



GATEWAY



July 2015 -- Vol. L No. 7



Dancers at Oldies 51 sway to the music of "Shiarwase Samba."

LIFE-Just Be Me

Michael Jitoshō

Good morning. Rev. Miyoshi asked me to lead today's Sunday service and provide today's Dharma message. I am no Buddhist scholar, nor do I have an official academic background in Buddhism. Some of you might be thinking of heading to the exit by now thinking I do not have the credentials to be up here today. But what I do have is my own experience and at this point in my life that is the only true thing that I can deeply share.

It may be of interest to some of you how and why this young man decided to become an ordained Shin Buddhist priest. I am not a descendent of Buddhist priests like many of our current and past ministers. I did not grow up in Japan. I am not aged to perfection having a life time of experiences and wisdom like our current ministers. So why did I decide to go through with

the first ordination? It was because of death.

In everyday social interactions death is a topic that people find taboo. Those who speak of death are criticized as being morbid. But death is natural. It's what makes life *life*. Death is forever tied with life. It is our fate ever since we were conceived. When I say the word death you may think of dark and unpleasant thoughts. However, when one encounters death and accepts death as a natural part of life it sheds light on life in ways no other realization can. On May 21, 2004, I encountered death; death of my father. It was the darkest, most heart breaking day I ever experienced. That morning I was in junior high attending class and the principal came into the room and asked me to come with him. My heart was pumping because I thought for sure I was

getting detention or something. But something about my principal just did not seem right. He informed me that my mom had called and asked for me to come straight home so the principal gave me a ride home. I went in the room where my father was resting. He was breathing heavily at an even rate and in an instant he was gone.

I cried many nights out of fear. Was our family going to be okay? Who was I supposed to turn to with questions about life that only a father can answer? My father was always there for me whether to cheer me on during boy scout pine car derby races, or to scold me after fighting with my sister. He was always there. But now he wasn't and never would be again. At thirteen I thought how was I supposed to deal

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T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

Everyone is busy getting prepared for Obon as I write this article. I hope that our Obon will be fun and successful.

The month of July is vacation time for our Dharma school children. I hope all of you will remember to read books during the next few months!

The following is one of Aesop's Fables. Aesop was a slave and storyteller who lived in Greece many centuries ago. It is one of my favorite stories and I would like to share it with you.

The Wind and the Sun

One day the wind and the sun had an argument about which one was stronger. They saw a man who was traveling on a road. They decided that the stronger of the two could make the man take off his coat.

The wind blew and blew harder and harder, but the man only held on to his coat tighter and tighter. The wind could not blow the man's coat away no matter how fiercely it blew.

Now it was the sun's turn. The sun softly sent its sunbeams on the man. It gently increased its energy until the traveler became very warm. The man finally took off his coat and rested under the shade of a tree.

The meaning or moral of this fable is: Gentle persuasion is stronger than force. Do you think Aesop was right? Let's discuss this during one of our Dharma classes!

Have a great summer!
Gassho,
Claire Hansen

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with this? I began to listen. Attending Sunday services and listening to Rev. Kawawata's Dharma messages did not become a chore but a real pleasure. After years of idly going through the motions of attending Sunday school I realized Rev. Ken had been saying the same thing year after year. Despite my feeling that his talks were repetitious I began to hear what he had to say in a very different light. Before then I did not appreciate the teachings nor did I understand them. His words about impermanence and the causes and conditions in life began to intrigue me. It applied to my life and to the passing of my father. From that point forward I didn't need to feel so helpless and alone. The many weeks following his death, family and friends were always around just to be there. I didn't want to talk so much. But they were there. Warm bodies to heat the cold air that filled our home. With the love and support of those around us I was given strength to support my mom and sister. I was tired of feeling depressed and sad. This is when I made a conscious effort to help around the house cooking meals, taking care of all major home repairs and most of all becoming closer

to my mom and sister.

The death of my father was a wake up call for me. I seriously began to value relationships. One of the introductory classes in the first year of optometry school had a survey about goals as aspiring optometrists. We were told to provide how we would spend our time if we had only 6 months to live. Then we gave responses for 1 month, 1 week, 1 day. As the time frame got shorter what we thought we wanted to do with our time began to get shorter and shorter. Our goals went from traveling, to doing extreme sports, to spending time with loved ones. While I did not experience my life on a set timer, I was awakened to the nectar of life. It is so limited yet offers us so many opportunities. The choices we make affect the people around us. I am a link in the golden chain. May I keep my link bright and strong. At this point I felt I could no longer stop listening to the Buddhist teachings. I may have times when I am really into it like during our seminars or retreats and other times when finals roll around and I am not able to participate with this Sangha as I would like. But I know I will never be able to pull myself away from the Buddhist teachings and to stop learning and to stop asking questions, such as the teachings of impermanence of life, seeing myself for who I truly am and the causes and conditions that came about which allowed for this moment to be, right now.

As I continue learning more about the Teachings and continue optometry school it is important for me to stay

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Jason and his brothers present a Father's Day gift to their Father, Anthony Gutierrez.



Claire Hansen delivered a heartfelt Father's Day message.



T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

The Study Class

The Study Class will meet on July 14 and 28 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 (626) 689-1040.

Obon & Hatsubon Service

Obon & Hatsubon Service will be held on July 19 at 4:30 PM. Rev. Patricia Usuki, from San Fernando Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, will be our special speaker. Please help us welcome Rev. Usuki at this important Service and remain for the complimentary *otoki* dinner that will follow the service.

Betsuin Obon Festival

The Betsuin Obon will be held on the weekend of July 25-26. WCBT will again be selling our delicious tamales. Sign-up sheets will be at upcoming services so please find a time you can help out in the tamale booth and join in the dancing and festivities at the Betsuin Obon.

Las Vegas Trip

WCBT will be sponsoring its annual fundraising trip to Las Vegas on the weekend of August 7-9, The \$160 per



person fee, for double occupancy, will include round-trip bus fare, two nights at the Main Street Station, Bell captain tips and lots of fun and games. A beverage will be served on the ride to Las Vegas as well as all the snacks that everyone brings to share.

The Las Vegas Obon will be on Saturday, August 8. Please let us know if you are planning to attend and need transportation.

The bus will depart on Friday, August 7 promptly at 1:00 PM from ESGVJCC. The return bus will leave from the California Hotel on Sunday, August 9, promptly at 11:00 AM .

Please contact Merry Jitosh (714) 271-3803 for more information.

August Schedule

The August board meeting will be held 8:30 AM on August 2 followed by the Shotsuki Service at 10:00 AM. We will then take our annual summer break so there are no Sunday Services on August 9 (Las Vegas trip), 16, 23 and 30. Services will resume again on September 6.

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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P. O. Box 1616
West Covina, CA 91793
(626) 689-1040

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Facebook: facebook.com/westcovinabuddhist-temple



JULY

Jamie Nakatani, Sylvia Ena, Jaylene Gutierrez, Kevin Hata, Lauren Koga, Russell Martinez, Laura Miyake, Margaret Takemoto, Ryoko Kodama, Richard Haraguchi, Craig Taguchi, Corey Taguchi, Pat Sato, Garrett Kawaguchi, Tyler Kobayashi, Steven Kuwahara, Marcus Nishihara, Lillian Nishihara, Kurt Kowalski, Jamie Teragawa, Jonathan Hoey, Jeffrey Akune, Anthony Gutierrez, Sam Kozono, Susie Kozono, Sayo Kikunaga





T H E G A T E W A Y

OLDIES LI (51)!

Joanie Martinez



A very nice crowd of around 158 people did indeed come to "Continue the Fun @ Oldies 51!" Thanks to our hard-working Sangha and our DJ Steve Kikuchi, the crowd really enjoyed

themselves on the dance floor. We have fun as we sing to these ol' tunes as well as dance to them. One guest told me he loves coming so much that he wished we had a dance once a month(!) A personal friend of mine from elementary school days came with her husband for the very first time and surprised me. I had been sending flyers to her and she decided to come this time. Her husband was pleasantly surprised at the number of people who were there dancing away and said, "We've been missing this all this time!" My friend commented that she liked seeing the nice mix of the crowd all coming together to enjoy the evening.

We promote our Obon @ our June dances, and many dancers stepped into the circle to join in "Tanko bushi" the coalminer's dance, and "Shiawase Samba". We danced these to the Old-

ies songs of "I'm Gonna Rock with You" by Michael Jackson, and "I Heard it through the Grapevine" by Marvin Gaye. Of course, we also did other line dance favorites such as "The Electric Slide," "Mambo #5," "Cupid Shuffle," and the more challenging quick steps to "Move like a Jagger."

Thank you to the Sangha members who donated raffle prizes and drinks, and to those who came to physically set up the gym, decorated and put the goody door prize bags together, cleaned up, sold tickets, and sold drinks. Thank you Bob and Kay Yamashita for always driving all the way from Menifee to help and support the dance! We appreciate all the dedication and positive energy that goes into making a successful fundraising dance. Phew! We've got a little break until the next one @ the end of September!



Some WCBT members know the best place to work at the Oldies.



Pssst, Claudia. One of us won the first place raffle prize.... and it's not you.



Lillian leads the dancers in Tanko Bushi



Mei-Ling, Lee & Rev. Miyoshi "gettin' down."



T H E G A T E W A Y

WEST COVINA
Higashi Honganji
BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Dear Members and Friends,

June 22, 2015

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Obon and Hatsubon Service which will be held on Sunday afternoon, July 19, 2015. This is a combined memorial service not only for those members who specifically have lost a loved one in the previous 12 months (Hatsubon means "first Obon service"), but also a universal memorial service for all our loved ones who have passed on.

The schedule for the service is as follows:

Date:	Sunday, July 19, 2015
Time:	4:30 PM
Dharma Message:	Rev. Patricia Usuki
(English)	San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

We will be serving Otoki dinner immediately following the service.

The Obon Service is held to remember our ancestors and to celebrate our life and is one of the most important observances of the year. Please join and gather again this year to resolve to deepen our understanding of Buddhism.

Gassho,
Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Minister
Mr. John Martinez, President of the Board of Directors



T H E G A T E W A Y



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 fttanji@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.



T H E G A T E W A Y

LIFE, con't from pg. 2

true to myself. I do not try to be the perfect Buddhist or the perfect minister because that is not possible for me. I am who I am but I am still able to follow the Buddhist's teachings.

If I try to be good, being good is not a state of being that I can maintain for very long, if at all. What I am really doing is only trying to avoid doing bad. Who we are is not a matter of being good or being bad, being happy or sad. It is not a matter of effort but realizing the true nature of who we are deep inside. Happiness is not a matter of what you do or say but how you live your life. No matter what we try to do or fail to do, who we are deep inside will always reign supreme. Our true nature, our human nature will always shine through.

It is important to me to stop trying to be this or trying to be that but just to be. I am not the perfect husband, son, brother or nephew. I use every situation, every encounter such as an argument, a good grade on an exam or complete failure and I use it as a chance for me to see me for who I am. Maybe I am too arrogant when I ask so many questions in class. Maybe I could write more letters to a special lady waiting for her visa to the US. Maybe I could tell my mom I love her as I go to school each morning. Maybe I could support my sister in every decision she makes and not argue with her about the smallest of details. Maybe I do not have to criticize my uncle who is always there to support me and show him more family love. But I sometimes I don't. When I try to do the things I wish I could, I am not me, I am merely emulating someone else. But there

is a way and that is being myself and knowing who I am and what I am. The Buddhists teachings applies to me no matter what I am as long as I am me and am able to see me for who and what I am. With all the good and bad, with all my flaws and shortcomings, I am me and only me.

There are so many opportunities all around us to see how we are all connected and how wonderful each and every moment is. It has been my pleasure to deliver this message to you today. Thank you for listening. I would like to leave you with some sunshine from a Pixar movie I recently watched. It said: the past is history; the future is a mystery; today is a gift so that it is why we call it the present.

(This article was abridged by the editors due to limited space.)

This lemon bar was one of the desserts on our 50th Oldies complimentary appetizer plate. As a result, we have had a number of requests for this delightful dessert. It is shared by one of our editors and was taken from the book, *Another Taste of Aloha: A Collection of Recipes* from the Junior League of Honolulu. Enjoy!

Super Lemon Bars

Crust:	2 cups	flour
	½ cup	macadamia nuts, finely chopped
	½ cup	powdered sugar
	1 cup	butter

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine flour, mac nuts, powdered sugar and butter. (I used my food processor for combining). Press into a greased 9 x 13 inch pan and bake for 20 to 25 minutes until golden brown.

Filling:	¼ cup	flour
	½ tsp	baking powder
	4	eggs
	2	cups sugar
	½ cup	lemon juice (use Meyer lemons if available)
	1 tsp.	lemon zest
		powdered sugar

Combine flour, baking powder, eggs, sugar, lemon juice and lemon zest. Mix well. Spread over baked crust. Bake until set, about 25 minutes. Cool. Dust top with sifted powdered sugar and cut into 3 x 1 bars.





T H E G A T E W A Y

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S



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, Oh so easy

1. Obon
 - a. is a Buddhist Memorial Day when we reflect on our gratitude to our ancestors and rejoice in listening to the Nembutsu.
 - b. is the celebration of joy of the birth of Shinran Shonin.
 - c. is the memorial service of Shinran Shonin to express our appreciation for sharing the teachings of the Nembutsu.
 - d. is the day when the sangha at WCBT feel this is indeed "the happiest place on Earth."

2. Manto-e
 - a. refers to the white lanterns with the names of our loved ones who have passed away attached to them that decorate our temple at Obon.
 - b. refers to the outdoor religious service in front of the yagura (Obon platform) just before the Bon odori begins.
 - c. refers to the tradition that began long ago in India when the sangha lit candles whenever they came to listen to the Buddha speak. As the sangha grew, so did the number of lit candles and the lights were later called "Manto" or "ten thousand lights."
 - d. All of the above

Answers: a (and also d is correct for many of our sangha, we hope...), d

Quote of the Month
 Religion is like a pair of shoes.....Find one that fits for you, but don't make me wear your shoes.
 -George Carlin



T H E G A T E W A Y

生死 地頭所マイケル

(*今回は5月31日の日曜礼拝で地頭所マイケルさんが話してくれた法話の抜粋をご紹介します。)

皆さんおはようございます。本日は見義先生が不在のため、私が日曜礼拝を勤めさせていただいております。

私が今日皆さんの前でお話するよう頼まれたのは2ヶ月前のことでしたが、今週に入っても何がお話できるのか、と正直悩んでいました。気軽なおしゃべりと違って、何か意味のあること、皆さんに領いていただけるようなことを話したいと思っていたのですが、それでは具体的に何を、と考えると答えに詰まってしまうのです。そもそもたかが25年生きただけの私が、知恵も経験も豊富な皆さんにお教えできるようなことなどあるはずがありません。もしも一つだけできることがあるとすれば、それは私がこれまでの人生で得た経験とそこから学んだこととお話することではないかと思ひます。

皆さんの中には、お寺の生まれでもない私がどうして得度を受けたのか、不思議に思っている方もいらっしゃるでしょう。私にとって得度のご縁となったこと、もっと言うなら仏教と出会う道を開いてくれたのは「死」でした。

私たちの社会では「死」は多くの場合タブー視されています。私たちはできるだけ死を語らず、考えず、従って死から逃げるような生活を送っています。けれども本来死を迎えるというのはごく自然なことなのです。死があるから生が意味をもつのです。「生死(しょうじ)」というように生と死は切り離すことができないことなのです。死に直面し、それが自然なこととして受け止めることができた時、初めて生きるということが真の光に照らされてはっきりとしてくるのではないのでしょうか。

私が死の問題に直面したのは、2004年5月21日でした。父がこの日亡くなりました。今までの人生の中で最も悲しく辛い日でした。中学生だった私は授業中に校長先生に呼ばれ教室を出ます。叱られるのではないかと恐る恐る後をついていくと、校長先生はすぐに家に戻るように言い、私を車で送ってくれました。家に

着いて父の部屋に入ると苦しそうな息遣いが聞こえました。父が亡くなったのはそれからすぐのことでした。

家族はこれからどうなるのだろう？父親にしか答えることのできない質問は誰にすればいいのだろう？いろいろな不安や恐れが私を襲い、泣きながら過ごした夜は数え切れません。思えば父はいつも私のそばにいてくれました。そばで応援し見守ってくれた父はもういません。その事実をどう受け止めたらいいいのか、13歳だった私にはその方法が見つかりませんでした。

お寺に自分から足を運ぶようになったのはちょうどこの頃でした。習慣になる程通うようにまではなりませんでしたが、それでも河和田先生の法話を聞くのは好きでした。そのうち、同じ話でもその時によって聞こえ方が違ったり、自分の心に残る部分が異なることに気がつきました。特に諸行無常や縁起の教えに惹きつけられました。それらの教えが私自身の人生の中で聞くことができた時、父の死が私に教えてくれていることを聞くことができるようになりました。

まず最初に気づいたことは、私は決して一人ぼっちではない、ということでした。父の死からずっと私は家族や多くの友人と一緒にいました。話をすることもなくただそばにいてくれた、彼らの温もりが冷え切った部屋を温めてくれていました。慈しみと支えはそのまま今度は私が母や姉を支えていく強さとなってくれました。

父の死は私を目覚めさせるアラームのようなものでした。父の死を通して家族や人とのつながりのありがたさに気づくことができたからです。父の死はまた私の人生も限りのあるものであることを教えてくれました。限りのある人生は、同時に無限の可能性や数え切れない機会に満ちています。だからこそかけがえのない人生なのです。人生を歩むとは、自分が選ぶ選択が周りや自分自身に影響を与えていくということではないのでしょうか。この気づきを与えてくれたのが仏教の教えでした。そのことをはっきりと感じた今、仏教の教えは私の生活から切り離せないものとなりました。これからも聞き続けていく歩みを続けていきたいと思います。それは本当の自分に会おう歩みだと感じています。

眼科医になるための学校に通い始めて、いよいよ仏教が私に教えてくれることの大切さを実感する毎日です。忙

しく、競争の激しい学校生活では、ありのままの自分でいることが本当に大切なことだと思ふようになりました。ありのままとは自分の事実をごまかしや言い訳をすることなく受け入れるということ、そして今自分にできることを精一杯尽くすことだと思います。そして、それは今この瞬間を精一杯に生きるということではないのでしょうか。そうした生き方が本当に価値あるものであるということをお教へてくれているのが仏教であると感じています。

お寺ニュース

お盆 / 初盆法要

日本語によるお盆 / 初盆法要は、7月2日(木)午後7時半より7月祥月法要と併せてお勤めいたします。

また英語によるお盆 / 初盆法要は、7月19日(日)午後4時半よりお勤めいたします。ご講師にはサンファナンド平原願寺の宇宿パトリシア師をお招きいたします。法要後にはお齋をご用意しております。ご家族、ご友人お誘い合わせの上、是非お参り下さいますようご案内申し上げます。

別院お盆フェスティバル

来る7月25日(土)と26日(日)の両日、ロサンゼルス別院お盆フェスティバルが開催されます。当寺院では例年フードブースにてtamaleを販売しております。ご多用中とは存じますが、どうぞお手伝いいただきますよう、よろしくお願い申し上げます。

基金募集ラスベガス旅行

来る8月7日(金)から9日(日)まで、当寺院恒例の基金募集ラスベガス旅行が行われます。参加費はお一人\$140です。宿泊はメインストリートホテル2泊(お2人で1部屋です)で、往復のバス運賃込みです。ラスベガスへの往路では、軽食とお飲み物が用意されます。

往路のバスは8月7日(金)午後1時、コミュニティセンターより出発します。復路のバスは9日(日)午前11時半にメインストリートホテルから出発します。

参加希望の方は、地頭所メリー氏(714-271-3803)までお問い合わせ下さい。

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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DATED MATERIAL

THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

❁ **GATEWAY** ❁

J u l y 2 0 1 5 - - V o l . L N o . 7

July

- 2 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
Obon/Hatsubon Service
- 5 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 12 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 12 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 14 10:00 am Study Class
- 19 4:30 pm Obon/Hatsubon Service

(English)

- 25-26 Betsuin Obon Festival
- 26 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 28 10:00 am Study Class

August

- 2 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 2 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 6 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 7-9 WCBT Las Vegas Trip
- 16 (No Service)
- 23 (No Service)

2015年7月行事予定

- 2日 午後7時半 法話会祥月法要
お盆/初盆法要 (日本語)
- 5日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 12日 午前8時半 理事会
- 12日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 19日 午後4時半 お盆/初盆法要 (英語)
- 25-26日 別院お盆フェスティバル
- 26日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

8月行事予定

- 2日 午前8時半 理事会
- 2日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 6日 午後7時半 法話会
- 7-9日 午前ラスベガス旅行
- 16日 日曜礼拝休み

I N S I D E T H I S I S S U E

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老いが、病いが、死が、
私の生を問いかけているのです。
「これでいいのか？」と
二階堂行邦