

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 428

January-February 2015

jihō

WWW

LOS ANGELES HONPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
FOUNDED 1905



NEW YEAR'S GREETING



KOJUN OHTANI, MONSHU

As we mark the beginning of a new year, I extend to you my greetings.

Last year, since having succeeded the Jodo Shinshu tradition in June, I have taken on the posts as the resident jushoku minister of Hongwanji and the Monshu of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha. Living among today's society in which the conditions are quickly changing, I shall help share the Jodo Shinshu teaching with as many people as pos-

sible, so that it will become a principle religious foundation for daily living. To do so, I humbly ask for your support.

The Jodo Shinshu teaching was expounded by Shinran Shonin. Since then, the teaching has been transmitted for well over 790 years, reaching us here today in this present day and age. This is because regardless of time and location, the Nembutsu teaching has always been able to serve any persons as a spiritual guidance to their life. Buddhism detaches from self-absorption and encourages living a life based on the Dharma. However, due to our own limitations being unable to put this into practice, we are faced with sadness and suffering.

Shinran Shonin has taught us that it has been predetermined that we will be led to the Pure Land and attain Buddhahood through the working of Amida Buddha. With the working of Amida Buddha's infinite wisdom and compassion, we are enabled to realize one's true self through the Truth.

In closing, let us live a life reciting the Nembutsu as we receive the Dharma.

January 1, 2015

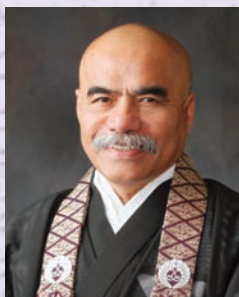
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*RIMBAN'S MESSAGE***THOUGHTS ON THE NEW YEAR — 2015**

**RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES**

It's hard to believe a whole year has passed. As I look back on 2014, I am overwhelmed by the kind words of support and encouragement that I received from many of you during my first year as Rimban. With the retirement of former Rimban Hiroshi Abiko, we were able to continue the demanding and challenging schedule of the Betsuin. Of course, the Betsuin couldn't have done this without the assistance and guidance of both Rev.

Koho Takata and Rev. Kazuaki Nakata.

This year marks the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple's 110th Year Anniversary. The Betsuin's long history, is truly a testimony to our Betsuin pioneers, whose intent was to establish a firm Jodo Shinshu foundation here in the Los Angeles area. Today, through continued hard work, dedication and sacrifice of our members, past and present, we are able to realize Nishi Betsuin's eleven decades of existence. As we prepare to commemorate the 50 years that Nishi Betsuin has been at the present site, our members are once again resolute to secure the future of Nishi Betsuin. Our plans to completely refurbish the *naijin* and to repair or replace the outdated or damaged areas in

the temple are well underway.

This year will be another challenging year as we continue the 50th Anniversary Fundraiser Campaign and the initiation of Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Buddhist Study Center. Of course, there is much work and financial support that is crucial as 2015 approaches and once again we look to you for your support.

Many thanks to all the affiliate organizations for all your help. Your efforts have been vital in putting together such successful fund raisers as Obon and Surf and Turf. Thank you to our many volunteers who have been taking care of such necessities from taking care of the temple grounds to stuffing envelopes. Many thanks to our office staff, Rie Fujii, Koko Kimoto, and Vance Ikkanda for their assistance in making the Betsuin run so smoothly and efficiently. My deepest appreciation to the Komon and Board of Directors for their guidance and their tireless commitment to keep the Nembutsu Teaching Central with our temple activities. Once again, my appreciation and gratitude to Rev. Koho Takata and Rev. Kaz Nakata for their support and friendship.

As we begin 2015, may gratitude and appreciation enter your life through your understanding of the Nembutsu Teachings.

Namo Amida Butsu

BETSUIN BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Lonny Quon



LONNY QUON

As I complete my three year term as board president, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for your support to our Betsuin this past year. Moving forward to 2015, I sincerely ask for your continued help to build and strengthen our temple for the future.

I want to thank our ministerial staff, Rimban William Briones, Rev. Koho Takata, and Rev. Kazuaki Nakata for dedicating their time and devotion to our members and community. The religious future of the LA Betsuin under the guidance of Rimban Briones and a very supportive ministerial staff is moving forward in a positive direction.

I also want to thank our komon, members of the board of directors, and our board of trustees for their support and guidance. Special thanks to our support staff and the

many volunteers for their assistance in meeting the daily administrative tasks and routines of our temple.

Finally, I want to thank our branch temples, affiliated organizations, maintenance, Kohaku, and special committees for their support and help with temple programs, events, fundraisers, and facility maintenance. Once again, this past year's Kohaku, Surf & Turf, and Obon Festival were all very successful.

I am truly grateful to all the mentors I had helping me with the programs and events at the temple. Please continue this support to our incoming president, Kenji Hatakeyama, as he takes over the leadership of our temple in January 2015. With your help, the LA Betsuin will continue to be a special place for our members and the community. Domo arigato

Gassho

Lonny Quon, Board President

LIFE OF AWAKENING

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

Happy New Year to you all. Throughout last year, I was supported and guided by the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. I am truly grateful to all of you for your untiring efforts, energies, and devotion in listening to the Buddha-Dharma and carrying out many activities and plans. May we also, together, continue to live with Namu-Amidabutsu

as the basis of true and real life in this year 2015.

In the previous issue of the Jiho, Ernest Hida, the general chairperson for the 50th Anniversary of Present Betsuin Location, announced the various commemorative events for the next five years. We will welcome the once-in-a-life time opportunity to commemorate various anniversaries to pay our respect and indebtedness to our forefathers and positively receiving the tradition and the Light of the Dharma by deeply reflecting upon the true intent of establishment of our temple.

As we welcome the auspicious commemorative anniversaries, I would like to share the five years theme and its sub theme along with various anniversaries.

2015 Life of Awakening: True Teaching
(*kyo*-Chapter on True Teaching)

110th Anniversary of Betsuin (1905-2015)
10th Anniversary of Muryokoju-do
(columbarium) and Wisteria Chapel (2005-2015)

2016 Life of Awakening: Namu-Amidabutsu (*gyo*-
Chapter on True Practice)

85th Anniversary of Betsuin Status (1931-2016)
60th Anniversary of ABA (1956-2016)

2017 Life of Awakening: Shinjin
(*shin*-Chapter on True Shinjin)

100th Anniversary of Dharma School (1917-2017)

2018 Life of Awakening: Perfect Peace
(*sho*-Chapter on True Realization)

100th Anniversary of Fujinkai, BWA (1918-2018)
100th Anniversary of YBA (1918-2018)

2019 Life of Awakening: Reflection and Gratitude
(Commemoration Year)

50th Anniversary of Present Betsuin Location
(1969-2019)
50th Anniversary of Boy Scouts (1969-2019)

In April 2008, the former Gomonsu His Eminence Koshin Ohtani revised “*Kyosho*” or “The Essentials of Jodo Shinshu” which was originally established by his father His Eminence Koshu Ohtani in April 1967 for wishing all followers of Shinran Shonin to be mindful and guided by the essential teachings of Jodo Shinshu and live the way of Nembutsu life.

In the Teaching of the “*Kyosho*,” the former Gomonsu stated,

Attaining the "entrusting heart"-awakening to the compassion of Amida Tathagata (Buddha) through the working of the Primal Vow-we shall walk the path of life reciting Amida's Name (Nembutsu). At the end of life, we will be born in the Pure Land and attain Buddhahood, returning at once to this delusional world to guide people to awakening.

Each moment of our lives is the precious opportunity for us to live fully by awakening to the dynamic power of Primal Vow and endless working of Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha which enables us to live with Namu-Amidabutsu as the basis of True and Real Life. Awakening to the constant working of Wisdom and Compassion, that is, hearing and entrusting the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha in our daily lives is the meaning of five years theme “*Life of Awakening*.”

Each year has a sub-theme which is the essence of Jodo Shinshu. Shinran Shonin wrote about True Teaching (Larger Sutra), True Practice (Namu-Amidabutsu), True Shinjin (True Entrusting Mind), and True Realization (Ultimate Fruition of Supreme Nirvana) in his major writing “*Ken Jodo Shinjitsu Kyogyosho Monrui*” or “*The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way*.” These four pillars of the teachings clarify the Truth of the Primal Vow manifested in the form of the Name of Amida Buddha. The Primal Vow and the Name is working together behind our recitation of Namu-Amidabutsu for all beings to awaken to the True and Real Life and enabling all beings to attain the Perfect Peace and return to this Saha World as the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life for guiding others to awaken to the same True Happiness through Wisdom and Compassion.

Our temple is called “Hongwanji” which means Primal Vow Temple where we hear the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha. Our teaching is called “Jodo Shinshu” which means the true essence of the Pure Land Way. Our school is called “Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha” which means the School of the Primal Vow Temple following the true

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SINCERE BOWING TO THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata



REV. KAZ

Where you are sitting right now, may be where your grandparents or great-grand parents were sitting when they were enjoying coming to Nishi Sunday services. Your friends' relatives may have been sitting 40 years ago where you are sitting right. We are not forcing each of you to bow when you enter the hondo, because it is not duty or obligation.

We simply show our respect to the history of this hondo and people around the history by bowing our heads...

First of all, I would like to say "Happy New Year of 2015" to our Nishi Betsuin Jiho readers! I have been in L.A. for 2-1/2 years, and I am celebrating my third New Year at Betsuin. Looking back the year of 2014, it was one of the most active years in my life. I completed my studies of Master of Business Administration and attended the commencement ceremony last June. A month later, I applied for my second master's degree, in Religious Studies (concentration in Buddhist Studies). I was accepted and I began my studies this past September. My main research topic is the *Infinite Life Sutra* both in Chinese and Sanskrit. I am taking the Sanskrit class for beginners. It's tough to memorize all characters but it is interesting to learn the ancient Indian language, especially the language was that was used to write our main text, the *Infinite Life Sutra*. When I attend my classes, I feel that I am gaining and learning so many things about Buddhism. What I learn, will ultimately become a source for my dharma talks and study classes. Again, I would like to thank the Betsuin board for allowing me to take the time to continue my education. By the time you read this issue of the Jiho, I hope that I have successfully completed my final exams and that I will be on my way with my second semester.

Our Nishi Betsuin hosts numerous special events throughout the year. There will be a particularly important event taking place in 2015. The Betsuin will be celebrate the 110th anniversary. Many of you may remember that in 2005, our Nishi celebrated its Centennial Service, and as a special project, the west wing of Nishi Betsuin was added with the Wisteria Chapel and the Muryo Koju-do (columbarium niches).

Some 110 years ago, the Japanese Buddhists immigrants formed a Buddhist association of Southern California (*Nanka Bukkyokai*). Some may have called it, Temple Bukkyokai at Nishi. These days, some people translate *Bukkyokai* as Buddhist temple or Buddhist Church, but technically it is not correct. Bukkyokai can be read as

Bukkyo-kai or *Buk-kyokai*. Both have different meanings. *Bukkyo-kai* can be used as a Buddhist association. *Bukkyokai* can be meant a Church of the Buddha. There is, however, no such word in the Japanese dictionary. *Bukkyokai* does not mean a Church of Buddha or a Buddhist Church. Buddhist Church/Temple should be translated as *Bukkyo-jiin* (*jiin* means temple in Jodo Shinshu). This is why Nanka Bukkyokai was referred to, in English, as the Buddhist association of Southern California. *Bukkyokai* had existed in Los Angeles for 12 years until 1917 before it merged with other two Buddhist groups. It was renamed Hongwanji Buddhist Church of Los Angeles when the merger was completed in 1917 and the name of *Bukkyokai* was removed from the official title of the temple. Later, in December of 1939, the temple name was changed to current Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. When I came to Los Angeles, I didn't understand why the term "bukkyokai" was used. Now I am speculating that 110 years ago, the Japanese immigrants used the term, bukkyokai, and the following generations of the bukkyokai members followed suit and the term bukkyokai was perpetuated. Now, when I hear bukkyokai used in conversations, I feel the Nishi tradition continues on from 110 years ago.

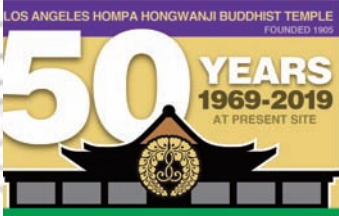
Our current hondo building was completed 45 years ago in 1969. Whenever I enter the hondo, I try to be mindful of those who have helped to maintain our Nishi Betsuin. One Sunday, before our Sunday service, there was a dharma school student sitting on the seat and she questioned me "Sensei, why do we bow when we enter the Hondo?" I replied to her, "Where you are sitting right now, may be where your grandparents or great-grand parents were sitting when they were enjoying coming to Nishi Sunday services. Your friends' relatives may have been sitting 40 years ago where you are sitting right. We are not forcing each of you to bow when you enter the hondo, because it is not duty or obligation. We simply show our respect to the history of this hondo and people around the history by bowing our heads..."

Every year we welcome the New Year at Nishi Betsuin. If there was no one to care about Jodo Shinshu, we would not have the Nishi Betsuin here in downtown Los Angeles. Because of the support each individual provides, we can continue to welcome New Year every January at Nishi Betsuin. Being aware of all this, I try to remind myself that I should not take all the generosity and support of the Betsuin sangha for granted.

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“50TH YEAR COMMEMORATION” REPORT

by Ernest Hida



Wishing all of you a very Happy New Year! Thank you very much for support in the past year and we look forward to your continued support in 2015. As we begin 2015, we have

four years until the 50th year anniversary since your temple was built at its current location. How time has flown by so quickly when your temple is always active with your attendance and participation. We have much work to do to maintain the legacy that was left for us by our pioneer members and each succeeding generations of members.

One of the 50th Commemoration Project is to establish a Buddhist Education Center at the Betsuin. The primary purpose of a temple is to provide a venue to understand the teachings of the Buddha-Dharma, thus creating the opportunity to nurture and spread the Nembutsu teachings and attitudes to all members of temples and the community. In addition to the sermons by ministers and seminars, this Buddhist Education Center will provide a center of learning and understanding the Buddha-Dharma. The Winter series will extend from January to March, the Spring Semester will be from April to June, and the Fall Semester will be from September to November. The Winter Semester courses will be taught by Rimban William Briones, Rev. Koho Takata, Rev. Kazuaki Nakata, Rev.

Ryuta Furuta, Rev. Tetsuo Unno, and Rev. Masao Kodani. We hope you will take this opportunity to attend any of these classes to learn and further your understanding of the Nembutsu teachings from these dedicated ministers. You can register for these classes at the Betsuin's office.

The 50th Year Commemoration Fundraising Campaign is rolling along with fundraising events by various affiliated organizations. As was mentioned in the previous JIHO issue, the Dharma School students started their fundraising with a weekly collection at their Dharma School classes every Sunday; ABA did a Spaghetti Dinner-BINGO Night for the campaign; the Dharma School teachers has been selling the ever-popular Paso Almonds for the campaign; BWA-Fujinkai has also raised funds for this campaign; and other organizations have begun to organize their fundraising events. In addition to the affiliated organizations, we look forward to your donations to your temple's fundraising campaign. We sincerely appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity for the benefit of your Temple. With four years to the 50th Year Commemoration in 2019, your Temple will be very busy observing various anniversaries, temple renovation projects, fundraising events, and the Buddhist Education Center. The success of the 50th Year Commemoration will be fulfilled with your active participation and generous support.

Gassho,

Ernest Hida, 50th Anniversary Chairman



SOUTHERN DISTRICT SEMINAR

“LIFE OF AWAKENING: TRUE TEACHING”

Saturday, February 7, 2015 • 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

@ LA Hampa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Guest Speaker: Rev. Tomoyasu Naito

Kangaku, highest authority with Jodo Shinshu Doctrine in Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

Registration: 8:30 am Opening: 9:00 am • Closing: 3:00 pm

**Registration Fee: \$10 (includes lunch)
Contact temple for registration**

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



HOMPA HONGWANJI
LOS ANGELES BETSUIN
DEDICATION

Nov. 14 - 16, 1969

815 East First Street, Los Angeles, CA
90012. Dedication*Schedule of Events,
and Brief History, Part 5

DEDICATION*SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (edited)

Sunday, Nov 9 Senbutsu Hoyo Service, conducted at
temple upon transfer of altar

Friday, Nov 14 Dedication Service (in English),
conducted by Bishop K. Tsuji with
message from the Lord Abbot Kosho
Ohtani, immediately followed by
reunion of former LA YBA members

Sat., Nov 15 Sarana Affirmation Rite
Memorial Service for Deceased
Members, conducted by the Lord
Abbot Kosho Ohtani, refreshments
served after the service
Welcome Banquet for Lord Abbot
Kosho Ohtani and Lady Yoshiko
Ohtani, & Dedication of New Temple
Banquet at the Hilton Hotel,
co-sponsored by LAHHBT and
Southern District Buddhist Churches

Sun., Nov 16 Traditional Chigo Procession, from
the old temple to the new temple, fol-
lowed by group picture taking.
Temple Dedication Service, conduct-
ed by the Lord Abbot Kosho Ohtani,
refreshments served after the service
Entertainment Program, at the old
temple building

Sun., Nov 23 Sunday School Dedication Service

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HOMPA HONGWANJI
LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

- 1905 Oct. Buddhists of Los Angeles organized
1917 Dec. Hongwanji Buddhist Church established
1919 Church moved into Yamato Hall
1925 June Temple built on Central Avenue
1931 June Temple appointed 1st Betsuin in the US
1933 July Rev. Hosho Sasaki appointed 1st Rimban

- 1936 Rev. Jyokatsu Yukawa appointed
2nd Rimban
1940 Rev. Jokai Kow appointed 3rd Rimban
1942 March Activities suspended during
evacuation (WWII)
1945 Sep Rimban Kow returned to Betsuin
1949 May Betsuin cleared of all debts
1957 Sep Rev. Daitetsu Hayashima appointed
4th Rimban
1962 April Rev. Ryuei Masuoka appointed 5th
Rimban
1964 Jan New Betsuin building fund drive began

This imposing red brick building on the corner of First St. and Central Ave. will no longer be the center of Buddhist activities. Built in 1925 through the vision and the sacrifices of the hard-working Isseis, this temple (Betsuin since 1931) served three generations in Southern California. As the gathering place and the spiritual focal point, it has functioned well. But, finally, it succumbed to progress – the move to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.

Where did they worship before?

The Buddhists of this area first organized as the Southern California Buddhist Association and met regularly in a small frame house near the wholesale vegetable market (Central Market). After about three years, a larger more suitable building on Savannah Street, near the present Evergreen Playground, was acquired.

In 1917, the Hongwanji Buddhist Church was formed after being at two locations, once on Turner St., and then on North San Pedro St.

From 1919-1925, before the Central Ave. temple was built, the church was in Yamato Hall on Jackson St. Solemn services and productive meetings were held with the boisterous gambling hall overhead!

The success of a church is not determined by the largeness of the congregation nor by the greatness of its temporal authority. The prosperity of a church is determined by the addition of even one new convert who has attained faith. The prosperity of the Shin Sect of the Pureland School, which teaches of the singleness of faith, is based on the endeavors of the disciples of the church.

—Rennyō Shonin

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HO-ONKO, SHINRAN SHONIN'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend the Ho-onko, the Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin which is the most important tradition in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhism to be held on **Sunday, January 18, 2015**. The guest speaker for the service will be Reverend Koshin Ogui of the former BCA Bishop and presently resident minister of White River Buddhist Temple for English Service and Reverend Akio Miyaji of BCA Minister Emeritus for Japanese Service.

Hoonko is a our gratitude to the founder, on death, January ally, the Japanese On" means "re- and "Ko" means meaning of."

Hoonko is tant for the Jodo dhists because it our respects to the sect, Shinran Shonin. We commemorate the anniversary of his death. On this occasion, we assemble together to pay our homage to his memory and to Amida Buddha for having awakened us to the existence of life's supreme debt of gratitude.

Shinran Shonin lived in the Kamakura Era, Japan. In a time



time to express Shinran Shonin, the day of his 16, 1262. Liter-characters "Ho- turn of gratitude" "to clarify the

the most impor- Shinshu Bud- is a day to pay the founder of

of disunity and violence, Shinran Shonin sought a way for all beings to attain perfect peace equally. Shinran Shonin interpreted Buddhism on the level of common people. During the period in Japan, to become a Buddhist meant having to leave one's home and family to enter a life of strict practices and intellectual study of Buddhism. Shinran Shonin, however, lived the life of an ordinary person – the same as that of the farmers and fishermen. Shinran Shonin had a wife and children. He ate meat and fish. Shinran Shonin lived a Nembutsu life with his family and opened up the path to Buddhism to the common people. If Shinran Shonin had not clarified the teachings of the Primal Vow, our temple and Sangha would not be in existence today. For this, we praise the virtues of our founder Shinran Shonin, express our sincere appreciation for having encountered his teachings, and reconfirm our true entrusting mind to listen and live his teachings each day.

In conjunction with Hoonko Service, we are fortunate to have a Hoonko Seminar entitled "*Life of Awakening: True Teaching*" on Saturday, January 17, 2015. The seminar will begin at 9:00am and end at 3:00pm. The guest speaker will be Reverend Koshin Ogui and Reverend Akio Miyaji. They will focus on the essential teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism which was clarified by Shinran Shonin. The registration fee is \$15.00 and the deadline will be on January 8, 2015. We encourage all of you to hear the Buddha-Dharma on the Memorial of Shinran Shonin.

THOUGHTS ON MAJOR SERVICES AND ITS DANA DONATIONS

by Rev. Koho Takata

We, Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, traditionally observe six major services in a year. They are Hoonko (Shinran Shonin's Memorial) in January, Spring Higan (Rededication) in March, Gotane (Shinran Shonin's Birthday) in May, Hatsubon/Obon (Gathering of Joy) in June, Autumn Higan (Rededication) in September, and Eitaikyo (Sangha Memorial) in November. We also observe Shusho-e (New Year's Day on January 1) and Jyoya-e (End of the Year on December 31) to reflect upon ourselves at the end of the year and rededicate ourselves to commit ourselves to listen to the Dharma as we start a new year. In addition to those observances, we, as Buddhists, observe Buddha Day (Shakyamuni Buddha's Birthday on April 8), Bodhi Day (Shakyamuni Buddha's Enlightenment on December

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HO-ONKO SEMINAR

Saturday, January 17th

Nishi Betsuin

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Guest Speakers:

Rev. Koshin Ogui (Eng)

Rev. Akio Miyaji (Jpn)

Registration Fee: \$15

Deadline: January 8th

Tel: 213-680-9130



NIRVANA DAY (BUDDHA'S MEMORIAL) SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend the annual Nirvana Day Service, which is the observance of Sakyamuni Buddha's Memorial Service to be held on Sunday, February 15, 2015. The speakers for the service will be Rev. William Briones for English Service and Rev. Kaz Nakata for Japanese Service.

Sakyamuni Buddha, founder of Buddhism, passed away into Nirvana on February 15. It is a day for all Buddhists to pay our deep gratitude and appreciation to the historical Buddha Sakyamuni for leaving us the wonderful teachings of Buddhism and also for his appearance in this world enabling us to encounter the teachings of Amida Buddha's Primal Vow.

Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, teaches us about the reason of Sakyamuni Buddha's appearance in this world in his major writing *"The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way."*

"Sakyamuni appeared in this world and expounded the teachings of the way to enlightenment, seeking to save the multitudes of living beings by blessing them with this benefit that is true and real." (CWS P.7)

Also, in *Shoshinge "Hymn of True Shinjin and the Nembutsu,"* Shinran Shonin expressed his deep gratitude and his strong conviction to Sakyamuni Buddha as follows:



The Passing of Sakyamuni Buddha mural painting in the Betsuin hondo

*Sakyamuni Tathagata appeared in this world
Solely to teach the oceanlike Primal Vow of Amida;
We, an ocean of beings in an evil age
of five defilements,
Should entrust ourselves to the
Tathagata's words of truth." (CWS P.70)*

We, the followers of the Amida Buddha's Primal Vow, therefore, commemorate Sakyamuni Buddha's Memorial once a year to pay our homage to him who is the manifestation of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life.

Let us all gather on the memorial day of Sakyamuni Buddha and express our gratitude and appreciation to Sakyamuni Buddha for making us to encounter the Truth of Primal Vow of Amida Buddha.

KOREISHA CHUSOKU KAI RECOGNIZES KANAI & MAEHARA

The Little Tokyo Nutrition Services honored Noritoshi Kanai and Tsutomu Maehara, both who are Betsuin long time members and leaders of the Japanese American community.

The 2014 Koreisha Chushoku Kai Fall event took place at the Bon-aventure Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. Founded in 1976, the Little Tokyo Nutrition Services is a nonprofit organization that provides meals for seniors.

Standing behind Mr. Kanai and Mr. Maehara are (left - right) Jean Kawakami, Shoichi and Nobuko Sayano, Lonny and Esther Quon, Tatsushi Paul Nakamura, Rimban William Briones, Kenji Hatakeyama, Irene Yoshioka, Harumi Hatakeyama and Ernest Hida.



KISARAGIKI: LADY KUJO & BWA LATE MEMBERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple BWA and their families and friends are invited to attend the annual Kisaragiki Dharma Service, which is the observance of Lady Takeko Kujo's Memorial Service to be held on Sunday, February 1, 2015. The guest speaker for the service will be Rev. Doei Fujii, a former associate minister of LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and a current Resident Minister of Tri State Buddhist Temples in Denver, Colorado.



Takeko Kujo

Lady Takeko Kujo, was founder of the Buddhist Women's Association, who promoted women's status and redefined women's role at temple. Lady Kujo was born as the second daughter of the 21st Monshu of Hongwanji, Myonyo Shonin. She was a devout Nembutsu follower who not only was an avid listener of the Dharma but also took an active part in community service. Lady Kujo was instrumental in the construction of the Asoka Hospital, one of Japan's first modern medical centers, after the Great Tokyo Earthquake in 1923. She was also founder of the Kyoto Joshi Gakuen (Kyoto Women's Schools) and known

for her poetry expressing her deep appreciation of the Nembutsu teaching. Lady Kujo passed away in 1928 at the age of 42. To honor her great contributions to the Hongwanji and also community, we hold Kisaragiki Memorial Service on February every year.

The World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha BWA respectfully carried over the Dana (selfless giving) spirit of Lady Takeko Kujo and established the annual Dana Day in 1965 to be observed in February every year and practicing Dana by benefitting offertory collections to charitable and social welfare agencies. Our temple BWA members are currently joining in visitation to nursing and care home residents to practice Dana. Let us practice to put into action the caring mind and the compassion Lady Kujo has shown us to follow.

We are also observing BWA Late Members' Memorial Service in conjunction with Lady Kujo's Memorial. It is a time to remember and honor all those who have passed away before us and to recognize the continuation of the influence of their deeds upon our lives. Let us gather at temple the opportunity given by Lady Takeko Kujo and passed members of BWA for listening to their dharma messages delivered by ministers.

ABA WOMEN: CHILDREN'S BLANKET SEWING PROJECT

by Dianne Odagawa

The Nishi ABA women recently donated over 50 blankets to the Grace Iino Child Care Center at the Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC).

The blanket project began with the ABA women and family members purchasing fabric and getting together to sew as many children's blankets as possible. The goal was to donate the "soft, warm, and cuddly" blankets to underprivileged babies and children. The Grace Iino Child Care Center was selected where 10 infants and 30 toddlers, most who come from low-income families, each received a blanket.

Subsequently, Dean Matsubayashi, Executive Director of the LTSC, presented a "thank you" card for the blankets from the children of the center.

This blanket project brought enjoyment to the ABA ladies whose hope was to make a child smile and to give them something that brings them comfort.



left to right: Suzy Saita, Nancy Hayashibara, Dean Matsubayashi, Cindy Nakamura, Karen Escanos, Dianne Odagawa, Harumi Hatakeyama, Jean Kawakami, Carol Hida, Kayo Uno, Chizuko Ito, and Mitsi Komatsu.

BETSUIN PHOTOS



The annual General Meeting where the business for 2014 was covered and 2015 was presented. front l-r: Rimban William Briones, Lonny Quon (temple president), and Nancy Hayashibara (recording secretary)



(left) ABA members prepare spaghetti for the Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser for the Betsuin's 50th Anniversary. (right) ABA men serve breakfast at the BEC sponsored Sunday breakfast.



Rev. Nakata assists Rimban Briones in dressing for the Eitaikyo Service.



The BWA received this tea cup from Honzan (Mother Temple in Kyoto) in return for a donation sent for the ascension of the new Gomonshu. This is a tea ceremony "tea cup" that was created by a Japanese ceramist.



Each year the Betsuin BWA presents the youth groups, Jr YBA and Sangha Teens with monetary donations. Pictured, l-r: Setsuko Nakahara (BWA president), Karlee Itomura, Kaylee Tanaka, and Rimban Briones.



Dharma school children in costume.



Temple president, Lonny Quon, is the Ebola virus czar doctor.



Jr Y kids had games for the little ones at the Halloween party.

Takata - continued from page 3)

essence of the Pure Land way. I wish all of us to encounter the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha which is the core of our temple, Primal Vow Temple, through hearing and entrusting the true essence of the Pure Land Way (true teaching, practice, shinjin, and realization) for experience of awakening to the Great Compassionate Mind of Amida Buddha at each moment of our lives.

The listed commemorative anniversary events in each year are opportunities to express our gratitude to our forefathers who have planted the seeds of the Buddha-Dharma for enabling us to encounter the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha and hand down the essential teachings of the Nembutsu to the next generations. Although they have already passed on, they, as buddhas, are still working hard for us to listen to their dharma messages. As we welcome the various commemoration events for the next five years, let us reflect upon the legacy of our forefathers and express our gratitude to Amida Buddha for giving us the opportunity to awaken to the true and real life, Namu-Amdabutsu at each moment of our lives.

It is my hope that this five-year theme “*Life of Awakening*” and the sub-themes created by the Buddhist Education Committee will be meaningful and significance for the sangha to embody and experience the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha in our daily lives.

The selected Primal Vow is the true essence of the Pure Land way. (CWS P.524)

Did You Know? - continued from page 6)

* * * * *

The Betsuin Jiho wishes to acknowledge Chizuko Ito, long time member of the Los Angeles Betsuin, for translating the “*Did You Know?*” articles into Japanese for the past few years. Chizuko is a native of Kyoto, Japan, where she attended the Doshisha University of Kyoto. She arrived in the United States in the 1980s. Her son, Tim Ito, attended Nishi Center and is a graduate of Nishi's dharma school. Presently, she is an active member of Nishi ABA organization. Thank you very much, Chizuko Ito!

* * * * *

WANTED: Functional Beta tape recorder/player. If you have such a machine, please let us know. We would like to borrow it for a couple of weeks. Leave message at Betsuin office, for Eiko. Thank you.

(Nakata - continued from page4)

During the past year of 2014, many of you have helped with our temple activities and me personally. Your support of your Nishi Betsuin is sincerely appreciated. I also ask for your continuous support of the Betsuin during the year of 2015.

Gassho

DANA DONATIONS - continued from page 3)

8), and Nirvana Day (Shakyamuni Buddha's Memorial on February 15). Each special service is very significant and important occasion for us to listen to the Dharma which is the primary purpose of our temple.

When we observe the above special services, we decorate our altar by making special arrangements, offer special foods such as sweets, fruits, mochi, etc. to the Buddha, invite a guest minister who will share the Dharma, and receive delicious refreshments after the service. Those expenses will be covered by your generous Dana donation to the Dharma at each major service.

Each member contributes yearly dues to sustain and maintain the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. Your dues go to Buddhist Church of America as our assessments and are also used to operate the temple, but it is not enough to cover the entire operation cost. Some of incomes such as donations from memorial and funeral services, fundraisings, etc. help to cover the shortfall. However, they are still not enough to cover the Buddhist Education programs and activities which are the most important functions at temple.

We humbly ask for your continued support and help to listen to the Dharma. The donation envelope for each major service will be attached to the Jiho, temple newsletter, at every time. The amount of donation is not set. It is up to your decision how much you wish to contribute toward receiving the Dharma. Your sincere and mindful donation of any amounts is truly appreciated to offset the expenses of major services. This enables all of us, as a Sangha, to listen to the Dharma on each special occasion. We sincerely ask for your understanding and cooperation as we devote ourselves to hear and share the teachings of the Nembutsu through the embrace of Amida Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion, never to be abandoned.

8TH ANNUAL SURF & TURF FUNDRAISER DINNER



Last year, there were well over 1,000 attendees to the Surf and Turf. Those who dined-in not only enjoyed their meal but also had desserts, wine, and beer available to add to their meal. Many enjoyed the BINGO for the adult and children, as well as a raffle and a Silent Auction.

SURF AND TURF DINNER

7th ANNUAL



MARCH 7, 2015

\$20.00 per plate

Dinner 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Bingo 4:30 PM – 8:00 PM

PRESALE ONLY

**MENU: TERIYAKI STEAK and SALMON • GREEN SALAD •
GOMAE GREEN BEANS • RICE**

Meals will be packed as "TAKE OUT"

DINE IN and enjoy your meals with family and friends along with a game of BINGO, raffle, and silent auction.

The number of meals to be sold will be limited.
Unclaimed dinners will be donated after 7:00 pm

NO MEALS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

All proceeds will go to the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple.



44TH ANNUAL KOHAKU UTAGASSEN

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2015

@ 1:00 PM

**NISHI HONGWANJI
BUDDHIST TEMPLE**

TICKETS: \$20

DAIJO FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

daijofcu@hotmail.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**Tuesday, January 20, 2015 @ 12 noon
LA Betsuin**

2015 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Valid from January 1 through December 31, 2015

**\$250 PER HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD
\$150 FOR ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS**

(SAME ADDRESS OVER 21 YEARS OLD)

CHECKS ARE PAYABLE TO:
L.A. HOMPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Payments may be made in full or by installments
throughout the year of 2015

IN MEMORIAM

The *Nishi Betsuin* extends its deepest condolences to the families of the following members who have recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the *Nembutsu*.

--*Namo Amida Butsu*

October, 2014	November, 2014
9 Mark Masaru Shimamoto	7 Tsugio Hiji
11 Barney Hoshio Tanida	10 Takako Aoki
11 Chiyoko Murakami	11 Dorothy Fumiko Sera
14 Harumi Umezaki	16 Shizuye Yoshioka
15 Yasuko Yamamoto	28 May Satsuki Nishimoto
17 Grace Michiko Ishitani	30 Grace Kodama Ito
24 Grace Michiko Iwaki	

MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR 2015

The following years are the dates of special services for the deceased. The temple will send out notices to the next of kin. In the event that a notice is not sent, please notify the *Betsuin* office for an appointment at 213-680-9130 during the business hours of 9 A.M. to 6 P.M.

Memorial Observance	Year of Death
1st memorial	2014
3rd memorial	2013
7th memorial	2009
13th memorial	2003
17th memorial	1999
23rd memorial	1993
25th memorial	1991
33rd memorial	1983
50th memorial	1966



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The *Betsuin* would like to acknowledge the Doizaki family of the Los Angeles Fish Company and express appreciation for their continual support for their donation of fish for the special services held at the *Betsuin*.

“WHITE ASHES”

HAKKOTSU NO GOBUNSHO

This letter by Rennyō Shōnin is usually read by the minister at Jōdo Shinshū funeral services.

In silently contemplating the transient nature of human existence, nothing is more fragile and fleeting in this world than the like of man. Thus, we have not heard of human life lasting for ten thousand years. Life swiftly passes, and who among men can maintain his form for even a hundred years? Whether I go before others, or others go before me; whether it be today, or whether it be tomorrow; who is to know? Those who leave before us are as countless and as fragile as the drops of dew. Though in the morning, we may have radiant health, in the evening we may be white ashes.

When the winds of impermanence blow, our eyes are closed forever; and when the last breath leaves us, our face loses its color. Though loved ones gather and lament, everything is of no avail. The body is then sent into an open field and vanishes from this world with the smoke of cremation, leaving only the white ashes. There is nothing more real than this truth of life.

*The fragile nature of human existence underlies both the young and the old, and therefore, we must – one and all – turn to the Teaching of the Buddha and awaken to the ultimate source of life. By so understanding the meaning of death, we shall come to fully appreciate the meaning of this life which is unrepeatable and thus to be treasured above all else. By virtue of True Compassion, let us realize the unexcelled value of our human existence; and let us live with the *Nembutsu*, *Namu Amida Butsu*, in our hearts.*

— translated by Taitetsu Unno



BON ODORI EXERCISE CLASS

BETSUIN LOTUS ROOM

(see calendar for meeting times)

Betsuin Jiho

Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones

English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto

Photos: Koichi Sayano and Glen Tao

SOUTHERN DISTRICT SEMINAR

南加教区仏教教育セミナー

“Life of Awakening: True Teaching”

『**真実信心の生活：真実の教え**』



Saturday, February 7, 2015

@LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Rev. Tomoyasu Naito 内藤 智康 勧学

Kangaku, highest authority with Jodo Shinshu Doctrine
in Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

Registration (受付): 8:30am

Opening (開会) at 9:00am/Closing (閉会) at 3:00pm

Registration Fee including Lunch (受付費用昼食込): \$10.00

Please contact Temple for Registration

JANUARY 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Shusho-e New Year's Day Service 10:00 am	2 Betsuin Closed	3
Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am 4 Regular Service 10:00 am Kouhaku Uttagassen 1:00 pm	5	6	7	8 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	9 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism" (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am	10
11 Regular Service 10:00 am	12	13 Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm	14	15	16 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism" (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm	17 Ho-onko Seminar Rev. K Ogui Rev. A Miyaji 9:00 am- 4:00 pm
Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am 18 Ho-onko Service Rev. K Ogui Rev. A Miyaji 10:00 am	19	20 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Guide to Be a Good Listener" Rev. Furumoto 7:00 -8:30 pm	21	22	23 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism" (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am	24 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Explained From Traditional and Western Perspectives" Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am
25 Regular Service Installation, New Member Welcome 10:00 am New Year Luncheon 11:30 am	26 "Understanding Shinran Shonin" Rev. Takata 7:00 -8:30 pm	27 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Guide to Be a Good Listener" Rev. Furumoto 7:00 -8:30 pm Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm	28	29 "Historical Perspectives of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the JA Communities and Beyond" Rev. Kodani 7:00 -8:30 pm	30 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism" (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am	31 "Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Explained From Traditional and Western Perspectives" Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am

FEBRUARY 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am 1</p> <p>BWA Kisaragi-gi, Lady Kujo & Late Members Memorial Service 10:00 am Rev. D Fujii</p>	<p>2</p> <p>“Understaning Shinran Shonin” Rev. Takata 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>3</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Guide to Be a Good Listener” Rev. Furumoto 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>“Historical Perspectives of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the JA Communities and Beyond” Rev. Kodani 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism” (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am</p>	<p>7</p> <p>So. Dist. Seminar Rev. Tomoyasu Naito 9:00 am - 3:00 pm</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Scout Sunday 10:00 am</p>	<p>9</p> <p>“Understaning Shinran Shonin” Rev. Takata 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Board Meeting 7:30 pm</p>	<p>13</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism” (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am 15</p> <p>Nirvana Day Service 10:00 am</p> <p>Board Luncheon 12:00 pm</p>	<p>16</p> <p>“Understaning Shinran Shonin” Rev. Takata 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>17</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Guide to Be a Good Listener” Rev. Furumoto 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>“Historical Perspectives of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the JA Communities and Beyond” Rev. Kodani 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>20</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism” (Jpn) Rev. Nakata 10:00-11:30 am</p>	<p>21</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Explained From Traditional and Western Perspectives” Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Regular Service 10:00 am</p>	<p>23</p> <p>“Understaning Shinran Shonin” Rev. Takata 7:00 -8:30 pm</p>	<p>24</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Guide to Be a Good Listener” Rev. Furumoto 7:00 -8:30 pm</p> <p>Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>“Historical Perspectives of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the JA Communities and Beyond” Rev. Kodani 7:00 -8:30 pm</p> <p>BCA Ministers’ and National Council Meeting (San Diego)</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>“Jodo Shinshu Buddhism Explained From Traditional and Western Perspectives” Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am</p>