

# LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 440

January-February 2017

# jihō

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LOS ANGELES HOMPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
FOUNDED 1905



## NEW YEAR'S GREETING



**KOJUN OHTANI, MONSHU**

At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to you.

This past year, we have been observing the ceremony known as The Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition since last October. This service will be continuing until the end of May over 10 sessions and a total of 80 days. The participation of the many delegates from

both domestic and overseas districts has revitalized the atmosphere of all of our temple activities, and for that I am truly happy and grateful to each and every one of you.

Through holding the service together with you fellow Nembutsu followers, I am able to personally experience how the Jodo Shinshu teaching has not only been passed down to us over the span of nearly 800 years, but also how it has been delivered to many regions of the world beyond national borders. I believe that we have the Jodo Shinshu teaching today precisely because it served as the spiritual foundation for all of the preceding Nembutsu followers.

Shinran Shonin revealed his understanding of the Dharma known today as Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. It is a teaching for those of us who constantly struggle with various worries and hardships in life. Let us continue to listen to the teaching and share our own appreciation of the Dharma with family and friends in the hope that we can follow the Nembutsu path together with them.

January 1, 2017

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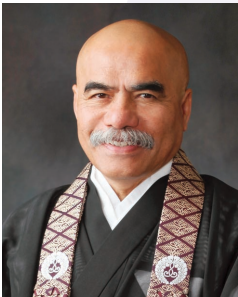
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## RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

## THOUGHTS ON THIS NEW YEAR — 2017



RIMBAN  
WILLIAM BRIONES

As 2016 comes to a close, I am reminded how fortunate I am for yet another healthy and fulfilling year. As I reflect on the innumerable causes and conditions that has brought me to this point in my life, I feel a wonderful sense of gratitude and appreciation, not only to our membership and friends but to the generations past for insuring a strong foundation for Jodo Shinshu to grow and enrich peoples life's.

As the New Year approaches, we look forward to the activities and traditions surrounding New Year that are symbolic of all our hopes and dreams. These activities and traditions manifest that which we hold dear to our hearts and minds.

Every New Year's Day morning, as far back as I can remember, we visited my aunt's house for *menudo* ... unfortunately I haven't been home for New Year's Day for the past 22 years, but I know our family continues this long tradition. I'm sure many of you have your own New Year traditions of visiting your grandparents or relatives house for *osechi*. I know in my "past life" after our *menudo*, we would spend the rest of the day visiting with relatives ... eating many of the traditional Japanese New Year dishes.

Another New Year custom is to ring the *bonsho* on New Year's Eve. Traditionally, the bell is struck 108 times. This, symbolizes the 108 characteristics of our human nature. Contrary to tourist guides, the striking of the bell does not rid ourselves of these 108 blind passions, but rather it is a reminder of who we truly are. It does not symbolize who we want to be, but again who we really are.

Shinran Shonin taught us that as long as we are so preoccupied with our 108 passions, we could never understand our own need for Amida's aid. Only when we come to our own realization of our inadequacies of being human and nature of our evilness, do we come to rely on Amida completely.

To truly see our ignorance, anger, and self-centeredness, to see our 108 passions, is actually liberating. This process is liberating because one can finally awaken to how he or she really is, stripped of all pretensions, defenses and self-images. In Jodo Shinshu, we are truly freed precisely because we are foolish, not in spite of it. The realization of our foolish and human nature is a very important part of our awakening.

Therefore, as it is consistent within our New Year's tradition,

this is the time of year where we should all take refuge in that which is of true value in our lives. It is a time to treasure all that we normally take for granted or never notice. It is a time to totally live each moment anew.

During my time at Betsuin I've been so fortunate to have met and made so many wonderful dharma friends. I've seen so many changes not only at our temple but within the Little Tokyo Community. I feel honored and privileged to have been a part of this dynamic change.

In 2016 our members saw our *naijin* transform to its original luster. After nine months in Kyoto, Japan at the Wakabayashi Company, our altar and ornaments were restored and returned to a newly remodeled *naijin* ... new wooden floors, floral roof tiles placed above the *naijin* (which included names of those who donated for the 50th Anniversary) and gold leaf wall paper that was installed to the back and side walls. Also fabric panels of *Heavenly Beings* (Flying Asparas) donated by Mr. Yasuhiro Chiji, were installed in the upper panels of the *gejin*. Of course all this could not have been possible without the generous donations that we have collected thus far and with the support of our members and community in making our fundraisers such a success.

However, there's still much to do ... major repairs to the front porch and railings and installation of a new air conditioning/heating unit. This all comes at a price. We, therefore, ask for your continued support.

As the year 2016 comes to a close, Nobuko and I would like to wish you and your family a very meaningful and fulfilling 2017. I would also like to express my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to all for your continued support and friendship. To be able to share the nembutsu teaching with you has been a truly wonderful experience for me.

Many thanks to all the affiliate organizations for all your help. Your help is vital to have such successful fund raises like Obon, Surf and Turf and the 50th Anniversary Dance. To our many volunteers, 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 guidance.

As we begin 2017 may gratitude and appreciation enter your life through your understanding of the Nembutsu Teachings.

## LIFE OF AWAKENING: SHINJIN

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

Happy New Year to you all. Throughout this past 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 Namo Amida Butsu

as the basis of true and real life in this year 2017.

The core committee for the 50th Anniversary of Present Betsuin Location was established in 2014 and decided upon three commemoration projects for the anniversary. The first project was the altar restoration project which was just completed in November. Your generous donations and voluntary work made the successful completion of the project possible.

The second project is establishment of the Dharma Center to strengthen Buddhist education programs which is the core of our temple. Since the pilot programs that were initiated in 2014, various ministers have conducted seminars and classes. I am happy to see many of you appreciating the opportunity to "taste" the Buddha-dharma. In addition to the dharma classes and seminars, the Dharma Center has a) published the *kakocho*, a "family record book," 2) laminated "*frequently asked questions*" you can find in the pews in the hondo and Wisteria Chapel, and 3) the replacement of the old service books in the hondo and Wisteria Chapel with new service books published by *Honzan* (*mother temple in Kyoto*.)

The third commemoration project is building repairs such as roof, porch railing, air conditioning, etc. This is still ongoing project.

The core committee also announced the various commemorative events from 2015 to 2019. The LA Betsuin, its branch temples, and some of affiliate organizations have already realized their anniversaries to pay our respect and indebtedness to our forefathers and deeply reflect upon the true intent of establishment of our temple.

I would like to share the various anniversaries along with five years theme and its sub theme.

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

- \* 100th Anniversary of Hollywood Buddhist Church

(commemorated on November 1, 2015)

- \* 110th Anniversary of Betsuin & 10th Anniversary of Muryokuju-do (columbarium) and Wisteria Chapel (commemorated on November 8, 2015)

### 2016 - Life of Awakening: Namo Amida Butsu (*gyo*-Chapter on True Practice)

- \* 60th Anniversary of ABA (commemorated on October 9, 2016)
- \* Altar Rededication Service, 85th Anniversary of Betsuin Status, & 111th Anniversary of Establishment of Betsuin (commemorated on November 6, 2016)

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

- \* 100th Anniversary of Dharma School

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

- \* 100th Anniversary of Fujinkai, BWA
- \* 100th Anniversary of YBA

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

- \* 50th Anniversary of Present Betsuin Location
- \* 50th Anniversary of Boy Scouts
- \* 35th Anniversary of Girl Scouts
- \* 35th Anniversary of Hui Aikane

In April 2008, the **Former Gomonsu Koshin Ohtani** revised "*Kyosho*" or "*The Essentials of Jodo Shinshu*" which was originally established by his father, the late former **Gomonsu 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."*

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## THE HARMONY OF NEMBUTSU TEACHING

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata



REV. KAZ

*Goko Shiyui-no Nawashiro-ni,  
Chozai Yeigo-ni Shiro-wo shite  
Ichinen Kimyo-no Tane-wo oroshi,  
Jiriki Zogyo-no Kusa-wo tori,  
Nennen Souzoku-no Mizu-wo  
nagashi,  
Ojo-no Aki-ni nari nureba,  
Konomi-wo Toru-zo Ureshi-kere,  
Namo Amida Butsu*

*"I took great care of preparing a rice nursery bed, like Dharmakara thoroughly spent five kalpas\* to establish his 48 vows. I plant each seed wholeheartedly, like I recite Nembutsu wholeheartedly each time. I trim weeds in the rice field, like I stay away from the allurements of the self-monastic practices (Ji-riki). I constantly water the rice field, like I maintain the Nembutsu teachings from generation to generation. When the end season of life comes as the autumn, I crop the rice with pleasure. Namo Amida Butsu"*

[kalpa\* (Sanskrit) millions or billions of years]

When I write my temple newsletter article, I usually use a quote in English. In this issue, I began with a transliteration of a Japanese passage. You may think it has no meaning. The passage I wrote is known as a Shinran Shonin's "rice-planting song."

On February 18th of 1207, Emperor Gotoba ordered Honen Shonin and Shinran Shonin to be exiled from Kyoto. Honen Shonin had to relocate to Sanuki in Shikoku Island for 10 months and later moved back to Osaka. Shinran Shonin was exiled to Echigo (Niigata Prefecture). He was 35 years old. During his first year exiled in Echigo, he was rationed to three pounds of rice and 0.5oz of salt a day by the government, and he was kept under surveillance. From his second year in Echigo, the government stopped providing rice but gave him rice seedlings to grow his own rice. It meant he had to cultivate waste land and grow rice for his survival. There is no record of how many family members were living with Shinran Shonin, but it is assumable that life was not easy.

The third Monshu of the Hongwanji, Kaku-nyo Shonin, published the *Godensho* (Poetry of Shinran Shonin's life story). The *Godensho* is an important Jodo Shinshu publication, and is read during Ho-onko services at the Hongwanji and the local temples. The *Godensho* reads:

From the *Godensho*, we learn that Shinran Shonin encour-

aged himself to set his mind to this new propagation opportunity. After spending four years in Echigo, Emperor Jun-toku absolved Shinran Shonin from exile on Nov 17th of 1211 and also gave Honen Shonin permission to return to Kyoto. Honen Shonin returned to Yoshimizu, Kyoto where Shinran Shonin met Honen Shonin in early January of 1212. Unfortunately, Honen Shonin entered Nirvana on Jan 25 and Shinran Shonin was not able to see him again.

Nembutsu followers lost a great teacher — Honen Shonin. Shinran Shonin, however, was intent on sharing what he learned from Honen Shonin. He stayed another three years in Echigo and in 1214, he decided to relocate to the Kanto area (near Tokyo) with his family and other Nembutsu followers. He and his family settled in several locations in Kanto area. These locations were called *So-an*, thatched huts. It is widely known that he did not build any temple, because he wanted to spend his energy to outreach and for the propagation of the Nembutsu teachings.

There was a young farmer named Hei-taro. He was living in Inatomi which was 12 miles away from Inada. He often visited Inada to listen to Shinran Shonin's talk. In the spring of 1218, Hei-taro invited Shinran Shonin to Inatomi to share the Nembutsu teaching with local farmers. These farmers were busy planting rice. They were singing their local songs but they were not reciting Nembutsu. Shinran Shonin walked down to a rice field and started helping these farmers. He shared his own rice-planting song with them. They were so pleased to sing his song and it was later known as Shinran Shonin's rice planting song. Shinran Shonin did not ask them to stop planting rice to listen to his talk. Instead, he gave his talk to fit into their convenience. Until Shinran Shonin, Buddhism was mainly shared with nobles and high officials at temples or monks would visit their place of residence or castle.

I believe that Shinran Shonin did not hesitate to try new ways of sharing the dharma. In fact, he wrote many poems as *wasan*, and one of his *wasan* is known as *On-Doku-San*. We often sing it here on Sundays. If he was a traditional "ritual-centered monk," he would not walk down to the rice field and sing. I was able to find a digital music file of the song. It was sung by Shuue Chorus Group of Chuo Bukkyo Gakuin, Hongwanji School for Buddhist Studies. ([http://www.geocities.jp/chubutsu\\_tokyo/image/taueuta.mp3](http://www.geocities.jp/chubutsu_tokyo/image/taueuta.mp3))

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**KENJI  
HATAKEYAMA**

With the beginning of 2017, I would like to express my deepest appreciation for your continued support of our Betsuin this past year. It has been a very busy year and moving forward in 2017, I humbly ask for your continued help and support to strengthen our temple for the coming years ahead.

I want to thank our ministerial staff, led by Rimban William Briones, Rev. Koho Takata, and Rev. Kazuaki Nakata for dedicating their time and devotion to our members and community. Under the leadership of Rimban Briones, our ministerial staff has successfully met the many challenges and demands of our temple's religious services, programs, events, activities, and the many meetings of our organizations.

I would like to thank our komons, board of directors and board of trustees for their continued support and guidance. A very special thank you goes to our office staff and the many volunteers for the countless hours they put in assisting everyone to help put together the daily administrative tasks of our temple.

I want to thank our branch temples, affiliated organizations, maintenance, and Kohaku committee for their support and help with temple programs, events, fund raisers, and facility maintenance. The 2016 Kohaku Utagassesen, Surf & Turf, and Obon festival were all very successful due to the many hours of help from all these organizations. Please continue to help and make improvements to make the future years as successful as in the past.

Finally, as I complete my term as board president, I am truly grateful to all the mentors that helped me with the many things that go on at the temple. I also want to thank the sangha for their patience in working with me on the religious traditions and the many temple routine items. As I step down from my duties, I ask that you give your support to our new board president, Bessie Tanaka. I am positive that she will continue to make our Betsuin a very special place for our children, members, and community.

In gassho,

Kenji Hatakeyama, Board President

## PRESIDENT-ELECT'S MESSAGE



**BESSIE  
TANAKA**

*Shinnen akemashite omedeto gozaimasu! Feliz Ano Neuvo! Happy New Year!*

Please let me take this opportunity to thank you all for entrusting in me the opportunity to help lead and continue to build our otera. I first came to "Nishi" when I started dharma school and Shigemi Aratani was president and Hayashima Sen-

sei was Rimban. I started attending board meetings when Masashi Kawaguchi was president. When I think of all the past presidents who gave of their time and expertise – I think, me? *Mottainai!*

Without the past presidents, ministerial staff and all the various organizations and volunteers, the Los Angeles Betsuin would not be where it is today. Sincere thanks to Kenji Hatakeyama who for the past two years did an outstanding job leading the otera (I couldn't convince him to stay on!) Also to Rimban William Briones, Reverends Koho Takata and Kazuaki Nakata who put in countless hours and dedication to spreading the Buddha dharma to our sangha, adults and youth, as well as in the community

We have now completed two years of our five year program toward the celebration of our 50 years at this location. We have completed the restoration of our beautiful onaijin. The Dharma Center study classes are going strong. We still have many projects ahead of us that will make the Betsuin safe, comfortable and a fun place to be. There will be many events in the three years to come. Please support the various organizations who will be sponsoring the events.

May I ask for your continued support in making the Los Angeles Betsuin a place where you and the whole family (*bachans, jichans, akachans*) can come to hear the Buddha dharma.

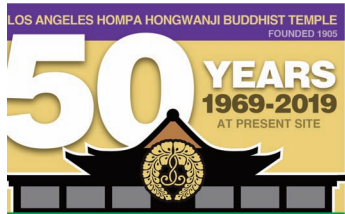
Wishing you a wonderful, healthy, prosperous 2017...

*Gassho*, Bessie Tanaka



## 50TH YEAR COMMEMORATION

by Ernest Hida



As we begin the New Year, I take this opportunity to wish all of you a very Happy New Year and we ask for your continued support again in 2017.

This is a very happy new year indeed as your onaijin is finally back and is completely installed in the hondo. If you have not seen the newly refurbished onaijin, we invite you to visit the temple to see how beautifully it was refurbished and installed. The Onaijin Dedication Service was held on November 6 and we were honored to have Bishop Kodo Umezu of the BCA as co-officiant with Rimban William Briones. We were also honored to have the participation of our former Rimbans: Rev. Hiroshi Abiko, Rev. George Matsubayashi, Rev. Seikan Fukuma, Rev. Nobuo Miyaji, and Mr. Tomoyuki Wakabayashi.

Our sincere gratitude for the hard work of dedicated artisans and craftsmen of the Wakabayashi Butsugu Company of Kyoto for skillfully refurbishing the onaijin, the dedicated work of the 50th Anniversary Project Committee, chaired by Shoichi Sayano and his committee members, our Betsuin ministers for their valuable and meaningful guidance, and many volunteers involved with this project to plan, arrange, coordinate, and install this refurbished onaijin. But let us also not forget the valuable and generous support of temple members.

In addition to the refurbishing of the onaijin, the 50th Anniversary Project also includes repairing the air conditioning system, repairing the roof and front railings, and other smaller repairs.

The goal for the fundraising campaign, to cover all the 50th Anniversary projects, is \$2.5 million. So far, the total donations and pledges is \$1.2 million - about 42% of the goal.

As you can see (fundraising gauge), we are still far from our goal. With the continued support and generosity of all temple members, I am confident this goal will be met. It is this generation of members' responsibility to continue the legacy that was left to us by our Issei pioneers and succeeding generations. We need to maintain the temple for our future generations of members.

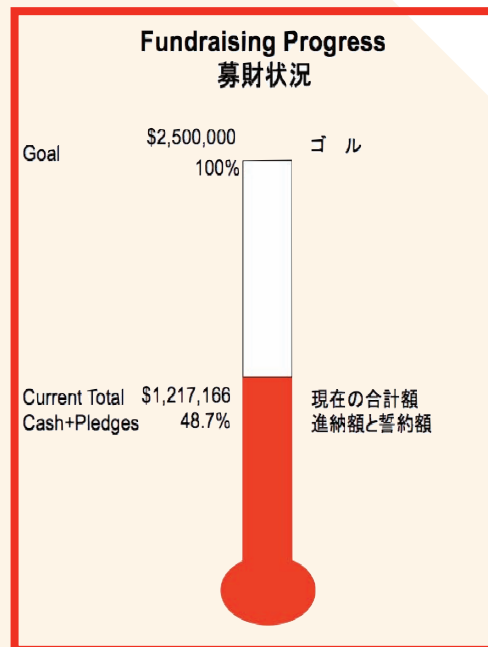
We sincerely thank you very much for your past support and we gratefully look forward to your continued dedicated support and generosity. Let us put our hearts and minds together and work together for a wonderful and meaningful 50th Anniversary celebration of your temple in 2019 to honor our Issei pioneers and past members for the legacy

they left for us.

Gassho,

Ernest Hida,

50th Anniversary Committee Chairman



## THE RETURN OF THE ONAIJIN

by Elaine Fukumoto

In early November the LA Betsuin held a *Dedication Service For The Restored Altar*. The sangha had been anxiously awaiting for months to view the newly restored *onaijin* (altar). Before the service, upon entering the hondo, all that could be seen was the restored folding shoji doors that were concealing the onaijin.

The Kinnara Gagaku musicians began playing, creating a traditional ceremonial ambiance. Rimban Briones entered the hondo and stood before the closed shoji doors. He then stepped up and unlatched the door. He, then, began pushing the door open with the help of Rev. Takata and Rev. Nakata, gradually revealing the magnificence of the newly restored onaijin. The brilliance of the gold and the black laquer, as well as the exquisite colors of the brocade cloth, and the cloth trim of the bamboo screens was an impressive sight.

Once the onaijin was readied, the Betsuin ministers filed in to take their seats. They were followed by four former

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*Onaijin - continued from page 6)*

Rimbans of the LA Betsuin: Reverends Seikan Fukuma, George Matsubayashi, Nobuo Miyaji, and Hiroshi Abiko. Bishop Kodo Umezu then proceeded into the onaijin, taking his seat before the Amida, serving as the officiant for the service.

This *Dedication Service Service for the Restored Onaijin* was the culmination of the first project of the 50th Anniversary of the Betsuin at the First Street and Vignes location.

The restoration began in January of 2016 with the dismantling of the onaijin under the supervision of the Wakabayashi Company. All the items to be repaired and restored were placed in a shipping container and sent to Japan.

With the absence of all of the onaijin items, the onaijin area was curtained off by a huge sheet of cloth. The *obutsudan* from the Muryokoku-do was placed on the stage in front of the onaijin and the Amida Buddha statue was placed in the Wisteria Chapel.

During the dismantling of the onaijin area, a time capsule was discovered beneath the base of the altar of the Amida Buddha. The contents of the time capsule included documents that declared the intent and gratitude to build a new temple structure in November of 1969.

While the onaijin area was vacated, new hardwood floors

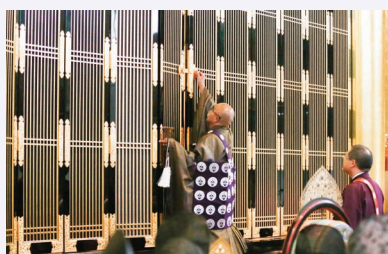
were put into place; new plywood was installed onto the walls, and the ceiling was prepared for the floral ceiling tiles. During the summer, there were craftsmen from the Wakabayashi Co. who, collectively spent, hundreds of hours working in the onaijin. One craftsmen, in particular, spent days, morning to evening, applying gold leaf to various areas of the onaijin.

During this time, four painted silk panels were installed above the opening of the onaijin. The artistic panels were donated by Yasuhiro Chiji who had also donated the painted matching panels in the Wisteria Chapel during the Betsuin Centennial and whose father, Hideya Chiji, painted the mural panels in the hondo nearly 50 years ago.

Finally, at the end of October, the restored items were shipped back from Japan. A team from the Wakabayashi Co. spent a week installing the onaijin items back into place.

On the day before the Dedication Service for the Restored Onaijin, a special service took place to return the statue of Amida Buddha to its "home" in the hondo.

To those who have not yet been to the temple in a while, make it a point to visit on most any Sunday morning to witness the splendor of the newly restored onaijin.



*The unveiling of the onaijin*



*The newly restored onaijin*

*(additional photos on page 12)*

## SHINRAN SHONIN'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

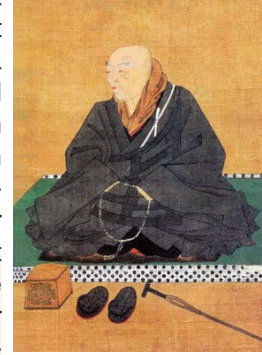
The members of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend the Hoonko, the Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin which is the most important tradition in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhism to be held on **Sunday, January 15, 2017**. The guest speaker for the service will be **Reverend Nobuo Haneda** of Maida Center for English Service and **Rev. Chuho Matsubayashi** of BCA Minister Emeritus for Japanese Service.

Hoonko is a time to express our gratitude to Shinran Shonin, the founder, on the day of his death, January 16, 1262. Literally, the Japanese characters "Ho-On" means "return of gratitude" and "Ko" means "to clarify the meaning of."

Hoonko is the most important for the Jodo Shinshu Buddhists because it is a day to pay our respects to the founder of 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 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 path to Buddhism with his family and the common people. If Shinran clarified the teaching of the Primal Vow, our Sangha would not be in existence today. For this, we praise the virtues of our founder Shinran Shonin, encourage us to encounter his teachings, and reconfirm our true entrusting mind to listen and live his teachings each day.



SHINRAN SHONIN

In conjunction with Hoonko Service, we are fortunate to have a **Hoonko Seminar** entitled "*Life of Awakening: Shinjin*" on Saturday, January 14, 2017. The seminar will begin at 9:00am and end at 3:00pm. The guest speaker will be **Reverend Nobuo Haneda** and **Reverend Chuho Matsubayashi**. 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 7, 2017. We encourage all of you to hear the Buddha-Dharma on the Memorial of Shinran Shonin.

## NIRVANA DAY (SAKYAMUNI BUDDHA'S MEMORIAL)

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 12, 2017**. The speakers for the service will



*The Passing of Sakyamuni Buddha mural painting in the Betsuin hondo*

be Rev. William Briones for English Service and Rev. Koho Takata 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."

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## KISARAGIKI: LADY TAKEKO KUJO & BWA LATE MEMBERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of LA Hompa 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 5, 2017**. The guest speaker for the service will be **Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto**, a faculty of Institute of Buddhist Studies.



Lady 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. The Betsuin's 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.

*Nirvana Day - continued from page 8)*

Also, in *Shoshinge* "Hymn of True Shinjin and the Nem-

*"Sakyamuni Tathagata ap-peared 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)

butsu," Shinran Shonin expressed his deep gratitude and his strong conviction to Sakyamuni Buddha as follows:

We, the followers of the Amida Buddha's Primal Vow,

*"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)

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.

## HO-ONKO SEMINAR Life Awakening: Shinjin

**Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**Nishi Betsuin**  
**9:00 am - 3:00 pm**

**Guest Speakers:**  
**Rev. Nobuo Haneda (Eng)**  
**Rev. Chuho Matsubayashi (Jpn)**

**Registration Fee: \$15**  
**Deadline: January 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Tel: 213-680-9130**

## DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



**“George Yamaguchi, 1971 WABL Recognition Awardee” Betsuin JIHO, May 1, 1971**

At the recently held Western Adult Buddhist Association Conference in the early part of February, in Stockton, California, Dr. George Yamaguchi of Los Angeles was the recipient of the WABL Recognition Award for 1971.

This honor is given to those who have actively participated in the Buddhist movement, by their involvement in the Buddhist Churches of America. Dr. Yamaguchi's achievements are many, having been the past president of the local Nishi Adult Buddhist Association, past president of the Southern District ABA Council, the Western Adult Buddhist Association's past president and, at present, its Executive Director. He has also served as the president of the Nishi Hongwanji Sunday School Parent's Association, and has helped as the assistant Youth Director and presently serves as the Executive Secretary of the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Church besides being on the Board of Directors. Additionally, he is a member of the BCA Board of Directors, as the representative from the Western Adult Buddhist Association.

Aside from his many religious ties, he has been the past treasurer and the president of the USC College of Pharmacy Alumni Association. Dr. Yamaguchi is a pharmacist in the Thrifty Drug Store chain, as well as being involved in the Montebello-Ashiya Sister City program.

He is the husband of Florence, with a daughter and two sons completing the family picture. A brother, Dr. Ken Yamaguchi of Pasadena, received the same award in 1967. Two other recipients in the Los Angeles Nishi Hongwanji are Noboru Ishitani in 1962, and Yoshio Shibata in 1966.

[Dr. George Yamaguchi passed away on September 17, 2016, followed by funeral service on October 8, 2016 at L.A. Betsuin.]

\* \* \* \* \*

**“The History of Nishi ABA”** taken from program of The 60th Anniversary of Nishi Adult Buddhist Association, 1956 – 2016, held on Sunday, October 9, 2016

The original Los Angeles Betsuin Adult Buddhist Association was organized in 1956 as Young Adult Buddhist Association (YABA). The purpose was to keep former YBA members (pre-World War II) active at the Betsuin and to bridge the gap between the Issei leaders and the younger Nisei's and 'Sansei's.

The first president was Jack Iwata, and the following are the charter members: Shigemi Aratani, Noboru Ishitani, Frank Kakita, Akira Murakami, Mickey Nagamoto, Shiz Shibata, Yoshio Shibata, George Yamaguchi, Edward Yoshimoto and Rev. Arthur Takemoto (ministerial advisor).

The Southern District YABA was formed in 1956, although not in an official capacity. In February of 1957, the L.A. Betsuin YABA requested admission into the Western Young Adult Buddhist League (WYABL) and immediately thereafter, the Southern District YABA Council was formed, namely Senshin, West Los Angeles, Gardena, Pasadena, and the L.A. Betsuin. Eventually WYABL became the Western Adult Buddhist League (WABL). In 1964, the name YABA was changed to ABA.

The Nishi ABA remained extremely active for over 30 years, sponsoring seminars, study classes, ti-sarana services, participation in our Obon and the Nisei Week carnivals and visitation to the Keiro Home. In 1988 the original ABA officially disbanded.



**Nishi Betsuin ABA, January 1970**

**front: Tamiko Murayama, Shiz Shibata, Yosh Shibata, Shig Sugimoto, Makino Morioka, Mickey Nagamoto, Josie Watamura back: Emiko Sasaki, Yasuko Sugimoto, Peggy Iwata, Kaz Shimizu, Rev. Masunaga, Sam Shirai, Mrs. Chizuko Masunaga, Yaeko Nakashima, Lily Nakamura, Tomoe Shirai**

In 1997, Nishi ABA was restarted by a few members who felt that the Temple needed an adult affiliated organization. Our purpose is to support the Betsuin in all of its projects, conduct informative seminars, support the community and enjoy activities with our members.

*(continued on page 14)*

## NISHI ABA 60TH ANNIVERSARY 1956-2016

by Joanne Nakamura

On October 8, 2016, in commemoration of Nishi ABA's 60th anniversary, ABA hosted a seminar "Being a Buddhist in America".

The guest speaker was Rev. Masao Kodani. Over 50 guests were in attendance to hear his message. Rev. Kodani delivered a provocative and interesting presentation. He opened this topic by relating to his own life experiences. He shared his personal circumstances that led him to find the path to Buddhism in a dominant Christian society. He grew up in a post-war environment unique to the Issei and Nisei Americans. Many of the attendees could relate to this conflict. Rev. Kodani gave light to the Issei's Buddhist teachings that is imbedded in many Sansei's today. He made reference to Christianity that has inherently influenced the post-war Japanese American Buddhist. Many guests walked away with affirmation and a deeper understanding of the challenges of being a "Buddhist in America."



**Rev. Mas Kodani**

ABA is opened to all temple members. If you'd like to become active in our temple, involve yourself in supporting our temple's activities, meet great people and have a positively enjoyable experience - join ABA!

If you are interested, leave your name, phone number and email address in the temple office and an ABA member will contact you.

## NISHI ABA GOES TO VENICE HONGWANJI

by Richard Odagawa

In September, Nishi ABA attended service at the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple to hear Reverend Kory Quon's dharma message. As expected, he did a great job. It also happened to be his first anniversary as the resident minister.

It was a thrill to see the former Nishi dharma school student, Jr. YBA member, and the son of our former temple president (Lonny) on the najin leading the sutra chanting. We can see why the Venice sangha embraces his presence.

And to almost top his service, it was "Sunday Sundae". Because it was the first service after Summer vacation, everyone was treated to ice cream sundaes. Great idea for the kids.

We congratulate Kory on his accomplishments and hope that he enjoys the BCA. We'll be back.



## 2016 NISEI WEEK PIONEERS

### YOSHINORI AKUTAGAWA AND SAKAYE ARATANI

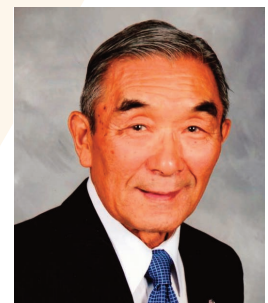
Two members of the Los Angeles Betsuin were honored as 2016 Nisei Week Pioneers.

**Yoshinori Akutagawa** was recognized for his leadership in the Hiroshima Kenjinkai and **Sakaye Inouye Aratani** was honored for her years of philanthropy in the community.

Many Betsuin members attended the Nisei Week Pioneer Luncheon in support of its honored awardees.



**Sakaye Aratani**



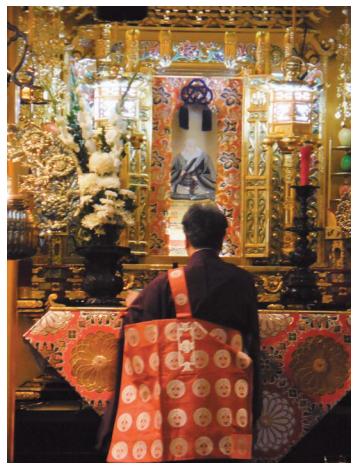
**Yoshinori Akutagawa**

*Photos: Courtesy of Nisei Week*

BETSUIN PHOTOS



*Amida Buddha*



*Rev. Takata standing before the portrait of Shinran Shonin*



*Returning the Amida Buddha statue from the Wisteria Chapel to the onajin, Rev. Takata hands the statue to Rimban Briones who then passes it on to Bishop Umezu, who has it placed in the gokuden.*



*Kinnara Gagaku*



*Betsuin ministers and former rimbans*



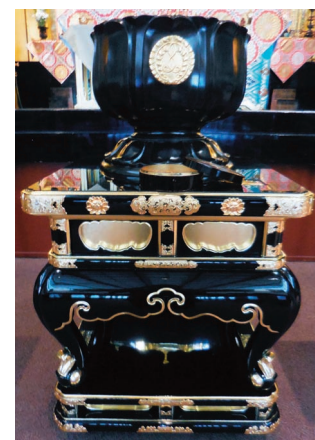
*New Kansho*



*Unloading the base of the Amida altar out of the shipping container.*



*Positioning the roof onto the Amida Buddha altar*



*Large Incense Burner/Table*

*(additional photos on page 16)*

## NISHI DHARMA CENTER WINTER 2017 (JANUARY - MARCH) COURSES

*The Dharma Center of the Los Angeles Hampa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple will be offering the following classes in General Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. The classes will be introductory for those who are new to the Buddhist concepts and continuing education for those already learning the Truth of the Dharma to live each moment in the Teachings. Let us all enrich our lives by listening to the Teachings.*

### Shoshin Nembutsu-ge (Shoshinge) - Hymn of True Shinjin and the Nembutsu -

**Monday, 6:30-8:00 PM**      **Rev. Koho Takata**  
**January 23, 30, February 6, 13, 20 (5 week class: \$50)**  
"Shoshinge" is composed of 120 lines in 60 verses and is most widely chanted among Jodo Shinshu followers, was written by Shinran Shonin summarizing the Teachings of Jodo Shinshu. It is Shinran Shonin's expression of joy and gratitude for encountering the Nembutsu teaching in being guided by the Sutra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and the seven masters from India, China, and Japan.

### Introduction to the Three Pure Land Sutras

**Tuesday, 7:00-8:30 PM**      **Rev. Ryuta Furumoto**  
**January 24, 31, February 14, 21 (4 week class: \$40)**  
The Larger Sutra, The Contemplation Sutra, and The Amida Sutra are known as the principle three Pure Land Sutras in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. The story of Dharmakara Bodhisattva, 48 vows of Amida Buddha, and the description of Pure Land are appeared in these sutras. The attendees of this class will understand the overview of the three sutra with an easy and simple guidance. This semester, the attendees will learn about the Contemplation Sutra.

### Contemporary Issues and Jodo Shinshu Perspective (Discussion)

**Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 PM**      **RimbanWilliam Briones**  
**January 11, 18, 25, February 1, 8 (5 week class: \$50)**  
Issues like same sex marriage, immigration, global warming were not an issue during Shinran's life, on the other hand there was war, sexism, and poverty during his time. What is our understanding of these contemporary issues living a life of Nembutsu? These five lectures will discuss current events and issues that effect our way of life and how Jodo Shinshu Buddhism influences our view point.

### Japanese Buddhist Art

**Thursday, 7:00-8:30 PM**      **Rev. Masao Kodani**  
**January 19, 26, February 2, 16, 23, March 2 (6 week**

**class: \$60)**

This class helps you to understand how Buddhism produces art in Japan.

### Rennyō Shonin (Class taught in Japanese)

**Saturday, 10:00-11:30AM** **Rev. George Matsubayashi**  
**February 18, March 25 (2 week class: \$20)**

### An Attempt to Make Hard-to-Understand Shin Buddhist Tenets Understandable: Defilement (Bonno), Faith (Shinjin), Pure Land, etc.

**Saturday, 10:00-11:30AM**      **Rev. Tetsuo Unno**  
**January 21, February 11, 18, March 11, 25 (5 week class: \$50)**

For Shinran Shonin, the "Final Solution to (One's) Life," in a word is "Shinjin" (Entrustment, Faith, etc.). But what is "Shinjin?" In an attempt to answer that question, these lectures will turn first to Shinran and secondly, to supportive insights of Zen and Western thinkers.

### Buddhist Education (Class taught in Japanese)

**Every Thursday, 10:00-11:00AM (free)**  
**Rev. Kazuaki Nakata**

### Introduction to Buddhism/Jodo Shinshu Buddhism

**Every Sunday, 11:00-11:30 AM (free)**  
**Rimban William Briones**

### Preteen Jodo Shinshu Practicum

**Sunday, 9:00-9:45AM (free)**  
**Rev. Kazuaki Nakata**  
**January 15, 22, 29, February 26**

### Applied Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Studies for Teens (Age 11 and up)

**Sunday, 11:30-12:15 AM (free)**  
**Rev. Kazuaki Nakata**  
**January 8, 15, 22, February 5, 19, 26, March 12, 19, 26**

The course tuition is collected and no refund on missed classes. Please mail completed registration form with a check for the total payment (payable to: LAHHBT) or bring it to temple.

For more information: Phone: (213) 680-9130/ Email: [nishidharmacenter@gmail.com](mailto:nishidharmacenter@gmail.com)



## BETSUIN VEHICLE DONATIONS

by Bessie Tanaka

The Los Angeles Betsuin will now be accepting donated vehicles. We will take any vehicle (car, pickup, truck, motorcycle, and even boats) as a donation to the temple. The funds realized from these donations will go to the Betsuin General Fund. Donors can report the full amount of funds received from the vehicle donation as a deduction on their tax returns.



We work with Harold's Car Donation Service (HCDS) to have the vehicles picked up, processed and refurbished as necessary to bring in the highest sale amount for the donated vehicle. Even if the vehicle is not operational it can still have salvageable value, sometimes for more than we could expect.

Once the vehicle donation is received by the Betsuin, a letter is sent to the donor to acknowledge the vehicle donation. The letter includes details of the donated vehicle and the amount for which the vehicle was sold or salvaged. All donors will be acknowledged in the Jiho.

If you have any questions about the program, or wish to donate a vehicle, please contact the temple office (213) 680-9130.

### *Did You Know? - continued from page 10)*

[October 8, 2016, Nishi Adult Buddhist Association celebrated their 60th Anniversary, with a seminar, and guest speaker, Rev. Mas Kodani.]

\* \* \* \* \*

Thank you to:

George J. Tanabe and Willa Jane Tanabe for donation to library of their publication, JAPANESE BUDDHIST TEMPLES IN HAWAII, AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE;

Shoichi and Nobuko Sayano for donation of temple records and publications; Kazuko Sakata for donations of photos of temple activities from Mich Sakata collection; Harumi Hatakeyama for donations to library of miscellaneous books; Larie Akashi Izumo for donation of wooden-carved framed artwork of the 16 aspects of the Buddha and three pieces depicting apsaras (Indian), hitennyō (Japanese) or celestial maidens, usually playing musical instruments, from her parents Mary and Dave Akashi collection. She came with her sister, Candace Watase, and friends Jennie Hasegawa, Cheryl Kobayashi, and Naomi Suenaka-Derr

## KAKOCHO FAMILY RECORD BOOK

by Bessie Tanaka

The **Kakocho Family Record** book is now available at the Nishi Book Center. The book is used to hold Homyo cards. A Homyo, Buddhist name, is given to the deceased at their funeral. The Kakocho should be placed in the drawer of the Obutsudan, not in the Obutsudan itself. If the drawer is too small, place the Kakocho next to the Obutsudan or near it.

The Kakocho book will sell for \$25. Proceeds of the sales will go to the 50th Anniversary and the Nishi Dharma Center.

## YOUTH ESSAY

### ***Applied Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Studies for Teens***

*In February of 2015, Rev. Kaz Nakata began a course of intensive Buddhist studies for the Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops at Nishi Betsuin. During the 2015, they were taught the essential teachings of Buddhism in English, Chinese, Japanese and Indian Sanskrit. Their essays have been in the previous issues of the Jiho. Here is another one.*

### **Bradley Tashiro**

There are essential concepts in Buddhism, such as *duhkha* and *sukha*. These concepts in Buddhism can be used as a tool to help us throughout our lives. Duhkha and sukha are part of the four essential universal truths in human science. The other two universal truths are impermanence and interdependence. Impermanence means that everything in life is always changing. Nothing is permanent and everything in life does not stay the same. Interdependence means everyone and everything relies and depends on each other.

The symbol [on the right] represents human interdependence because the first character is “*butsu*,” or human. In the second character, the two vertical lines are the posts and the lines that wrap around them are the vines. The vines depend on the posts to grow. The posts rely on the vines to hold them up. This symbolizes that everything in life and all of us are interdependent.

One of the other universal truths is *duhkha*. The original meaning of *duhkha* is that life cannot be controlled. Since life cannot be controlled, it causes many people to suffer. Everyday normal life is unpredictable. Understanding and accepting the concept that you cannot control life leads to

*(continued on page 15)*

*Takata - continued from page 3)*

Each moment of our lives is the precious opportunity for us to live fully by awakening to the dynamic working of Amida Buddha's Primal Vow which enables us to live with Namo Amida Butsu 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 Each year has a sub theme which is the essence of Jodo Shinshu. Shinran Shonin wrote about *True Teaching* (Larger Sutra), *True Practice* (Namo Amida Butsu), *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 Namo Amida Butsu for all beings to awaken to the True and Real Life and also 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 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 for 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. As we welcome the various commemoration events till 2019, 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, Namo Amida Butsu at each moment of our lives.

*Youth Essay - continued from page 14)*

sukha. The original meaning of sukha is a state of great calmness. This state of calmness does not mean you can control life. Life is still uncontrollable, but if you live the life of Sukha, you can achieve calmness. An example of sukha is Los Angeles traffic during rush hour. One might get stressed and upset because traffic is moving so slow. Although you cannot control traffic or change it, understanding that there will be traffic and that everyday normal life is unpredictable can lead you to Sukha, a great state of calmness. Sukha does not mean everyday life will be stress free. Everyday life will still be unpredictable, such as traffic jams. You can feel great calmness by understanding and accepting these truths.

Knowing that happiness and suffering are only temporary can bring calmness. An example of happiness being temporary is getting a new cell phone. Getting a new phone such as the latest iPhone 7 can bring happiness for only a certain amount of time. Winning a basketball game can also bring happiness for a certain amount of time too. This feeling of happiness does not last long. An example of suffering being temporary is waiting in a long line. Waiting in a long line can bring suffering because sometimes it makes people stressed. This stress will only last for so long before going away. Understanding that these feelings of happiness and stress are only temporary can bring calmness in your life.

If you live the life of sukha, you can understand that stress exists and things do happen in everyday life, such as traffic or waiting in long lines at the store. Hopefully we can all understand that you cannot change these things and therefore we can achieve calmness in our everyday lives.

## 2017 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Valid from January 1 through December 31, 2016

**\$250 FOR EACH ADULT FAMILY MEMBER**

CHECKS ARE PAYABLE TO:

**L.A. HONPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE**

Payments may be made in full or by installments  
throughout the year of 2017

**MORE BETSUIN PHOTOS**



*Re-assembling the onajin*



*Small incense burner table*



*Base of the Amida Buddha Statue (Gokuden)*



*Canopy suspended in front of the Amida Buddha statue*



*Table beneath the Rennyō Shōnin image*



*Screen to the Shinran Shōnin image closed*



*Dharma School Halloween*



*Experiencing mochitsuki...pounding, forming, and eating mochi!*





*Nakata - continued from page 4)*

I was also able to find a video file of the song on YouTube. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFvEhbwfHnc>) The song was performed during the Hoonko Service at Yokkaichi Betsuin of Higashi Honganji in Japan. In the video, they are only speaking in Japanese, but you will see how these singers enjoyed singing the song in front of the altar. The song is sung by both Nishi Hongwanji and Higashi Honganji. Shinran Shonin used singing as a means for sharing the dharma.

Today, many Hongwanji temples in Japan are integrating music performance and singing in their traditional services and hold Buddhist concerts both in the hondo and outside of the hondo. Every Sunday I sing loud and enjoy making harmony with everyone. In the harmony, I can feel the propagation spirit of Shinran Shonin from 800 years ago. So, please, don't hold back and take pleasure in the joy of singing. *Gassho*



## MAJOR SERVICES/SEMINARS FOR 2017 WINTER

### Hoonko (Shinran Shonin's Memorial)

Seminar January 14 and  
Service on January 15  
Rev. Nobuo Haneda (Eng)  
Rev. George Matsubayashi (Jpn)

### Winter Pacific Seminar on 1/28

Dharmathon (Dharma messages delivered)  
by Nishi and Higashi Ministers  
(Eng & Jpn)

### Special Seminar for 50th Anniversary at Current Temple

February 4  
Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto (Eng & Jpn)

### Spring Higan

Seminar March 18 and  
Service on March 19  
Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara (Eng)  
Rev. Nobuo Miyaji (Jpn)



## SPECIAL SEMINAR



# LIFE OF AWAKENING: SHINJIN

## Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>

9:00 am - 4:00 pm @ LA Betsuin

**Guest Speaker:**  
**Rev. David Matsumoto**  
(Faculty-Institute of Buddhist Studies)

Jpn: 8:30 - 11:45 am    Eng: 12:30 - 3:15 pm

**Registration Fee: \$10**

**Tel: 213-680-9130**

## SURF AND TURF DINNER

10th ANNUAL



MARCH 11, 2017

\$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 •  
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.

## 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*

### September 2016

17 George Yamaguchi  
21 Lila Hiroko Nacion  
28 Setsuko Miyamoto

15 Matsuye Fujitsubo

21 Ronald Youichi  
Doizaki

27 Mifu Kadomatsu

27 Janet Mitsui Brown

### October 2016

2 Yoshiko Okino  
2 Takako Nakamoto

### November 2016

5 Tamae Toda

## MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR 2016

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	2016
3rd memorial	2015
7th memorial	2011
13th memorial	2005
17th memorial	2001
23rd memorial	1995
25th memorial	1993
33rd memorial	1985
50th memorial	1968



## Betsuin Jiho

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

## “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

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# BETSUIN 2017 CALENDAR

## JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day Service
- 2 Betsuin Closed
- 8 46th Annual Kohaku Utagassen
- 8 Dharma School First Service
- 14 Hoonko Seminar  
(Rev. Nobuo Haneda/Rev. George Matsubayashi)
- 15 Hoonko Service  
(Rev. Nobuo Haneda/Rev. George Matsubayashi)
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 22 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 29 Installation, New Member Welcoming, & New Year's Party

## FEBRUARY

- 4 Special Seminar for 50 Years at Present Betsuin Site  
(Rev. David Matsumoto)
- 5 BWA Kisaragi-ki, Lady Kujo's, & Late Members' Memorial Service  
(Rev. David Matsumoto)
- 12 Nirvana Day  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 19 Scout Sunday

## MARCH

- 1-2 BCA Ministers' Meeting in San Jose
- 3-4 BCA National Council Meeting in Visalia
- 11 Surf & Turf Fundraiser
- 12 Girl Scout Sunday  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 18 Spring Higan Seminar  
(Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara/Rev. Nobuo Miyaji)
- 19 Spring Higan & Rimban-ki Memorial Service  
(Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara/Rev. Nobuo Miyaji)
- 27-7 Accession Ceremony at Honzan

## APRIL

- 8 Butsuren Hanamatsuri
- 9 Betsuin Hanamatsuri (Rev. Ryuta Furumoto)  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 21-23 FDSTL Conference at Fresno Dharma Center

## MAY

- 14 Mother's Day Service  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 21 Gotan-e & Infant Presentation (Hatsumairi)  
(Rev. Tetsuo Unno/Rev. Seikan Fukuma)
- 28 Memorial Day Service
- 29 Memorial Day Hakamairi Service

## JUNE

- 5-6 SD Ministers Summer Fuken
- 10 SD Buddhist Conference
- 11 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 18 Father's Day Service
- 25 Graduation & Attendance Award Service

## JULY

- 1 Hatsubon Service
- 2 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 4 Independence Day Betsuin Closed
- 8-9 Obon Carnival & Odori
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 16 Obon (Rev. Akio Miyaji) & Hakamairi Service

## AUGUST

- 6 Atomic Bomb Memorial Service
- 13 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 15-16 BCA Summer Fuken @ Reno
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service

## SEPTEMBER

- 2-3 SD Jr. YBA Conference
- 4 Labor Day Betsuin Closed
- 10 Dharma School Registration  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service  
Autumn Higan Seminar  
(Rev. Kenji Akahoshi/Rev. Doei Fujii)
- 18 Autumn Higan Service  
(Rev. Kenji Akahoshi/Rev. Doei Fujii)

## OCTOBER

- 1 Eshinni/Kakushinni Memorial Service  
(Rev. Mutsumi Wondra)
- 8 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service

## NOVEMBER

- 12 General Sokai Meeting  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 18-19 Eitaikyo Service (Rev. George Matsubayashi)
- 23-24 Thanksgiving Day Betsuin Closed

## DECEMBER

- 3 General Temple Cleanup
- 10 Bodhi Day Service  
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 17 Oseibo Taikai Appreciation Service
- 25 Holiday Betsuin Closed
- 31 Year End Service

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**WINTER PACIFIC SEMINAR - 21ST CENTURY**

*Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies,  
Buddhist Churches of America Center for Buddhist Education & Shinshu Center of America*

***EAST MEETS WEST PART II***

*Jodo Shinshu from the Higashi and Nishi Perspectives*

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 2017**

**9:00 am - 4:30 pm** (Doors open at 8:30 am)

**Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple**

**815 East First Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012**

*OPENING DHARMA TALKS BY:*

**Rev. Kodo Umezu**

Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

**Rev. Noriaki Ito**

Bishop, Higashi Honganji North American District

*DHARMATHON FEATURING MINISTERS AND SPEAKERS FROM BOTH TRADITIONS  
IN ENGLISH AND JAPANESE.*

*MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION TO COME. SAVE THE DATE!*

**REGISTRATION: \$40** (Includes lunch) **DEADLINE: JANUARY 19, 2017**

Visit [www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org](http://www.BuddhistChurchesofAmerica.org) and click on CBE to check for updates.

Hosted by the BCA Southern District Ministers Association & Buddhist Education Committee

# JANUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  <b>Shusho-e New Year's Day Service 10:00 am</b>	2	3	4	5	6  Tai Chi 11:00 am	7
8  Regular Service 10:00 am  Kouhaku Utagassen 1:00 pm	9	10  Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm	11  Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rimban Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	12  Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  Board Meeting 7:30 pm	13  Tai Chi 11:00 am	14  <b>Ho-onko Seminar 9:00 am - 3:00 pm</b>
15  Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am  <b>Ho-onko Service 10:00 am</b>	16  <b>Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm</b>	17	18  Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rimban Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	19  Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  Japanese Buddhist Art Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	20  Tai Chi 11:00 am	21  ...Shin Buddhist Tenets Understandable... Rev. Unno 10:00-1130 am
22  Regular Service 10:00 am  <b>Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:00 pm</b>	23  Shoshin Nembutsu-ge (Shoshinge) Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm	24  Introduction to the Three Pure Land Sutras Rev Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm  Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm	25  Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rimban Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	26  Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  Japanese Buddhist Art Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	27  Tai Chi 11:00 am	28  <b>BCA Winter Pacific Seminar "East Meets West" Higashi and Nishi Perspectives 9:00 am - 4:00 pm</b>
29  Regular Service & Joint Installation 10:00 am  New Member & New Year Luncheon @ 11:30 am	30  Shoshin Nembutsu-ge (Shoshinge) Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm	31  Introduction to the Three Pure Land Sutras Rev Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm				

# FEBRUARY 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
			1	2	3	4	
			Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rimban Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  Japanese Buddhist Art Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	Tai Chi 11:00 am	<b>Special Seminar 50th Anniversary 9:00 am - 4:00 pm</b>	
Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am  <b>Kisaragi-ki Service 10:00 am</b>	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Shoshin Nembutsu-ge (Shoshinge) Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm		Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective Rimban Briones 7:00-8:30 pm	Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  Board Meeting 7:30 pm	Tai Chi 11:00 am	...Shin Buddhist Tenets Understandable... Rev. Unno 10:00-1130 am	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
<b>Nirvana Day Service 10:00 am</b>  <b>Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:00 pm</b>	Shoshin Nembutsu-ge (Shoshinge) Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm	Introduction to the Three Pure Land Sutras Rev Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm  Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm		Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  <b>Go-Meinichi-ko1:30 pm</b>  Japanese Buddhist Art Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	Tai Chi 11:00 am	Rennyō Shōnin (JPN) Rev. Matsubayashi 10:00 - 11:30 am  ...Shin Buddhist Tenets Understandable... Rev. Unno 10:00-1130 am	
Bon Odori Exercise 8:30 am  Scout Sunday 10:00 am	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Shoshin Nembutsu-ge (Shoshinge) Rev Takata 6:30-7:30 pm	Introduction to the Three Pure Land Sutras Rev Furumoto 7:00-8:30 pm		Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am  Japanese Buddhist Art Rev. Kodani 7:00-8:30 pm	Tai Chi 11:00 am		
26	27	28	29	30	31		
Regular Service 10:00 am		Bon Odori Exercise 6:30 pm		Buddhist Education (JPN) Rev. Nakata 10:00 - 11:30 am	Tai Chi 11:00 am		