



GATEWAY



April 2013 -- Vol. XLVII No. 4

Living Dharma News

www.livingdharma.org

As the saying goes, "what's old is new again," and "new" on our website is a very old dharma talk given at WCBT in 1995 by Rev. Takami Inoue. Rev. Inoue's talk was called, "The Significance of Being Human," and I think you'll enjoy reading it (again). It's in our Memorable Dharma Talks section.

At the time, Rev. Inoue was a grad student at UCSB and was invited by WCBT's minister, Rev. Kiyota, as a guest speaker for our Hanamatsuri. Interestingly, at that point in my life, I recall being active at WCBT but certainly not considering the ministry at all.

What's really intriguing to me though is that, not only was Rev. Inoue one of four teachers that instructed Rev. Fred and myself during our 2012 kyoshi training at the Honzan, in this early dharma talk, he states that though he is from a family of ministers, he himself did not really identify with the Buddhist teachings until much later in life, until causes and conditions led him to seek the dharma. As he states, "I was more religiously motivated...I had problems and questions about

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Living the Dharma

by Susan Shibuya

When my daughter was only 2 years old I brought our family to WCBT. I felt the message of Buddhism to be both the truest and the most enriching. Attending regular Sunday services had not been a part of my husband's life since the day his Nisei parents told him they would no longer make him attend Protestant services.

I grew up in the Catholic Church when the mass was still in Latin but spent 6 months living in India. I see Hinduism as the mother religion which nourishes worship in many forms.



Above: WCBT received timely help at its 2013 Cherry Blossom Festival fundraiser, such as that given by Howakai member Yaeko Morita, who gave some suggestions on the packaging of the mixed sushi plates at the 2013 Cherry Blossom Festival (more pics on page 2)

2013 Cherry Blossom Festival Report

The East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center held its annual Cherry Blossom Festival on March 16th. It was amazing to see all of the center's organizations come together to put on this event. Our temple was well-represented by the hardy members who came early to set up, cook, and sell

But the form of devotion to a particular god—any particular god—never brought me peace or understanding.

Though I was drawn to the Dharma, there never seemed to be enough time or energy left by Sunday to get my family to attend service together. Still, I continued to read the Gateway and gain inspiration from Rev. Hata's wise and compassionate writings. For the past few years I've been supervising the care of my aging and ailing in-laws. A few months ago, when my father-in-law's condition was worsening dramatically, I knew I needed to find a way to nurture myself to be able to keep giving. That's when I saw the notice in

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delicious chicken teriyaki dinner plates. We were also extremely fortunate to have our Howakai members enhance our food booth with mixed sushi, totaling almost 100 containers of *inari* and *makisushi*! Initially, there was some worry whether WCBT's booth would do well as there were quite a few other food booths present. Needless to say, WCBT's food kind of "sells itself," and the hungry participants showed their approval and support by helping us to sell out just before the festival ended. Arigato gozaimashita to all.

Temple Event Highlights:

- Apr. 7 Hanamatsuri
- Apr. 7 LABCFF Hanamatsuri
- Apr. 8 Intro To Buddhism
- Apr.19 WCBT Golf Tournament
- May 12 Mother's Day Service
- May 19 Tanjo-e/Hatsumairi
- Please See Temple News



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

April has always had a special meaning for us Buddhists. The beautiful celebration of the Buddha's birthday takes place with flowers on the altar, the pouring of sweet tea over the Buddha's image, the Sangha singing "In Lumbini's Garden," etc. In order to help you (not just the kids) prepare for this joyous event, please try your hand at filling in the blanks below. The purpose is just to refresh your memory:

Over (a) _____ years ago, in the small kingdom of (b) _____, King (c) _____ & Queen (d) _____ became the proud parents of a baby boy named (e) _____. Legend tells us that the infant took f) _____ steps, with his (g) _____ hand pointing upward, and his(h) _____ hand pointing downward declaring: "(i) _____."

If you're a bit doubtful, see if you can choose the correct fill-ins from the helpful hints below.

With Gassho,
(j) _____

- (a) 250, 2,500, 2005
- (b) New Delhi, Mumbai, Kapilavastu
- (c) Suddhodana, Bimbisara, Raul
- (d) Lana, Maya, Kisa
- (e) Samuel, Siddartha, Ashoka
- (f) 10, 3, 7
- (g) left, right
- (h) left, right
- (i) I'm okay, you're okay! Above the heavens, below the heavens, I alone am the most noble. I'm so glad we have this time together!
- (j) Michelle Kwan, Diane Hata, Ann Curry



Quote of the Month

If you meet the Buddha in the lane,
feed him the ball.
-Coach Phil Jackson, *Sacred Hoops*

Assorted March Pics



Above: L-R, Larry Oshima, Bob Stack, Anthony Gutierrez, Rev. Peter Hata, and Don Frack have been studying together in the Bombu Study Class since about October of last year—they don't call it the "Larger Sutra" for nothing!



Above: At WCBT's Spring Ohigan Service, guest speaker Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi clarified the here-and-now relevance of the Pure Land teaching for our everyday lives. Below: WCBT President Mr. Johnny Martinez presents 2012 Oseibo gifts to Rev. Peter, Diane and Jeanne Kawawata.



Above: Early morning strategizing at the Cherry Blossom Festival. Below: Richard Kagawa, Johnny Martinez, and Jennifer Higa were just a few of our stalwart members who worked the entire day.





T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

Study Center Lecture Series

The WCBT Study Center Lecture Series continues in April with "Introduction to Buddhism." The lectures will be held on April 8, 15, 22 and 29 (Monday evenings) at 7:00-8:30 PM. For more information contact Rev. Peter.

WCBT Hanamatsuri

West Covina's Hanamatsuri Service will be held on Sunday, April 7, 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, Dharmatones, and light refreshments will be served after the service. We invite you to come and join us to celebrate the Buddha's birthday!

LACBF Hanamatsuri

The Federation Hanamatsuri Service will be held on April 7 beginning at 1:00 PM at the Jodoshu Temple in downtown LA (park in our Betsuin's lot and walk across the street). Everyone is encouraged to attend the LACBF service after WCBT Hanamatsuri Service. The event features a uniquely colorful service with more than a dozen priests of Higashi Honganji, Nishi Honganji, Jodoshu, Zenshuji, Koyasan, and Nichirenshu. Also, the keynote speaker will be Dr. Lori Meeks, Associate Professor of Religion at USC, who will speak on "Buddhism and Women." Finally, the 200+ precious artworks of LACBF kids will be displayed...and

rumor has it that one of WCBT's kids may have won a prize!

WCBT's 16th Annual Golf Classic

Mark your calendars for WCBT's 17th Annual Golf Classic, which will be held on Friday, April 19, at the Industry Hills Gold Club on the Eisenhower "Ike" Course, One Industry Hills Parkway, City of Industry, CA 91744. Registration starts at 11:00 am, Putting Contest is 11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Shotgun start is 1:00 pm and Dinner at 6:30 pm. The \$160 entry fee includes golf, cart, putting contest, accuracy drive contest, hole-in-one contest, pre-tournament snack, dinner and prizes. The format is Scramble and the options are 3 Mulligans for \$10 and 50/50 closest to the pin for \$5. Please contact Roy Takemura (909-973-2580) if you'd like to participate, sponsor or volunteer.

Mother's Day Service

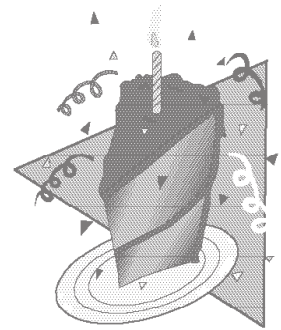
A Mother's Day family service will be held on May 12, at 10:00 AM. A special tribute to all mothers will be presented so please attend this special service. Guest speaker TBA.

Tanjo-e & Hatsumairi

The Tanjo-e and Hatsumairi (new baby) Service will be held on May 19 at 10:00 A.M. There will be a special ceremony to acknowledge new additions to our Sangha. Please contact Rev. Peter 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.
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Facebook: facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple
E-Mail: dharmalivingdharma.org



APRIL

Lauren Miyake, Randy Maekawa, Susan Oshima, Nancy Maekawa, Kevin Kawawata, Tammy Lespron, Yaeko Davis, Kristen Hiranaka, Jacob Kato, Adriana Kochi, Kellie Komoda, Shakyakamuni Buddha



Above left: On March 10, Rev. Hata participated with a dozen other priests of the Los Angeles Buddhist Church Federation in a memorial service in downtown LA for the victims of the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami; at right, Rev. Toho (Zenshuji), Rev. Tanaka (Jodoshu), Rev. Hata (Higashi Honganji), Rev. Hayashi (Koyasan) and Rev. Kako (Koyasan) prepare for the service.



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the Gateway about the family retreat. My daughter, now 22, agreed with me that it would be a lovely event for us to attend together.

This message was especially appropriate for me to hear since my father in law had just passed away.

Unfortunately, she came down with one of the bad colds going around and didn't want to share it with the Sangha, so I came alone. Being a science teacher and an environmentalist I am quite at home with the message of interdependence. But I struggle every day with accepting impermanence. The haiku Rev. Yamada quoted at the retreat made me realize that the struggle is living the Dharma. "The world of dew... and yet... and yet..." This message was especially appropriate for me to hear since my father in law had just passed away.

By reading the Gateway I've come to appreciate that participation in the Sangha is also part of living the Dharma. I was so grateful to be sharing the time and energy and wonderful treats cooked up by a group of people who were all sharing the same struggles, in light of the Dharma, that I didn't even mind offering a kanwa!

I tried again, this past Sunday, to get my family to share the warmth of the Sangha with me—everyone at WCBT is so very welcoming and kind—but the demands of their lives are too great at this time. However, I will continue to look for an appropriate way to contribute to the Sangha in gratefulness for the wonderful opportunity to share the Dharma that WCBT offers to anyone who can either read or participate in the community of those supporting each other in the search for their path to the living Dharma. ☸

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life. I wanted to take refuge and seek answers in the teachings of the Buddha and Shinran Shonin." I think this has certainly proven to be true for me also. And who would have thought that, after hearing Inoue-sensei in 1995 at

WCBT, I'd hear him again at the Honzan in Kyoto some 17 years later, this time much more religiously motivated myself?

Gassho,
Rev. Peter Hata

Selected E-mail

To: dharma@livingdharma.org
From = Richard Meyers
Subject = Christian/Buddhist discussion

Message = Just to say I found your article heart warming and wondered what led to its being written. As a member of a Pure Land group here in the UK, I am often dismayed by the comments made, attacking Christianity. I grew up within the Catholic Church, but grew disaffected with it as a teenager. It was only in my later middle years that I rediscovered something of the beauty and profundity of Jesus' teaching.

Right now as I approach my 66th year, I am conscious of the flowering and cross-pollination possible between both traditions. It is through my Buddhist practice that I have come to recognise the humanity and beauty of Christ.

Dear Richard,

Thank you for writing to us. I'm happy to hear that we're being read in the U.K! I'm not sure which article you're referring to. I know I've written a few of them, and I know I've answered many email questions on the subject! Speaking for myself, it saddens me when I see others entering Buddhism with anger still in their hearts at their former religions. There may be very good reasons for leaving one religion for another, but one should not bring anger into Buddhism, or any other group for that matter. Buddhism is about leaving our anger behind. Anger is often rooted in our attachments, our cravings, or rather thirst. We list anger as one of the three poisons that ruin our lives. Buddhism's goal is to purge out the poisons and help us to live a life of equanimity. I did not leave Christianity in anger. I was disappointed that it didn't work for me. I found that I had a different path instead. I liken my personal story to that of the Ugly Duckling. I saw

my true reflection and it was Buddhist. The Ugly Duckling, discovering he was a swan all the time, does not hate the ducks, but enjoys their beauty as they are. As I've deepened into Buddhism I have come to appreciate Christianity, not as divine, but as a great human religion, dealing with human problems and challenges. Buddhism is also a very human religion doing the same. It is on that basis I can enter into dialog and gain benefit from my encounters with many good Christians. I hope they have gained equally from me, but that is the challenge! May I recommend for your enjoyment, and reflection, Thich Nhat Hahn's "Going Home: Jesus and Buddha as Brothers"? Thank you again for writing. By the way could you share a little about your group? Every so often we get people from the U.K. asking for groups to join. By the way, I'm 60 and as a youngster I'm still learning!

Sincerely and with gassho,
Rev. Frederick Brenion

From = Pratibha
Subject = Regarding Om Mani Padme Hum

Message = It is said that as we sow so we reap, our wrong actions have to be paid, we cannot escape. Then it also says that if we recite om mani padme hum every day 10 mala's, our sins and wrong actions will be washed away. Is it so simple to escape our wrong actions? I am very confused. I have great faith in the Buddhist religion, but I am not able to understand this concept.

Dear Pratibha,

Thank you for visiting the Living Dharma website. You raise an interesting question: Is the recitation of this mantra effective at "washing away" our wrong actions? In our Shin Buddhist tradition, we don't have the practice of mantra recitation; our practice is listening to and reflecting upon the dharma teachings. Thus, as a Shin Buddhist I cannot definitively answer your question. However, I did see an interesting comment by the Dalai Lama regarding this mantra. Without going into the complex interpretations of the six characters, what resonated with my own Buddhist under-

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T H E G A T E W A Y



HIGASHI HONGANJI NORTH AMERICA DISTRICT

2013 8th Series Joint Dobo Retreat (English)

We wish to invite you to attend the 8th Series 2nd Joint Dobo Retreat (English) of Higashi Honganji North America District. We will invite Dr. Nobuo Haneda, the head of the Maida Center of Buddhism, Berkeley as our guest speaker. The theme of the Retreat Series is “Finding Sakyamuni and Shinran in Everyday Life.” Please send the application form below to the North America District office or to ministers of your local temple.

Date: Saturday, April 27, 2013
Time: 9:20 am — 4:30 pm
Speaker: Dr. Nobuo Haneda (Maida Center of Buddhism)
Location: Higashi Honganji Los Angeles Betsuin
 505 East 3rd Street, Los Angeles, California 90013
Theme: Finding Sakyamuni and Shinran in Everyday Life
Fee: \$12.00 (payable to Higashi Honganji NAD) *Lunch included.

Dr. Nobuo Haneda Biography



1946 Born in Nagano, Japan.
 1968 Read Shuichi Maida's work and became interested in Buddhism.
 1969 Graduated from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.
 1971 Studied under Revs. Gyomei Kubose and Gyoko Saito.
 1979 Received Ph.D. from University of Wisconsin.
 1979 Lecturer, Otani University, Kyoto, Japan.
 1981 Lecturer, Buddhist Educational Center, Chicago, IL.
 1984 Head Professor, Institute of Buddhist Studies, Berkeley, CA.
 1987 Researcher, Numata Center, Berkeley, CA.
 1997 Director, Maida Center of Buddhism, Berkeley, CA.

If you have any questions, please contact your local temple or the district office at:

Higashi Honganji North America District Office
 505 East Third Street, Los Angeles, California 90013
 Phone: (213) 621-4064, Fax: (213) 621-4189, Email: northamerica@higashihonganji.org

Detach Here

I would like to participate in the 2013 JOINT DOBO RETREAT (English).

Name

Temple



T H E G A T E W A Y

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standing was his emphasis on the importance of not just reciting, but reflecting on its meaning. As he put it, "The meaning of the six syllables is great and vast." You might find one of the syllables, "padme," which refers to the lotus flower, to be particularly relevant.

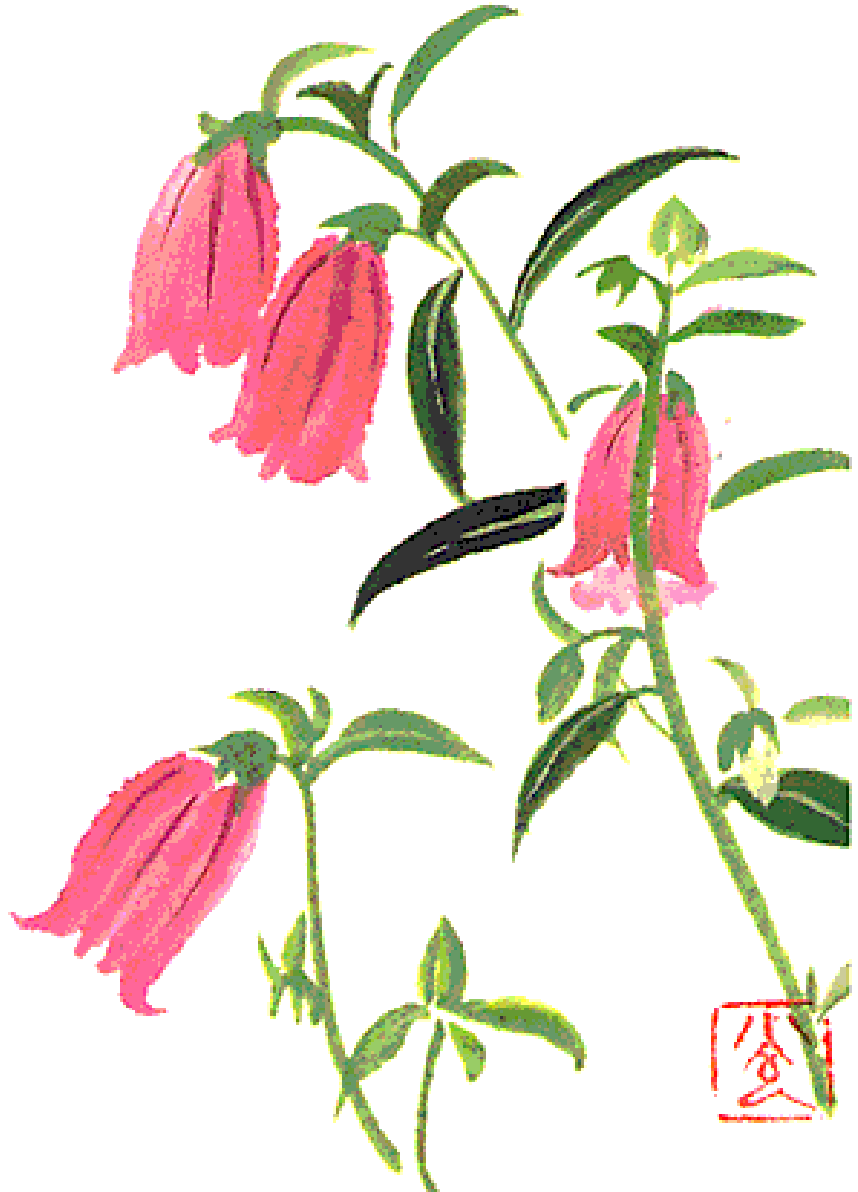
The beautiful lotus flower only grows out of the dirty mud at the bottom of the pond. And, if the lotus flower is a symbol for enlightenment itself, the flower's "requirement" of mud is symbolizing that our attaining enlightenment "requires" our own "mud" or duhkha, our "sins and wrong actions." Without duhkha (or samsara), there can be no nirvana. And, like the lotus flower, despite (or because of) being rooted in the mud of our self-created duhkha, with the working of the powerful light energy of the dharma shining upon us, our "mud" can be transformed into the beauty of enlightenment.

In emphasizing our need to reflect on the meaning of the symbols in Buddhism, the Dalai Lama is reminding us that it is not enough to simply recite this mantra (or any mantra); we must make a personal connection with the symbols and their meaning. In the analogy to the lotus, we might say that the light of the sun (i.e., Buddhist wisdom) transforms mud (our self-created duhkha) into a beautiful flower (enlightenment). In other words, we become enlightened when the light of Buddhist wisdom enables us to clearly see our own "mud." In seeing the mud within—and accepting responsibility for our self-created duhkha—the mud is transformed into wisdom, into a truer, more humble understanding of the self.

Best Wishes,

Rev. Peter Hata

The Living Dharma Website



From: P K

Subject: reply

To: "dharma@livingdharma.org"

Dear Respected Peter Hata,

I thank you for your kind reply in a very simple, understanding way. The word padme is so true and so beautiful, after understanding the meaning.

With best wishes and regards,

Pratibha





T H E G A T E W A Y

仏教 Q&A

問い 4月8日は「花まつり」で、お釈迦さまの誕生日と聞きますが、お釈迦さまが誕生されたことにどんな意味があるのですか。

答え お釈迦さまは、今から約2400年ほど前、北インドの釈迦族の王子としてお生まれになりましたが、生まれるなり7歩あゆんで、「天上天下唯我独尊(てんじょうてんげゆいがどくそん)」とお名のりになったと伝えられています。私たちがいただいている『仏説無量寿経』では、そこを「吾当(まさ)に世において無上尊(むじょうそん)となるべし」と記されており、共にこれらの言葉は「人間誕生の意義」と端的に教えてくださっているのでしょう。

私が人間としてこの世に生まれたのは何のためかといえば、この世においてまさに「無上尊」となるためであると。「無上」とは、私がいちばん上、「お山のテッペンぼく一人」ということではなく、無上は即ち無下であって、上も無く下もない、比較を超えたという意味です。人はだれしも、だれとも比較できない、また比較する必要のない唯一無上な尊い存在であるという意味で、そういう尊い自己自身に目覚めてゆくために人間に生まれたのであると。

お釈迦さまは、若いころからこの世の無常と、生きることの苦しみをお感じになり、「人生はなぜ苦しいのか。ほんとうに生きるとはどういうことか」という課題を担って29歳のとき出家され、そして35歳のとき真実の法に目覚められたと伝えられています。

その目覚めとは、苦しみ悩みの原因は自分というものの取り違い(無明)と煩惱にあったと気づかれ、真実の法に依って生きるほんとうの生き方を得られたのです。

自分の取り違いとは、「私」がという勝

手な執着(自我)を自分として生きていくことです。そこから、私のいのち・私の財産・私の健康・私の能力……と、いうようにあらゆるものを「私のもの」と取り込み、その「私のもの」に依って「私」を立てようとして生きている。そのあり方こそが迷いの構造であり、苦悩の元であります。真実の法に照らされてみれば、「私」も「私のもの」も本来無いものであった。私自身も他の一切のものも、「私」の手を超えた「法」の上に成り立っていたのである。その法に遇うとき、他なる条件に依って私の値打ちが決まるのではなく、法の上に成り立っていたあるがままの私自身を、無条件で「無上に尊いもの」と真にいただくことができるのであります。

その法とは、「無量寿経」に説かれる「弥陀の本願」であり、お釈迦さまは「唯弥陀の本願海を説く」ためにこの世にお誕生くださったと、親鸞聖人は教えてくださっているのであります。

(真宗大谷派大阪教区ウェブサイト「銀杏通信」より引用)

お寺ニュース

花まつり法要

本年の花まつり法要は4月8日(日)午前10時よりお勤め致します。この花まつりでは、毎年皆様にご持参頂いたお花で花御堂を飾り、お釈迦様のご誕生をお祝いいたします。どうぞご家族、ご友人などお誘い合わせの上、ご参詣頂きますようご案内申し上げます。

また同日午後1時より、浄土宗北米開教本院(リトル東京)にてお勤めされます。法要後には、ローリー・ミークス USC 教授による講演、子供達のアートコンテストなどが予定されています。どうぞお子さん、お孫さんとご一緒にご参詣下さい。

WCBT 基金募集ゴルフ大会

お寺の第17回基金募集ゴルフ大会が、4月19日(金)、インダストリー・ヒルズ・ゴルフクラブにて開催されます。午前11時より受付開始、午後1時よりショットガンスタートとなります。参加費はお一人160ドルで、夕食費などが含まれております。ただ今、プレイヤーとティースポンサー、そしてブックレットの広告を募集しております。大会の収益はお寺の青少年教化活動や寺院維持費に使用させていただきます。皆様のご協力を賜りますよう、どうぞよろしくお願い申し上げます。詳しくは、幡ピーター開教使までお問い合わせ下さい。

母の日家族礼拝

5月12日(日)午前10時より、母の日家族礼拝をお勤めいたします。例年のように、メンバーの方による母の日のメッセージがごございます。どうぞ皆様と一緒に参り下さい。

親鸞聖人誕生会

並びに新生児初参り法要

本年の親鸞聖人誕生会並びに新生児初参り法要は、5月19日(日)午前10時より厳修いたします。親鸞聖人のご誕生をお祝いし、合わせて新生児の初参り法要をお勤めいたします。皆様のご家族、お知り合いの方に0歳から6歳までのお子様がいらっしゃいましたら、どうぞお申し込み下さい。初参り参詣をご希望の方は、幡ピーター開教使までお知らせ下さい。

4月祥月法要 / 法話会

4月4日(木)

午後7時30分より

East San Gabriel Valley
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple
1203 W. Puente Avenue, West Covina, CA 91790
P.O. Box 1616, West Covina, CA 91793

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THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

 **GATEWAY** 

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April

- 4 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 7 8:30 am Board Mtg.
- 7 10:00 am Hanamatsuri Service
- 7 1:00 pm LABCN Hanamatsuri @ Jodoshu
- 8 7:00 pm Introduction to Buddhism Study Class 1
- 10 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 14 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 15 7:00 pm Introduction to Buddhism Study Class 2
- 19 11:00 am WCBT Golf Tournament
- 21 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 22 7:00 pm Introduction to Buddhism Study Class 3
- 23 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 28 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 29 7:00 pm Introduction to Buddhism Study Class 4

May

- 2 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 5 8:30 am Board Mtg.
- 5 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 12 10:00 am Mothers Day Family Service
- 14 10:00 am Bonbu Class
- 19 10:00 am Tanjo-e/Hatsumairi Service
- 26 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 28 10:00 am Bonbu Class

4月行事予定

- 4日 午後7時半 日本語祥月法要 / 法話会
- 7日 午前8時半 理事会
- 7日 午前10時 花祭り
- 7日 午後 1時 LA 仏教連合花祭り
(於 LA 浄土宗)
- 14日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 19日 午前11時 基金募集ゴルフ大会
- 21日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 28日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 28日 午後 1時 同朋リトリート (於 LA 別院)

5月行事予定

- 2日 午後7時半 日本語祥月法要 / 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 母の日家族礼拝
- 19日 午前10時 親鸞聖人誕生会 / 初参り法要
- 26日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

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あなたを

生きている

宗祖親鸞聖人750回御遠忌テーマ