



GATEWAY



April 2011 -- Vol. XLV No. 4

Living Dharma News
www.livingdharma.org

Our hearts are with the victims and survivors of the Japan earthquake disaster. *Namu Amida Butsu*. If you'd like to donate, the homepage of the website has links to www.redcross.org (you can designate that your funds go to the "Japan earthquake and Pacific tsunami") and to www.interaction.org (the site officially recommended by President Obama) for links to about 3 dozen other respected global aid organizations such as AmeriCares, UNICEF and Habitat for Humanity. To donate specifically to the hard hit Higashi Temples in the Tohoku region, please make your check out to "Higashi Hongaji." Rev. Ken will see that they are delivered to our District office.

New on the Living Dharma Website is the report (published last month) on our SLO retreat, which featured the Dharma talk of Rev. Mas Kodani. There is a certain directness in his message which seems to flow from his insights into the core teachings of impermanence, non-duality, and non-self, and through which, we can sense the power of the Dharma. If Kodani sensei's message resonated with you, check out one of his most memorable talks (also in our Library), "Discovering the Profoundly Beautiful."

The WCBT Golf Tournament is one of our annual fundraisers, and it also has a connection to the Buddhist teachings. As Rev. Gyoko Saito once said, "The golf game is Buddhism. Our golf ball and our game don't always go the way we wish they would, and neither does our life. That's why we need the Buddhist teachings. We listen to the Buddha's teaching for every thing in our life, so the golf game gives us the teaching of Buddha too." Read more about this crucial connection between the teaching and our lives in Rev.

Please see L.D. NEWS, con't on page 4



Above: The combined Sanghas of the Los Angeles Betsuin and WCBT gathered together last month to sing gathas while being filmed for the creation of a District-wide DVD (photo: Steven Toyoshima)

REFLECTIONS ON THE TRAGEDY IN JAPAN

Bishop Noriaki Ito

The horrible images of human suffering and destruction in Japan due to the massive earthquake and the subsequent tsunami have been etched in our minds over the past week. Being separated by the Pacific Ocean, we have all felt powerless to do anything to help the people who continue to suffer or to ease the anxiety they continue to feel due to the continued threat of radioactive fallout from the damaged nuclear power plants. As of this writing, the death toll has risen to nearly 10,000 people.

We watch the news and wish that the government and the power plant operators can do something to gain control of the problem. We empathize with the workers who are working feverishly despite the risk to their lives. But I have to admit that I have been regarding them simply as technicians or as human robots. It wasn't until I heard the story of a young woman, the daughter of one of the workers, who shared her family's story through Twitter. She wrote, "I've never seen my mother cry so much."

Then to her father, "Please come back alive, Dad!"

This episode reminded me that they are human beings and victims themselves of the tragedy. Some may have lost homes, family members, and yet they persevere willingly in inhuman conditions for the sake of the entire country...for the sake of the people in neighboring countries like Korea and China, even for us here in the United States.

Please see REFLECTIONS, con't on page 4

Temple Event Highlights:

- April 3, WCBT Hanamaturi
- April 10, LABCF Hanamaturi
- May 6, WCBT Golf Classic
- May 7, Mother's Day Service
- Please See Temple News



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

The unimaginable circumstances facing the victims of the earthquake/tsunami in Japan have left us in disbelief with the overall feeling of helplessness. Our Dharma students may not be able to participate in monetary donations, but they can share feelings of sorrow and sympathy. We would like to invite all of our children to bring in drawings illustrating their friendship and concern for the surviving children of this catastrophic event.

Rev. Kawawata's family's temple is in the Kanto area of Japan, which is relatively close to the March 11th earthquake. With Sensei's help, we will be able to send the drawings as encouragement to the children of the temple's families.

With Gassho,
Diane Hata



Quote of the Month

Educated people, who look down on the illiterate, find, ultimately, that their knowledge is unreliable and useless. And the so-called foolish ones have the same worries as the well educated. Either way, we cannot separate ourselves from this, our actual world, and neither can we find true settlement in this, our actual world.

There is then no other way but to live this life with *nembutsu*, by entrusting in the Primal Vow. This is what Shinran realized through his own experience.

-Daiei Kaneko

CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL 2011!





T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

WCBT Hanamatsuri

West Covina's Hanamatsuri Service will be held on Sunday, April 3, at 10:00 AM. Everyone is invited to arrive early with flowers to decorate the *Hanamido*. There will be a special performance by the Dharma school children and Bodhi Tree Band, and light refreshments will be served after the service. We invite you to come and join us to celebrate the Buddha's birthday!

LBCF Hanamatsuri

The Federation Hanamatsuri Service and Lectures "Omoiyari, Thoughtfulness" will be held on the April 10 beginning at 1:00 PM at Nishi Honganji in downtown LA. Everyone is encouraged to attend the LBCF service after our Shotsuki Service.

Study Center Lecture Series

The Study Center Lecture Series continues in April with "Modern Thinkers of Shin Buddhism." Rev. Nobuki Miyoshi will give the lectures on April 5th & 12th and Bishop Noriaki Ito will continue on April 19th & 26th. The lectures will be held every Tuesday evenings in

April at 7:00 PM. For more information contact Rev. Ken.

Golf Classic

Mark your calendars for WCBT's 15th Annual Golf Classic which will be held on Friday, May 6, at the Pacific Palms Golf Course in the City of Industry. It will be a shot-gun start at 1:00 PM. For more information contact Jack or Julie.

Mother's Day Service

A Mother's Day family service will be held on May 8, at 10:00 AM. A special tribute to all mothers will be presented so please attend this special service.

Tanjo-e & Hatsumairi

The Tanjo-e and Hatsumairi (new baby) Service will be held on May 29 at 10:00 A.M. with special guest speaker Rev. Ryoko Osa. There will be a special ceremony to acknowledge new additions to our Sangha. Please contact Rev. Ken if you or your family member has had a new baby in the last year.

GATEWAY Staff

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West Covina Buddhist Temple Mission Statement:
In the spirit of universal brotherhood, West Covina Buddhist Temple provides the opportunity for all to listen to and share the Teachings of the Buddha in order that we may awaken to our true selves, living our lives fully and dynamically.

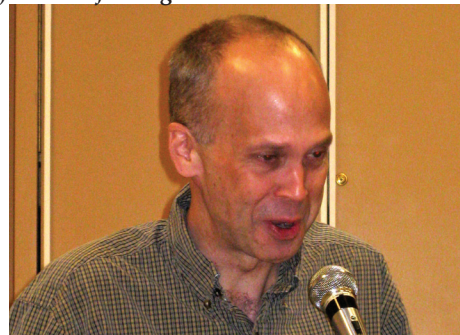
The Temple's mailing address is:
West Covina Buddhist Temple

P. O. Box 1616
West Covina, CA 91793
(626) 913-0622

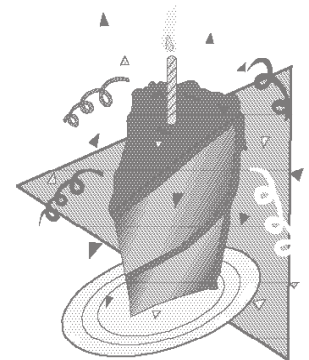
Website: www.livingdharma.org
E-Mail: dharma@livingdharma.org



Above: the Bodhi Tree Band and the Sangha enjoyed DVD filming in the Betsuin's hondo!



Above left: Rev. Bill Briones of the Nishi Betsuin gave a wonderful Dharma talk at WCBT's Ohigan; above right, Mr. Tor Ormseth shared his personal experiences with impermanence at WCBT's March 20th service.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Lauren Miyake, Randy Maekawa, Susan Oshima, Nancy Maekawa, Kevin Kawawata, Tommy Lespron, Yaeko Davis, Kristen Kiranaka, Jacob Kato, Adriana Kochi, Kellis Komoda, Shakyakamuni Buddha



T H E G A T H E W A Y

REFLECTIONS, con't from page 1

I was reminded of the story of Dharmākara Bodhisattva in the Larger Sutra of Eternal Life who raises 48 vows in order to establish the Pure Land before becoming Amida Buddha. In what we call the Primal Vow, he says, "I will not receive true enlightenment unless all sentient beings are delivered to the land of happiness." In other words, he is saying that he will not enjoy enlightenment, he will not quit, until the suffering of all living beings is overcome.

In Mahayana Buddhism, such a promise is called the Bodhisattva vow. It is the example of true compassion, of true *dana* or giving, the first of the teaching of the Six Paramitas. The ultimate gift we can give is to go to the extreme of giving up one's life for the sake of others.

Upon reflection, therefore, I now think of those workers being subjected to conditions that likely will lead to severe illness and possibly death as true examples of Bodhisattvas. We all hope that they will succeed in their mission to prevent massive radioactive fallout. But even if they fail, they will be remembered as true heroes and heroines, as true examples of Bodhisattvas. Their stories inspire all of us, and give us hope for the future not only of Japan but for the entire world. ☸

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Kawawata's "Golf and Buddhism" sermon in our Library.

Gassho,
Peter Hata

Selected E-mail

From = [name withheld]

Subject = Video at Higashi 2/27

Message = Hi Peter,

You did an excellent job conducting the singing at Higashi and I enjoyed participating in the event. Will it be available for purchase or can we later view at The Living Dharma or HHBT website?

Dear [name withheld],

I'm sure it will be available, but not where or how. Back in the fall of 2010, the impetus for this project originally was to present,

through gatha singing, our North American District members to everyone at the Shinran Goenki Memorial in Osaka, Japan in May. So, as far as "when," I think it's safe to say this project will be finished before then!

Best Wishes,

Peter Hata

The Living Dharma Website

West Covina Buddhist Temple

[Ed. Note: Despite the cancellation of the Japan program, the DVD will be completed soon and will definitely be shown at least at WCBT using the Center's state of the art projector. DVD copies might be made, depending on demand.]

Hello Peter,

I was visiting the Watsonville Buddhist Temple a few weeks back and they were playing a wonderful CD of gathas. They told me the artist was Peter Hata. Would that be you? I would like to buy a copy for our temple (San Jose Betsuin) and for myself. Can you tell me where I could buy a copy, either on line, or in the Bay Area? I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Janice Doi

Hi Janice,

That would be me--I think some Watsonville people attended the 2010 Baby Boomer Seminar at the Jodo Shinshu Center, where I presented those arrangements. Give me your address, and I'll send you a copy. There's no charge. In general, a gatha, like the Buddhadharmas itself, is given away freely.

Gassho,

Peter Hata

From = Ben Vinluan

Subject = Invitation to Peace Pole dedication

Message = Rev. Kawawata: Please come to our dedication of the Peace Pole on April 3, at 10:30. We would like that the honor of your presence would enrich the experience of all - we will have Christian, Jewish, Muslim and also Buddhist to be present there. Thank you, and please get back to me soon! Dr. Ben Vinluan, Covina United

Methodist Church, Covina, CA

Dear Ben Vinluan,
I'm very sorry for the delay in responding, and perhaps you've already finalized your program. My name is Peter Hata, and I'm a Minister's Assistant at West Covina Buddhist Temple. I don't believe Rev. Kawawata has responded to you yet, but if he has, you can disregard this message. Rev. Kawawata has been very busy lately because one of our sister temples in Newport Beach has had administrative issues requiring Kawawata-sensei's intervention. The problems are still ongoing, and I don't believe he will be available on April 3. However, the last time I spoke with him about your invitation, he said WCBT would be happy to attend, though we'd have to see who might be able to go. Your event coincides with our Sunday Service, for which we already needed to find a substitute for Rev. Kawawata!

If your invitation still holds, let me know, and I will see to it that either myself, our other Minister's Assistant, or one of our active Sangha (congregation) members will definitely attend.

Thank you, and once again my apologies for the delay.

Peter Hata

Subject: Re: Invitation to Peace Pole dedication

From: Ben & Gerda Vinluan

To: The Living Dharma Website

Dear Mr. Hata:

Thank you so much for your response to my previous email to Rev. Kawawata. I'm so sorry to know that Rev. Kawawata is having to serve beyond his usual task, but I'm hopeful and praying that he will be able to help resolve the problems he is being called upon to help resolve.

Thank you for being so gracious to offer to find someone else to take his place to respond to our invitation. However, I was so concerned when I failed to hear from him and, therefore, scrambled to find other possibilities. I therefore found someone else to pick up the slack. I'm sure there will be

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other times when we could make contact with you again for possible cooperative endeavor, for the sake of peace and understanding in our communities and the world.

Again thank you, and may God bless you and the congregation at West Covina Buddhist Temple. Kindly convey to Rev. Kawawata my warm greetings. Sincerely,
Rev. Dr. Ben Vinluan

From = Jason Higgins
Subject = Living with monks
Message = Hello, I'm not sure really how to ask this but I will try. Buddhism has always interested me. Recently I was involved in an accident and it had made me see life differently. I stand to get some compensation and with this money would like to travel. Even more so, I would like to live with Buddhist monks and learn their ways without becoming one. Is this possible? If so, please could you help me find how to go about it, as I can find nothing on the Internet but articles!
Many thanks
Jason Higgins

Dear Jason,
Like you, Buddhism interests me greatly. Like you, I was in an accident some time ago. It affirmed dramatically the truth of Buddhist impermanence! Now, to answer your question: Yes. It is possible to live with Buddhist monks without being one. Many temples and monasteries offer the possibilities of attending retreats, which I highly recommend. You do not say where you live, so I will point you to two web links: <<http://www.buddhanet.info>>www.buddhanet.info and <<http://www.dharmanet.org>>www.dharmanet.org -- they both have excellent directories to various temples and centers. You will discover that there is immense variety in Buddhist schools. Some are very colorful, some austere. Many are ethnic oriented, but the good ones will be open to all.
Now you need to do some homework. You are planning on committing your time, and finances -- most temples, retreats, will expect (encourage) donations to cover

your room and board. You need to choose wisely. Is there a particular tradition that you are curious about, or that would fit your needs? There's Zen, Tibetan, Theravadin, and so on. Are there techniques you want to explore? There's Vipisanna, Metta, Koan, Sitting, and so on. But much more importantly, you need to think about what your motivation is. What is it you really want to do and why? Many flee to a monastery thinking they can avoid the distractions of the world, but they find that they brought the world with them anyway. There's no escaping it. A fundamental Buddhist truth is that your mind IS the world. Buddhism is not about getting away from distractions. It is about dealing with distractions. What is enlightenment? If your bowl is dirty then you clean it. That's it. Do what needs to be done. Give attention to what needs to be attended to. "After the ecstasy, the laundry." Buddhism is about living your life, not running away from it. Having said all this, let me recommend that you seek a nearby temple to attend. Get to know the people, hear the teachings, learn to listen. Beware of "guruism". You do not want to be caught up in slavishly following any teacher. You want to know if your teacher is a student too. That he/she is open to learning. Once you've settled within a Sangha the opportunities of a retreat will be more meaningful for you.

As you've written our website, let me share a little about us. We don't have monks or monasteries. Not all of Buddhism is monastically driven. Jodo Shinshu, or Shin Buddhism, is lay oriented, family oriented, living the Dharma in the world. We do offer retreats. Our temple just held one recently. I am attaching a copy of our newsletter dealing with our retreat in order to give you an idea of what is talked about and shared. You might find it interesting, I hope inspiring! Anyway, I think if you really want to get to know Buddhism you should find a temple, a sangha, to be with, the rest will follow.

Good fortune to you! Let us know how it goes.
Gassho,
Fred Brenion

From = George

Subject = Obon

Message = When is the event scheduled for 2011? Do you teach obon dancing prior the the festival?

Dear George,
Our Obon festival is scheduled for Saturday, June 25. And yes, there are classes for the Obon dancing! Obon Odori (dance) practice will begin in June, every Tuesday and Friday, from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. All you need to bring are your kachi-kachi (castanets) and tenugui (Japanese towel) or fabric of equivalent size. The fans will be provided. Everyone is invited to join in the fun. I hope you will enjoy our coming Obon. It is a lot of fun, with many activities, excellent food, and good people to meet!
Gassho,
Fred Brenion

From = Eric Matsumoto

Subject = Visiting the Temple
Message = Hello, my name is Eric Matsumoto, and I'm a senior at Azusa Pacific University. I am a co-leader for a missions team of 7 people going to Japan this summer, and we would like to visit a local Japanese Buddhist temple to learn more about Buddhism and Japanese culture, and experience it firsthand so we can better understand the context of the Japanese people. However, we do not wish to intrude or disrupt anything uninvited, and therefore we would like to ask if it is possible for us to visit your temple service within the next couple weekends, or be able to learn more about Buddhist traditions and cultures by being immersed in a setting where we can understand it better. My cell phone number is 408-710-9549, so you can email me or call me back if there is a way we could coordinate a visit either next Sunday or the Sunday afterwards (Mar. 27th or Apr. 4th).
I'm sorry if this is too last minute, so we understand if we should not come. Thank you very much!

Dear Eric,
Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma
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Website. As to your question, we get regular visitors from your school. In fact, we just had several students visit this past Sunday. You are welcome to come to any service (<http://www.livingdharma.org/Calendar.html>), and after most services, we have an informal discussion group when you can ask questions.

Best Wishes,
Peter Hata

To: dharma@livingdharma.org

From: "Bobbi Allan"

Subject: Stillness in Action news Jan 2011

Mindfulness for School teachers:

During the past six months I have been researching the benefits of introducing Mindfulness training into schools. Focused awareness, as cultivated through mindfulness, helps students by improving attention, promoting academic achievement, reducing problem behaviours and increasing enthusiasm for learning. But the greater educational potential of mindfulness goes beyond raising test scores. Mindfulness has much to offer as educators address other intractable problems of education through facilitating the flexible transfer of skills and knowledge to new contexts, developing deep understanding of student motivation and engagement, strengthening critical and creative thinking, and fostering more self-directed learners.

As the problems caused by climate change and the depletion of the earth's resources become increasingly urgent, we will all need to know how to manage our minds, our thoughts and emotions. We will need enormous amounts of patience, steadiness, flexibility, creativity and resourcefulness. Introducing Mindfulness training to schools will help the next generations to stay calm, and to think and act creatively and collaboratively.

As I write that, the poet Deena Metzger's words come to mind:
We are setting fire to our world.
We are in danger.
There is time only to work slowly.
There is no time not to love.



There are schools around the world with Mindfulness programs, and the body of research supporting the benefits is growing. I want to support this movement, but as my skills are in

working with adults, not children, I am focusing on introducing mindfulness to teachers.

Bobbi Allen

www.stillnessinaction.net



T H E G A T E W A Y

東日本大震災に寄せて

ロサンゼルス東本願寺別院
輪番 伊東憲昭

日本の大地震と津波による被害そして人々の苦しみの姿は、連日私たちの目に焼き付いております。被災者や原発事故の恐怖に直面している方々に対し、私たちは太平洋を境にしてなすすべもなく唯無力さを感じております。この記事を書いている今、死者数は1万人に近づこうとしています。

政府や発電所の職員がこれ以上の被災を食い止めてくれるように、報道ニュースを見ながら願っています。

ツイッターに作業員の娘からのこんなつぶやきがありました。

「お父さん原発行っちゃったよ。母さんがあんなに泣いたの初めて聞いた。原発の人たちは自分を犠牲にみんなを守ろうと必死なんだよ みんな生きてほんとに生きて 原発の人の気持ちを無駄にしないで お父さん生きて戻ってきて。」

危険な作業に命を掛けて立ち向かう技術者について、この言葉を読んで私は初めて一人一人の人間を想像しました。作業を行っているのはロボットではなく一人の人間なのです。しかも、大災害の被災者であり、中には家や家族を失ったかたもおられるでしょう。そのような悲惨さわまりない状況下に耐えて、日本のためにまた近隣の韓国や中国のために、そしてここアメリカのために最前線で努力を続けているのです。

大無量寿経の中に法蔵菩薩のお話があります。阿弥陀如来となられる前に、法蔵菩薩は浄土を建立するための四十八の誓いを立てられました。この誓いは「本願」と呼ばれています。「すべての衆生が浄土に生まれなければ、私は本当の覚りを取らない」これは「生きとし生けるものが苦しみから解放さ

れない限り、法蔵菩薩は覚りの境地を喜ばない。法蔵菩薩は仏に成らず歩み続ける。」という事です。

大乘仏教におきまして、このような誓いは「菩薩の願」と呼ばれています。これが真の慈悲であり真の布施であります。中でも究極の布施とは自分の命を投げ出して他の命を助けようとする施しの行為なのです。

病気や死の危険性に顧みず、危険な状況下の原発施設で作業を行っている方々は私たちにとって「菩薩」と言えるでしょう。放射線漏れを防ぐという彼らの任務が成功することを全ての人々が願っています。しかし、万が一成功しなかったとしても、彼や彼女らは「英雄」そして「菩薩」として私たちの記憶に深く刻まれることでしょう。彼らの行動が、日本に希望を、そして全世界に希望を与える事を願っています。

お寺ニュース

花祭り法要

花祭り法要は4月4日午前10時より厳修いたします。この花祭りでは毎年皆様にお花をご持参いただき、花御堂をお飾りしお釈迦さまのお誕生をお祝いいたします。法要後、日曜学校子どもさん達の物語などがあります。その後リフレッシュメントもごございます。ご家族でお参りください。

WCBT スタディーセンター

春のレクチャー

前号にてお知らせしましたが、この4月5日より恒例の春のレクチャーが行われます。この度は別院より見義信

4月祥月法要
法話会花まつり法要
4月7日 午後7時半

香師ならび伊東憲昭開教監督をおむかえし近代の浄土真宗について4回にわたってお話し頂しいたします。4月5日12日は見義先生より、金子大榮師の教え、また19日26日は伊東監督により曾我量深師の思想について講義をされます。講義は英語で毎週火曜日午後7時から8時半まで行われます。

WCBT ゴルフ基金募集

今年のお寺のゴルフ大会は5月6日午後1時よりインダストリーヒルズゴルフクラブにて開催されます。ただいま参加者、またティースポンサー並びブックレットの広告を募集しております。みなさまのご協力をお願い申し上げます。参加費はお一人160ドルで大会後の夕食が含まれております。この大会はお寺の大事な基金募集一つであります。どうぞお知り合いの方にもおすすめてください。(626) 913-0622

母の日家族礼拝

5月7日(日)午前10時より母の日家族礼拝をお勤めいたします。例年のごとく会員の方の母の日メッセージがございます。また青年会では母の日朝食を用意し、ダルマスクールでは素敵なプレゼントをお参りのお母さん、おばあちゃんに用意しております。みなさんでお参りください。



日本語座談会ご案内
4月12日並び26日
午後1時

センターダイニングルーム
気軽に参加出来る座談会です。
お友達をお誘いの上お出で下さ

East San Gabriel Valley
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple
1203 West Puente Avenue
West Covina, California 91790
(626) 913-0622

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DATED MATERIAL

THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GATEWAY

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April

- 3 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 3 10:00 am WCBT Hanamatsuri Service
- 5 7:00 pm WCBT Study Center Lecture
- 7 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 10 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 10 1:00 pm LABCF Hanamatsuri @Nishi Honganji
- 12 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 12 7:00 pm WCBT Study Center Lecture
- 17 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 19 7:00 pm WCBT Study Center Lecture
- 24 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 26 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 26 7:00 pm WCBT Study Center Lecture

May

- 1 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 1 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 5 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 6 1:00 pm WCBT Golf Tournament
- 8 10:00 am Mother's Day Family Service
- 10 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 15 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 22 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 29 10:00 am Tanjo-e/Hatsumairi Service
- 31 10:00 am Bonbu Class

4月行事予定

- 3日 午前8時半 理事会
- 3日 午前10時 花祭り法要
- 7日 午後7時半 法話会
- 10日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 午前11時 仏連花祭り法要、於：西別院
- 12日 午後1時 同信会座談会
- 17日 午前10時 日曜法要
- 24日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 26日 午後1時 同信会座談会

5月行事予定

- 1日 午前8時半 理事会
- 1日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 5日 午後7時半 法話会
- 6日 午後1時 ゴルフトーナメント
- 8日 午前10時 母の日家族礼拝
- 10日 午後1時 同信会座談会
- 15日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 22日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 29日 午前10時 親鸞聖人誕生会／初参り法要
- 31日 午後1時 同信会座談会

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