

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

No. 458

January-February 2020

jihō

WWW

NEW YEAR'S GREETING



KOJUN OHTANI, MONSHU

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

Last year again, following the year before, Japan, as well as many other countries in the world, was struck with multiple natural disasters. I would like to convey my deepest condolences to those who lost their lives through those disasters and express my sympathy to everyone affected. In addition, we must never forget that armed conflicts and terror attacks as well as severe starvation is making it difficult to live, and lives are being lost every day.

Last September I had an opportunity to

make an official visit to the temples of the Buddhist Churches of America as Monshu for the first time. This allowed me to complete the first round of visitations to all of the overseas districts which include Canada, Hawaii, South America, and the US mainland.

Although every temple and district has its own history and background, many of the overseas Jodo Shinshu temples were established and have been cherished by the Japanese immigrants and their descendants. Reflecting on how sincerely our predecessors entrusted themselves to the Buddha Dharma and how importantly they thought of their temples while facing many difficulties such as World War II, I cannot help but feel grateful and even awe for their tremendous efforts as well as many other wondrous circumstances that have allowed the Jodo Shinshu teaching to be handed down to us today.

However, a considerable amount of time has passed since the Japanese emigrated overseas, and the lifestyle of their descendants, as well as the world situation have changed greatly. In accordance with these changes, quite a few people who are not of ethnically Japanese origin have also come to appreciate the teaching clarified by Shinran Shonin, and attend our overseas temples.

What caused this is nothing but the universality of the Jodo Shinshu teaching that transcends time and space. In other words, Amida Buddha's compassion equally

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Homba Hongwanji
Buddhist Temple
815 East First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

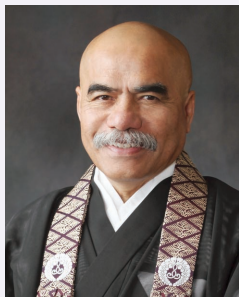
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RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON 2019 AS WE BEGIN THE NEW YEAR



RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES

As we begin the New Year, I am reminded how fortunate I am for yet another healthy and fulfilling year. The coming of the New Year, 2020, marks my 19th year as a minister of the BCA. During my time at Betsuin I've been so fortunate to meet and make so many wonderful dharma friends. I've seen so many change,s 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.

I am especially honored to have been part of the special services and banquet to commemorate Betsuin's 50 years at being a the present site on First and Vignes. After five years of fundraising, we were able to refurbish the *naijin*, and complete much needed repairs and improvements within Betsuin.

As we take in the events of the year, we are truly grateful for all the support and enthusiasm that we have received for the Betsuin's 50th Anniversary. And as we look forward to another rewarding and meaningful 50 plus years, let us reflect and be mindful of those innumerable causes and conditions that brought us to this New Year. To recognize and be totally aware of the causes and conditions that surround us will result in experiencing the transforming power of gratitude and appreciation. This is the basis of the truth reality with which Jodo Shinshu is concerned.

We have a tradition at the Betsuin, after our New Year's Eve service and again after our New Years Day service our member's line up to ring the *bonsho*, the large bell in the front of the temple. Traditionally, the bell is stuck 108 times. Thus symbolizing the 108 characteristics of our human nature also known as *bonno*. Contrary to holiday articles in newspapers, the striking of the bell does not rid ourselves of these 108 blind passions. It is, instead, a reminder of who we truly are.

Shinran taught us that as long as we are so preoccupied with our 108 passions we will never understand the intention of the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha. It is only when we come to our own realization on how truly limited we are as humans and come face to face to our true nature of ignorance 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 our true self.

In Jodo Shinshu, we are truly freed 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.

As the year 2019 comes to a close, Nobuko and I would like to wish you and your family a very meaningful and fulfilling 2020. I would also like to express my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to all of you for making this past year a most valuable and rewarding experience. To be able to share the Nembutsu Teaching with you has been a truly wonderful experience for me.

I would like to thank Rev. Koho Takata for his assistance throughout the year, also many thanks to the board of directors and *komon* for their support and guidance. Many thanks to our office staff, Rie Fujie and Vance Ikkanda. They truly keep this temple running efficiently and professionally. Our volunteers, that come in daily to help with the daily responsibilities of paying bills, mailing, keeping track of membership, donations and so much, much more ... Thank you Reiko Ikkanda, Amy Miyakawa, Jean Kawakami, Bruce Shinohara, Bruce Hatakeyama, Kenji Hatakeyama and a very special thanks to Bernard Wallace.

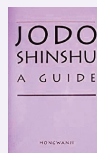
While current events continue to over shadow our daily lives, may gratitude and appreciation enter your life through your understanding of the Nembutsu teachings.

Wishing all of you a joyous and meaningful 2020.

Namo Amida Butsu



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TRUE VOW

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

Happy New Year to you all. Throughout last year, I was guided and nurtured 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 NamoAmidabutsu

as the basis of true and real life in this year 2020.

I would like to share the five years theme and its sub theme from this year 2020 to 2024.

2020 Buddha's Wish: Vow of All the Buddhas Say the Name

(17th Vow, Chapter on Practice)

2021 Buddha's Wish: Vow of the Sincere and Entrusting Mind

(18th Vow, Chapter on Shinjin)

2022 Buddha's Wish: Vow of Necessary Attainment of Nirvana

(11th Vow, Chapter on Realization)

2023 Buddha's Wish: Vow of Immeasurable Light

(12th Vow, Chapter on True Buddha and Land)

800th Anniversary of the Birth of Shinran Shonin

850th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jodo Shinshu Teaching

2024 Buddha's Wish: Vow of Immeasurable Life

(13th Vow, Chapter on True Buddha and Land)

At the beginning of the New Year, I guess some of us make a resolution to accomplish our wish for the year. I always establish my resolution to lose my weight and exercise more but I always fail to fulfil my resolutions. My resolution is always about myself, self-centered wish.

In addition to our own resolutions, there is another resolution established by Amida Buddha in order for us to live more profound and fulfilled lives. It is called "Hongan" in Japanese and often translated as "Primal Vow." Our temple is called "Hongwan-ji" or Temple of Primal Vow. It came from Amida Buddha's resolution "Hongan." Hongwanji or Jodo Shinshu is the path in which we carefully listen to what Amida Buddha's resolution for us is and why Amida Buddha established the resolution for us. Our five year's theme "Buddha's Wish" was taken from "Hongan" or "Pri-

mal Vow."

There is a sub theme for each year which is the essence of Jodo Shinshu. Shinran Shonin revealed that True Teaching is larger Sutra of the Buddha of Immeasurable Life. There are 48 of Buddha's wishes in this Larger Sutra. Shinran Shonin selected 5 vows as True Vows from 48 vows. They are 17th Vow (NamoAmidaButsu), 18th Vow (Shinjin), 11th Vow (Nirvana), 12th Vow (Infinite Light), and 13th Vow (Infinite Life).

Shinran Shonin wrote about True Teaching (Larger Sutra), True Practice (17th Vow, NamoAmidabutsu), True Shinjin (18th Vow, True Entrusting Mind), True Realization (11th Vow, Nirvana), and True Buddha and Land (12th & 13th Vow, Infinite Light and Life) in his major writing "The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way" based on the 5 true vows in the Larger Sutra. These 5 vows or wishes established by the Buddha 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 NamoAmidabutsu for all beings to awaken to the True and Real Life.

It is my hope that the five year theme "Buddha's Wish" and the sub-themes will be meaningful and significance for all of our Sangha to embody and appreciate the Wisdom and Compassion of Amida Buddha in our daily lives.

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

2020 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

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GOMONSHU KOJUN OHTANI AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

GOSHINKYO (Dharma) MESSAGE COMMEMORATION SERVICE

It is with great pleasure that I was able to conduct together with you, the commemorative service for the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple's 50th anniversary of its present site. Since its establishment in 1905, when the original temple was called the Southern California Buddhist Church, your temple's prosperity was brought about by the many ministers, members, and all supporters of the past and present, who endured through World War II and countless other hardships. I feel deep respect and appreciation for the commitment of all of these people.

The Jodo Shinshu teaching clarified by Shinran Shonin has been revered and passed on to us by our ancestors for 800 years. Today, those who cherish his teaching are not limited to Japan and found across the world.

One important teaching in Jodo Shinshu is expressed in the phrase, *sesshu fusha*, which literally means to "grasp and never abandon." In a poem composed by Shinran Shonin known as Hymns of the Pure Land, he writes:

*Seeing the sentient beings of the nembutsu
Throughout the worlds, countless as particles,
in the ten quarters,
The Buddha grasps and never abandons them,
And therefore is named "Amida."*

Shinran Shonin adds explanatory notes to the phrase "grasps and never abandons them" and writes "setsu means to pursue and grasp the one who seeks to run away."

In addition, Sakyamuni Buddha taught that the fundamental cause of our suffering is none other than our human desires. He explains that we suffer because we are inclined to be driven by our conveniences. In other words, we place judgment on things as good or bad depending upon whether they promote our selfish interests or not. Moreover, when human desires are limitless, and people excessively assert their egocentricities to others, resentment deepens between groups of people, and this paves the way for future confrontation.

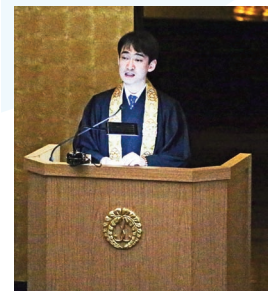
Responding to this, Amida Buddha chases after those who have their backs turned towards the truth. The Buddha continuously works to grasp and guide people to the world of truth. This working manifests itself as the Name or the Nembutsu that is *Namo Amida Butsu*, which is always being directed towards us.

No matter how much science and technology may develop in the future, the essential nature of us human beings will

never change. However, without regard to time and place, whether it be Japan, the US, or anywhere in this world, in the past as well and in the future to come, the Jodo Shinshu teaching will continue to be the spiritual basis for all people and enable them to truly find meaning in their lives.

Just yesterday, the Dharma Center was launched at your temple. I hope this new institution will effectively serve as a center to share Buddhism and Jodo Shinshu with temple visitors, sangha members, as well as those who have yet to encounter this teaching.

It is also my hope that every one of you will continue to deepen your appreciation of the Dharma and share it on every occasion with your family as well as to the people around you. Let us live each day to the utmost, appreciating the Buddha's compassion that extends to every one of us.



(additional message and photos on next page)

GOMONSHU'S BANQUET MESSAGE

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you on the 50th Anniversary of relocation of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple in its present site. It is wonderful that there will be a celebratory service along with a variety of commemorative events being conducted on this occasion. This is made possible by the sincere dedication of the ministers, members, and all supporters of the past and present who endured through World War II and many other hardships since the temple's foundation in 1905. I am deeply grateful for those people's efforts and contribution.

In modern society in which technology like artificial intelligence is developing extremely rapidly, transmitting the Dharma to the next generation through conventional methods has become exceedingly difficult. On the other hand, recent trends where globally, we are witnessing increasing sentiments of exclusiveness of certain groups of people and the excessive prioritizing of one's own country, economy, and culture, there are people both Japanese and non-Japanese, who are showing a growing interest in the Jodo Shinshu teaching clarified by Shinran Shonin. In my view, historically the tradition has been handed down from generation to generation through the family household until today. However, in today's times, it is absolutely essential to logically convey the teaching to the people.

I hope that your temple will play a leading role in the propagation of the Jodo Shinshu teaching in America with the newly instituted Dharma Center as its base. On your temple's 50th anniversary at its present site, I wish for the continued development and success of the Los Angeles Betsuin in the coming years. Congratulations!



front l-r: BCA Socho Kodo Umezu, Gomonshu Kojun Ohtani, Bishop Keiichi Abe (Jpn), back: Bessie Tanaka (Betsuin president), Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Rimban William Briones, Rev. Koho Takata, & Ernest Hida (50th Anniversary chairperson)



Gomonshu Ohtani waits to take his place in the Chigo Procession along with BCA Bishop Kodo Umezu and Bishop Keiichi Abe

Gomonshu New Year - continued from page 1)

reaches and nondiscriminatively embraces everyone in the midst of all sorts of pain and agony.

In this year, let us continue to listen to the Dharma, considering it is directed to each one of us, and keep moving forward to share it with many other people as possible.

January 1, 2020

OHTANI Kojun

Monshu

Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha



INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year. I would like to thank all of you, as members of this temple, for all your support. Especially, having commemorated being at this site for 50 years. The temple leaders worked very hard to bring this event to fruition. It could not have been done without everyone.



PAM TABATA

I would like to thank Bessie Tanaka, for her leadership and hard work for the past three years. It is quite an accomplishment to be the first woman president of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. She had many more tasks to perform than the past few presidents, just by hosting the Gomonshu.

As I have been handed that role as the leader of this temple, where I grew up, I am very honored and humbled. It's a daunting task and I will rely on you for guidance and support. I thank you in advance for giving me this opportunity and your trust.

In *gassho*.

OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Shinnen akemashite omedetō gozaimasu! ¡Feliz Año Nuevo! Happy New Year!

2019 – what a year! We culminated our five years of preparations for the *otera's* 50th Anniversary. We were honored to have and hear **Gomonshu Ohtani** participate in all our anniversary activities. What wonderful memories we have! Thank you **Ernest Hida** and your committee for the past five years of preparation and its culmination!

Many thanks to our ministerial staff led by **Rimban William Briones** with **Reverends Koho Takata** and **Kazuaki Nakata** (now in Central California) for dedicating countless hours to funerals, *hoji*, special services, events, advising our affiliated organizations as well as being liaison with the other temples, and attending community meetings. We will soon be joined by **Rev. Hibiki Murakami**, who will join us by mid-January. Welcome Sensei!

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BESSIE TANAKA

HO-ONKO, SHINRAN SHONIN'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and their families are invited to attend the Hoonko, the Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin which is the most important tradition in the Jodo Shinshu Buddhism to be held on **Sunday, January 12, 2020**. The guest speakers for the service will be **Rev. Nobuo Haneda** of Maida Center for English Service and **Rev. Nobuo Miyaji** of BCA Ministers 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



Shinran Shonin

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KISARAGI-KI: LADY TAKEKO KUJO & BWA LATE MEMBERS MEMORIAL SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The members of LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple BWA and their families and friends are invited to attend the annual Kisaragiki Dharma Service, which is the observance of Lady Takeko Kujo's Memorial Service to be held on **Sunday, February 2, 2020**. The guest speaker for the service will be Betsuin ministers.

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 Kisara-giki 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 Ta-keko Kujo and established the annual Dana Day in 1965 to be observed in February every year and practicing Dana by benefitting of-fertory collections to charitable and social welfare agencies. Our temple BWA members are currently joining in visitation to nursing and care home residents to practice Dana. Let us practice to put into action the caring mind and the compassion Lady Kujo has shown us to follow.



Lady Takeko Kujo

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

by Rev. Koho Takata



The Passing of Sakyamuni Buddha mural painting in the Betsuin hondo

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 9, 2020. The speakers for the service will 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."

"Sakyamuni appeared in this world and expounded the teachings of the way to enlightenment, seeking to

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NISHI ABA VISITS WEST LOS ANGELES BUDDHIST TEMPLE

by Joanne Nakamura

On Sunday October 13, Nishi ABA members visited the West LA Buddhist Temple. Reverend Fumiaki Usuki warmly welcomed the attending ABA members from Nishi.

On this particular Sunday, it was the Eshinni-Kakushin-ni, Takeko Kujo and Hisako Nakamura memorial service at the temple .

Reverend Usuki delivered his dharma message on "homyo" (Buddhist name), the significance and meaning of the "homyo". His sermon enlightened the sangha to a new level of awareness. The "homyo" you receive has deep implications and purpose to its recipient . Each is unique and pure to the individual. Many of us were motivated to revisit our own "homyo" from the perspective of the newly acquired knowledge.

Following the service, the sangha was invited to a delicious lunch in the Sangha Hall, provided by the West LA BWA.

Nishi ABA is grateful to the gracious hospitality experienced by our visitations to the West LA, Gardena and Venice Temples.

Each of our visits has expanded our appreciation and awareness of the Buddha's teachings.

Nishi ABA will continue to afford its members the opportunity to visit other temples. The experience is profound and informative.

Nishi ABA has many exciting activities planned for the coming year of 2020. New members of all ages are always welcomed. You're invited to come and join this organization. Inquire at the temple office for more information.



front l-r: Les Toguchi, Harumi Hatakeyama, Suzy Saita, Jean Kawakami, Reiko Ikkanda, Ethel Toguchi, Rev. Usuki, Thomas Mochizuki, Cindy Nakamura, Joanne Nakamura, and Dianne Odagawa back: Glen Saita, Kenji Hatakeyama, Roy Yamatoku, Vance Ikkanda, Roy Tanaka, Lonny Quon, Richard Odagawa, and Yoshi Ono

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2019 PADMA AWARD SCOUT TRIP II

by Eileen Nozaki

In late July, Rev. Kaz Nakata led a small contingent of Scouts on his fifth annual Padma/Sangha road trip to the San Francisco bay area. The three-day trip is a culmination, following a year's worth of Buddhist teachings, per the Girl Scout's Padma and Scouts BCA's Sangha pin requirements.

This year three Cadette Girl Scouts - Kiyomi Banta, Tatsumi Capela, and Airi Montoya - were the fortunate Scouts to enjoy the religious and cultural sights in the Bay area.

This issue of the Betsuin Jiho features the memories of Tatsumi Capela and Airi Montoya.

Thank you, Scouts, for sharing your memories of our Padma trip. Signed your Troop Co-leaders, Eileen Nozaki and Susan Lee.

By Tatsumi Capela:

There are many things that I learned on my recent trip to San Francisco. This was the second time I was fortunate enough to go on the yearly Padma Award Tour, but I still was able to learn a great amount. For example, I learned about the first Jodo Shinshu temple in the United States and even got to visit it. There I learned that the Buddhist Church of San Francisco has ashes of Shakyamuni Buddha and disciples Shariputra and Moggallana from the Royal Court of Thailand in 1935.

My favorite part of the trip was the part when we went on a morning meditation walk. We were told that it would be a walk but it turned out to be a hike. Either way it, was really fun and a great way to start the day. It was a very cold day and it turned out that all I needed was to get walking because it warmed me up really quickly. I am very grateful that I was able to go on this trip, it was very informational and I enjoyed the company of my fellow Girl Scouts.

By Airi Montoya:

This summer I was given the opportunity to travel to San Francisco with Reverend Kaz Nakata and friends from my Padma class. Whether it was the long drive together or the plentiful fun activities such as going to Ghirardelli Square, Fisherman's Wharf, or going through a forest looking at incredible sights, we got a lot from this trip not just matching scrunchies and delicious food. We gained new experiences and learned a lot. We drove across San Francisco and the journey ended up at the Buddhist church.

As we pulled into the lot, I saw this Japanese styled church. As my friends and I began to cross the street to walk there, we were told that was the wrong way. That was

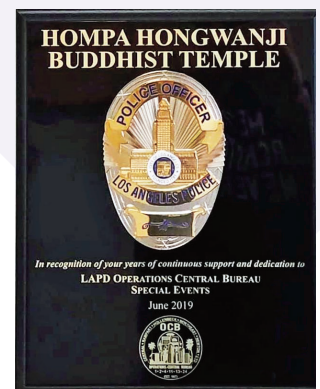
in fact a catholic church styled off of a Japanese temple to attract people.

As we walked towards the Buddhist church we were a little confused on the exterior. We learned that the Buddhist church was actually styled to look like a normal building since they were not the most popular and wanted to avoid any conflict.

As we entered the building we saw their obon flyers that lead us towards the *hondo*. After our chanting session we learned about the Buddhist church of San Francisco. The minister would ask us questions and we would answer based on our knowledge. He pointed at the picture of the Monshu in Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple in Kyoto and explained how he is related to Shinran Shonin. Then he told us that relics of Shinran Shonin were actually given to the Buddhist Church. We were all surprised that there on the sight were relics of Shinran Shonin.

We walked up a long flight of stairs and went up to the roof. We walked into a small room with the relics, which were very beautiful. I thought that was the most memorable. I am very thankful for Rev Kaz and Ms. Eileen Nozaki, Nishi Girl Scout Troop leader for giving us this amazing experience in San Francisco.

LAPD RECOGNIZES THE BETSUIN WITH A PLAQUE



Because Rimban William Briones sees to it that the Betsuin supports the LAPD whenever possible (eg: use of parking lot for special operations), the LAPD presented the temple with a plaque of recognition.

AKI MONTO OF HIROSHIMA

by Elaine Fukumoto

Aki Province is the ancient name of the Hiroshima Prefecture. It was abolished in 1871 and renamed Hiroshima. Historically, the Jodo Shinshu followers of this region were known for their sincere devotion and were thus designated as “Aki monto,” devout followers. There is currently a district named Aki in the Hiroshima prefecture where there is a high concentration of Jodo Shinshu temples.

* * * * *

<https://deepkure.com/aki-monto-bon-festival-lanterns/>

“Aki Monto” is a term for people living in Aki no Kuni (now part of Western Hiroshima Prefecture) who adhere to a Japanese branch of Buddhism called Jodo Shinshu. “Aki Monto” have a custom of decorating their family graves with special paper lanterns during the Bon Festival in summer. These colorful lanterns are unique to Hiroshima Prefecture.



Suzu-san's father carrying a bon festival lantern unique to the Hiroshima Prefecture.

In the animated film In This Corner of the World, you can see Suzu-san's father holding just such a lantern.

Even today, many people in Hiroshima decorate their family graves with these colorful lanterns during the Bon Festival. However, on “*hatsu-bon*” (the first Bon Festival

after death), mourners eschew these colorful lanterns, and instead use lanterns made only with white paper. At the end of WWII when many people in Hiroshima died from air raids, white lanterns filled Hiroshima's graveyards.

* * * * *

Below is a photo taken in July 1962 in Yano, Hiroshima. Pictured is the *ohaka* (grave or tombstone) of my paternal grandfather and grandmother, Otsujiro and Kono Hatakeyama. I had never met any of my grandparents. The image is of the unique paper lanterns, adorning the grave. On four of the lanterns are the names, Keizo, Chisato, Isao, and Fumio Hatakeyama — my father and his brothers



(Nirvana Day continued from page 7)

save the multitudes of living beings by blessing them with this benefit that is true and real.” (CWS P.7)

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

*“Sakyamuni Tathagata appeared in this world
Solely to teach the ocean-like Primal Vow of Amida;
We, an ocean of beings in an evil age
of five defilements,
Should entrust ourselves to the Tathagata's*

words of truth.”

(CWS P.70)

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

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

NISHI DHARMA CENTER WINTER 2020 (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.

Faith and Shinjin

Monday, 7:00-8:30PM

Rev. Masao Kodani

January 6, 13, 20, 27, February 3 (5 week class: \$50)

Faith and Shinjin, is it same or different?

Tannisho - A Record in Lament of Divergences

Monday, 6:30-8:00 PM

Rev. Koho Takata

February 10, 17, 24, March 2, 9 (5 week class: \$50)

Tannisho is one of the most popular Japanese Buddhist texts among Jodo Shinshu followers and recollection of the words of Shinran Shonin. Reading the Tannisho is probably the most meaningful way for us to touch Shinran Shonin's deep appreciation and entrusting mind to the Amida Buddha's Primal Vow.

The Basic Teaching of Jodo Shinshu

Tuesday, 7:00-8:30 PM

Rev. Ryuta Furumoto

January 7, 21, 28, February 4, 11 (5 week class: \$50)
(5 week class: \$50)

This class offers an opportunity for those who want to learn the basic teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. The presentation will include important terms such as *shinjin*, *tariki* (Other Power), *oho* (Birth in the Pure Land), etc. The class will also cover the life of Shinran Shonin, the history of Jodo Shinshu, and the introduction to the teaching of the Seven Pure Land Masters.

Contemporary Issues and Jodo Shinshu Perspective (Discussion)

Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 PM

Rimban William Briones

January 8, 15, 22, 29, February 5 (5 week class: \$50)

Issues such as 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.

蓮如上人の『御一代記聞書』に聞く(Class taught in Japanese)

Saturday, 10:00-11:30AM

Rev. Nobuo Miyaji

January 18, February 29, March 28 (3 week class: \$30)



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

MAJOR SERVICES/SEMINARS FOR 2020 WINTER

Theme — “Buddha’s Wish: Vow of All the Buddhas Saying the Name”

Hoonko (Shinran Shonin’s Memorial) Seminar on 1/11 and Service on 1/12

Rev. Nobuo Haneda & Rev. Nobuo Miyaji (English & Japanese)

Winter Pacific Seminar on 1/25

“Fushidan Sekkyo” Dharma Talks & Story-Telling in Jodo Shinshu

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Mark Blum, Dharmathon by SD Ministers (English & Japanese)

Kisaragiki, Memorial Service for Lady Takeko Kujo on 2/2

LA Betsuin Ministers (English & Japanese)

Spring Higan Seminar on 3/14 and Service on 3/15

Rev. Ryuta Furumoto & Rev. Noritaka Imada (English & Japanese)

BETSUIN PHOTOS



Lonny Quon picks up lunch made by the Jr YBA before he attends the General Meeting.



The General Meeting where 2019 finances were discussed and forecasting needs for 2020.



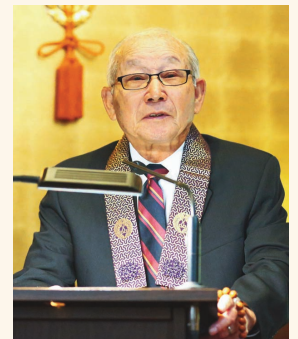
Rev. Nobuo Miyaji served as the guest speaker at the Eitaikyo Service



Eitaikyo Service
Rev. Seikan Fukuma (left) and Rimban William Briones in the onaijin.



Eitaikyo Service
Rev. Koho Takata (left), Rev. Miyaji, and Rev. George Matsubayashi in the onaijin.



Fuji Yamamoto served as the service chairperson at the Eitaikyo Service



BWA ladies preparing chirashi otoki for the Eitaikyo Service attendees.



BWA ladies had a Craft Sale where many of the items sold were handmade.

BETSUIN DHARMA SCHOOL PHOTOS



Ms. Bessie digs into the candy bowl along with Kenji.



Sisters, Noe and Emi, take Halloween cupcake decorating very seriously.



Grown-ups like to dress-up for Halloween, too!



Jr YBA members man the various activities for the young children.



The Shimizu Family (minus one)



Dharma School "Moms" organize everything for the Dharma School Halloween Party for the young children.



A ghoulish served as service chairperson on this special Sunday.



Each year, Seibi Okita donates his time, effort, and vegetables to create an array of Jack-O-Lanterns.

(“Tanaka” continued from page 6)

The Betsuin wouldn't be functioning well without **Rie Fujie** in the office. She is now helped by **Futami Wai** who is learning the functions of the efficient office. What can we say about Vance Ikkanda who handles all the scheduling of special events, groups, and parking rental as well as overseeing the repairs and renovations? The added income has helped the temple tremendously. We also give thanks to the many volunteers in the office – **Amy Miyakawa** with membership, **Reiko Ikkanda**, Betsuin treasurer, who also runs off letters and notices that are sent out, **Harumi Hatakeyama** and her committee who sends out the Jiho and all the temple mailings, **Seibi Okita**, who picks up our seniors on Sundays and also works and maintains our gardens and all members who come in to help whenever they can.

Thanks also to our branch temples, Hollywood and Sun Valley, maintenance committee, Kohaku Utagassen committee and the Affiliated organizations for their constant support and help with temple activities. Thank you Boy Scouts for always setting up for the various activities!! The success of the temple's activities is because of all of you.

I thank you for all the support you have given me the last three years and allowing me to make mistakes! I thank the past presidents for their support and advice. Please give the same assistance to **Pam Tabata**, the incoming Betsuin president.

Let's try to make our membership in 2020 stronger and more involved in temple activities where you and the whole family, (*bachans, jichans, akachans*) can come to hear the Buddha Dharma.

Wishing you a wonderful, healthy and prosperous 2020!

Thank you all – *dōmo arigatō, muchisimas gracias!*

Gassho, Bessie T. Tanaka

(“Amazon Smile” continued from page 8)

How do I select Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple to support when shopping on Amazon-Smile?

On your first visit to AmazonSmile, you need to select **Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple** to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. We will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. AmazonSmile will occasionally contact you about donation amounts disbursed to your chosen charity or about the program.

HO-ONKO SEMINAR

BUDDHA'S WISH: VOW OF ALL THE BUDDHAS SAYING THE NAME

Saturday, January 11, 2020

9:00 - 3:00 pm

Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

Guest Speakers:

Rev. Nobuo Haneda

Rev. Nobuo Miyaji

Registration Fee: \$15

Tel: 213-680-9130



49TH ANNUAL KOHAKU UTAGASSEN

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2020

@ 1:00 PM

NISHI HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

TICKETS: \$20

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama

CORRECTION: Nov-Dec 2019 JIHO, page 4, "Did You Know?" Thank you for donation from **Nobuko Yamamoto** of Monterey Park, not Yoshiko Yamamoto.

ADDITIONS: "Thank you" to **Donna Mendivil** of Lincoln, CA, for donations of memorabilia of pins from the 60th anniversary (1904-1964) and Hanamatsuri festivities (1964, 1965, 1966). "Thank you" to the family of late **Chiyeko Hamada** for collection of books and materials for consideration

(*"Hoonko" continued from page 6*)

fishermen. Shinran Shonin had a wife and children. He ate meat and fish. Shinran Shonin lived a Nembutsu life with his family and opened up the path to Buddhism to the common people. If Shinran Shonin had not clarified the teachings of the Primal Vow, our temple and Sangha would not be in existence today. For this, we praise the virtues of our founder Shinran Shonin, express our sincere appreciation for having encountered his teachings, and reconfirm our true entrusting mind to listen and live his teachings each day.

In conjunction with Hoonko Service, we are fortunate to have a Hoonko Seminar entitled "Life of Awakening: Shinjin and Nembutsu" on **Saturday, January 11, 2020**. The seminar will begin at 9:00am and end at 3:00pm. The guest speakers will be **Rev. Nobuo Haneda** and **Rev. Nobuo Miyaji**. They will focus on the essential teaching of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism which was clarified by Shinran Shonin. The registration fee is \$15.00 and the deadline will be on January 4, 2020. We encourage all of you to hear the Buddha-Dharma on the Memorial of Shinran Shonin.

BETSUIN VEHICLE DONATION



HAROLD'S CAR DONATION SERVICE

**Donate any vehicle:
car, truck, motorcycle, or boat**

The vehicle need not be operational.

Funds received will go to the Betsuin general fund and donors can get full amount credit towards income tax.

Contact the Betsuin office: 213-680-9130

ADULTS/SENIORS

**FRIDAYS @ 10 - 11 am
LA BETSUIN KAIKAN**

\$5.00 per class

Especially geared towards older individuals to promote fitness, balance, prevent falls, etc:

**SUPPORTED BY A
KEIRO GRANT**

**TAI CHI
QIGONG**



BON ODORI EXERCISE CLASS

BETSUIN LOTUS ROOM

**1st & 3rd Sundays 8:30 am
2nd & 4th Tuesdays 6:30 pm**

SAVE THE DATE

MARCH 2020

**7 SURF AND TURF
FUNDRAISER DINNER**

14/15 SPRING OHIGAN

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 2019	28 Shigeru Taniguchi
14 Harue Margie Murakami	28 Etsuo Hongo
16 Mutsuo Mori	30 Tsutomu Yokoyama
24 Midori Sugita	
27 Motoko Kaneta	

October 2019	November 2019
2 Stanley Masayoshi Nagao	2 Arthur Gen Masuda
16 Takeshi Tokiyama	4 Beatrice Aiko Akita
25 Kyoji Shimaya	9 Momoko Murakami
	11 Grace Kotake
	12 Seiji Iwai
	13 Kelly Higashi

2019 MEMBERSHIP

A "member" of the L.A. *Betsuin* is one who has donated to the annual membership.

The following is a list additional members who have submitted their membership during the **September 16** through **November 15, 2019**. Your continuing support of the temple is greatly appreciated.

Ichikawa, Emiko	Nishi Wanjettes
Itomura, Terrie Yukiko	Okohira, Deana
Kakita, Roger Tatsuo	Suenaka-Derr, Naomi
/Annette Setsuko	Tanaka, Roy T./Susan
Nishi Aikido,	
Nishi Girl Scouts Troop	
12135	



MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR 2020

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	2019
3rd memorial	2018
7th memorial	2014
13th memorial	2008
17th memorial	2004
23rd memorial	1998
25th memorial	1996
33rd memorial	1988
50th memorial	1971

Betsuin Jiho

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

SURF AND TURF DINNER

13th ANNUAL



MARCH 7, 2020

\$25.00 per plate
 (includes a BINGO card)

Dinner 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Bingo 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

PRESALE ONLY

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

Meals will be packed as "TAKE OUT"
DINE IN and enjoy your meals with family and friends along with a game of BINGO and raffle

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.

BETSUIN 2020 CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day Service
- 2 Betsuin Closed
- 5 49th Annual Kohaku Utagassen
Dharma School First Service
- 11 Hoonko Seminar
(Rev. Nobuo Haneda/Rev. Nobuo Miyaji)
- 12 Hoonko Service
(Rev. Nobuo Haneda/Rev. Nobuo Miyaji)
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service (Shinran Shonin Monthly
Memorial Service)
- 19 Dharma School First Service
- 25 Winter Pacific Seminar
- 26 Installation, New Member Welcoming, & New Year's
Party

FEBRUARY

- 2 BWA Kisaragi-ki, Lady Kujo's, &
Late Members' Memorial Service
- 9 Nirvana Day
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Scout Sunday
Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 18-19 BCA Minister's Meeting (Seattle WA)
- 20-22 BCA National Council Meeting (Seattle WA)

MARCH

- 7 Surf & Turf Fundraiser
- 8 Girl Scout Sunday
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 14 Spring Higan Seminar
(Rev. Noritaka Imada/Rev Ryuta Furumoto)
- 15 Spring Higan & Rimban-ki Memorial Service
(Rev. Noritaka Imada/Rev Ryuta Furumoto)
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service

APRIL

- 5 Betsuin Hanamatsuri
Butsuren Hanamatsuri @ Zenshuji Buddhist Temple
- 12 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 24-26 FDSTL Conference (Orange County Buddhist Church)

MAY

- 10 Mother's Day Service
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 17 Gotan-e & Infant Presentation (Hatsumairi)
(Rev. Masao Kodani)
- 24 Memorial Day Service
- 25 Memorial Day Hakamairi Service

JUNE

- 1-2 SD Ministers Summer Fuken (Dana Point)

- 14 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 21 Fathers' Day Service
- 28 DS Graduation & Attendance Award Service

JULY

- 4 Independence Day Betsuin Closed
- 5 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 11-12 Obon Carnival & Odori
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 18 Hatsubon Service
- 19 Hakamairi & Obon Service

AUGUST

- 2 Atomic Bomb Memorial Service
- 9 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 18-20 BCA Summer Fuken (LA Betsuin)

SEPTEMBER

- 5-7 So. Dist. Jr YBA Conference
- 7 Labor Day Betsuin Closed
- 13 Dharma School Registration
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 19 Autumn Higan Seminar
(Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara/Rev. Yugo Fujita)
- 20 Autumn Higan Service
(Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara/Rev. Yugo Fujita)

OCTOBER

- 3 So. District Buddhist Conference @ Betsuin
- 4 Eshinni/Kakushinni Memorial Service
(Rev. Yuika Hasebe)
- 11 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service

NOVEMBER

- 10 General Sokai Meeting
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 16-17 Eitaikyo Service (Rev. Nobuo Miyaji)
- 26-27 Thanksgiving Day — Betsuin Closed

DECEMBER

- 6 General Temple Cleanup
- 13 Bodhi Day Service
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Gomeinichi-ko Service
- 20 Oseibo Taikai Appreciation Service
- 24-25 Holiday Betsuin Closed
- 31 Year End Service

(dates subject to change)



WINTER PACIFIC SEMINAR - 21ST CENTURY



“Fushidan Sekkyo”

DHARMA TALKS & STORY-TELLING IN JODO SHINSHU

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Dr. Mark Blum



Dr. Mark L. Blum is a Buddhist Studies Professor and Shinjo Ito Distinguished Chair in Japanese Studies in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of *The Origins and Development of Pure Land Buddhism* (2002), co-editor of *Ren-nyo and the Roots of Modern Japanese Buddhism* (2006) and *Cultivating Spirituality: a modern Shin Buddhist anthology* (2011) and author of other works. He is currently working on completing *Think Buddha, Say Buddha: a history of nenbutsu thought, practice and culture*.

DHARMATHON:
Southern District Ministers

~ Presented in English and Japanese ~

REGISTRATION: \$40

(Includes lunch)

SO. DISTRICT: PLEASE REGISTER WITH TEMPLES

DEADLINE: 1/11/20

Contact: Rev. Koho Takata at
NishiDharmaCenter@gmail.com
or call (213) 680-9130

In Japan, Jōdo Shinshū priests often delivered Dharma messages in the form of fushidan sekkyō, which featured musical, often comical, forms of story-telling. Dr. Mark Blum will discuss this style of preaching and explain how, like rakugo (“fallen words”), a similar form of Japanese performance art, it is gaining in popularity today.

SATURDAY,
JANUARY 25, 2020
9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Doors open at 9 am

LOS ANGELES HOMPA
HONGWANJI BUDDHIST
TEMPLE

815 E. First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Download registration forms and schedule
at www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

Presented by the Institute of Buddhist Studies & BCA Center for Buddhist Education

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

JANUARY 2020

Sunday	Monday 0	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			Shusho-e New Year's Day Service 10:00 am	Betsuin Closed		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Family Service 10:00 am Kouhaku Utagassen 1:00 pm	<u>Faith and Shinjin</u> Rev. Masao Kodani 7:00-830 pm	<u>Basic Teaching of Jodo Shinshu</u> Rev. Ruyta Furumoto 7:00-830 pm	<u>Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective (discussion)</u> Rimban William Briones 7:00-830 pm	Board Meeting 7:30 pm		Ho-onko Seminar
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Ho-onko Service 10:00 am Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:00 pm	<u>Faith and Shinjin</u> Rev. Masao Kodani 7:00-830 pm		<u>Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective (discussion)</u> Rimban William Briones 7:00-830 pm	Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm		蓮如上人の『御一代 記聞書』に聞く (in Japanese) Rev. Nobuo Miyaji 7:0-830 pm
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Regular Service 10:00 am Dharma School restarts	<u>Faith and Shinjin</u> Rev. Masao Kodani 7:00-830 pm	<u>Basic Teaching of Jodo Shinshu</u> Rev. Ruyta Furumoto 7:00-830 pm	<u>Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective (discussion)</u> Rimban William Briones 7:00-830 pm			IBS/BCA Winter Pacific Seminar 900 am to 3:30 pm
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Service, Joint Installation, New Member Welcome 10:00 am New Year Luncheon 11:30 am	<u>Faith and Shinjin</u> Rev. Masao Kodani 7:00-830 pm	<u>Basic Teaching of Jodo Shinshu</u> Rev. Ruyta Furumoto 7:00-830 pm	<u>Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective (discussion)</u> Rimban William Briones 7:00-830 pm			

FEBRUARY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Kisaragi-ki Takeko Kujo Memorial 10:00 am	3 <u>Faith and Shinjin</u> Rev. Masao Kodani 7:00-830 pm	4 <u>Basic Teaching of Jodo Shinshu</u> Rev. Ruyta Furumoto 7:00-830 pm	5 <u>Contemporary Issues & Jodo Shinshu Perspective (discussion)</u> Rimban William Briones 7:00-830 pm	6	7	8
9 Nirvana Day Service 10:00 am Eitaikyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1:00 pm	10 <u>Tannisho: A Record in Lament of Divergences</u> Rev. Koho Takata 6:30-800 pm	11 <u>Basic Teaching of Jodo Shinshu</u> Rev. Ruyta Furumoto 7:00-830 pm	12	13 Board Meeting 7:30 pm	14	15
16 Scout Sunday Service 10:00 am Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm	17 <u>Tannisho: A Record in Lament of Divergences</u> Rev. Koho Takata 6:30-800 pm	18	19	20	21	22
23 Regular Service 10:00 am	24 <u>Tannisho: A Record in Lament of Divergences</u> Rev. Koho Takata 6:30-800 pm	25	26	27	28	29 <u>蓮如上人の『御一代 記聞書』に聞く (in Japanese)</u> Rev. Nobuo Miyaji 7:0-830 pm