I have a service book given to me by my father. He wrote a message on the back cover of this book. He wrote;

October 1983
On the occasion of Hōonkō
For Nobuko-san,

Shinran Shonin is the one who awaken to the great wish which we all have deep within. It is the aspiration for freedom and equality of all human beings. Shinran Shonin determines to make this aspiration as the foundation of his life, and expresses his joy of living with it in his writings. May you encounter his words through this book.

From your father, Akira

I was eleven years old when he gave this service book to me. Fortunately, I was old enough to realize that it was something important. However, I have to admit that for an eleven year old girl, the present was not really attractive. I said thank you to my father and kept the service book for a while, but soon I left it on a table in the Hondō and forgot about it.

Nevertheless, his message has been with me all this time. I came to realize that his deep wish brought me to who I am and that my path as a minister is a path to listen to his message. This service book is now my treasure.

Moreover, I am now firmly convinced that his message does not merely convey his personal wish as a father, but it was a profound wish that he too receive and listen to the teachings of Shinran Shonin. He saw me as an equal disciple of Shinran Shonin just like himself. Calling me ‘Nobuko-san,’ which sounds very formal to call his eleven years old daughter, proves it. It was his message that he wished that I too encounter the world that Shinran Shonin had encountered. It is the path in which I became ‘Dōbō (true dharma friends)’ with my father and Shinran Shonin. The message beyond him has reached me through their words.

What then, did Shinran Shonin

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The WCBT Sangha celebrate the birthday of the baby Buddha at our Hanamatsuri service on April 12, 2015.

**HONGANRIKI**

The Power of the Primal Vow Moves Me
Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

(The following is an English translation of my Dharma message given in ‘Dharmathon’, a series of Dharma messages, at the Jodo Shinshu Center, Berkeley. The Dharmathon is now uploaded on YouTube.)

The WCBT Sangha celebrate the birthday of the baby Buddha at our Hanamatsuri service on April 12, 2015.
encounter? It is the teaching of Amida’s Primal Vow, that no one should be discriminated, neglected, or rejected for any reason. My father expressed this teaching as “the aspiration for freedom and equality.”

Absolute freedom should be fulfilled when all of us can truly appreciate our own lives and live it to the fullest. And living equally means we sincerely respect each other’s diversity. It is the Primal Vow which reveals our innermost aspiration. In my father’s phrase, “It is the aspiration for freedom and equality of all human beings.”

At the same time, the Primal Vow illuminates our reality. Although we all have the aspiration deep within, we are ignorant of it. Our selfish ego-centered mind and views are like a thick cloud covering the aspiration. On the one hand, we praise the beauty of equality and freedom, on the other hand, we constantly judge others and discriminate against people based on our own views and preferences. This is our reality. When the Primal Vow works within us, it enables us to see this grave contradiction.

What a non-discriminatory, non-judgmental, and non-selective teaching reveals to us, is how much we are discriminatory, judgmental, and exclusive. However to reveal this truth, is not to condemn us. Non-judgmental teaching does not judge us no matter who we are. Opening our eyes and allowing us to truly realize this reality is the ultimate purpose of the teaching.

Some may say, “What is the point for facing our reality? Buddhism seems to be very pessimistic about human nature.” It is true that our reality is not something we are willing to see. However, contrary to our expectation, Jodo Shinshu gives us an assurance that facing our reality would not lead us into hopelessness.

Shinran Shonin was on Mt. Hiei practicing and striving to reach enlightenment. Practices are a means to help Buddhists get closer to the goal. Many of us also have this image today. Shinran Shonin also believed this and spent twenty years to attain the ultimate truth. In reality, however, is there any way for us to find out how much closer we are to the goal? There is no clear guideline and we are totally incapable to measure the distance to enlightenment, because our views and thoughts are always tainted by our ego. Therefore, the path for Shinran Shonin on Mt. Hiei was always uncertain. The

Please see HONGAN, con’t on pg. 9

Dharma School News

The Hanamatsuri service was very beautiful with the Baby Buddha surrounded by lovely flowers. The dharma school teachers are proud of the students’ presentation in honor of Prince Siddhartha’s birth. The children worked hard to color and decorate pictures of the Baby Buddha and the elephant which appeared in Queen Maya’s dream.

Mother’s Day is May 10—our students will be working on something for their moms. I’m sure their efforts will be wonderful!

May is also when we celebrate the birth of Shinran Shonin. This special service is called Tanjo-e and will be held on May 17. The children will be introduced to Shinran, the founder of our Jodo Shinshu sect. The teachers will have an activity that will help reinforce the significance of Shinran’s profound importance.

Happy Mother’s Day to all our moms! We love and appreciate you!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen

HONGAN, con’t from pg. 1

The Dharma School children display the posters they made for Hanamatsuri.

Sangha members Anthony Gutierrez and son Joshua pour sweet tea over the baby Buddha.
**The Study Class**
The Study Class will meet on May 12 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will be based on selected topics that vary from week to week. The class meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (213) 219-6140.

**WCBT 19th Annual Golf Classic**
WCBT will be holding their 19th Annual Golf Classic on Friday, May 8, at the Industry Hills Golf Club at the Pacific Palms Resort in the City of Industry. If you are able to help on the day of the golf tournament or have any questions, please call Roy Takemura at 909-594-3600 (office) or 909-973-2580 (cell).

**Mother’s Day Service**
A Mother’s Day family service will be held on May 10, 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 17 at 10:00 AM. There will be a special ceremony to acknowledge new additions to our Sangha. Please contact Rev. Miyoshi if you or your family member has had a new baby in the last year.

**Oldies Dance LI (51)**
“Continue the Fun at Oldies LI (51)!” will be held on Saturday, June 6. It’s our 51st Oldies with Steve Kikuchi & High Resolution providing favorite hits from the 60’s, 70’s and 80’s. The dance begins at 8:00 PM and will end at 12:00 AM with lots of dancing and fun in between. Presale tickets are $20 or $25 at the door. For info and song requests, call Joanie at (626) 300-8947 or Lillian at (626) 780-9866.

Your Toban chairs will contact you about work shifts and assignments. Plan to come by the center about 6 PM to help with the set-up. Donations are welcome for raffle prizes and drinks. Sign-up sheets for drinks will be at the Sunday service.

**Dads & Grads Family Service**
A Father’s Day & Graduation Family service will be held on June 14, at 10:00 AM. All graduates will be honored so please contact Rev. Miyoshi (213) 219-6140 with the names of graduates in your family. Join us for this special event.

**Bon Odori Practices**
Bon 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. The dates again are June 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 19 and 23. Everyone is invited to join in the fun. See you there!

**OBON FESTIVAL!**
Our 2015 Obon will be on June 27 and is just a few weeks away. Preparations are beginning but much work is still needed to make this exciting annual event a success.

Set-up will begin on Friday, June 26, at 1:00 PM. We’ll need help setting up outside and inside the gym as well as food prep and general hands-on help.

In the mean time, we are accepting donations for rice, chili and children’s and regular raffle prizes. Age for inari-zushi will be passed out before Obon for those volunteering to make sushi. Raffle tickets will be sent out and don’t forget to get your favorite dessert recipes out.

Sign-up sheets will be passed around at Sunday Services or contact Merry (714) 271-3803 to see how you can help.
We received many compliments on our recent 50th Oldies dance party fundraiser: “The atmosphere here is always warm and welcoming,” “We always have a good time here,” “We like this group that puts on the dance,” “We had so much fun,” “I like how you decorated the place!” Indeed, our hard-working Sangha members, palm trees and a tiki bar, greeted our guests with a warm aloha and a fun spirit pervaded the entire evening! Over 225 guests enjoyed our Hawaiian-themed evening, which included a special complimentary appetizer dish. Thank you to Jennifer Higa and her kitchen crew: Kato sisters, Denise and Steve Underwood, Mary and Ted Kato, Kay and Bob Yamashita, Karen Escano, Haruko, Reiko, Sangha members who contributed homemade desserts that were added to this plate, and to Hisako Koga who made hand-decorated Hawaiian sugar cookies (individually wrapped!) for everyone to enjoy! Hisako also made those delightfully cheerful Hawaiian table reservation cards which we will gladly use again! Everything becomes elegant and special in her hands. Appreciation goes to Dick Koga for all his cooking help, as well as working hard to make his legendary chow mein for those who came early to help. Thank you to Frank Tanji, Merry Jitosho, Bruce Whang, Richard Hiroshima and Rev. Miyoshi who came by at 5:30 p.m. to help lay down the tarp since the regular crew was not available for this. We also appreciate all the Sangha members who helped set-up and decorate the tables including Phil and Trina Underwood and Brent Levingston. Thank you to so many generous Sangha members for their drinks donations, and for your numerous donated raffle prizes. Your raffle prizes encouraged guests to purchase raffle tickets towards the big 50/50 to the top 3 winners. Even if
you didn’t win the big prizes, there were so many other great prizes one could win, and they were all lined up on the stage. People saw this and were buying those tickets til the very last minute! Thanks Frank, Pat, and Jane for going around to sell these. Mahalo to Toban B for always taking care of the balloons and table decor/door prize goody bags! Special recognition goes to

Frank and Merry’s brother-in-law Dick Horio who crafted and donated 3 lovely wooden lanterns, as well as our own Mits Oshita who donated a couple of carefully-tended bonsai plants. WCBT acknowledged our talented late member, Arne Han-

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WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE presents

OBON FESTIVAL 2015

BON ODORI DANCING
public invited to participate

MARTIAL ARTS
DEMONSTRATIONS

CULTURAL EXHIBITS
AND ENTERTAINMENT

TAIKO DRUMMING

DELICIOUS FOOD
GAMES • PRIZES

JUNE 27 SATURDAY
1 PM TO 9 PM

1203 W. Puente Ave, West Covina 91790
626.689.1040
West Covina Buddhist Temple Announces Bon Odori Dance Practices

• WHAT: The Bon Odori dancing is the highlight of the Obon because, as a celebratory “group dance,” it symbolizes the world of oneness that is the goal of the Buddhist teaching. It's also just a lot of fun! The public is invited to learn the specific moves of each dance at the free and popular public dance instruction practices.

• WHEN: Every Tuesday and Friday, 7-8:30 pm starting Tuesday, June 2.

• WHERE: the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center parking lot, 1203 West Puente Avenue, West Covina, 91790

• THE OBON FESTIVAL: Saturday, June 27, 1-9 pm

• Contact Info:
  phone: 626 689-1040
  website: www.livingdharma.org
  e-mail: dharma@livingdharma.org
WEST COVINA H. H. BUDDHIST TEMPLE PRESENTS

VEGAS WEEKEND “FUN”-draiser!
Main Street Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV

AUGUST 7, 8 & 9, 2015

DEPARTURE:
The bus departs promptly on Friday, August 7, 2015, at the “new time” of 1:00 p.m. from East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC), 1203 West Puente Ave., West Covina, CA

RETURN:
The return bus departs promptly on Sunday, August 9, 2015, at 11:00 a.m. from Main Street Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV.

COST:
$160.00 per person/double occupancy. Price includes bus transportation, bell captain’s tip and driver’s tip. We’ll have lots of games and prizes on the drive to Vegas.

* PLEASE KEEP YOUR SAME SEAT ON THE TRIP TO VEGAS AND THE RETURN TRIP TO ESGVJCC

* FEEL FREE TO BRING SNACKS & MUNCHIES FOR YOURSELF AND SHARING

* PLEASE SEND IN YOUR RESERVATION BY JULY 27, 2015, for more information and/or questions, please contact Frank T. Tanji at 714-271-3398 or email his at ftanji@gmail.com

Make checks payable to West Covina H. H. Buddhist Temple
Mail to: WCHHBT c/o Frank Tanji, PO Box 1616, West Covina, CA 91793

Name: ________________________________
Number of Person in room _________ Email/Phone _________________________________
Name of roommate(s): ___________________________________________________________
TOTAL AMOUNT REMITTED: $_____________________________

NO refunds – NO cancellations: Please try and find your own replacements. If you need help, please call Frank at 714-271-3398. Thank you.
only thing he was undoubtedly aware of was the fact that he was farther from the truth than when he began. The realization of desperation and hopelessness made him leave Mt. Hiei.

It was when Shinran Shonin encountered Amida’s Primal Vow that he awakened to the fact that his reality was indeed not desperation, rather it was the realization that enabled him to keep walking the path of Buddhism and made him yearn to listen to the teachings throughout his entire life.

This awakening gave him a profound meaning to his life.

We are far away from what the truth says, and because of that, it is truly necessary for us to listen to the teaching. This ongoing process becomes strength to live our lives. Rev. Shizuka Miyagi says, “Achieving a sense of accomplishment is actually dangerous. In our real life, knowing that we are not yet accomplished turns into a great power in our life.”

Moreover, awakening to the reality of our limitations demonstrates the fact that we have encountered the working of the Primal Vow right at this moment.

Jodo Shinshu does not help us to attain something we do not yet have. Rather, it is the teaching which makes us realize what we have received already. It liberates us from hopes and expectations that we are strongly attached to.

The working of the Primal Vow reaches us through words of Shinran Shonin, my father, people we meet and anything around us. In this sense, Jodo Shinshu is the teaching which transforms everything that happens to us into great teachers that allow us to find who we truly are. Shinran Shonin praises the working of the Primal Vow in his hymns;

Obstructions of karmic evil turn into virtues;
It is like the relation of ice and water:
The more the ice, the more the water;
The more the obstructions, the more the virtues.
(Hymns of the Pure Land Masters)

Nothing, even our blind passions, are no longer obstructions on our path. The teachings that Shinran Shonin encountered and that my father received also calls out to me to encounter the Vow of Amida to constantly reflect upon myself and urges me to listen throughout my life.

(「本願」11頁からの続き)

これは答えようとしているのです。それは、それ自体の実感であることに違いないのです。それは、自らの事実として確かに実感し、頷くことができるのです。そして実はその気づきこそが歩みになる、ということを教えてくださっているのが、浄土真宗の教えではないかと思うのです。

それを宮城顗先生は「「世界、悟れり」という心は危うい。人間の現実において、悟ることよりも、「未だ悟らず」と知ることの方が大きな力になる」と教えてくださっています。浄土真宗とはどこまでも自己中心でしかない私の姿を明らかにする教えであり、それが知らされたということは、それを私に知らせようとするたらきに、今まさに遭遇しているということの確かな証なのです。それが、私たちと仏法との関わり方ではないか、といただいているのです。そうした関わりを親鸞聖人は「高僧和讃」において、

Quote of the Month
“Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned.”
-Gautama Buddha
Buddhism Quiz

Here is another one of our quizzes to test you on "How well you know your Buddhism." We hope that it will continue to be informative and entertaining for our readers.

Difficulty Level: Easy, maybe....

1. A rinban is
   a. a resident minister of a Buddhist temple
   b. an assistant minister of a Buddhist temple
   c. a youth minister for youth activities such as Jr. YBA and Sangha Teens at a Buddhist temple
   d. a head minister of a regional headquarters Buddhist temple

2. Rev. Noriaki Ito is both a rinban and a bishop. He is
   a. Bishop of the Higashi Honganji North America District
   b. Bishop of the Higashi Los Angeles Buddhist Temple
   c. Bishop of all Buddhist temples in Los Angeles
   d. Bishop of all overseas (outside Japan) Buddhist temples

Answers: d, a
お寺ニュース

母の日家族礼拝

5月10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
日のメッセージがございます。皆さまのご参拝をお待ちしております。

親鸞聖人誕生会

並びに新生児初参り法要

来る5月17日（日）午前10時よ
り親鸞聖人誕生会並びに新生児初参
り法要を勤修いたします。親鸞聖人の誕
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。初参り参拝
をご希望の方は、見義信香開教使まで
お知らせ下さい。

盆踊り練習

本年度の当寺院のお盆祭り（6月
27日）もいよいよ近づいて参りました。
今年の盆踊り練習は以下の予定に
て行われます。練習日は火曜日と金曜
日、時間は午後7時から8時半までを
予定しております。どうぞお誘い合わ
せの上、お気軽にご参加下さい。

盆踊り練習

目的日

6月 2日（火）
5日（金）
9日（火）
12日（金）
16日（火）
19日（金）
23日（火）
（6月26日は練習はありません。）

5月祥月法要

親鸞聖人誕生会法要

（日本語）

5月7日（木）午後7時半
2015年5月行事予定

2日 午前9時半 南加リトリート
3日 午前8時半 理事会
3日 午前10時 祥月法要
5日 午後7時 仏教講座2（英語）
7日 午後7時半 法話会
8日 午後11時 ゴルフトーナメント
10日 午前10時 母の日家族礼拝
12日 午後7時 仏教講座3（英語）
17日 午前10時 誕生会／初参り法要
24日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
31日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

6月行事予定

4日 午後7時半 法話会
1日 午前8時半 理事会

人と人との出遇いほど不思議で、かつその人の一生を大きく変える大事なものはない

林 暁宇