

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 445

November-December 2017

jihō

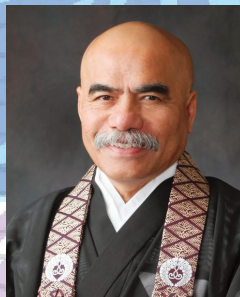
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LOS ANGELES HONPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
FOUNDED 1905



RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION



**RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES**

The great practice is to say the Name of the Tathagata of unhindered light. This practice, comprehensively encompassing all practices, is perfect

We get many visitors throughout the week. Some out of curiosity, some to pray or meditate, some for school projects and some to learn about Buddhism. The other day I had a fellow come in wanting to talk to an "enlightened monk." I chuckled and said there was no one here that was enlighten, let alone monks at Betsuin. As we continued our conversation, he wanted to know when our meditation sessions were held. Of course, I told him as Jodo Shinshu followers, our practice does not include meditation as a means of Awakening, however I did tell him I saw no harm as using mindful meditation as a technique to quiet the mind. I don't think he bought it, so I suggested he visit our Zenshuji neighbor.

Meditation is central to all Buddhist tradition that have a strong monastic component, such as Zen, Tibetan Vajrayana, and the Theravada tradition of the Southeast Asia. But if you were to observe Buddhist from each of these tradi-

tions meditating side by side, there would be few differences to note. Meditation practices are designed to transform consciousness. All are used to cultivate the state of consciousness the Buddha attained some 2,500 years ago.

The Buddha began his spiritual pilgrimage, studying with many meditation teachers. For the most part, these teachers taught a type of meditation designed to induce calm, even trance. The young Siddhartha mastered all these techniques. He was so mastered in meditation that his teachers asked him to join them to teach, but he was not satisfied. He had an intuition that these meditation practices, while deep, were but a temporary respite from the primal suffering of human existence, and that once one emerged from trance the suffering was still there. He left his teachers and vowed to look deeper. His meditation was not about finding a calm mind but of finding the real self, a deeper realization of the universal truth of human existence.

After Prince Siddhartha became enlightened and became Buddha, he gave his first sermon and it is said he taught the Four Noble Truths, the fourth truth being the way to eliminate suffering. This was called the Noble Eightfold Path. This path combines Right Thought and

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SPIDER THREAD

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

When my daughters were attending the Hongwanji Mission School in Hawaii, they always participated in the Halloween parade at their school. When I transferred my ministry from Hawaii to the mainland and lived in Arizona, my family was surprised that so many people came our home to “trick or treat” on Halloween. While we were in Hawaii,

our home was always located on the temple grounds so that there were not many who visited us on the Halloween.

Some Christian churches celebrate Halloween and some don't, based on their beliefs. Halloween may be a closest equivalent to our observance of Obon which is associated with the story of hungry ghosts.

When I go to the store or pass the neighbors' houses, I see spiders and their webs or thread as decoration for Halloween. It always reminds me of the story of “*Kumo no ito*.” “Kumo” means spider and “ito” means thread. It was written by a very famous Japanese writer, *Ryunosuke Akutagawa*.

One day, the Buddha was strolling through a garden. When he stopped and looked into a pond, he was able to see through the water into hell between the lotus flowers and lily pads. The Buddha's gaze rested upon a single man, Kandata, who was a terrible criminal during his lifetime. He did have a good moment.

The Buddha was able to see Kandata's life where he was about to step on a spider. Kandata suddenly changed of his mind and stopped himself. He thought was that the spider had just as much right to live as any other creatures. He decided not to step on the spider because he felt that it was not fair to kill the spider without good reason.

Seeing this moment in Kandata's life, the Buddha lowered a spider thread from his garden to the down into the hell and invited Kandata to be saved.

When the spider thread reached Kandata, he began to climb up. But he soon realized that many others were also trying to climb up the spider thread by following him. Kandata became very selfish and demanded that they let go of the thread as it was meant for him alone. Then, suddenly, the spider thread snapped and they all crashed into the hell again.

The Buddha's garden represents the world of enlightenment, Pure Land. The hell represents our world— the

world of suffering. Kandata represents “I” myself. I am always selfish and carry ego, self-attachments, and desires like Kandata. As Buddha teaches me that the cause of my suffering is always “I.” I, outwardly, don't show my ego, however, my mind is full of ego.

Shinran Shonin deeply reflected upon his human nature throughout his lifetime and confessed about his evil nature in his *Hymns of Lament and Reflection*.

*Each of us, in outward bearing,
Makes a show of being wise, good, and dedicated;
But so great are our greed, anger,
perversity, and deceit,
That we are filled with all forms of
malice and cunning.*

(CWS P.421, #95)

Shinran Shonin realized his own limitations by reflecting upon himself through the guidance of Amida Buddha. Without dharma, he would not be able to aware of it. The light of the candle represents Amida Buddha's Infinite Wisdom which always shines upon our ego that is deep within our minds. We can realize the Amida Buddha's Wisdom by listening to the Teachings of the Buddha. It is our practice to realize our deep-seated ego and follow the Buddhist way of life and light up our egoism by the mirror of the Dharma. Halloween reminds me of my ghosts and desires in my mind. Let us all reflect upon our true nature of existence and appreciate that our foolish selves are constantly sustained by the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life.

*My eyes are being hindered by blind passions,
I cannot perceive the light that grasps me;
Yet the great compassion, without tiring,
Illumines me always.*

(Hymns of the Pure Land Masters, CWS P.385, #95)

Namo Amida Butsu

LA BETSUIN GENERAL MEETING

November 12 @ 12:00 pm

All Betsuin members should attend
to cast their votes

A KAMAKURA STORY

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata



REV. KAZ

We only have a short time before we enter into the year of 2018. How are you enjoying your daily life in 2017? I have been keeping my life active. I have been studying more on the history of Jodo Shinshu this year. In this article I would like to share one of the stories in the history of Jodo Shinshu.

As part of this history, Jodo Shinshu founder, Shinran Shonin, was ordered to be exiled to Echigo in the northern portion of Japan. That event is known as Jogen no Honan, Buddhist persecution in the year of Jogen (CE 1207). His teacher Honen Shonin was ordered to be exiled to Shikoku Island in the opposite direction. There were several reasons associated with the persecution. Two petitions for prohibition of Nembutsu teachings and its practice were declared by two major Buddhist schools. One was from Tendai Buddhism of Mt. Hiei, and the other was from Kohoku-ji Temple. According to the historical sources, their petitions were not the direct reason for the exile of Shinran Shonin and Honen Shonin. There was a story behind those reasons where two young women were involved.

During the Kamakura period of Japan (1185–1333), Sadaijin Imadegawa, the Minister of the Left, the Senior Minister, had two beautiful daughters. The elder of the two was Matsumushi and younger one was Suzumushi. Matsumushi took good care of her younger sister and had a very good relationship as siblings. The Imadegawa family resided in Kyoto, the capital of Japan at the time.

Gotoba, a retired emperor at the time, had heard of Imadegawa's daughters and requested Sadaijin Imadegawa send his daughters to be assistants to the retired emperor in the Imperial Palace.

For a while, Matsumushi and Suzumushi had enjoyed their work in the palace. Gotoba was very generous and the Kanjo, the other co-workers, helped them. They were adored so much by Gotoba that the Kanjo soon became jealous. Some of the Kanjo treated them with malicious words and deeds. Matsumushi and Suzumushi cried every night at the garden of the Imperial Palace and finally they decided to leave the palace and become Buddhist nuns. They thought that it was the only way they could live their lives peacefully without any evil will or interruption.

One night, Matsumushi and Suzumushi secretly left the palace. They headed towards Kiyomizu Temple where Honen Shonin was staying. They appealed to him, "We

are willing to shave our heads to become a nun to live our lives peacefully under the teachings of Buddha. Please allow us to join your Nembutsu followers." Honen Shonin quietly responded, "In our Nembutsu Buddhist teaching, you need only to take refuge in Amida Buddha by the recitation of *Namo Amida Butsu*. You need not to be a nun to eliminate your affliction and torment." He did not accept their request to become nuns.

Honen Shonin had two followers Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin who resided at Shishigatani Soan which was known as a thatched hut for Nembutsu followers in Shishigatani village in Kyoto. According to the essay "*Tsurezure Gusa*," Anraku Shonin was a superior chanter of the sutras. He had created a harmonious singing style to the sutra *Ojo Raisan* and became well-known in the Kyoto area. In the evenings, many came to listen to his melodious *Ojo Raisan* chanting. Matsumushi and Suzumushi heard of his reputation and went to Shishigatani Soan to enjoy his chanting. They were so impressed that they asked Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin with tears in their eyes, "We will not be returning to the palace from where we left. Because we cannot become a nun we are ready to jump into a river to die. If you feel pity for us, please allow us to join the group of Nembutsu followers."

Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin were very touched by their firm resolution and questioned, "Even if you become a nun, you may be captured by the retired emperor Gotoba and be forced to return to the palace. Do you have a plan of escape?"

Matsumushi and Suzumushi replied, "We have a friend who lives in Kokawa of Wakayama (south of Kyoto) and we plan to go there." Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin agreed to accept them to become nuns and said, "We will conduct your ordination for welcoming you as a nun. If the retired emperor finds and criticizes you, we are willing to be criticized by him for you." They shaved the two sisters' long black hair, and gave the dharma name of *Myochi* to Matsumushi and *Myotei* to Suzumushi.

During this period, the escape of the two girls created a huge disturbance at the palace. The Gotoba was furious and ordered his servants and officials, "Search and locate Matsumushi and Suzumushi as soon as possible. The first person to find them will be rewarded. Whoever gives shelter to them, will be punished with harsh penalties." As a result, Kyoto was teeming with officials. Matsumushi and Suzumushi knew that they would be caught by the officials if they escaped during daylight. They burned pine needles

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EITAIKYO SERVICE (SANGHA MEMORIAL)

by Rev. Koho Takata

Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend the annual Eitaikyo Sangha Memorial Service, which is one of the Six Major Services in the Jodo Shinshu tradition to be held on as follows:

Saturday, November 18 at 1:30pm

English Speaker: Rimban William Briones

Japanese Speaker: Rev. Koho Takata

Sunday, November 19 at 10:00am

English Speaker: Rev. George Matsubayashi

Japanese Speaker: Rev. George Matsubayashi

The spiritual origin to this observance goes back to a few centuries after the historical Buddha Sakyamuni entered Nirvana. At this time the lay followers practiced many types of offerings, including the building of *stupa* and offerings of services for the maintenance of temple and their compounds. The purpose was to accumulate religious virtues to be directed to the deceased or for themselves.

This spirit has been carried with the Buddhist tradition as Buddhism spread into China and Japan and this practice of making offerings in the form of sutra chanting and rituals has become a part of the life of the people.

Here, at Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, **Eitaikyo** or **Sangha Memorial Service** is observed not as a means of accumulating virtues to be directed to others but taken as a solemn occasion to express one's dedication to the sangha. Sutra chanting, rituals, and donations done by sangha in the service are symbolic expressions of their dedication and appreciation.

The term *Eitaikyo*, an abridgement of *eitai-dokkyo*, means the perpetual chanting of the sutra in memory of the deceased, signifying that all those who have passed away lived in the teachings of the Buddha. This signification gives each of us a chance to affirm our own understanding of Buddhism because of the guidance of the Buddha through our loved ones. Such affirmation gives us the precious opportunity to see how the dharma has helped in our lives and to realize oneness of life. It means we are all connected. Acknowledging our dharma connection to those who have passed away empowers us to further pursue the path of the Buddha, dharma, and sangha, which have been our spiritual treasures. The great virtue that may be accumulated in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is through the practice of the dharma in our daily lives.

Nakata - continued from page 3)

and they rubbed the soot onto their faces to disguise themselves. Under the light of the moon, they made their escape to Kokawa.

The officials frantically searched for the the two girls and learned of their visits and requests to become a nun to Honen Shonin, Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin. Because Honen Shonin did not report to officials that the girls had visited his abode, he was sentenced to exile in Shikoku. The officials discovered that Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin had helped the girls escape. They did not reveal to where the girls escaped. The retired emperor Gotoba was so enraged that he sentenced both Anraku Shonin and Juren Shonin to death. At the same time, Shinran Shonin was order to be exiled to Echigo. Shinran never saw his teacher Honen Shonin after that.

In Kokawa, Matsumushi and Suzumushi learned of how Honen Shonin and his followers suffered from the persecution by Gotoba. They knew that that officials would be going to Kokawa to capture them. They boarded a boat and escaped to Ikuchi Island of Hiroshima. They recited Nembutsu every day and peacefully resided at Komyo-bo temple for their rest of lives.

In our daily lives, how often do we think about why the Nishi temple exists or why do we have the Nembutsu teaching in the America? Shinran Shonin lost his teacher and guidance of the Nembutsu teaching. He had to continue studying alone and propagate it on his own from the scratch. In the 21st century, we are sitting on the legacy and tradition of numerous ancestors' tireless efforts and sacrifice of the Nembutsu teachings. As I continue my studies of the history of Jodo Shinshu and Shinran Shonin, I feel encouraged to share these wonderful teachings to those who have never heard and encountered them. What is your reaction after having read the story of Matsumushi and Suzumushi?

Gassho

SAVE THE DATE

JANUARY 2018

- 1 SHUSHO-E
NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE
10:00 AM.**
- 7 47th KOHAKU UTAGASSEN**

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



Los Angeles Buddhist Women's Association (*Fujinkai*) will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in October 2018.

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS, A Brief History of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Betsuin Fujinkai (Buddhist Women's Association), Golden Anniversary, 1971

1971

The Betsuin Fujinkai was organized in June of 1918. The year before (1917), the Los Angeles Hongwanji Buddhist Temple was formed, after merger of Rafu Bukkyokai (Los Angeles), Chuo Bukkyokai (Central), and Nanka Bukkyokai (Southern California). Their meeting place was on Jackson Street (Yamato Hall). The Bishop of the Buddhist Churches of America at that time, Director Koyu Uchida, presided over the inaugural ceremonies and reorganization (1917 – 1919). The first full time assigned minister was Rev. Tetsugai Jisoji.

The original name of the BWA was *Los Angeles Hongwanji Bukkyo Fujinkai*. Among the original thirteen members who gathered to form the group were Tsune Tokunaga and [Mume] Nakayama, both of whom are still healthy and actively engaged in the activities of the Fujinkai. [Kinuko Sumino of Hollywood is mentioned along with Mrs. Tokunaga].

[The first president is said to be the wife of the head minister. Rev. Jisoji was appointed head minister in 1918 and was unmarried. To assist with the reorganization, Director Uchida did come to Los Angeles with his wife*, Seto, and son, Satoshi. Mrs. Uchida gave birth to a son, Masami, in Los Angeles, in January, 1919, and hence is thought to have taken the leadership in establishing the Fujinkai, as the first president.]

In May, 1931, the Hongwanji Buddhist Church was granted *betsuin* status by Honzan (Kyoto), the first such granted in the United States, and became the Homba Hongwanji Betsuin Fujinkai. Rev. Hosho Sasaki, formerly, bishop of the BCA, was appointed the first *rimban*, in 1933. Upon his recommendation, the minister's wife became the advisor to the BWA and the president was elected from the membership. The first elected presi-

dent was Tsune Tokunaga. For six years, she led the BWA in all their activities, the most important at that time being the raising of money to pay for the new temple (119 North Central Ave., dedicated in 1925). During this period, the membership was about 120 women.

In 1939, Mrs. Tokunaga was succeeded by Tane Tamari, who held the office until 1942. The principal activities of the Fujinkai during this period were serving refreshments after service, visiting the bed-ridden at Rio Hondo Hospital, providing entertainment and bento to cheer the elderly, and assisting the dharma school. A highlight of the activities was assisting at the special memorial service held in honor of Lady Takeko Kujo. They also assisted at the annual obon services and bazaar, fund raising for the Community Chest and the Red Cross, and even raised funds for the Asoka Hospital in Japan. ... to be continued

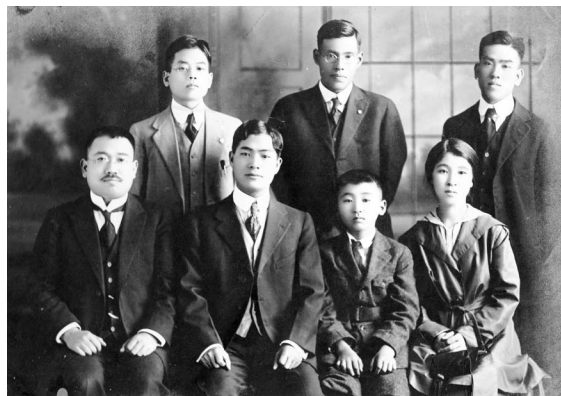


photo: Los Angeles, 1917-1918 (?)

Front left: Director Koyu Uchida, Rev. Tojiro Hirata (visiting Kanji from Jpn), Satoshi Uchida (boy), Mrs. Seto Uchida. Back: Rev. Tetsugai Jisoji, (?), Rev. Chosui Ike [Photo shared by Rev Yutaka Jisoji of Shinnenji, Fukuoka, Japan

* Notes by Seto Uchida (wife of Rev. Koyu Uchida) on her memories of life in US (1905-1923), included in 3 part series on "Koyu Uchida, a wise man of all times" by Rev. Tetsugai Jisoji, in *Bukkyo Times*, January 1963, translated by Rev. Yutaka Jisoji (of Shinnenji, Fukuoka, Japan, grandson of Rev. Jisoji) and Katsuko Uchida Hirota (of Sacramento Betsuin, granddaughter of Rev. Koyu Uchida)

"In August, 1905, my husband was 29 years old, I was 22 years old, and our first child Satoshi was just born. The three of us went to the United States together. If I were to write about my experiences of that time, you would wonder what country I

was describing.

First of all, in those days, the Japanese population in United States was very small. In particular, the number of Japanese women was especially small. We didn't know how to wear Western style clothes. At first, I didn't know how to put on a dress properly. Rev. Kii [of San Francisco temple, 1903-1907] had to instruct me about the buttons in the back of the dress. I remember, the waist was small and the long skirts covered the heel of my shoes.

In those days, the Fujinkai was small, so we all got along well and we looked forward to listening to the dharma to-

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Rimban - continued from page 1)

Right Actions which leads to the ultimate goal of the realization of truth and reality of life.

Of the eight ways, the seventh, Right Mindfulness, is something we can all practice every day, every hour, every minute. Each moment gives us an opportunity make us aware of how our thoughts are working.

Mindfulness is about being aware of one's body, feelings and all thoughts that arise within. It's about knowing one's mind so that we will be able to tell if our mind is selfish, angry, or conniving.

One need not sit in *zazen* meditation for hours. It's the everyday occurrences for which we should be grateful. They're all around us if we just recognize how marvelous they really are.

Jodo Shinshu doesn't require us to practice meditation or mantras like most other schools of Buddhism. Jodo Shinshu rejects the idea that our actions in themselves cause our enlightenment. Shinran rejected these sorts of practices because he felt they were calculated and contrived which led to attachment and self-righteousness. He felt that often practice increased the very problem it set out to overcome, self-centeredness.

When we practice, we do it out of a sense of gratitude. As long as one doesn't see their efforts as directly causing enlightenment, we, as Jodo Shinshu Buddhist are free to engage in any form of practice.

Buddhism is a religion of awareness and it is in our everyday lives that we strive to cultivate this awareness. Cultivating awareness is being mindful of our thoughts, words

and action that will lead us to a greater understanding of our indebtedness and gratitude to the interdependent nature of our existence. Mindfulness is about being aware of ones body, feelings and all thoughts that arise within.

In today's fast paced, high tech driven society, it seems as if computers and electronic gadgetry has taken over the burden of the mundane drudge of everyday living. They have given us more leisure time to surf the net, play with our cell-phone, video games, universal remote control and much more. It seems as if our minds our put on automatic pilot, while we busily do two or three different things at the same time.

These irritating but consequential occurrences give us an opportunity to reflect upon our lack of awareness of our imperfections and our self-centeredness.

Becoming aware is no more than just slowing down. Savoring the moment is the first and perhaps most essential element in experiencing gratitude. To recognize and be totally aware of the causes and conditions that surround you will result in experiencing the transforming power of gratitude.

One need not meditate everyday to experience this awareness. It's the every day occurrences for which we should be grateful. They're all around us if we just recognize how marvelous they really are. To truly seek out and become aware of what each of these things are and to truly sense their worth in our life, is what living in the Nembutsu means.

Namoamidabutsu

Did You Know? - continued from page 5)

gether, once a month. The Buddhist church had English classes. A Caucasian teacher and the *kaikyoshi* were teaching the classes. I still keep in touch with three people in my class, who are still healthy. There were no Japanese grocery stores yet, so I used to take a cable car to Chinatown to buy fish, vegetables and tofu every other day. Eight months after we arrived, the Great 1906 San Francisco Earthquake occurred. The Buddhist church was burned down. I thought this was the time to return my gratitude for the Amida Buddha and I joined my husband, along with other *kaikyoshi* and YBA members, day and night, to help our people who survived the earthquake. It was one of my unforgettable memories.

There were very few automobiles in those days. When Rev. Hara, who was assigned to the Sacramento temple [1903-1907], fell ill and decided to return to Japan, I wanted him to go to the port by automobile. There were

many happy occasions while I was living in the U.S. I spent my childhood in Japan, then moved to start a new life as a housewife, as well as a minister's wife, in the United States. In this new life, there were hard times and sad times, but I will never forget the kindness shown to me by the older members of the Fujinkai. I still get tears in my eyes when I think about it. They made me feel so happy. As you already know, my husband was easy going and did not concern himself with small issues. He was constantly busy, working day and night, focusing on promoting and expanding the Buddhist churches. Every time a ship from Japan and Europe came, he had visitors. And when new ministers came, he entertained them. He was very busy taking care of Sunday school, Young Buddhist Association, and Fujinkai.

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BWA SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY



*The previous issue of the Betsuin Jiho featured the essays of two of the three scholarship awardees. In this issue, **Karlee Itomura's** essay is presented.*

"What Jodo Shinshu means to me and how it applies to my everyday living."

I've basically grown up a Buddhist, but I can't remember the day everything seemed to click. I remember sitting in the hondo on Sunday mornings, not really understanding what anything really meant, yet even back then I could feel the compassion of the temple members.

It is thanks to Jodo Shinshu Buddhism that I have another place to call home, another community that's like family. Sangha is what we call it; the first of the three jewels of Buddhism I learned. As I grew older and participated in Buddhist youth programs such as dharma school, Saishin Dojo, LABCC, Sangha Teens, Padma Class, and Jr. YBA I began to understand the other two jewels: Buddha and dharma.

About a year ago Nishi Jr. YBA held a conference, in which we had to lead workshops. One of the most valuable lessons Buddhism has taught me is that life is like a cruising ship. For one of the workshops, Rev. Nakata explained that life can be calm or rough like the ocean tides, setting us on different paths, but we are in control of the ship's wheel, much like the wheel of dharma. We use the Buddha's teachings to help guide us through life's ups and

downs.

Recognizing this, my life has always been greatly influenced by the dharma. For instance, in my first two years of high school I was reluctant to join a hip-hop group called Ricebreakers at my school. In my junior year, I figured things change, time is rapidly passing, and I don't want to live with any regrets. So with that mindset, I joined. It was one of the best decisions I ever made in high school. Impermanence is a concept that took me a long time to accept and apply. Since the only constant is change I realized I have to seize any opportunity I can, I have to live in the present moment. Likewise, dance is an activity that really exemplifies this idea of living in the "now". One cannot simply think "There will always be a next time" whether this be dancing in front of an audience, or introducing yourself to someone new.

When I was younger, I didn't understand why we learned the history of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. It wasn't until Mr. Koichi's class that I realized that we have to learn the history, before we can ever try to understand the teachings. We first need to know how and why we practice specifically Jodo Shinshu. After understanding this, I also came to acknowledge the significance of traditions and revering our ancestors; in short I learned the importance of gratitude.

Without Buddhism I would not be the same person I am today. Jodo Shinshu has taught me so much about how I can live life to the fullest, for which I am forever grateful. With that in mind, I try to share the Buddha's compassion and teachings with everyone, everywhere I go.

NISHI ABA SUPPORTS JACCC NISEI WEEK

At the Nisei Week festival this past summer at the JACCC plaza, the Nishi Adult Buddhist Association (ABA) served as vendors of chilled somen. ABA was supported by Nanka Seimen, Mutual Trading, Yamasa Kamaboko and the Hompa Hongwanji Temple.

ABA was pleased to support one of the community's long time event. This year's festival was its 77th year. Nisei Week continues as one of the nation's longest running cultural festivals which is supported by many community organizations and leaders and Little Tokyo businesses.

If you are interested in supporting the temple and community, consider joining ABA. New members are welcomed.



Harumi Hatakeyama (l) and Susan Saita purveying cold somen at the Nisei Week festival

NAGASHI SOMEN

Rev. Kaz (Nakata) is the minister who oversees much of the youth activities at the Betsuin. This past summer he organized a Nagashi Somen (flowing somen) event to the delight of many young and old alike. Along with the nagashi somen, there were wading pools for the little ones to keep cool and there was also a Suikawari (watermelon splitting) event.

Two years ago, Rev. Kaz implemented a dharma school mochitsuki and a second one was held a year ago. There will be an upcoming mochitsuki November 26th.



Darren Kawasaki and Rev. Nakata checking the Nagashi Somen makeshift device.



The seniors and the youngsters of the Betsuin enjoying "fishing" for somen.



Inspite of the heat, many took part in the unique Nagashi Somen experience.



...little ones taking advantage of the refreshing wading pool.



A great Zatoichi (Blind Swordsman) move...

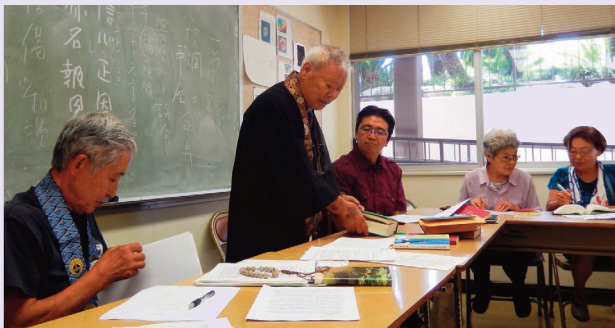
BETSUIN PHOTOS



*Hollywood Buddhist Church
2nd Annual Brew Ha Ha Beer Tasting & Food Pairing*



Aaron Alexander's (picture inset) Nishi Boy Scouts Eagle Project - building blocks for the Nishi Center students. Aaron is the son of Rie Fujii, Betsuin's office manager.



Rev. George Matsubayashi leads a Dharma Center study class in Japanese.



Participating Ministers at the Autumn Ohigan Service (left front) Rev. Doei Fujii (guest speaker), Rimban William Briones, Rev. Kenji Akahoshi (guest speaker). (back) Rev. Kazuaki Nakata, Rev. Seikan Fukuma, Rev. Koho Takata, and Rev. George Matsubayashi



Did You Know? - continued from page 6)

At that time, many Buddhist churches were being established, but they were struggling financially, and so were the ministers. When they came to visit the main temple in San Francisco, they could not afford to stay in the hotel, so I took care of them. My husband has passed away already and I am now 80 years old. In looking back 50 years, it makes me very happy to hear the news that the Buddhist churches in the United States are thriving. Gassho”

Betsuin Jiho
 Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones
 English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto
 Photos: Koichi Sayano and Glen Tao

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*

July, 2017

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 17 Tom Tsutomu
Nishimura | 6 Fumiko Nakamura
Kamimura |
| 21 George Norichika
Minami | 16 Masaharu Nakashima |
| 22 Chieko Harano | 17 Tamiyo Fukubayashi |
| 22 Shigeko Iwasa Yamada | 18 Theodore Michihiko
Yoshimura |
| 23 Kiyoka Keo Tokunow | 20 Toshiye Mukai |
| 25 Kinuye Ethel Okazaki | 21 Kimiyo Sakaniwa |
| 26 Takaji Ikeda | 21 Dale Misami
Kobashigawa |
| 27 Kazuhiko Komatsu | 22 Clara Chiyeko Sumida |
| 29 Toshiko Fukushima | 26 Shizuko Fukuzaki |
| 30 Hatsue Yoneda | 30 Masako Isomura |

August, 2017

- 1 William Patrick Couey
- 3 John Yamao Nishizu
- 4 Suyeko Yusa
- 4 James Kazunori
Minakawa

September, 2017

- 1 Lynne Fumiye Kagawa
- 3 Shirley Hiroko Umeda
- 4 Tom Tamio Hayata
- 5 Masaji Kajiki

The great practice is to say the Name of the Tathagata of unhindered light. This practice, comprehensively encompassing all practices, is perfect and most rapid in bringing them to fullness. For this reason, it is called "great practice." Saying the Name then breaks through all the ignorance of sentient beings and readily brings all their aspirations to fulfillment. Saying the Name is in itself mindfulness; Right Mindfulness is Nembutsu; Nembutsu is Namo Amida Butsu.

—*Shinran Shonin*




PHOTO EXHIBITION

"THE BUDDHA'S WORDS AND SCENERY OF INDIA"

November 18 & 19
9 am - 4 pm
Betsuin Kaikan

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November 19 @ Betsuin Kaikan

11:45 am Presentation Gagaku & Bugaku to children by Rev. Mas Kodani

•

1:00 pm Presentaion on the Buddha-Dharma & India by Rev. Mas Kodani

•

2:00 pm Presenation of Kinnara Gagaku & Bugaku (traditional Buddhist Music & Dance)

Free Admission

Sponsored by Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Dharma Center, & Senshin Buddhist Temple

BINGO & DINNER FUND RAISER

November 11, 2017

Betsuin Kaikan

\$20/Person preorders only

Dinner 5:00-6:30 pm
(chicken teriyaki, chow mein, rice, & salad)

BINGO 6:30-9:00 pm

Sponsored by Nishi ABA Benefiting Betsuin's 50th Anniversary Restoration Project



47th ANNUAL KOHAKU UTAGASSEN

The 46th Annual Kohaku Utagassen will be held on Sunday, January 7, 2018. Tickets are available at the temple for \$20 donation.

NOVEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 Explaining Shin Buddhism in the Simplest Way Possible Rev. Unno 10:00-11:30 am
5 Regular Service 10:00 am	6	7	8	9 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	10	11 蓮如上人と御一代記聞書 Rennyō Shonin (Jpn) Rev. Matsubayashi 10:00-11:30 am ABA Dinner Fundraiser
12 Regular Service 10:00 am General Meeting 12:00 pm Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 2:00 pm	13	14	15	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm	17	18 Eitaikyo Service 1:30 pm BDK Photo Exhibition BWA Craft Sale
19 Eitaikyo Service 10:00 am BDK Photo Exhibition Kinnara Gagaku & Bugaku BWA Craft Sale	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving Holiday Betsuin Closed	24	25
26 Regular Service 10:00 am	27	28	29	30		

DECEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Temple Clean-Up 8:00 am	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Regular Service 10:00 am Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:30 pm	11	12	13	14 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	15	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm
17 Oseibo Kansha Service and Program 10:00 am	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Christmas Holiday Betsuin Closed	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Joya-E New Year's Eve Service 6:00 pm						