



GATEWAY



December 2015 -- Vol. L No. 11



All the Sangha members who attended Shinran Shonin's Memorial Service enjoyed the Dharma talk by Rev. Yamada and the delicious otoki provided by Toban C.

Buddhism -Whom Is This Teaching For?-

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

People have various images about "Buddhism." Some bring up the image of a monk with a saffron robe living in a monastery. Others associate Buddhism with inner peace and meditation.

What is your image about Buddhism? What would you say if one day your neighbor says, "I know you go to the Buddhist temple every Sunday. I am curious about what Buddhism is. Could you tell me something about it?"? Your neighbor's question is simple, yet you might not know how to answer because many of us who think ourselves as Buddhists often miss the question to think about.

When I worked at the Betsuin, I received the similar question from one of our members. She said, "If I have only five minutes to explain Buddhism, what should I say?" Unfortunately, I was unable to respond to her immediately. Many ideas and thoughts came to mind but it seemed to me, that it was almost impossible to explain enough about Buddhism in such a short time. However, her question was never far from my mind and I kept thinking about it.

It is ideal if we have enough time to sit down and talk about Buddhism with visitors and our neighbors, but unfortunately, that

is not possible all the time. Time is limited sometimes, and it is all the more important for us to make it clear what makes Buddhism "Buddhism."

Considering the fundamental question, I first thought about "Who is the target of the Buddhism

Please see BUDDHISM, con't on page 2

Temple Event Highlights:

- Dec. 13 Mochitsuki
- Dec. 20 Year-end Service
- Jan.1 New Year's Service
- Jan. 3 Shotsuki Service
- Jan. 17 Eitai-kyo/Gen. Mtg
- Please See Temple News



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

We hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday! The Dharma school children and staff are working on our Oseibo presentation for the Year-end service. We hope you will all enjoy our performance.

Dharma school will be trying something different in our curriculum. Since most of our students are very young, we will be presenting Buddhist concepts using contemporary young children's books. Activities reinforcing these ideas will vary from lesson to lesson. Among the concepts we will be teaching will be compassion, acceptance, interdependence, and impermanence. If parents and grandparents would like to know the names of the books that will be used in our lessons, please let us know. It would be great if you can reread these stories to the little ones!

Dharma school wishes you a happy holiday season and a wonderful 2016!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen



BUDDHISM, con't from pg. 1

teaching?" Buddhism is neither just for men, nor just for women. It is not exclusive Japanese or American. The teaching of Buddhism is for everyone. No matter whether we are Buddhists, Christians, Jews, or Muslims. The truth Buddhism reveals to us should work on every human being and all other living things. Buddhism teaches us that impermanence and interconnectedness are the truth of 'our' existence. In Buddhism, in this sense, the truth never exists apart from us. It is Buddhism that talks about each of us, not about Buddha.

Imagine that you happen to find a book at a bookstore. As soon as you start to read the book, you realize that the central character of the story in the book is YOU! The realization is just like the moment of encountering the teaching of Buddhism in your life. Buddha is not a God, but one who was awakened to the truth which specifically talks about his or her reality. We often see Buddhism as 'the teaching

of Buddha,' but it can be also said that Buddhism is the teaching that Buddha was awakened and listened to throughout his life.

In the same way, the history of Buddhism is the history of people who unexpectedly have encountered themselves in the teaching and have expressed their deep emotion and appreciation in their life. Those people have been called 'Buddhists.'

The question of "What is Buddhism?" is actually asking us "Do you see yourself in the teaching of Buddhism?" Relying on Buddhism does not mean to believe in Buddha as a god. Rather, it is deeply trusting in the teaching that lets us be aware of our reality which we often try not to face or accept.



In October Phil Underwood, Roy Takemura and Jack Wear represented WCBT at the recent ESGVJCC Golf Tournament held at the Via Verde Country Club in San Dimas.



T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E M E N T S

The Study Class

The December Study Class will be cancelled. The Study Class in 2016 will start on January 12 at 10:00 AM. Discussions will be based on selected topics that vary from week to week. The class usually meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. For more information, please contact Rev. Miyoshi at (626) 689-1040.

December Shotsuki Bodhi Day Service & Board Meeting

December Board Meeting will be held on December 6 at 8:30 AM followed by the Shotsuki and Bodhi Day Service at 10 AM.

Mochitsuki

WCBT's annual *Mochitsuki* will be held on Sunday, December 13. The special *mochi* rice will be passed out to Sangha members on November 29. This rice will be washed and soaked the night before and beginning at 7:00AM it will be steamed until it is ready to be poked and pounded and eventually molded into smooth *mochi* shapes. Some are filled with sweet bean *an* and others are made into the traditional New Years symbolic offering, *okasane*. Come and join us in this annual tradition.



Year-end Service & Oseibo

Our Year-end Service, Oseibo gift presentation and potluck dinner will be held on Sunday, December 20 at 4:00 PM. Entertainment will be provided by the Dharma School, youth organizations and other members of the Sangha. If you have a talent you'd like to share, please contact Rev. Miyoshi.

The potluck assignments are as follows: If your last name begins with A-K, please bring a main dish and a salad; L-N, bring a main dish and rice dish; O-Y, bring a main dish and a dessert.

Please join us for a fun evening of entertainment and feasting on the delicious potluck spread from the West Covina Temple members.

New Years Day Service

A special service to commemorate the new year will be held on Thursday, January 1, 2016, at 11:00 AM. Please let Rev. Miyoshi know if you're planning to attend.

Board Meeting & Shotsuki Service

The January 2016 board meeting will be held on Sunday, January 3 at 8:30 AM followed by the Shotsuki Service for January.

Eitaikyo & General Meeting

Eitaikyo will be held on Sunday, January 17 at 10 AM. followed by the General Meeting.

A bento lunch will be provided by presale only so make sure you contact Toban A to get your Eitaikyo lunch tickets. Join us for our yearly service and enjoy the delicious bento.

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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DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

Allison Haraguchi, Kyle Kagawa, Aki Kamimura, Chris Nakano, Denise Underwood, Larry Oshima, Susan Iwama, Johnny Martinez, Tristan Miyashiro, Helen Nakawatase, Sandra Nakano, Jonathan Ogino, Kristin Dubble, Merry Jitosh, Jessica Saucedo, Taylor Saucedo, Katrena Sakaue, Brandon Kwan, Brett Miyamoto, Chau Chen, Wesley Zhao Chen, Julie Griffith, Jack Wear, Dawn Masai, Sean Underwood, Richard Kagawa, Atrina Underwood, Takashi Takemoto, Michiko Oku, Stephanie Akune



T H E G A T E W A Y

WCBT Activities from Hoonko to Oldies



Bishop Nori Ito, Abbott Otani and his wife, Mrs. Satika, and Rev. Miyoshi pose for Gateway at our recent Hoonko Service.

WCBT welcomed 10 Higashi Honganji ministers and Rev. James Fredericks to our memorial service for Shinran Shonin.

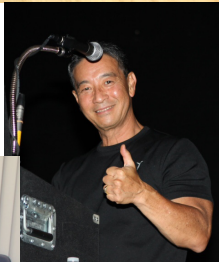


Rev. Ken Yamada was the guest speaker at WCBT's Hoonko Service



The bartenders at the WCBT Oldies dances are handsome, suave and youthful

DJ Steve Kikuchi never fails to impress and entertain us with his wonderful selection of music from our dancing past.



Nancy, Denise and Hiroko smile for the camera while Joy seems to have had one too many... Seriously, she was just avoiding being in the picture. Yeah, right...





T H E G A T E W A Y

Kiku Craft & Food Fair 2015!



Our 7th annual Kiku Craft & Food Fair was once again a smashing success! There were so many vendors, with their artistic creations, who participated in our crafts fair this year that it was held in the Center's gym. In addition many of our sangha members worked hard behind the scenes to provide the delicious food. Thanks to everyone for making this a fun and fantastic fundraiser!!





T H E G A T E W A Y



Quote of the Month
An eye for an eye only
ends up making
the whole world blind.
-Mahatma Gandhi

Buddhism Quiz

Here is another one of our quizzes to test you on "How well you know your Buddhism."
As in the previous Buddhist quizzes, today's questions are about the Buddhist altar.

Difficulty Level: Easy review

1. In the Jodo Shinshu tradition of Buddhism, the candle(s) burning in the altar
 - a. symbolizes wisdom, the light through which we understand truth.
 - b. symbolizes the glow in our hearts as we approach the true meaning of the Buddha Dharma.
 - c. has no symbolic meaning other than to reflect off the gold ornaments and brighten the altar.

2. The traditional offering of food, specifically rice, in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is called obuppan.
It
 - a. symbolizes our appreciation for the food we receive.
 - b. is a reminder that we should share what we have with others.
 - c. Both a and b





T H E G A T E W A Y

誰のための 教えなのか 見義信香

「仏教」という言葉から皆さんはどんなイメージを受けられるでしょうか。また、実際にお寺のご門徒でいらっしゃる方にとって、例えばある日隣りに住む人から、「熱心にお寺に通っていらっしゃいますが、仏教とは一体どんな教えですか?」と聞かれた時、どのようにお答えになるのでしょうか。非常にシンプルな問いですが、それだけにお寺に身を置く者は逆に見過ごしがちな問いではないかと思うのです。

あれは別院での日曜礼拝の後だったと思いますが、その時にご門徒の方から同じような質問を受けました。それは「五分で仏教を説明するとすれば、一体どんなことを話せばよいのでしょうか」というものでした。結局その時私はその質問にお答えすることはできませんでした。答えることができなかった一番の理由は、おそらく五分という非常に短い時間で仏教を説明することなどほとんど不可能のように思えたからでした。しかしながら、その後もこのことがずっと私の中に引っかかっておりました。実際お寺でも訪れた方から仏教について質問される機会は多くありますが、すべての方にじっくりと座ってお話をする時間があるとは限りません。限られた時間だからこそ、非常に根本的なこの問い、すなわち「仏教とはなにか」がなによりもまず明らかにされなければならぬのではないのでしょうか。言い換えれば、あの時、ご門徒の方の問いに答えられなかった私は、「仏教とはなに

か」という基本的な問いにあまり向き合っていなかったということでしょう。

こうして改めてこの大きくて広い問いについて考える機会をいただいた時、最初に思い浮かんだことは「仏教とはいったい誰のための教えなのだろうか?」ということでした。仏教は男性のためだけの教えではありません。女性のためだけの教えでもありません。日本人のためだけの教えでも、アメリカ人のためだけの教えでもありません。さらにいうなら、仏教徒と呼ばれる人々のためだけの教えでもないのです。なぜなら、仏教が説くのはすべての人間、いいえ、人間のみではなくいのちあるあらゆるものにとっての真実だからです。一切衆生という言葉は生きとし生けるすべてのものを包む言葉であります。したがって、一切衆生の真実について書かれているのが仏教の教えといえるでしょう。私たちひとりひとりも間違いなくこの一切衆生の輪の中に包まれています。ということは、仏教の教えは私について、そして皆さん方ひとりひとりについて書かれた教えということになります。ちょうど、手に取った本の主人公が思いもかけず他の誰でもない、自分自身だったというようなことを想像してみてください。そして、仏とはそのようにまさに教えが自分自身について書かれたものであるという事実に目覚めた人、言い換えるなら、教えの中に自分自身を見いだした人のことであります。その意味では、仏教とは仏の教えであると同時に、仏が自らの身を通して聞いた教え、ということもいえるでしょう。そして、仏教の歴史とは、教えの中で思いもかけず自分自身に出会うことのできた数えきれない人々の驚きと感

動の歴史、というふうにいえるのではないのでしょうか。

「仏教とはなんですか?」という問いはそのまま「私にとって仏教とは?」という問いとなって、改めて仏法に聞いてゆく機会を私に開いてくれているように感じられます。



お寺ニュース

12月法話会祥月法要 忘年会

今年も余す所ひと月となりました。12月の法話会・祥月法要は3日(木)午後7時よりセンターにてお勤めいたします。また法要後例年の如く忘年会を催します。法話会とお寺よりお刺身が用意されます。皆さま方にはご自慢のお料理やデザートをお持ちくださるようお願い申し上げます。また歌や踊り、隠し芸などもご用意ください。一年を振り返りつつ皆さまと楽しい時間を過ごすことを楽しみにしております。

餅つき

今年のお餅つきは12月13日(日)午前7時より行われます。200ポンドの餅米をつきますのでお手伝いを宜しく願いいたします。なお、餅米は11月29日に皆様にもって帰って頂き一昼夜水につけた後当日持って来ていただきます。みんなで美味しいお餅をつきましょう。当日は仏教青年会による朝食もごぞいます。

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 **GATEWAY** 

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December

- 3 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 6 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 6 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
Bodhi Day Service
- 8 10:00 am Study Class
- 13 7:00 am Mochitsuki
- 20 4:00 pm Year-end Service

12月行事予定

- 3日 午後7時 法話会
- 6日 午前8時半 理事会
- 6日 午前10時 祥月法要/涅槃会
- 13日 午前7時 もちつき
- 20日 午後4時 年末家族礼拝

January

- 1 11:00 am New Year's Day Service
- 3 8:30 am Board Meeting
- 3 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 7 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service
- 10 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 12 10:00 am Study Class
- 17 10:00 am Eitaikyo Service/General Meeting
- 24 10:00 am Sunday Service
- 26 10:00 am Study Class
- 31 10:00 am Sunday Service

2016年1月行事予定

- 1日 午前11時 修正会法要
- 3日 午前8時半 理事会
- 3日 午前10時 祥月法要
- 7日 午後7時 法話会
- 10日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
- 17日 午前10時 永代経法要/総会新年会
- 24日 午前10時 日曜礼拝

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罪を超える道

仲野良俊