, then how else would you react? Maybe you might react angrily or defensively and miss the opportunity to really see yourself.

Many years ago, I was outside in front of the Hondo after the Orange County Buddhist Church (OCBC) Sunday service talking to people. One of our members came up to me and said, "Sensei, I need to talk to you." He pulled me off to the side of the Hondo and I thought that maybe he was going to ask for counseling or had something personal to discuss with me.

When we were away from everyone, he said to me, "Sensei, your zipper is down." I looked down and my zipper

might react angrily or defensively and miss the opportunity to really see yourself.

One of the favorite sounds that I loved to hear at our festivals at OCBC was the sound of laughter coming from the members. We would all be working so hard at the festivals, in the heat, in the busyness of the festival, but I could always hear laughter from members working and talking together and having a good time. It was a real joy to hear. Sometimes it came from the Jr. YBA kids. Some-

Once I went to a buffet restaurant with my wife and I noticed this lady who had a huge pile of food on her plate. I whispered to my wife, "Look at that lady's pile of food on her plate!" I then looked at my own plate and it was piled just as high as that lady's plate. How easy it is to see others, and how hard it is to see ourselves. We also might find that we can easily laugh at the foolishness of others, but it is harder to laugh at ourselves. We must laugh at ourselves first and foremost.

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

'Teri-mukuri': Opposites Residing Together



By Rev. Ryuta Furumoto
Senshin Buddhist Temple

The roof over the front entrance of the Senshin Buddhist Temple's Hondo has a unique shape.

It curves gently up and down like a wave. This shape is called "Teri-mukuri," a Japanese architectural term. It is a combination of two opposite shapes: "Teri," (or "Sori") a concave shape, curved inward and "Mukuri," a convex shape, curved outward.

This shape is often used at entrance areas and gates ("Mon") of temples and shrines in Japan.

According to an architectural specialist, "Teri-mukuri"



The curved roof, called "Teri-mukuri," is shown at the front entrance of Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles. (Courtesy of Glen Tao)

originated in Japan and is influenced by Buddhist thought: opposites coexist, or the unity of opposites. Life and death, truth and false, good and bad, young and old, rich and poor, peace and war, and yin and yang. There are many opposites, but they coexist. Because of the other, one can exist.

"The Two Deep Minds" is a popular phrase in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, written by Master Shan-tao (Zendo Daishi):

"Deep mind is the deeply entrusting mind. There are two aspects. 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."

— Master Shan-tao (Zendo Daishi), "Collected Works of Shinran," Page 85

Zendo Daishi explained the following about Shinjin: If you entrust yourself to Amida Buddha, what kind of thought or belief would you have?

"One is to believe you are too attached to self and have countless bonno, passions from ego, so you have no hope to be born in the Pure Land," he said. "However, at the same

Continued on Page 5

Correction

The July article on the BuddhaMap app incorrectly stated that all BCA temples have been listed. The app will be updated to list all BCA temples.



Wheel of Dharma

(USPS 017-700)
Official Publication of the
Buddhist Churches of America

BCA National Headquarters
1710 Octavia Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
Tel: (415) 776-5600
Fax: (415) 771-6293
www.BuddhistChurchesOfAmerica.org
Email: WODeditor@bcahq.org

Wheel of Dharma (USPS 017-700) is published monthly by Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109-4341. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to WHEEL OF DHARMA, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, CA 94109-4341. Subscription free to BCA temple members; \$12.00 annual subscription for nonmembers.

Submission Guidelines:

Articles should be around 500 words, typed, double-spaced in Microsoft Word. The editors may ask for longer articles, or split in multiple parts at the editors' discretion. Documents should be sent as an email attachment to WODeditor@bcahq.org. Please include the article's author or contact, temple, and suggested title. Images, preferably in color, must be submitted as 300 dpi JPEG or TIFF in separate attachments and never embedded in a Word document. PDF is not preferred. The editors reserve the right to crop images and to edit articles. Articles and news releases are reviewed for publication on the 10th of every month.

Change of address and subscription cancellations:

Individuals may mail, email, fax or phone in change of address requests and subscription cancellations to the BCA National Headquarters at the address above. Please include the following: Subscriber's name (as written on current subscription); address currently being used; new address and/or name changes; requested action (e.g. change of address, name, subscription cancellation, etc.); phone and/or email of person requesting the change; date of request. Please allow up to 8 weeks for changes to take effect. BCA local temples should send update requests as usual.

WHEEL OF DHARMA POLICY

HARDCOPY PUBLICATION LICENSE:

Authors who submit articles for publication in the Wheel of Dharma ("WOD") thereby grant WOD a royalty-free non-exclusive paid up license, worldwide, in perpetuity and in all media (the "License") to use, edit, and republish the article(s) and to grant sublicenses to any third party to do so on the same terms. WOD grants third parties an identical License to republish its articles so long as the article(s) is republished in its entirety, without edit, providing credit to the WOD and the Buddhist Churches of America.

ONLINE PUBLICATION LICENSE:

Authors who submit articles for publication in the Wheel of Dharma online ("WOD") thereby grant WOD a royalty-free non-exclusive paid up license, worldwide, in perpetuity and in all media (the "License") to use, edit, and republish the article(s) and to grant sublicenses to any third party to do so on the same terms. WOD grants third parties an identical License to republish only the first three paragraphs of any article, without edit, providing credit to the WOD and the Buddhist Churches of America, including a hyperlink to the article in WOD.

Editor:

Jon Kawamoto
Editor, Japanese Section:
Rev. Ryuta Furumoto
Print Production:
Jeffrey Kimoto

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My Heartfelt Thanks to Everyone Listed in Donor Appreciation Issue



By Steven Terusaki
BCA President

This edition of the Wheel of Dharma acknowledges the many individuals who have contributed to the financial strength of the BCA.

I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to everyone listed in this Donor Appreciation issue. Your support and commitment to the BCA and to the Nembutsu teachings means that our future is secured.

I am reminded of why we started the Dharma Forward campaign. The campaign came together around the story of the monarch butterfly. It takes the monarch butterfly several generations to complete its full cycle migration back to its original home. Each generation builds on the efforts of the preceding generation to finally reach its most northerly destination; and then reverses its migration to head south to its ancestral origins.

Much like the monarch butterfly, each generation of Shin Buddhist followers has taken the mantle to lead BCA into the

future.

It began with the initial requests made by the Issei to the Hongwanji to send missionaries to the United States to meet the spiritual needs of a growing Japanese immigrant community, to the American-born Nisei leaders who stepped forward during World War II in the incarceration camps to plan for the future of the BCA, and who reopened and reestablished the churches and temples after the war and grew the network of churches and temples to meet the increasing demand of an English-speaking Japanese American community. Since 1899, we have been on that journey building on the successes of previous generations.

It is now the Sansei and Yonsei generations along with non-Japanese Shin Buddhist followers who now carry the mantle of leadership — it is now our time and responsibility to ensure that the Dharma is heard by future generations, so that they can receive the Nembutsu teachings and live a life of gratitude and appreciation. It is with deep reverence for all those who came before us that the Dharma Forward campaign was created.

Dharma Forward is our major campaign, so that the BCA, Institute for Buddhist Studies (IBS) and Shin Buddhism will continue to thrive in the United States and in the entire English-speaking world.

Your Dharma Forward donations are currently being allocated in programs and initiatives that ensure that:

- Shin Buddhism is a flourishing Buddhist tradition where the Nembutsu teachings are shared in perpetuity.
 - Programs are in place to support and develop an engaging ministry to service the needs of a growing Sangha.
 - BCA can support Buddhist Education, Technology and Outreach, and Facilities Upkeep and Maintenance so that our inclusive communities at each of our temples and churches can cultivate peace, understanding and compassion for everyone.
- Donors who are acknowl-

operations of the BCA that support educational and youth programs; Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) and IBS; publishing and distributing the Wheel of Dharma; administrative, legal and insurance costs of the BCA; and salaries and benefits of BCA staff.

Donors who have generously targeted specific BCA needs under the umbrella of Dharma Forward have supported:

- Center for Buddhist Education
- BCA Music Committee
- Student Financial Assistance Program for prospective candidates pursuing a career as a BCA Kaikyoshi minister.

for the Bishop's discretionary support of new programs and initiatives.

- Zaidan collected at BCA events and meetings in support of the future of the Shin Buddhism.

We thank each donor for recognizing and generously supporting those needs that resonate most with them.

The generosity and dedication of our Sangha members and others outside of our BCA community to financially support the BCA, IBS and the Endowment Foundation reaffirms that I am not alone in my commitment that it is **our time** and **our responsibility** to ensure the future of Shin

The generosity and dedication of our Sangha members and others outside of our BCA community to financially support the BCA, IBS and the Endowment Foundation reaffirms that I am not alone in my commitment that it is our time and our responsibility to ensure the future of Shin Buddhism in the United States.

edged in this issue have also supported many other areas of need for the BCA. Most of these areas of need fall under the umbrella of Dharma Forward, but also include other specific programs including:

Social Welfare: providing grants to nonprofits that address human suffering and assisting those deprived of basic needs, along with efforts for disaster relief to victims of natural and human-caused disasters.

Dana Program: providing monies for the annual

- Ministerial Support for the legacy pension plan for retired ministers and wives.
- Debt Relief (formerly 4x4x1000) for the principal payoff of the BCA loan for the Jodo Shinshu Center (JSC).
- JSC/JSC Rooms for expenses related to the JSC.
- FBA Legacy for the publishing of the Wheel of Dharma.
- Koromo Fund for robes for new Kaikyoshi ministers.
- Bishop's Expansion Fund

Buddhism in the United States.

Realizing the generational life cycle of the monarch butterfly, we too are continuing the legacy of the original pioneers who set up the Zaidan Fund in 1929 to build the financial resources for BCA, IBS and Shin Buddhism to thrive today and well into the future.

Thank you again for your support.

Kansha no kotoba mo orimasen.
Namo Amida Butsu

7 Ministerial Aspirants Get Shin Grants

Northwest District Council Supports Those Seeking to Serve Temples

By Jon Kawamoto
Wheel of Dharma Editor

The Shin Buddhist Grant, established more than 40 years ago to encourage ministerial aspirants seeking Kaikyoshi ordination to serve BCA temples, recently issued seven grants.

The program is administered by the BCA's Northwest District Council, and a secondary purpose is to support certified Minister's Assistants in the Northwest District who seek to further their education and continue their service to their temple. This includes those individuals seeking Tokudo, Kyoshi and Kaikyoshi ordination.

This year "was one of our largest years," said Mike Iseri, Chairman of the Shin Buddhist Grant Committee and co-President of the Idaho-Oregon Buddhist Temple. "In the past 20 years, we've given more than 30 grants

FYI
Donations may be sent to **Scott Winner, Northwest District Council Treasurer, Oregon Buddhist Temple, 3720 SE 34th Ave., Portland, OR 97202**

amounting to a total of more than \$50,000."

The following grants were approved at the May 18 council meeting, with the amount of the grant and the temple:

- Rev. Stacy Reardon,** \$1,000, San Fernando
- Geoffrey Russell,** \$1,000, Ogden
- Sydney Shiroyama,** \$1,000, Palo Alto
- Rev. Von Magnin,** \$100, Arizona
- Rev. Blake Honda,** \$1,000, Fowler
- Rev. Rosalie May,** \$1,000, Seattle Betsuin and Yakima
- Sara Perrott,** \$1,000,

White River

The reduced amount of the grant for Rev. Magnin was because of limited need, based on the application, Iseri said.

The Shin Buddhist Grant dates back to June 30, 1979, when the Northwest District Council created a scholarship grant for ministerial candidates studying in Japan, according to Iseri.

The program ran until February 1990 as a scholarship for Buddhist studies and was not necessarily focused on ministerial training.

It is funded from the Northwest District Council, the Northwest BWA, temples and individuals.

"The Shin Buddhist Grant of the Northwest District Council has become a gesture of support and encouragement to those who apply," Iseri said. "We're grateful for their efforts and welcome



BCA's Bartolacci Weds

BCA Executive Coordinator Angela Bartolacci wed Samuel Grimes on June 29. The ceremony was officiated by Rev. Michael Endo, Executive Assistant to the Bishop, at the Mather Redwood Grove Amphitheater at UC Berkeley's Botanical Gardens. (Courtesy of Gayle Noguchi)

FDSTL to Host 'Living Nembutsu'

The Federation of Dharma School Teachers' League (FDSTL) Education Committee is hosting an Oct. 26 online seminar featuring author Jeff Wilson, who will speak about how Shinran Shonin's teachings offer profound insights and practical guidance for today's world.

The seminar will be held at 10 a.m. (PST) and will be on Zoom. Please register at: <https://forms.gle/gHW6eenfyTXRhuqs5>

Wilson, author of "Living Nembutsu: Applying Shinran's Radically Engaged Buddhism in Life and Society," will cover such topics as queerness, age of the refugee, and climate change.

He will explore how Shinran's philosophy, which champions the experiences of marginalized and oppressed communities, can be a beacon of hope and action in addressing contemporary issues.

The seminar will also feature a minister-led discussion with Wilson and an interactive question-and-answer session, and a small group discussion involving other teachers to talk about ideas for lesson plans.

For more information, contact Mas Nishimura at nish221@gmail.com

2024 FDSTL Webinar

Jeff Wilson

Living Nembutsu
Applying Shinran's Radically Engaged Buddhism in Life and Society

Saturday, October 26, 2024
10 am US/Pacific

Registration Form:
<https://forms.gle/gHW6eenfyTXRhuqs5>

TechnoBuddha Conference

RE:CONNECTION

Jodo Shinshu Center Berkeley, CA Oct 12, 2024

The Technobuddha conference is back!

This year will be all about reconnecting with one another as well as inspiring the next generation of TechnoBuddha leaders.

For ages 21+

Register now!

<https://www.facebook.com/technobuddha.conference/>

Come, Be Inspired at 'Women of BCA'

By Sharon Sasaki
Buddhist Temple of San Diego

The BCA is paying tribute to women contributors of past, present and future with a special seminar titled "Celebrating Women of the BCA" on Sept. 28 at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley, California.

Special guest speakers will be Rev. Candice Shibata of the Buddhist Church of Stockton and Rev. Melissa Opel of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco.

The seminar will be from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Register by Sept. 15 at <https://forms.gle/8m7BysFcYpZRZfwM9>

The cost is \$50 and includes a delicious breakfast,

lunch and dinner. Overnight accommodations are available at the JSC.

Women have long played a critical and largely supportive role throughout the history of the BCA. An example is the Bōmori, which translates as "person in the back," referring to the behind-the-scenes role of hosting, cooking and caregiving of the wife of the minister, i.e., the "person in the front."

As we've been taught, life is impermanent. While the BCA is embracing this change, some members continue to prefer traditional gender roles. Women serving as ministers, temple presidents and project leaders face unique leadership chal-

lenges.

Our intent is to empower women in whatever role they feel comfortable. Not everyone will become BWA President. Not everyone will write a song about the Nembutsu path. Hear from panelists Sumi Tanabe, Andrea Chapman and Sydney Shiroyama on how they leaned into their skills.

What can everyone do? Contribute or lead in their own way in our sanghas. Women are now free to forge our own paths, and the possibilities are endless. Men, women, non-binary Dharma friends, join us. Make and renew friendships. Learn and be inspired by the unique journeys of some remarkable women!

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

Come be inspired to forge your own path!

Jodo Shinshu Center
2140 Durant Ave, Berkeley 94704 - and parts online -
Register by Sept. 15, 2024 at <https://forms.gle/8m7BysFcYpZRZfwM9>
\$50 Registration & Meals, Register for online Free*
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

Rev. Furumoto

Continued from Page 2

time, you believe because you are hopeless, Amida Buddha established the vows that enable you to be born in the Pure Land."

It means "because you

cannot go to the Pure Land, you can go to the Pure Land."

It sounds contradictory. But foolish beings and Amida Buddha, bonno and Nirvana, and hopeless and hopeful, coexist and cannot be separated like the back and front of a sheet of paper, so this is an appropriate expression to

explain Shinjin.

"Teri-mukuri" is one of the symbolic architectural designs to express opposites residing together. We can learn from such a view, so it is a meaningful design for the Hondo entrance.

Namoamidabutsu.

BCA Music Committee

Buddhist Churches of America MUSIC

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Akira Tana, the drummer and band leader of Otonowa, is the son of the late BCA Reverend Emeritus Daishō Tana?

As a special BCA 125th anniversary

sponsored project, Otonowa recorded "Nembutsu" by Chizu Iwanaga in Ōtsuchi, Iwate Prefecture, Japan. View the video on the BCA Music YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXxW-8YnnPo>

TECHNOHOYO

AN ILLUMINATED MINDFUL EXPERIENCE *
US TOUR 2024

REV. GYOSEN ASAKURA

FEATURING MADOKA KOHNO FROM cyberNamunamu

A FUSION OF BUDDHIST TEACHINGS & ELECTRONIC BEATS * * *

NEW YORK CITY, NY SEPT 8 / 9 / 10 / 11
LOS ANGELES, CA SEPT 14 / 15
SAN JOSE, CA SEPT 17 / 18

MORE INFO BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG/TECHNOHOYO
@TECHNOHOYO TECHNHOYO US TOUR 2024

USC Dornsife USC Shimo In Center for Japanese Religions and Culture
BCA Life of Gratitude
MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE THE REV. GYODO KONO FUND

Being a Certified BCA Minister Assistant, Part I

Editor's note: The BCA's Archives-Historic Preservation Committee (AHPC) is highlighting the Minister's Assistant (MA) program. Two members of AHPC, Cynthia Mee, Ph.D., of Midwest Buddhist Temple and Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul deGuzman of San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple have agreed to share their unique paths and experiences as MAs. The Wheel of Dharma is honored to present Part I of Cynthia Mee's path as a MA. Part II will appear in the October issue, followed by Rev. Dr. deGuzman's article in the November issue.

"I am a link in Amida's Golden Chain of love that stretches around the world. I will keep my link bright and strong. May I be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself. May I think pure and beautiful thoughts, say pure and beautiful words, and do pure and beautiful deeds."

— "The Golden Chain of Love" by Dorothy Hunt

By Cynthia S. Mee, Ph.D.
Midwest Buddhist Temple

I appreciate learning, taking classes, reading, being an educator, making new friends and being with old friends, helping others, being a practicing Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, and weaving together knowledge, places, people, and opportunities.

I am fortunate to engage in all these activities at the Midwest Buddhist Temple (MBT) in Chicago, as a Sangha member, as a former Lay Leader, and now as a Certified Minister's Assistant (MA).



Midwest Buddhist Temple member Cynthia Mee, Ph.D., became a Certified Minister's Assistant in March 2011. (Courtesy of Cynthia Mee)

I think it was in 2009 that my son and I first started attending MBT. We immediately became dedicated Sangha members. Sometime during my second year attending MBT services, then-Resident Minister Rev. Ron Miyamura mentioned something about Lay Leaders and that he was going to offer classes to train interested Sangha members. I wasn't totally certain what being a Lay Leader meant, but I was intrigued.

At that time, Rev. Miyamura was not only the Resident Minister at MBT, but also was the supervising minister to both Twin Cities Buddhist Association (TCBA) and

Cleveland Buddhist Temple (CBT). Rev. Miyamura and previous MBT ministers received support of their MBT responsibilities and regular Sunday services through Sangha Lay Leaders and Certified Minister Assistants.

Approximately 25 years ago under the leadership of Rev. Koshin Ogui, then MBT minister, and Rev. T.K. Nakagaki, from the New York Buddhist Church (NYBC), designed a program to provide training for Sangha members to become Lay Dharma Leaders to assist resident ministers.

The program eventually evolved into the Minister's Assistant Program (MAP). Rev.

Dr. Taitetsu Unno assisted Rev. Nakagaki to create the study classes, which became the foundation for the Lay Dharma Leaders in the old EBCC (Eastern Buddhist Coordinating Council). A few years later, Rev. Ogui became the BCA Bishop, and the MAP was supported and approved by the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Ministers' Association.

The MAP training continues today and has evolved by maintaining a traditional commitment while also addressing contemporary and local focus. Within the program, there are different levels of BCA expectations and criteria for the training of Assistant Ministers and of Minister's Assistants.

To become a Certified MA, one is expected to attend the Center for Buddhist Education (CBE) MAP Training Sessions, complete the Jodo Shinshu Correspondence Courses (JSCC), be recommended by the resident minister, and approved by both the local temple/church board and the Office of the BCA Bishop.

Becoming a Lay Leader and a Certified MA

When Rev. Miyamura was planning to start classes to train interested Sangha members to become Lay Leaders, I didn't think twice. I knew that I wanted to participate. I signed up for the training with a few other MBT members. I attended classes for several weeks conducted by Rev. Miyamura.

Some of the topics included Buddhist history, Jodo Shinshu history, the Seven Patriarchs of Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism, Rennyō, Honen, Shinran, the background and practicing of various rituals and chanting, ringing the Kansho bell, how to enter and set up the Onai-

jin, how give a Dharma talk, and so much more. I remember a couple of guest speakers. After completing the training, our training class became Lay Leaders.

After two years as a Lay Leader and continuing my training and practice, I became active in the MAP. In March 2011, I earned the honor of becoming a Certified Minister's Assistant and received my certificate from then Bishop Rev. Kodo Umezu when he was visiting MBT. It's an honor I still cherish. I value and respect the expectations of being an MA and work to represent the temple in a caring, supportive and committed way.

I am sharing my MAP training experiences in this article because some Sangha members see MAs assisting in their temples in various ways but may not know how one becomes a Lay Leader or an MA. While writing this article, I asked a couple of Sangha members what they thought MAs were about. In far fewer words than I have written in this article, they shared that MAs are Sangha members who want to learn more about Buddhism and contribute to the temple. My experience is just that.

I am not certain of the number of MAs over the years at MBT or at other EBL temples and churches, but I know that I and other MAs have taken our responsibilities seriously and with respect. We have assisted Rev. Miyamura during his years at MBT, and now with Rev. Todd Tsuchiya, our new resident minister.

Next: Midwest Buddhist Temple MA Cynthia Mee will describe post-initial MA training and her experiences.

AHPC Presents Articles on the MA Program

It Is Committee's Contributions to BCA 125th Anniversary

By Sandy Saeki
Chair
BCA Archives-Historic Preservation Committee

The BCA 125th Anniversary Planning Committee contacted the Archives-Historic Preservation Committee (AHPC) to request contributions to the year-long commemorative events.

After some discussion, it was agreed that the AHPC would submit articles on the Minister's Assistant (MA) program. Two members of our committee are MAs, Cynthia



Sandy Saeki

Mee, Ph.D., of Midwest Buddhist Temple and Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul deGuzman of San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. They have volunteered to share their

unique paths and experiences as MAs.

We also volunteered to update the various directories contained in the BCA 100th anniversary commemorative book but were informed that there would not be a hard copy publication for the upcoming 125th commemoration. As an alternative, the updated directories will be posted on the BCA website, accessible via a password protected link.

Our committee members are: Sandy Saeki, chair; Jane Naito, vice chair; Rev. William Briones, ministerial advisor; Rev. Kory Quon, ministerial advisor; Rev. Michael Endo, BCA staff team member; and Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul deGuzman, Emiko Katsumoto, Eiko Masuyama, Cynthia Mee, Ph.D., and Dona Mitoma.



Coast District Buddhist Women's League invites you to join us for the

47th BCA FBWA Conference

ICHI GO ICHI E

Each precious moment
a perfect treasure

October 4-6, 2024
San Jose DoubleTree Hotel

<https://fbwaconference.org>





BCA Music Committee Celebrates Fourth Anniversary

Subcommittees Are Creating New Music, Celebrating History in Song, Dance

By Kemi Nakabayashi
and Donna Sasaki
BCA Music Committee

The Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Music Committee is celebrating its fourth anniversary since the initial organizational meetings in 2020, when Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada requested forming the committee.

Its many subcommittees have not only been creating new music, but also celebrating the history of the music and dance of the Jodo Shinshu tradition in the mainland United States.

The BCA Bon Odori Taiko subcommittee has promoted the new commissions of “Kangie” by Nobuko Miyamoto and “Lantern Song” by Bonbu Stories. Meanwhile, the BCA Music History subcommittee has coordinated with the American Bon Consortium to celebrate Bon Odori history.

The “American Bon Odori: Dancing in Joy and Remembrance” exhibit at the National Japanese American Historical Society in San Francisco’s Japantown runs through Sept. 30. Then, in addition to “Kangie” and “Lantern Song,” there will also be traditional Bon Odori dances as well as “Ei Ja Nai Ka” by PJ Hirabayashi from the late 1990s, included during the American Bon Dancing event on Sept. 8 in San Francisco’s Yerba Buena Gardens. (American Bon Dancing) The BCA Music Committee organized the premiere of

“Amida’s Light” by Shinji Eshima, which was performed live by the Sacramento Betsuin Choir at the BCA Eitaikyo Service in February, and “Storms and Peace” by Francis Wong as a new gatha video at the BCA’s 125th anniversary service on Sept. 1.

It also paid tribute to the late Chizu Iwanaga with a new collaborative recording by BCA musical artists for the opening gatha “Nembutsu,” and a jazz arrangement by Akira Tana and his band Otonowa performed during the musical interlude at the service.

Capturing Otonowa recording in Tohoku in January for a special sponsored project was a precious opportunity. The trip was the band’s first to the communities affected by the Northern Japan earthquake and tsunami in 2011 since the annual trips they had been making before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tana, son of the late Rev. Emeritus Daisho Tana, provides relevance to BCA history in the video, which premiered at the BCA National Council Meeting in February in Sacramento. To view the video on the BCA Music YouTube channel, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXxW-8YnnPo>

The Jodo Shinshu anthem “Shinshu Shuka,” written just over a century ago, was presented as a new arrangement by the San Jose Chidori Band with singers from San Jose Betsuin choir after the conclusion of the Sept. 1 service. It is also a sponsored recording project and there is a deep connection to the San Jose community to honor the late Dr. Kenji Torigoe, as well as Torigoe’s earlier involvement in the YBA band in Watsonville in



Akira Tana, shown second at right, with his band Otonowa, will perform a jazz arrangement at the Sept. 1 BCA’s 125th anniversary service. (Courtesy of Sophia Noel and Tonari)

the 1950s under the direction of Chizu Iwanaga.

The Sept. 1 service featured gagaku music by the Northern California Gagaku Group, organized by David Ushijima and others from Berkeley Bud-

da Castro with such favorite classics as “I Love the Story” (also known as “With Grateful Hearts”), “Buddha Loves You,” “Farewell,” “A Special Place,” “Master Ganjin’s Journey,” and “The Bodhi Tree.”

features the late Rev. Hiroshi Abiko playing taiko on the recording. Music by the BCA’s many musical living legends such as “I’m a Link in the Golden Chain” and “Say Namu Amida Butsu” by Gordon Ah Tye, “In a Quiet Valley” by Eshima, “Metta” by Hiro Imamura, and “Like Blossoms” by dii Lewis were also included.

Newer music was also featured, including the FBWA Music Project gatha, “With Gassho From the Heart” by Donna Sasaki, and several of Albert Fujitsubo’s compositions, including “Maitreya.”

Additional new compositions from the first BCA Music Committee gatha lyric writing contest will be highlighted this fall. We celebrate both the old and the new as we move toward the next phase of the BCA and BCA Music Committee. We welcome you to be a part of our efforts with ideas for future sponsored projects.

The BCA Music Committee organized the premiere of “Amida’s Light” by Shinji Eshima, which was performed live by the Sacramento Betsuin Choir at the BCA Eitaikyo Service in February, and “Storms and Peace” by Francis Wong as a new gatha video at the BCA’s 125th anniversary service on Sept. 1.

dhist Temple.

For this special service, the Service Music Subcommittee leaders selected a variety of gatha compositions by BCA composers over the decades as background music and for special telethon videos.

We honored the late Yumi Hojo, Jane Imamura and Lin-

Hiro Imamura’s “Higan” pays tribute to the lyrics written by the late Rev. Dr. Seigen Yamaoka. BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Bob Oshita’s lyrics of “With Grateful Hearts” is also a tribute to Yumi Hojo’s composition.

“Season of Obon,” composed by Misaye Abiko,

Kieshiki, Hatsumairi Ceremonies Held at Ogden Temple



Kieshiki Affirmation and Hatsumairi ceremonies were held May 20 at the Buddhist Church of Ogden with Rev. Jerry Hirano in attendance. Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada attended via Zoom, and presented four members with their Buddhist names, or homyo. Shown at left, from left, are: Haylee Hoch, Graysen Hoch, Chad Shellabarger and David Miller. Five babies took part in the special Hatsumairi service, which commemorates a child’s official “first visit” to the temple. The children and their families are shown at right. (Courtesy of Kris Yamada)

DONOR APPRECIATION ISSUE



By Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop of the BCA

Thank You for Your Generous Donations to the BCA

As we celebrate this year, our 125th anniversary, it is most gratifying to acknowledge the generosity of all of you who have supported our Buddhist Churches of America this past year.

In honoring our past, we stand on the shoulders of our pioneering members and ministers, who even during

the Depression, found ways to financially support the BCA and the local temple.

All of you continue in that spirit of “Dana” to contribute to help support our national organization and its many programs and initiatives. You have many choices as far as where to contribute to and what causes to support, but

you have chosen to support the sharing of the Dharma for now and into the future.

This past year, we have embarked on several new initiatives like the creation of a BCA Film and Video committee; the innovative expression of music, lighting and chanting in the Techno Hoyo concerts; and the

performances of the Grateful Crane Ensemble that celebrate and honor our history through musical theater. These initiatives are all made possible because of your support and generosity.

May we ask for your continued support of our efforts to share the Dharma with others.

Dharma Forward Making an Impact

Scholarships Awarded to Aki Rogers at Ryukoku University, Tokudo Recipients

By Michiko Inanaga
Director of Development
BCA Endowment Foundation

Aki Rogers is one of the BCA’s newest aspiring ministerial scholars in Kyoto.

She grew up at Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles and at Orange County Buddhist Church and has been familiar with the BCA for a while, but didn’t really anticipate studying to be a minister in Japan.

On a recent trip, I got a chance to catch up with Aki in front of the Karamon Gate at Nishi Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto to learn how and why she came to study in Japan.

Aki has a passion and an appreciation for the opportunity to study in Japan. She is studying at Chuo-BukkyoGakuin, a seminary school to learn the practical side of Shinshu ministry such as chants, rituals and doctrine. This is her second year in Japan and first year in the master’s program at Ryukoku University.

“The great thing about being here (in Kyoto) is that we have a wide range of teachers — professors at Ryukoku or affiliated with the Hongwanji research department,



Aki Rogers, who grew up at Senshin Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles and Orange County Buddhist Church, is in the first year of the master’s program at Ryukoku University. Rogers received a scholarship to pursue academic studies in Japan through the Dharma Forward campaign. (Courtesy of Aki Rogers)

the soken; teachers with a lot of practical experience such as those with Fu’kyo shi, which is the certification to be official Dharma speakers,” Aki said. “There is just a wide variety of teachers and I really appreciate that because you get all

kinds of different perspectives, a wide range of thought.”

Some of the professors come directly from “Kangaku,” the doctrinal heads of the Hongwanji-ha.

Continued on Page 13

Let’s Help Make Dharma Forward a Big BCA Success

Campaign Needs 20% More to Reach Goal of \$15 Million

By Michiko Inanaga
Director of Development
BCA Endowment Foundation



Michiko Inanaga

Bring it home!

We can do so much more now that the Dharma Forward campaign is in full swing and committees are mobilized.

The mood to reach our \$15 million goal is hopeful, uplifting, with a “can do” attitude.

With \$11.6 million already raised, Dharma Forward projects are providing growth and substance to BCA and the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS).

We are growing a wider network through our activities and leaning into what we do well. We are focused on areas where impact can be made now and where it will set us up

Continued on Page 14

IBS Is Expanding Its New Field Education Department

Program Growth, Hiring of Director Dr. Lilu Chen Funded by Generous Donors

By Rev. Gesshin Greenwood
Communications and Admissions Director
Institute of Buddhist Studies

Through the Dharma Forward campaign’s generous supporters, the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) has been able to significantly grow its Field Education Department over the past year with new Field Education Director Dr. Lilu Chen.

Dr. Chen — whose hiring in early 2023 was also made possible by donors — launched the first “Introduction to Field Education” class last fall with three students, two of whom chose to complete their field education experience

at a hospice organization. The other student served as a Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) Minister’s Assistant for her temple.

And, for this coming school year, Dr. Chen is expanding field education to cover two semesters. This extended timeframe will allow students to be more fully integrated into their field sites, invest in longer-term relationships, and have more opportunities for learning.

“I have a strong appreciation for field education because it’s about taking what you learn and applying it to the real world, then seeing what you’re doing out in the world and understanding how that applies to what you’re learning at IBS,” Dr. Chen said in a March 2023 article in the Wheel of Dharma.

Field education at IBS encompasses a diverse range of settings, including Clinical Pastoral Educa-

tion (CPE) sites such as hospitals, as well as volunteer opportunities at Buddhist temples, prisons and nonprofits. Students are also encouraged to propose their own sites to tailor their experiences to their interests and career goals.

As Field Education Director, Dr. Chen fosters relationships with various field education sites and guides students in the Master of Divinity program as they fulfill their field education requirements.

Dr. Chen brings an impressive blend of academic training and hands-on chaplaincy experience to IBS. She completed her Ph.D. in religious studies at Stanford University, focusing on Islamic history in China. Her chaplaincy experience includes work as a chaplain intern at Kaiser Permanente San Leandro and as a chaplain resident

Continued on Page 14



Dr. Lilu Chen, the Field Education Director at the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS), launched the first “Introduction to Field Education” class last fall. (Courtesy of IBS)



Thank You for Your Generous Offering

Thank you for entrusting us with your gifts of time and financial support. With your support, we can provide a family and community-based connection to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha for all. The following list includes offerings made by members and friends of the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) and the Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) that were processed by the BCA Endowment Foundation between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. Donation levels reflect cumulative amounts given across different programs and campaigns; please see notes for further details.



Gifts to the BCA Endowment Foundation

Donor List

Continued from Page 8





Institute of Buddhist Studies Is Deeply Grateful to Its Donors

Throughout the year, IBS is the recipient of gifts in support of its academic mission and commitment to the advancement of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist ministry and Buddhist chaplaincy.

The list below acknowledges donors whose gifts were received between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024.

The IBS community (students, alumni, faculty, staff and the Board of Trustees) is deeply grateful for your partnership and support.

IBS Donations Received - July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024: \$2,470,649.39

Donor List

Continued from Page 9



Rev. Yuki Sugahara is shown at a variety of events and activities with the Sacramento Betsuin. Above left, he greets a member outside after the Sunday Dharma service. Above right, the Sacramento Betsuin gathered for a Sunday afternoon family bowling event. Shown, from left, are Kyle Adachi, Brian Hatano, Sensei Grace Hatano, and Rev. Sugahara. At far left, he attends a Sacramento Buddhist Women's Association (SBWA) udon noodle making class. Rev. Sugahara taught the SBWA members how to stomp on the noodle dough to create the noodles. At near left, he greets Sangha members after a Sunday service in the kaikan, or gym. (Photos courtesy of Karen Adachi)

Rev. Sugahara

Continued from Page 1

service, chanting “Shoshinge” along with a Dharma talk. More recently, he records the services in advance and posts them at 8 a.m. on his YouTube page, <https://www.youtube.com/@yukisugahara2259>, which has more than 1,000 followers and about 100,000 views.

The page also features videos of the songs he plays during services and by himself without an audience, how to Oshoko and chant other sutras, and of his practicing martial arts.

A few months ago, he posted a video performing “Lime-light” by the Canadian rock band Rush. It has been viewed 8,800 times and received dozens of comments.

“That’s so beautiful, in every regard,” one viewer commented. “A man of faith with a devotion to music. Maybe life isn’t all or nothing.”

Rev. Sugahara, who replies to every comment on his videos, said: “Thank you for your comment! Buddhism is the path of no-extremes so maybe life is not all or nothing.”

His rendition of “Portrait of Tracy” by jazz bassist Jaco Pastorius is his most popular music video, with more than 63,000 views and hundreds of comments.

“It is wonderful when ministers utilize their particular talents or interests to share the Dharma in innovative ways like Rev. Sugahara, who uses his guitar playing to enhance



Rev. Yuki Sugahara and his family pose at the Sacramento Betsuin's Halloween party. Shown, from left, are daughter Aoi, 12, and wife Namiko. In the front is son Hikaru, 7.

the services at Sacramento,” said BCA Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada.

Ken Garner, a former President of the Oregon Buddhist Temple, said Oregon was at the vanguard of BCA temples using online tools thanks to Rev. Sugahara, who was a “perfect fit” for the temple.

said, adding that is a “great combination for a Jodo Shinshu priest.”

Rev. Sugahara has also implemented a number of new programs at the Sacramento Betsuin, according to temple President Karen Adachi. They include a monthly chanting class, a monthly class in Jap-

“A young, goateed, bass-playing Buddhist priest, who loves food and IPA! He is intellectual with an academic brain, but is able to distill basic and more esoteric aspects of Buddhism to easy to understand doses ... (a) great combination for a Jodo Shinshu priest.”

— Ken Garner, former President of Oregon Buddhist Temple

“A young, goateed, bass-playing Buddhist priest, who loves food and IPA! He is intellectual with an academic brain, but is able to distill basic and more esoteric aspects of Buddhism to easy to understand doses,” Garner

anese on the reading of the “Tannisho,” a monthly hybrid study class and taiko for Dharma School children.

Last year, he and Rev. Matt Hamasaki, the second Resident Minister in Sacramento, began Wednesday morning

services for seniors. The morning services are open to all. A shuttle bus brings seniors from a couple of assisted living facilities, according to Adachi.

Rev. Sugahara conducts the service in Japanese and English the first Wednesday of the month and Hamasaki conducts the service the third Wednesday of the month.

“All of these new programs have been well received by our Sangha members,” Adachi said. “Reverend Yuki is very personable, and it is important to him to meet and get to know each of our Sangha members, which is appreciated by our Sangha.”

Rev. Sugahara comes from a line of ministers dating back 15 generations from both his father and mother. Korinji, the Sugahara family’s temple, is located in Oda City in Shimane prefecture.

“When I was little, I loved following my grandmother, grandfather and father around

Music was part of his life from a young age. His first instrument was piano, but after a few years he quit because “I wasn’t good at it.” He switched to trumpet in the elementary school marching band, and finally, in ninth-grade, to the instrument that he loves, bass guitar.

He is self-taught, learning by watching bassists such as Billy Sheehan of Mr. Big, Gedde Lee of Rush and jazz bassists such as Jaco Pastorius, Marcus Miller, Stanley Clarke and Victor Wooten.

He owns a four-string bass, five-string bass, six-string bass, four-string fretless bass, two electric guitars, one acoustic guitar and two ukuleles.

Rev. Sugahara is not the only musically inclined BCA minister. Rev. Harry Bridge, Resident Minister at the Buddhist Church of Oakland, is also well known for playing bass guitar.

In addition to music, Rev. Sugahara practices Eagle Claw Kung Fu and martial arts, which he started — to lose the 20 pounds he gained after coming to the United States. He also juggles.

Rev. Sugahara and wife Namiko have a 12-year-old daughter, Aoi, and a 7-year-old son, Hikaru.

Rev. Sugahara studied political science at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto and at one point had hoped to become a translator for the United Nations. He said he always thought he’d get his Kyoshi certification, but was prompt-

Continued on Page 14



At left, UCLA students pose with members of Bonbu Stories at the Westwood campus. At right, students and Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul deGuzman examine the BCA Collection at the UCLA Young Research Library. (Photos courtesy of Dr. Jesse Drian and Rev. Dr. Jean-Paul Contreras deGuzman)

UCLA Course

Continued from Page 1

focused on the history and contemporary experiences of American Buddhists through the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, class and power. In addition to reading “Be the Refuge: Raising the Voices of Asian American Buddhists,” by Institute of Buddhist Studies (IBS) alumna Chenxing Han, along with other scholarly works, students were immersed in the world of American Jodo Shinshu.

Opportunities for experiential learning give students the tools to create an enduring understanding of complex materials that readings and lectures can not.

So, I am extremely grateful that Rev. Ko’e Umezu, the Assistant Minister of the West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple, generously opened her temple doors to my class.

Umezu Sensei curated a wonderful set of documents from temple archives that explained the evolution of Buddhism from ancient India to medieval Japan to the nearby Sawtelle Japantown, and in doing so, emphasized the historic and enduring role women and young people played in temple life.

As our class grappled with stereotypes of Buddhists as solely male monastics, her storytelling brought to life a history most students had never encountered.

Students also explored the Hondo and asked thoughtful questions about everything from altar ornaments to the symbolism behind rituals like oshoko.

Students then had the opportunity to dive even deeper into the history of our organization and individual temples through examining the BCA’s expansive archival collection that is housed at UCLA’s Library Special Collections.

Through the diligent efforts of the BCA Archives and Preservation Committee and countless other stewards of our collective history, the BCA collection is now accessible to the public and the wealth of its contents did not

FYI

To learn more, please visit the following links:

Buddhist Churches of America Collection at UCLA:
<https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8v412d7/>

Young Buddhist Editorial:
<https://www.youngbuddhisteditorial.com/>

Bonbu Stories:
<https://bonbustories.art/>

disappoint.

Thanks to Dr. Jesse Drian, a distinguished Buddhist Studies scholar at UCLA’s Library who works closely with the BCA collection, students were able to explore a variety of sources that Dr. Drian located for us.

One group was captivated by the detailed correspondence between the office of the Bishop of the Buddhist Mission of North America (BCA’s predecessor) and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the lead up to the forced removal and mass incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans in 1942. They were taken by the BMNA’s emphasis on the loyalty of Japanese Americans and the curt responses of the president’s office.

Other students got to explore various pieces of ephemera including shimmering, decades-old wages that commemorated a variety of occasions. Meanwhile, their peers were a little confused by a scrapbook of otherwise mundane black-and-white photos that seemed to capture a vacation, when in fact it was a record of the U.S. tour of the towering Shinshu Otani-ha (Higashi Honganji) priest and philosopher Haya Akegerasu.

Another group reveled in all of the issues of the Berkeley Bussei from the 1950s and 1960s. They commented, to use their language, on how “emo” (i.e., sensitive, emotional or philosophical) the writers were, a history recently captured in IBS President Dr. Scott Mitchell’s new book, “The Making of American Buddhism.”



Rev. Ko’e Umezu of West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple explains the significance of incense burning and different parts of the Onajin to the UCLA students.

Looking at additional Japanese American newspapers from the time, other students were surprised at how “savage” (i.e., fierce or unafraid to speak truth to power) some Nisei feminist writers were. All in all, students came to grasp just how active and engaged Shin Buddhists have been for generations. Though these activities may have given students an opportunity to understand Jodo Shinshu with their minds, they ended our time together by experiencing Buddhism with their hearts.

Classes were sometimes canceled or had to pivot to Zoom with little warning. Because my class was housed in an interdisciplinary ethnic studies-influenced program that instills a sense of social justice in its courses, many students were active participants in the encampments and faced violence and harm first hand. Due to the volatility, other students had to return home at the request of their parents.

Our teachings around interdependence, compassion and gratitude were timely, if

I am left immensely grateful for all of the individuals across time and space who made these learning opportunities possible. As a Buddhist — and as a historian — I am always humbled by moments to witness the truth of interdependence.

This past academic year was marked by immense turmoil across college campuses due to the genocide in Gaza, and UCLA was not spared.

not necessary, as students encountered so much suffering.

To close the class, Rev. Devon Matsumoto and Hannah KC Mukai, two of

the founders of the Young Buddhist Editorial, organized a participatory “acknowledgment circle.” Students got to experience Jodo Shinshu rituals, such as chanting “Sanbujo” and “Amida Kyo,” as entry points that encouraged them to reflect deeply on themselves and those they carried with them in a time of such pain on campus and around the world.

Rev. Matsumoto gave students the option to bring in a personal object that they later contributed to an altar and used to reflect on resilience.

As one student expressed their gratitude: “This talking circle was extremely impactful. The open, kind and empathetic environment that you helped to foster on our last day of class will be in my memories for a long time — all of us as students were encouraged to be empowered by our own vulnerability. We owe it to you.”

Just as that chaotic quarter came to a close, summer session began and I was excited once again to incorporate contemporary American Jodo Shinshu into the classroom.

I taught an Asian American history class in which themes of ancestors, remembrance and the significance of artists as the writers of history were prominent. How fortuitous it was that the class coincided with the Bonbu Stories’ tour across Obon celebrations to debut “Lantern Song,” composed and choreographed for the 125th anniversary of the BCA.

Sydney Shiroyama and Miko Shudo spoke to my class about the origins of Bonbu Stories and how they have used music and dance as storytelling. They led students in dancing to “Lantern Song,” which they thought was an unexpected part of taking a history class and prompted them to reflect on their ancestors in a different way.

Just like the previous experiences, learning about the history and spirituality that informed “Lantern Song” left students understanding that Buddhism in America is

Continued on Page 14

Shimizu

Continued from Page 1

During her adult life, Dorothy Shimizu was the ultimate, hard-working multitasker. She raised her family, ran her own business, and helped both Enmanji and her community thrive.

She didn't just teach Dharma School, she taught older Dharma School students how they could teach Dharma School. She didn't just volunteer to supply a dish for a fundraiser, she chaired the fundraiser. A great cook, she didn't just bring delicious food, she taught cooking classes for the temple and the local community. All the while, she lived the spiritual insights learned from her parents.

Dorothy Shimizu was born on May 16, 1929, to Harry Otani and Elaine (Yoshioka) in Watsonville, California. The couple had met while working at Schofield Barracks, the U.S. Army installation, in Oahu, married on Feb. 23, 1928, and moved from Hawaii to the mainland.

From her father, she learned to treat all people kindly and with respect, a lesson she lived, and one she passed on to her children.

"One of the things she always used to say is that we all need to be accepting of people," said Julene Leach, her eldest daughter. "Whether Buddhist, Christian or Jewish doesn't matter, we all need to get along."

From her father, she also learned how to cook. Cooking for big groups was one of his jobs at a nearby ranch, and he did most of the cooking for his family. He insisted she learn how to figure quantities, telling her, "You're the oldest girl and you'll do most of the cooking." He also told her she'd need a big stainless-steel bowl "because you'll use it."

Shimizu was 12 when the family was forcibly uprooted in 1942 during World War II, as a result of Executive Order 9066. In a 2003 interview with the Sonoma County Japanese American Citizens League, she recalled her family had to sell most everything, leaving



Dorothy Shimizu is shown with her mother Elaine Otani at the Kameoka Farm in Petaluma picking daikon in this undated photo. (Courtesy of Julene Leach)

them in an empty, unfurnished house. Every morning, their neighbors, the Feathersons, would leave fresh milk in a jar on the fence.

The Otani family left on her birthday. Their German neighbor baked her a cake and gave it to her before the family left on a flatbed truck, and took a local train to get to Merced. Armed guards escorted them, along with thousands of other Japanese Americans, onto a train with all the shades drawn. No one said where they were going.

Amache mass detention camp in Colorado.

In the 2003 interview, Shimizu focused on the positives of camp, like bus trips outside the barbed wire fences, Girl Scout meetings, and the kindness of the Quaker teachers who eventually took over classroom duties at the camp.

Some positive things were happening in Sebastopol at the same time. While the Otani family was interned, neighbors protected their property, made sure the garlic and carrots were harvested and sold, and rented

War II. Vandals fire-bombed the Hondo, burning part of the interior, but not the structure. The temple also became the target of drive-by shootings.

In response, the local United Church of Christ's youth group decided to stand guard at the temple to prevent further attacks. They knew Enmanji was important to their Japanese American friends, and felt, as Americans, it was wrong to target a church of another person's religious beliefs.

The youths guarded the temple for three months until

community.

"When your parents participate a lot, you kind of fall into their positions," Leach said. "Mom did a lot of Fujinkai business and Daddy was president many times, maybe five, and they were frequent chairs of things."

After high school, Shimizu expanded her cooking skills and learned how to be a seamstress. Leach recalled that her mother took beautician and sewing classes. In order to pay for them, she worked for an administrator at the Presidio in San Francisco and learned from the housekeeper how to make hors d'oeuvres.

"She liked to make things pretty," Leach said. "She would tell us 'You eat with your eyes,' so plating was important. She also said that 'American pretty is different from Japanese pretty.'"

At Enmanji, Shimizu met with the ministers' wives to learn how to prepare shojin ryori, or vegetarian temple cooking.

After finishing her classes, Shimizu worked in various beauty shops and took up sewing. Martin Shimizu built an additional room to the family home and Dorothy Shimizu used it for 40 years as Dorothy's Beauty Bar, catering to the local community.

"How did Mom do this?" Leach said. "Work during the day, and at night, she cleaned and made dinner and lunch."

Shimizu still found time to tirelessly work on behalf of Enmanji and the community. Leach remembered how her mother made delicious food out of so little when times were lean.

"She could take one pork chop and a head of cabbage and feed a family of seven," Leach said. There were five siblings in all, three brothers, Leach, and a younger sister.

Throughout their lives, Shimizu and her husband would always welcome visitors and guests to Enmanji. In tributes after her passing, many people recollected how she always made people feel at home, like family.

Thanks to Julene Leach for contributing to this article.

She didn't just teach Dharma School, she taught older Dharma School students how they could teach Dharma School. She didn't just volunteer to supply a dish for a fundraiser, she chaired the fundraiser. A great cook, she didn't just bring delicious food, she taught cooking classes for the temple and the local community. All the while, she lived the spiritual insights learned from her parents.

Once the family settled in their seats, the family shared the cake — on a shuttered train racing to an unknown destination.

When the train finally stopped — after traveling more than 1,350 miles — they found themselves at the desolate

the property for the Otanis. On their return, the farm and house were still theirs and in good order.

Meanwhile, the historic Enmanji temple — which was once displayed at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair — became the target of arson during World

emotions in the community cooled.

Dorothy Otani and her future husband, Martin Shimizu, grew up together at Enmanji. They were married on Feb. 19, 1955. Both Dorothy and Martin Shimizu held leadership positions at Enmanji and in the

"Eight hundred to nine hundred years of history that you're connected with right here deepens and makes me feel closer to the history of our tradition," Aki said.

She expressed her deep appreciation for the BCA, the Endowment Foundation and the Dharma Forward campaign.

"I'm a lucky recipient of the scholarship from Dharma Forward," Aki said.

Not being distracted by the responsibilities of a part-time job allow Aki to focus on her studies, research, and to fully commit herself to all of the history and connection

her studies and Kyoto offers.

Receiving the support from the BCA represents the generosity of the Sangha which "goes a long way in helping this mission of educating ministers and future Shinshu scholars to then be able to give back to our communities back home," Aki said.

"One of the things I think about when I'm here in Japan, or back in the United States, is temple generationality, how this teaching is passed from one generation to the next," Aki said.

"Even if you're brand new to the temple system, you're

starting a new generation — you to your children, you to your friends — just this network that builds up because we share in these teachings together."

With dedication and opportunity, students like Aki Rogers represent the continuation of sharing the Dharma Forward. We look forward to having Aki as a minister in the near future!

In addition to Aki Rogers, the Dharma Forward campaign also awarded scholarships to 10 Tokudo candidates who completed their ordination at the Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto in December 2023.

Scholarships

Continued from Page 7

Another important point of being in Japan, she said, was the "direct connection to the history."

There is a beautiful morning service at 6 a.m. at Honzan, the head temple in Kyoto. There is also Shinran Shonin's family temple, Suminobo, where Shinran Shonin passed away; Ohtani Hombyo, the mausoleum where Shinran's ashes are interned; and many other historical sites connected to Jodo Shinshu history in Kyoto.

Shin Grants

Continued from Page 3

their likely addition to the ranks of qualified Kaikyoshi ministers serving the BCA."

For more information about the Shin Buddhist Grant, contact Iseri at mikeiseri@fmtc.com.

Donations may be sent to Scott Winner, Northwest District Council Treasurer, Oregon Buddhist Temple, 3720 SE 34th Ave., Portland, OR 97202. For donations made via credit card, please contact Iseri.



Dharma Forward

Continued from Page 7

for the future.

It hasn't always been an easy road. Not because there is resistance to the idea, but because the road ahead is wide and the people we want to support are many.

BCA's strength is in continuing to provide the physical hub of Jodo Shinshu in America, the philosophical base, and to represent Jodo Shinshu as Buddhism

FYI

For more information about the Dharma Forward campaign and a pledge form, go to: www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.com/dharma-forward

becomes more mainstream — such as we did at the White House this year for the Vesak celebration.

BCA also ensures that temple leadership is connected to

each other and to resources for a larger sense of community. It is one of our core teachings. IBS brings academic legitimacy to the entire enterprise. Being a leader in Buddhist research, teaching, and publication allows many to hear the Nembutsu.

What is important for us to understand is the value of having what we have and striving to improve. The future is made up of choices and decisions. How does our collective future unfold?

With your generous help,

we have already been able to improve facility safety, support IBS professorial chairs, create new areas of research, support sanghas through music and technology upgrades, and ensure that ministerial candidates get the financial and educational support to complete their studies. But there is 20% left to raise.

What's left is to level access to Buddhist education, strengthen the ministerial "bench," fulfill professorial chair endowments, and to keep the experience of "being

Buddhist" one of deep learning, shared experiences and joy.

Join us as we continue to strive to deepen our bonds with your generous volunteer time, sharing your experiences with others, and monetary support.

We intend to close out this campaign at the end of the 125th celebratory year in December 2025. Bring it home! Please help us in successfully closing this campaign with a donation today or a pledge for the next 12 months.

Rev. Sugahara

Continued from Page 11

ed to do it after his mother passed away in his sophomore year.

But he preferred music to the ministry. His father said he could do anything until age 29, maybe longer — if he made it in the music business. For years, he practiced with groups each week and played about twice a month in the Tokyo area. The closest he came to "making it" was when one band got a recording contract. But the music was never released.

When he reached the age of 29, his father suggested he consider becoming a minister with an overseas district of the Hongwanji. That appealed to him, in part because he spent a year in the United States in an

exchange program during high school. He said he thought he could spread the teachings using his English.

Rev. Sugahara was part of the 2009 class of the International Ministerial Orientation Program (IMOP) and visited a number of BCA temples.

Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara, who supervises IMOP since its inception in 2008, recalled Rev. Sugahara as "relatively quiet, but very smart. He was eager to study and learn more" and seemed to be good at making friends, especially in social situations.

"I thought it was vibrant and more 'genki,'" Rev. Sugahara said of what he saw at temples in the Bay Area, Sacramento and Southern California. Where many temples in Japan have small Sanghas, he noted how BCA temples have Dharma

schools and more young people coming to the temple.

Rev. Sugahara was first assigned to the Florin Buddhist Temple in 2011 and then to the Oregon Buddhist Temple in 2017.

Maintaining an online presence will continue to be important for BCA temples, Rev. Sugahara said.

"I want to try new things ... something more to attract people," he said.

At the suggestion of a Sacramento member, he and Rev. Hamasaki plan to trade off posting short Instagram videos every month. Those are the kinds of activities he believes are important to support the teaching of the Dharma.

There is another idea he's been thinking about: Recruiting young people to start a Buddhist rock band.

UCLA Course

Continued from Page 12

not simply an ancient set of religious practices, or an intellectual mind game, or exotic superstitions, or even a passing trend, but rather a living, breathing system of awakening to one's true self and true reality itself.

Taken together, I am left immensely grateful for all of the individuals across time and space who made these learning opportunities possible. As a Buddhist — and as a historian — I am always humbled by

moments to witness the truth of interdependence. My students experienced the legacies of countless ancestors through sitting in quiet awe at the West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple or through the pieces of the past left behind and gathered tenderly in the BCA Collection or reflection in the acknowledgment circle or swaying to the beat of "Lantern Song."

Moreover, how thankful I am that my karmic path brought me to Jodo Shinshu and encounter good Dharma friends — activists, artists, ministers and more — who, as conduits of the Great Compassion,

have guided me. Though my goal was never to proselytize my students, I sincerely hope that I succeeded in giving them a fuller, nuanced, and more authentic understanding of what Buddhism is.

Namo Amida Butsu!

Rev. Jean-Paul R. Contreras deGuzman, Ph.D., a Minister's Assistant at the San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, is a Lecturer in the Race and Indigeneity Cluster & Asian American Studies Department at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Field Education

Continued from Page 7

at Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City.

he also completed the year-long Sati Center for Buddhist Studies Chaplaincy training program.

Her vision for field education is centered on helping students find volunteer sites that align with their interests and personal growth goals.

The "Introduction to Field Education" class was a great success, according to Dr. Chen. She expressed pride in her students for their deep reflection and the way they kindly and thoughtfully supported each other in class.

Students shared how field education helped them affirm their career goals and gave them the confidence to transition more readily into professional work after IBS. They also appreciated that the class created a trusting environment where they were able to share vulnerabilities and challenge each other to grow.

Expanding field education studies at IBS also aligns the institute with the standards of other leading seminaries.

Students from the first field education cohort expressed a desire for a longer class duration, which Dr. Chen is addressing. She is developing the second semester field education course for spring 2025 and updating the policies in

the field education handbook.

Dr. Chen said she has heard from many new and beginning Master of Divinity students who are eager to start field education and explore the possibilities.

She hopes that field education will continue to benefit students in deepening their self-understanding and equipping them with essential skills for success after IBS.

We are grateful for the contributions of our donors, whose support has made this expansion and the hiring of Dr. Chen possible. Their generosity ensures that our students receive the best possible education and preparation for their future roles in ministry and chaplaincy.

Southern District Buddhist Conference

FOR THE Nembutsu

Save the Date

Saturday, October 19, 2024
Buddhist Temple of San Diego

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Rev. Marvin Harada
Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America (English)



Rev. Hibiki Murakami
Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (Japanese)

SCAN HERE FOR INFO



Contact: Ralph Honda
(email: rkhonda205@gmail.com)
Buddhist Temple of San Diego
(info@btsd.net)

The following Temples, Churches, and organizations affiliated with the Southern District:

- Arizona
- California
- Los Angeles
- Orange County
- Orland
- Pasadena
- San Diego
- San Fernando
- Santa Barbara
- Seattle
- Venice
- Vista
- West Los Angeles
- Adult Buddhist Association (ABA)
- Buddhist Women's Association (BWA)
- Dharma School Teachers League (DSTL)
- Young Buddhist Association (SD YBA)
- Junior Young Buddhist League (JYBL)

BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF MARIN

2nd Annual Fall Seminar series:

BUDDHISM & CULTURE



REV. CJ DUNFORD (they/them/theirs)

Colonization and Dominant Cultures: Problems of how Buddhist teachings and practitioners have been influenced by 'Western' cultures and religions

September 29, 2024



CATHERINE SHAW (she/her/hers)

Buddhadharma, the First Multinational: Buddhism has gone over the centuries into many very disparate cultures. What has changed and what has stayed the same; and how does this matter to us

November 17, 2024

Buddhism and Culture wrap-up, review and conversation on topics with all presenters

December 15, 2024

Hosted by the
BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF MARIN

60-minute hybrid sessions
1pm after Sunday Service

390 Miller Ave. Mill Valley, CA
Suggested donation: \$20



Scan for more info or to register

Visit the new domain

BCABOOKSTORE.ORG

for Shin Buddhist books and goods!



今月の法話

「仏さまのお徳とお浄土の世界」

ツインシティ仏教会
開教使補 鬼倉フライ 知永美



Rev. Chiemi Onikura Bly

浄土真宗のお寺にお参りをすると、そのお内陣には金色の仏具、色とりどりの木々や花々、美しい鳥やいきいきとした童などの生き物の彫刻や絵を見ること

できます。中央の阿弥陀様が安置されている宮殿、わきにある親鸞聖人などが安置されている返子と呼ばれるそれぞれの小さな屋根の下の、戸帳や華鬘と呼ばれる細かな装飾は見事です。天井にも天蓋と呼ばれる、見上げればと心ときめくほどの見事な飾りがあります。欄間の細かな彫刻や壁に描かれたきれいな絵は見るものを樂しませてくれます。仏華と呼ばれるいけばなは特別で悠々しく、立派な燭台に蠟燭をともし、芳しいお香を焚き、いろいろな果物や菓子をお供えします。打敷や水引と呼ばれる豪華なクロスの色や刺繍もきらきらしています。特別な法要で僧侶が着用している五条袈裟、七条袈裟なども華々しく豪華です。ご家庭のお仏壇も、大きさやデザインはさまざまですが、阿弥陀様や「南無阿弥陀仏」のお名号の周りには、金色や華やかな飾りがあります。お寺の本堂でも、ご家庭のお仏壇でも阿弥陀様とその周囲の輝く様子を伺うことができます。

なぜこのように、お寺やお仏壇は華やかに飾ってお荘厳されているのでしょうか。そしてなぜお寺に参拝したり、ご家庭のお仏壇でお参りをするのでしょうか。先祖や亡くなった方の供養のため、とお答えになる方も多いです。供養とは、亡くなったあとに、迷わずに浄土で往生できるように願い、祈ることを意味します。しかし、浄土真宗では「即得往生」「往生即涅槃」といわれ、その意味は「この世の縁が尽きる時、すぐさま浄土に生まれ仏となる」と聞かせていただきます。宗祖親鸞聖人は教行信証に「全ての人は、南無阿弥陀仏のお名号のおいわれを聞いて、信じ喜ぶまことにそのとき、その信は阿弥陀仏がまことの心をもってお与えくださったものであるから、浄土へ生まれようと願うたちごころに

往生すべき身に定まる。浄土に往生すれば、ただちに阿弥陀仏と一体の仏果を得る」と示されています。私たちが祈ったりしなくても、亡き人たちはすでにお浄土に往生生まれていらつしやいます。仏となられ、かたちやこだわりを超えて、いつでもどこでも私たちに寄り添い、一人ひとりを輝かせようとはたらいしておられます。その仏様のお徳を感動と共に讃えさせていただくことが、私たちがお寺やご家庭のお仏壇でお参りをする意味です。そしてお参りを通して、仏となられた方々に会うことができると思います。お寺やお仏壇には、亡き方達が仏となり、阿弥陀様とご一緒のお浄土の様子が表現されています。

阿弥陀仏の浄土は、煩惱の汚れない世界、清らかなさどりの世界であると説かれています。知恵は「あらゆるものの本質を知り尽くすはたらき」慈悲は「煩惱に苛まれているものを損取らずにはおかないというはたらき」です。その常にはたらいしている世界が浄土と呼ばれています。それとは対照的に、私たちが生きている世界は迷いの世界。私たちは自分の決めた物差しや自分の都合で、善い人や悪い人、好きや嫌い、役に立つ、役に立たないといったように、勝手に価値を決めて判断し、差別をしてしまっています。そこに争いが生まれ、苦しみが生まれる。しかも、そのことに気づいてさえもいなの世界は調和の世界。いろいろな音色が聞こえて、それらは美しく調和をしながら奏でられています。その麗しい姿は、清らかな悟りを開くはたらきをそなえていて、その音色を聞くものに仏法僧の三宝に報謝する思いを起させてくれるといわれています。

阿彌陀仏の浄土は、煩惱の汚れない世界、清らかなさどりの世界であると説かれています。知恵は「あらゆるものの本質を知り尽くすはたらき」慈悲は「煩惱に苛まれているものを損取らずにはおかないというはたらき」です。その常にはたらいしている世界が浄土と呼ばれています。それとは対照的に、私たちが生きている世界は迷いの世界。私たちは自分の決めた物差しや自分の都合で、善い人や悪い人、好きや嫌い、役に立つ、役に立たないといったように、勝手に価値を決めて判断し、差別をしてしまっています。そこに争いが生まれ、苦しみが生まれる。しかも、そのことに気づいてさえもいなの世界は調和の世界。いろいろな音色が聞こえて、それらは美しく調和をしながら奏でられています。その麗しい姿は、清らかな悟りを開くはたらきをそなえていて、その音色を聞くものに仏法僧の三宝に報謝する思いを起させてくれるといわれています。

「仏説阿弥陀經」



には、「阿弥陀仏の浄土では、宝の並木や宝の網飾りが微風に揺れ、美しい音楽が流れている。百千種の楽器が同時に奏でられているようであり、その音色を聞くものは、だれでも自ら仏を念じ、法を念じ、僧侶を念じる心を起すのである。阿弥陀仏の浄土はこのように麗しい姿を備えているのである。」と述べてあります。またお浄土の世界について、次のようにも説明されています。

「浄土にはきれいな池があつて、池の底には一面の金の砂が敷き詰められている。また池の中には、車輪のように大きな蓮の花があつて、青い花は青い光を、黄色い花は黄色い光を、赤い花は赤い光を、白い花は白い光を放ち、いずれも美しく、その香りは気高く清らかである。」浄土というのはさどりの世界。それは全てのもので、そのままありのままの姿で光り輝いていることを表しています。青い花はその青のまま、赤い花はその赤のまま、黄色い花はその黄色のまま、私は私色のまま、あなたはあなた色のまま、全ての命がそのままひかりかがやく、そんな世界がさどりの世界、お浄土だとおっしゃっています。

古来より人々は、この仏様の世界、お浄土の世界をさまざまな技術や思考を凝らして表現してきました。このことは仏教美術として確立し、それぞれの時代の文化が花開き、繁栄していくことに大きな影響を与えました。仏教美術は、インド、中国では二千年以上の、日本でも千五百年以上の歴史があり、たくさん寺院仏閣、仏像が建立されてきました。日本でも京都や奈良を中心に世界遺産に指定されている建造物や美術品などがたくさんあります。それは文化の繁栄の極みでもありました。現代では多くの観光客が世界中から訪れています。それらの多くは極楽浄土の世界を表現されています。

また、寺院に参拝すると、さまざまな宗派で、声明と呼ばれるとても美しいメロディーで読経が行われています。それらは時代の代表的な音楽文化にもつながっていますし、日本でも古代より伝統雅楽なども盛んに寺院儀式に取り入れられてきました。浄土真宗に関する歴史をみますと、古には法然聖人の門弟である安樂坊遵西らによる天台声明を元にした「往生礼讃」の美しいメロディー

AN ILLUMINATED MINDFUL EXPERIENCE

* USTOUR 2024

TECHNO HOYO

REV. GYOSEN ASAKURA

FEATURING MADOKA KOHNO FROM cyberNamunamu

A FUSION OF BUDDHIST TEACHINGS & ELECTRONIC BEATS * * *

NEW YORK CITY, NY SEPT 8 / 9 / 10 / 11

LOS ANGELES, CA SEPT 14 / 15

SAN JOSE, CA SEPT 17 / 18

MORE INFO → BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG/TECHNOHOYO @TECHNOHOYO TECHNHOYO US TOUR 2024

USCDornisife UNIC Shimo Ito Center for Japanese Religion and Culture

BCA Life of Gratitude

MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE THE REV. GYOZO KOHNO FUND

この九月に全米各地でテクノ法要というイベントが開催されます。福井県にある浄土真宗照恩寺住職の朝倉宣師によって発案されたプロジェクトで、現代のテクノロジー技術を駆使した仏教儀礼です。コンピューターでプログラムされた光のディスプレイによるビジュアルと電子サウンドを組み合わせ、伝統的な修行を現代的にアレンジし、極楽浄土の世界を表現し、法要をお勤めする企画です。お荘厳にプロジェクターなどを用いた光の表現を施します。お釈迦様に示していただいた真理の教えが、七高僧や親鸞聖人を経て時空を超えて現代の私たちに届いていることに感謝をする法要です。1000年、2000年の時を超えて、最先端のテクノロジーを用いることにより、より幅広い年齢層の方々にも親しみをもちて仏様の教えに触れるきっかけになると確信します。

このテクノ法要にはBCAのウェブサイト詳しい情報があります。会場になるお寺が近い方は足を運んでいただき、またオンラインでの配信もありますので、ネットを通じて参拝をいただければと思います。



法輪

2024年 9月号

発行所
米国仏教団
Buddhist Churches of America
1710 Octavia Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
電話 (415) 776-5600
FAX (415) 771-6293
Email: info@bcahq.org
for WOD: WODeditor@bcahq.org

二〇二四年度
教化標語
「今がその時」

あの記事をもう一度!

法輪のバックナンバーがBCA
ウェブサイトにて読めます。
<http://buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/about-us/wheel-of-dharma>

ご門主のメッセージ



このたび、北米開教区において「親鸞聖人御誕生850年・立教開宗800年慶讃法要」並びに「北米開教区創立125周年記念法要」がご修行されますこと、心よりお喜び申し上げます。

親鸞聖人は1173年にご誕生になり、1224年にその主著である『顕浄土真実教行証文類(教行信証)』に浄土真宗のみ教えを体系的に著されました。以来、浄土真宗のみ教えは数々の苦難を乗り越え、日本はもとより世界各地で今日まで受け継がれてきました。それは、み教えがそれぞれの時代や地域において、多くの方々の生きる支えとなったからです。

仏教を説かれたお釈迦様は、縁起や諸行無常という時間や場所を超えた、この世界のありのままの真実を明らかにされました。しかし、

私たちはこの真実をそのままに受け入れることができず、常に自己中心に物事を捉え、その結果、自分の思い通りにならないことで悩み苦しみ、人と争うなどしています。

お釈迦様は私たちの苦悩の原因を、この自己中心的な執われの心である無明煩惱にあると示されました。

そして、親鸞聖人は、このような私たちに向け、阿弥陀如来は「必ず救う」のよび声となって、はたらき続けて下さっていることを明らかにされました。

阿弥陀如来のおはたらきに出遇った私たちは、自らの煩惱を深く悲しみ、慚愧して、それを厭離しようとするのが当然であり、決して自らの煩惱的欲求に無批判に従うということはありません。それは、これまで自己の執われに無自覚であった者が、執われに縛られている自己であると知らされ、執われを離れようと思ひ識させられ、その意識が毎日の生活に影響を与えるということです。これからも阿弥陀さまの大慈大悲のおはたらきにお任せし、報恩感謝の思いで日々を過ごしてまいりましょう。

2024年9月1日

浄土真宗本願寺派
門主 大谷光淳

総長メッセージ

仏教とユーモア

米国仏教団総長 原田 マービン



Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada

今月は仏教とユーモアについて考えてみましょう。私は、仏教的な人生とはユーモアのセンスを持つことで、自分の愚かさや笑うことができ

私が尊敬する開教使の先生は皆、ユーモアのセンスに長けています。海野徹雄師や小谷マス師は、時に皆を爆笑の渦に巻き込むような法話をされますが、ただ楽しいだけの話ではなく、意義深いお話をされます。

私は、海野師が話された面白いエピソードをよく思い出します。先生がシアトル別院に勤め始めたばかりの若い開教使だった頃、初めて葬儀に出動されたそうです。葬儀ではたいいてい袴を着用します。袴は、言うなれば、ぶかぶかの長ズボンのようなものですが、袴を着るのに慣れていなかった先生は間違えて両足を袴の片方だけに入れてしまいました。そのことに気づかなかった先生は、お内陣に上がる時、ペンギンのように歩かなければならなかったと言われていました。そのことを想像すると、とても滑稽に思えて思わず笑ってしまいました。

何年も前のことですが、オレンジ・カウンティ仏教会の日曜礼拝が終わった後、私は本堂の前で人々に挨拶したり、話したりしていました。その時にあるメンバーの方が近づいてきて、「先生、話があります。」と言われました。彼は私を本堂の脇に引っ張って行ったので、「私にカウンティングをしてほしいのかな?」「何かシリアスなことを相談するつもりなのかな?」と思いました。

みんなから離れると、彼は私に「先生、ジッパーが下がってるよ。」と言われました。スボンを見ると、ファスナーが全開になっていたのです。恥ずかしい思いをしました。自分の姿はなかなか見えない、ということを知っている経験になりました。ジッパーが下がっているこ

とを覚えてくれるために、私を横に引っ張ってくれたあのメンバーはなんて親切なのだろう、と思ひ出すことがあります。

もし私たちが自分自身を笑い、自分の愚かさを笑い、自分のエゴを笑うことができるなら、それはとても健全なことです。仏教的な生き方をしていることだと思ひます。もし、自分の愚かさを笑えないとしたら、他にどのような反応をするでしょうか?もしかしたら、怒ったり、防衛的に反応したりして、自分自身の姿を本堂に見る機会を失ってしまうかもしれません。

オレンジカウンティ仏教会のお盆などのフェスティバルで私が好きだったのは、メンバーから聞こえる笑い声です。暑くて忙しいけれど、一緒に働き、話し、楽しい時間を過ごしているメンバーの笑い声がいっつも聞こえてきます。それは本当に嬉しいことです。その笑い声は、Jr.YBAの子どもたちから聞こえてくることもありました。しかし、チキンを作っているABAグループから聞こえてくることもありました。朝から夕方まで一日中笑い声が絶えませんでした。

お経や親鸞聖人が著されたものに、「仏教徒はユーモアのセンスを持つべきだ」というようなことは書かれてないかもしれませんが、他人と一緒に笑い、法話で面白い話を聞いて笑い、自分自身を笑うセンスを持つのが仏教徒だといえます。

ある時、妻とビュッフェレストランに行った時のことです。私は妻に、「あの女性のお皿の上の食べ物のお皿を見て!」とささやいたのですが、自分の皿を見てみると、その女性の皿と同じように山盛りになっていた、ということがありました。他人のこのを見るのは簡単ですが、自分のこのを見るのは難しいのです。他人の愚かさを笑うのは簡単ですが、何よりもまず、自分自身のこのを笑えるようになってみましょう。

