



GATEWAY



January 2012 -- Vol. XLV No. 1

Living Dharma News
www.livingdharma.org

Over the past few months (years?), certain improvements have been in the works for the website, but have yet to be implemented. Sometime this year however, I will transition to a newer website design application. This is necessary to add at least a few of the modern navigational aids most websites (and at least a few Buddhist temple websites) have today, such as drop-down menus. Now that the Library and Real World sections have nearly 200 articles, a more user-friendly organization style is needed. Also, I've asked Rev. Fred Brenion to help expand the selections in our site's Bookstore. There are only eight selections currently, but we can expand that considerably. I'm hoping our bookstore can be distinguished by its choices.

Gassho,
 Peter Hata

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Year-End Service Highlights

West Covina Buddhist Temple's 2011 Year-End Service was a memorable combination of sutra chanting, Dharma talk, expressions of gratitude in the Oseibo ("year-end gift") portion, entertaining "battle of the genders" in the quasi-Family Feud skit, impressive displays of talent in the music portion, and of course, sampling the delectable dishes of WCBT's famous Year-End potluck. All in all, the event provided a fitting upbeat climax to an eventful year that seemed to just "fly by."

The service began with chairperson Mr. Lee Ezaki reflecting on how, despite our economically tough times, he personally was very grateful for the life that he is able to enjoy. Following his opening message, the service

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Above, WCBT's hard-working staff was thanked at the 2011 Year-End Service (left to right): Rev. Peter Hata, Rev. Ken Kawawata, Mary Hatakeyama, Hisako Koga, President Johnny Martinez, Joy Kitaura, Diane Hata, Merry Jitosh, Rev. Fred Brenion, Jeanne Kawawata, Pat Sato, Tor Ormseth, Ruby Kagawa, Denise Underwood.

Happy New Year!

By Rev. Kenjun Kawawata

First of all I would like to express my thanks to everyone who has given me and the temple great support, suggestions, and encouragement during the last year.

Last year was a very busy and active year for WCBT. We had 6 major services in addition to regular Sunday services. We also had 7 major fund raisers and a lecture series. I am so glad we could make last year a successful year too. Thank you very much.

Last July, Peter and Fred received tokudo ordination and became Jodo Shinshu priests. They always lead chanting with me every Sunday. And they also deliver dharma messages when I am absent at temple. This year they are going to receive kyoshi ordination which is like a teacher's credential for Shinshu ministers. I'm really impressed with their determination to walk on the path of Jodo Shinshu and have a deep appreciation for their effort and time to share the Buddha dharma

with all of us.

Once they receive Kyoshi credentials, we will increase the number of lecture series and classes and will have more opportunities to provide religious education for our members and people who want to listen to the dharma. We also would like to have more Yonsei and Gosei participate in our temple activities and operation.

I think that our community is changing and we have more people and

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Temple Event Highlights:

- Jan. 1, New Year Service
- Jan. 22, Eitaikyo service
- Feb. 12, Pet's Memorial
- Feb. 17-19, Family Retreat
- Please See Temple News

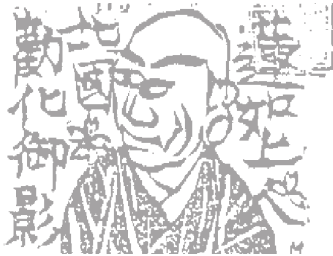


T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

Seasons Greetings everyone! To help prevent brain-freeze over the winter break, try to find 16 words which you can spell using S-H-I-N-R-A-N. Two-letter words do count! (answers below) Good luck and Happiest New Year ever!

With Gassho,
Diane Hata



Above: at the Dec. 4 Bodhi Day Service, Mrs. Deanna Matsumoto gave an interesting slide show presentation on the history of Japanese-Americans in the Los Angeles area, which included some early pictures of Higashi Honganji Sanghas.

Quote of the Month

The buddha-dharma is about examining our lives, our behavior, our speech, and the means by which we earn our keep on this planet—and how all these activities connect with everything else. We have only one choice. Either we awaken, or we do not.

-Steve Hagen

Answers: is, an, in, ash, ran, air, sin, has, his, sir, im, rash, hair, rain, rains

YEAR END 2011



Clockwise from above: Diane Hata MCs, Johnny Martinez makes Oseibo presentations, the ladies team (Joanie Martinez, Claudia Haraguchi, Pat Sato, Joy Kitaura & Jeanne Kawawata) vs the mens team (Ted Kato, Johnny, Rev. Fred, Rev. Peter & Rev. Ken) in WCBT's version of Family Feud, Bodhi Tree Band, John Erickson plays an original composition on his piano and Peter Hata, Taiji Miyagawa & Bob Stack jam to A Foggy Day. Opposite page: Bodhi Tree Band with Leo Kowalski, Yasmin Whang, Sean Underwood, Noah Kowalski & Matthew Ormseth.





T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

New Years Day Service

A special service to commemorate the new year will be held Sunday, January 1, 2011, at 10:00 AM. Following the service, Jeanne Kawawata will be serving her delicious *Oshiruko* so please let Rev. Ken know if you're planning to attend.

Eitaikyo & General Meeting

WCBT Eitaikyo will be held on Sunday, January 22 at 10 a.m. followed by the General Meeting. Rev. Takafumi Bansaka will be our special speaker. A fundraising luncheon will be provided by the Jr. YBA for \$10. All lunches will be presale only so make sure you contact one of the Jrs to get your Eitaikyo lunch tickets. Join us for our yearly service and meeting and stay to support our Jrs!

Family Retreat

Our annual Family Retreat will be held on the weekend of February 17-19 at the Newport Beach Higashi Honganji this year. Expect another great weekend with stimulating discussions, quality time with sangha friends, access to the beach and as always, too much food. For those of you who are lamenting the change from San Luis Obispo, think of it as saving 3 hours of driving time each way.

See Rev Ken for more info.

Pet's Memorial Service

A special service will be held on February 12 at 10:00 AM to remember our animal friends. Everyone who has lost a pet is invited to pay tribute to them on this special day.

Kiku Crafts Thank You

Our 3rd annual Kiku Crafts & Food Fair was held on Sunday, November 6 under rainy skies. Our determined Sangha members geared up to cook, serve and help in anyway. Over 20 craft fair vendors arrived to set up their wares, hoping the weather would clear up. Unfortunately the rain fell steadily throughout most of the day but despite it, we also had a slow but steady flow of customers come by.

A big "thank you" to everyone who came out to help. Whether it was helping set up the gym the night before, working in the kitchen, barbecuing in the rain, delivering lunches to vendors, welcoming customers while sitting out in the cold, setting up the mike, coming up with trivia questions, handling the raffle or just coming out to shop to support our vendors and buy some of that great West Covina food, we couldn't have done it without everyone's help.

Thank You!
Hisako Koga



GATEWAY Staff

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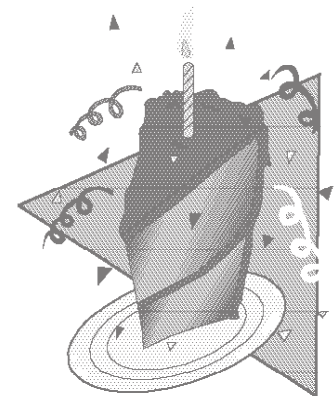
West Covina Buddhist Temple Mission Statement:
In the spirit of universal brotherhood, West Covina Buddhist Temple provides the opportunity for all to listen to and share the Teachings of the Buddha in order that we may awaken to our true selves, living our lives fully and dynamically.

The Temple's mailing address is:

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West Covina, CA 91793
(626) 913-0622

Website: www.livingdharma.org

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Tami Kitaura, Casey Hansen, Kevin Maekawa, Susan Kashiwabara, Carol Oshima, Neil Kato, Kathy Oshima, Cora Ormseth, Matthew Ormseth, Kristen Nakano, Jesse Sakaue





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proceeded with Sutra chanting led by Rev. Kawawata, with Revs. Brenion and Hata assisting, and also included the gatha "A Special Place," with the Sangha accompanied by the Bodhi Tree Band.

Next, Rev. Kawawata gave a heartfelt Dharma talk. First, he

completing their kyoshi ministerial training next year and that, at that time, WCBT will be able to enter a new phase of listening to and sharing the Dharma together.

The next part of the Year End program was the annual Oseibo Gift presentations to WCBT's dedicated

the bell, they literally smacked it off the table! But the most interesting difference with this game was that the survey questions were specifically about WCBT's services and about Buddhism itself. Everyone was glued to their seats to hear the answers since the questions were very "close to



Above: Rev. Ken faces off against Joanie Martinez in the Family Feud game show put on by WCBT's creative Jr. YBA

sincerely thanked the entire Sangha for their support of WCBT throughout the year, not just for attending our services, study classes, and retreats, but also for participating in the various fund-raisers throughout the year that support the temple financially. Moving on, he discussed the topic of impermanence by relating his very recent experience of trying to frantically prepare for his December Japan trip—he was going on a three week tour with the Kinnara Gagaku Group of Senshin Buddhist Temple, and needed to complete various computer-related duties before leaving—only to have his computer suddenly "die." And as we all know, very early on the morning of December 1st, we all experienced the unprecedented Southern California windstorm which knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of people (including Sensei). But he also ended his talk on a positive note by mentioning how he looked forward to Fred Brenion and Peter Hata

staffers by WCBT president Mr. Johnny Martinez. As he called each staffer up to the podium to receive a thank you gift from the temple, he also introduced and discussed how they tirelessly contribute to the operation of the temple.

The entertainment portion began with the Jr. YBA skit, which was a clever game based on Family Feud, and which was often quite hilarious. There were two teams, one made of of "the men" (Rev. Ken, Rev. Peter, Rev. Fred, Johnny Martinez, and Ted Kato) which was pitted against "the women" (Claudia Haraguchi, Joanie Martinez, Pat Sato, Joy Kitaura, Jeanne Kawawata). Just as in the Family Feud, one contestant from each team faced each other with a bell in-between. When the question was asked, the contestants had to guess the answers given by the Sangha from a survey that had been previously taken—and tap the bell first. Some contestants got so into it that instead of lightly tapping

home."

There were some fairly easy questions, such as, "Which hand do you hold your ojuzu in?" In the survey, most of the Sangha answered "left" (whew), but yes, 13% actually said "right." To the question, "What is your most important Buddhist practice during Sunday Service?," there were many good answers like "listen to the Dharma" (42%), "recite nembutsu" (17%), "chanting sutra" (11%), "gassho" (8%), and "discussion group" (5%). Of course, then there were those who couldn't pick just one and wanted to cover their bases and responded with "all of the above" (8%). Hmm... since when was "all of the above" a legitimate survey response on Family Feud?

Not surprisingly—since it is frequently emphasized in sermons and discussion, "impermanence" was the most popular response (31%) to the question, "What is the most meaningful

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Jodo Shinshu teaching?" But it seemed to be the question, "What is the hardest thing about being a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist?" that led to some of the most interesting responses. For example, besides expected responses like "being non-judgemental," "self-examination," and "letting go of your ego," there were several responses that reflect our larger context in America, such as "having to deal with intense Christians at my school," living in a Judeo-Christian society," and "being seen as a heretic." Then there a few realistic responses like "getting to service on time"; apparently, not everyone is a "morning person." Of course, there was at least one person who was seemingly overwhelmed by it all and responded with "everything" regarding what was hard about being a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. Maybe he/she should hook up with the person who responded to this same question with, "nothing" (both are right).

In the musical portion, Mr. John Erickson played an enjoyable and evocative solo piano piece he had recently composed entitled, "The Illusion of Hope and the Affirmation of Belief" that had everyone listening very intently. Following him, the Bodhi Tree Band played a very well-received set consisting of "Simply to Forget" (a contemporary rock tune encouraging us to try to make the world a better place for all), the ever-popular "Sukiyaki," and the pop hit, "Kids," by the group MGMT. Next Bodhi's talented vocalist Yasmin Whang sang a very beautiful and Buddhist contemporary Christmas tune entitled, "My Grown Up Christmas List," accompanied by Peter Hata on guitar and special guest Taiji Miyagawa, an accomplished jazz bassist. As a finale, Peter and Taiji were then joined by the mellow sounds of Bob Stack on tenor sax. The trio improvised several melodic choruses on the well-known Gershwin gem entitled, "A Foggy Day."

Of course, no sooner had the ending chord of that song finished sounding that everyone rushed their growling stomachs to the kitchen to eat!

Because of the diverse contributions of the Sangha, this was a memorable Year-End Service, arguably one of the most successful ever. Perhaps the most encouraging aspect was that it was also a very well-attended service, with a sizable number of the people being newcomers who have been active at WCBT less than a year.

L.D. NEWS, con't from page 1

Selected E-mail

From = Enrique Reyes
 Subject = Buddhist's Life in California
 Message = To whom it may concern,
 Hi, I am doing a school research as to how Buddhism is a lived tradition in California. Where may I find more information or is there someone that may be willing to answer small questions/interview via email?
 Thank you for your time.

Dear Enrique,

Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, there is a great deal of relevant information on our website. Go to our Library page and browse the titles of the various links. For example, in the "Memorable Dharma Talks" section, Rev. John Doami's "True Listening Can Change Your Life" and Rev. Marvin Harada's "Message to Baby Boomers—The Best Years of Your Life Are Ahead" are two great essays. In the "Living Dharma Articles" section, which are thoughtful essays written by our lay Sangha; "Searching for the Way," by Reiko Ikehara Nelson and "My Path to Buddhism," by Julie Griffith are quite relevant to your research. Finally, in the Retreats and Seminars" section, I'd recommend any of the reports on our temple's family retreats at the San Luis Obispo Buddhist Temple; there are four different short reports for 2004 and 2005, with guest speaker Dr. Franz Metcalf (author of "What Would Buddha Do?"), 2009 (with Revs. Fred Brenion and myself), and 2011 (with Rev. Mas Kodani). While these retreats feature lectures on Buddhist teachings, they are probably most popular with our Sangha because over the weekend, participants get to relax and enjoy each other's company away from the hustle and

bustle of city life (San Luis Obispo is about a 4 hour drive from Southern California).

At these retreats, listening to the teachings, cooking and eating together, and enjoying the beautiful scenery, Buddhism truly comes to life as a member of the Sangha. If you need more info, feel free to contact us.

Best Wishes,

Peter Hata

The Living Dharma Website

West Covina Buddhist Temple

From = June Kuehn

Subject = Cookbook

Message = I am looking for a cookbook that came from recipes from members at a Buddhist temple but can't recall which location it came from. Do you have a book of this kind? Thank you.
 June Kuehn

Dear June,

Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, you didn't mention which city you live in (that might be a helpful clue), but in any case, we don't have a cookbook, not yet at least. But I recommend you go to the Buddhist Churches of America's Bookstore and check out the various temple cookbooks they stock:
<http://stores.buddhistbookstore.com/Categories.bok>

Near the bottom of the page, they have cookbooks from the Makawao Hongwanji Temple, Buddhist Church of Lodi, Buddhist Temple of San Diego, Ekoji Temple, Gardena Buddhist Church, Los Angeles Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Stockton Buddhist Temple, and Toronto Buddhist Church. If those titles don't ring a bell, you can always e-mail Gayle (sales@bcabookstore.com) and ask her to recommend a cookbook.

Best Wishes,

Peter Hata

The Living Dharma Website

West Covina Buddhist Temple

From: "Dharma Learner"

Subject: Mahayana sutras in English

Dear friends, Of the 31 Mahayana Buddhist sutras posted on this website at <<http://www.sutrasmantras.info>,

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L.D. NEWS, con't from page 5

Sutra 8 is actually a subsection in the Shurangama Sutra. As Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva teaches in the Heart Sutra (Sutra 16) the principle, Great Might Arrived Bodhisattva teaches in Sutra 8 the practice. It is a real gem. Buddhists are recommended to recite this mini Sutra from memory along with the Heart Sutra. This website does not represent any Buddhist group, but is intended to serve all Buddhist students. Would you please share this website with your friends? Thank you and wishing you joy in the Dharma,
Sincerely,
Dharma Learner

Dear Dharma Learner,

Thank you for sharing your website with us. It is always good to be aware of the great teachings that have been given to us. I see that your site presents the great Chinese teachers of the Pure Land. Our own tradition, which developed in Japan, Jodo Shinshu, looks with great pride on our Chinese inheritance that we received from such great teachers as Donran, Doshakuk, and Zendo. In Japan, the great teacher Honen learned from them, and his disciple, Shinran, carried the the Pure Land Way to new heights and brought it to our hearts today. I think you might find Shinran inspiring as he found the way of relying completely on Amida's Vows. Thank you again. I appreciate the hard work that our spiritual cousins in the Pure Land Way have done in keeping the Chinese Buddhist heritage alive and vibrant for us all to study.

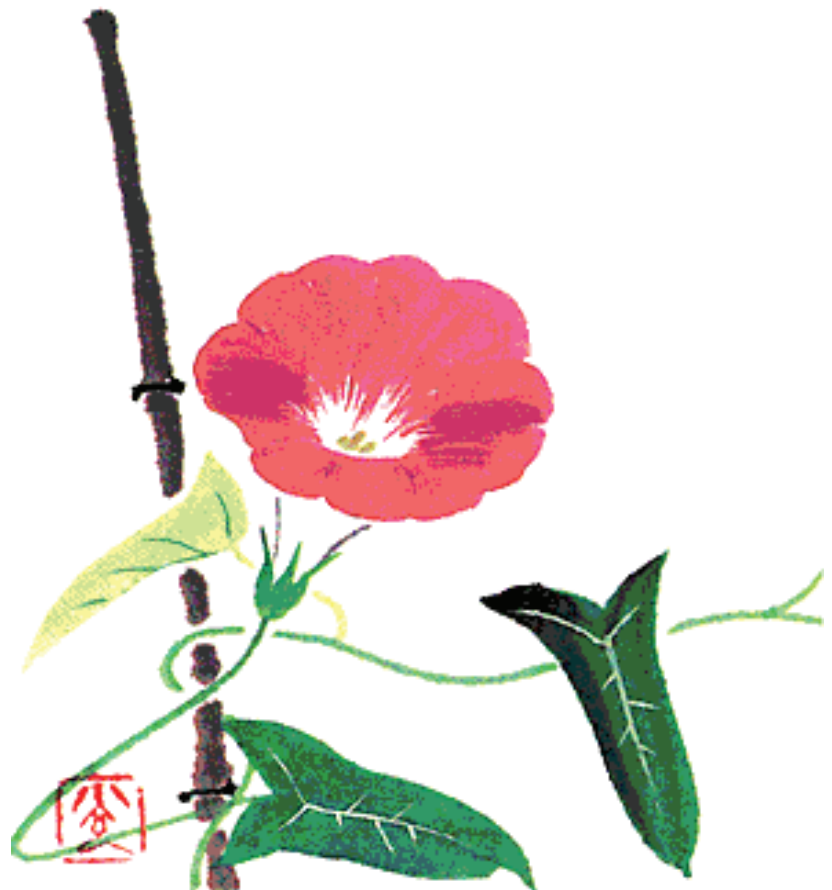
*Sincerely,
Frederick Brenion
The Living Dharma Website
West Covina Buddhist Temple*

From = Max

Subject = Questions

Message = Hi I am a college student in a world religions class and I was asked by my professor to interview people from different religions and was wondering if you would allow me to ask a few questions regarding your religion and the choice of it.

Dear Max,



*Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, you are welcome to attend any Sunday Service. Towards the end of our services, we usually have an informal discussion group and you are welcome to ask your questions then.
Best Wishes,
Peter Hata
The Living Dharma Website
West Covina Buddhist Temple*

From = Anh Chung
Comment = Do you speak Vietnamese at your services or is it all in English?

*Dear Anh,
Thanks for visiting our Living Dharma Website. As to your question, our services are in English.
Best Wishes,
Peter Hata
The Living Dharma Website
West Covina Buddhist Temple*

NEW YEAR, con't from page 1

members from outside of the Japanese American community. We'll keep our traditions but we need to change and open our temple to people who really seek the way and teachings for life.

We will again have a busy and exciting schedule this coming year. I hope that we listen to the dharma together and have a good and meaningful 2012.

I would like to ask for your support for this year again.

Thank you in gassho,
Rev. Kenjun Kawawata





T H E G A T E W A Y

新年のご挨拶

河和田賢淳

皆様あけましておめでとうございませう。昨年中はお寺また法話会に対してのご理解とご協力ありがとうございました。皆様のご協力により実りある一年となりましたこと心より御礼申し上げます。本年も公私ともによろしくお願い申し上げます。新年を迎えます時、新たなる気持ちをもってスタートを切り、今年が良き年である事を願うことであります。昨年もお寺はみなさまのお陰で活発な一年を過ごすことができました。報恩講をはじめとする6大法要、各種研修行事、定例礼拝やお盆フェスティバルやダンス等の7つの基金募集行事などで、門徒の方はいつも何かの準備をしている様な一年でした。しかしながらこうしてこのお寺が真の仏法を聞く場所としてみなさまのお力で支えられているのです。本当にありがたいことです。

お正月を迎えますといつも一休禅師の句を思い出します。

「門松や冥土の旅の一里塚、めでたくもあり、めでたくもなし」

正月は皆新年を迎えたと、おめでたいと祝うのです。しかし他方から見れば一休さんのいわれる如く、死に一步近づいていることでもあります。一休さんは「私どもは毎年毎年、死の世界に近づいていることを忘れていけないのだ。私どもは無常世界に住んでいる。」と言っているのです。それは私どもの事実で明日おも知れないいのちを生きているのです。死を通して本来の生、生活のあり方が見えてくるのです。いつ終わるか判らないいのち生きる、色々な選択が私どもの前にあります。どれ

をとっても一回きり、この瞬間、今日この一日、そしてこの一年、この一生かけがえのない時を私どもは生きていくのです。一日一日を一回一回の出会いを大切に日暮らしさせていただき、このことがきっと有意義な一年に無駄のない人生につながってゆくことなんでしょう。

本年もみなさまと一緒に聴聞させていただき、共に有意義な一年を過ごせますことを念じます。

今年もよろしくお願い申し上げます。

お寺ニュース

修正会法要

修正会法要は2012年1月1日(日)午前10時よりお勤めされます。皆様と正信偈をお勤めし、その後河和田開教使の新年の挨拶があります。法要後河和田ジニー夫人の作ったおしるこを頂き、皆様と新年の挨拶を交わします。どうぞこの新年初のお参りにご家族お揃いでお参りください。一年は初めを正信偈のおつとめで始めましょう。ご家族一緒にお参りください。

2012年度

永代経法要・教団総会

2012年度永代経法要1月22日午前10時より厳修されます。今年も昨年同様、御法話には昨年7月赴任された北米開教監督部の番坂啓史師を御招きしております。法要後教団総会が開かれ新年度の役員が選出されます。お寺の大事な総会です。どうぞ法要、総会にご出席ください。またお斎は仏教青年会のより唐揚げチキン弁当が用意されます。お弁当は8ドルで

この収益金は仏教青年会の活動資金として使用されます。テイクアウトもできますのでお知らせください。

1月日本語祥月法要／法話会

2012年最初の法話会は並び日本語祥月法要は来る1月5日午後7時半よりお勤めされます。どうぞご家族、お友達をお誘いの上、1月祥月法要にお参りください。

お寺家族リトリート

来る2月17日(金) - 19日(日)家族リトリートをニューポートビーチ費が東本願寺にて開催いたします。この度は御講師に伊東憲昭開教監督を招きしております。今年は場所を変えて行われますが、内容は講義、座談、ビーチでの野外活動などで家族一緒にお楽しみいただけるプログラムが組まれております。お寺に宿泊されない参加者はモーター、ホテルにも宿泊可能です。日常をはなれ仏法にただ耳を傾けるよい機会です。どうぞお誘いの上ご参加ください。詳しくは河和田開教使までお尋ねください。



1月祥月法要／法話会

1月5日

午後7時半

日本語座談会ご案内

1月10日並び24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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THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GATEWAY

January 2012 - - Vol. XLV No. 1

January 2012

- 1 10:00 am New Year's Day Service
- 5 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 8 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 8 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 10 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 15 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 22 10:00 am Eitaikyo Service /General Meeting
- 24 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 29 10:00 am Sunday Service

February

- 2 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 5 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 5 10:00 am Shotsuki Service/Nirvana Day Service
- 12 10:00 am Sunday Service/Pets Memorial Service
- 14 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 17-19 WCBT Family Retreat
- 19 No Sunday Service
- 26 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 28 10:00 am Bonbu Class

2012年1月行事予定

- 1日 午前10時 修正会法要
- 5日 午後7時半 法話会
- 8日 午前8時半 理事会
- 8日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 10日 午後1時 同信会(座談会)
- 15日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 23日 午前10時 永代経法要/総会新年会
- 24日 午後1時 同信会(座談会)
- 29日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

2月行事予定

- 2日 午後7時半 法話会
- 5日 午前8時半 理事会
- 5日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 12日 午前10時 日曜礼拝/ペット追悼法要
- 14日 午後1時 同信会(座談会)
- 17日-19日 家族リトリート
- 19日 日曜礼拝はありません
- 26日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 28日 午後1時 同信会(座談会)

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はだかでお発する 尊いことだ

竹部勝之進