Hanamatsuri is a service to celebrate the birth of Śākyamuni Buddha. On April 8 the Los Angeles Buddhist Temple Federation is commemorating this event at Nishi Hongwanji. This year’s theme is “I Alone, Am the Honored One…Means You and Me.” The birth of Śākyamuni Buddha is accompanied by many legends. Among them, one of the most famous stories is the story of the baby Buddha taking seven steps, pointing his right hand to the sky and his left hand to the earth, and saying, “Above and below the heavens, I alone, am the World-Honored One.”

For some people, this might sound very arrogant, however, that is not what it meant. When he declared this, the ‘I’ indicates not only himself but also each of us. Śākyamuni Buddha was the one who sought the Truth of all human existence and awakened to it. Throughout Śākyamuni’s spiritual journey, it was not for his personal concerns or issues but for all of us in order to find the true meaning of our lives. Therefore, this passage talks not only of Śākyamuni Buddha but also of every one of us. In other words, this mythical story teaches us the Truth that each of us is precious, irreplaceable, and ultimately valuable just as we are.

In actuality, when we hear that “You are all receiving precious life and are living at this moment, it clearly shows us that our existence is irreplaceable and ultimately precious,” it may not be that difficult to agree with it. On the other hand, it is much more difficult for us to deeply accept it with our heart and body and take refuge in it. Rather, we often say that “I think I am precious and proud of myself because…,” and make every effort to find the words that can complete this sentence.

For example, to have a high educational background, to work hard, or to try to be kind to people, can be reasons to verify the meaning of your existence. The Truth always tells us that nothing is necessary to show your preciousness, yet we tend to look for proof to validate our significance. That is to say, it is us who do not want to accept the Truth and rather try to ignore it. Instead of focusing on being just as we are, we would rather focus on ideal images of ourselves. We create all kinds of images that we want to be or we should be, and try to satisfy that the image. As a result, as long as we fulfill the ideal image, we are able to think of...
DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

About 2500 years ago, near the Himalaya Mountains in a grove called Lumbini, was born a baby who was named Siddhartha. His mother, Queen Maya, and the infant were showered with blossoms and sweet water from the sky. This little baby became the Buddha. In our tradition, we honor the birth of Siddhartha by offering flowers and sweet tea to commemorate this happy day, April 8.

The Dharma School children will honor Prince Siddhartha with birthday cards that they have fashioned. They will place the cards near the Hanamido when offering flowers and sweet tea. Their cards will be displayed so that everyone in the Sangha can enjoy them. The staff asks that parents and/or grandparents help their children to make their birthday cards—Thank you!

April 29th will be our WCBT Fun Day. We hope you can attend service that Sunday and join in the festivities. There will be activities planned and pizza and drinks will be provided. Please bring finger food to share—desserts, appetizers, etc.

The Dharma School staff encourages families to bring their children to Dharma School. We have activities, stories, and lessons that we would love to share with our youngsters!

Hope to see all of you at our Hanamatsuri and the WCBT Fun Day!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen

WCBT Family & Friends Fun Day

After Temple Service on Sunday, April 29, WCBT has planned a Family & Friends Fun Day from 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM at the Center Social Hall. All current and past WCBT members and their families and friends are invited for an afternoon of games, lunch and good times. Come meet new members and reacquaint with past Dharma friends. Activities will be planned for young and old. See flyer for schedule, lunch plans and contact information. Hope to see you there!

IT’S TEE TIME!

WCBT will be holding it’s 22nd annual golf tournament on Friday, May 11th, 2018 at the Pacific Palms Golf Course (Industry Hills). We will be providing goodie bags for our golfers, therefore we are asking our Sangha to donate items to fill these bags. We are expecting 75-80 golfers, but any quantity of donated items is appreciated. Please bring your donations to Temple on Sunday, May 6th, 2018.

1) Some of the items we need are:
2) Granola bars
3) Nuts
4) Gum
5) Mints
6) Crackers
7) Cookies
8) Fruit snacks
9) Pens, hand sanitizer, etc.
10) Golf or non- golf item of your choice

***Please NO CHOCOLATE! (sticky fingers)

Thank you for your support. The success of our golf tournament relies on the support of our Sangha.

Gassho,
Golf Committee
WCBT Hanamatsuri
West Covina’s Hanamatsuri Service will be held on Sunday, April 8, 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 and light refreshments will be served after the service. We invite you to come and join us to celebrate the Buddha’s birthday!

LABTF Hanamatsuri
The Federation Hanamatsuri Service will be held on the April 8 beginning at 1:30 pm at the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple in LA. Everyone is encouraged to attend the LABTF service after WCBT Hanamatsuri Service.

WCBT Fun Day
A WCBT Fun Day is being planned for Sunday, April 29, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Center Social Hall. All current and past WCBT members and their families and friends are invited for an afternoon of games, lunch and good times so mark your calendars and save the date. Hope to see you there!

WCBT 22nd Annual Golf Classic
WCBT will be holding their 22nd Annual Golf Classic on Friday, May 11, on the Babe Zaharias Course at Industry Hills Golf Club at the Pacific Palms Resort in the City of Industry. Registration begins at 11:00 am and the tournament will begin at 1:00 pm.

Entry forms and sponsorship forms have been mailed to Temple members. 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.

For more information see the article on page 2.

Mother’s Day Service
A Mother’s Day family service will be held on May 13, 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 20 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.

The Study Class
The Study Class will meet on April 10 and 24 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 (213) 219-6140.
ourselves as precious or valuable.

Unfortunately, however, there is no guarantee that we are always able to follow those images that we create of ourselves. A person who makes a healthy body a criterion to prove himself/herself could become very ill. Another person whose ideal image is to be productive in society would eventually become older, making it harder and harder to fulfill the image. As a result, when we cannot satisfy our images as we desire, nothing but despair is left. Therefore, unable to validate ourselves, we no longer feel that our existence is precious and significant anymore. In other words, when we lose things to be relied on to prove the meaning of our existence, we cannot help but be disappointed in ourselves and cannot find any hope for ourselves.

Conversely, to deeply accept our original preciousness with our heart and body, and to take refuge in it, will guarantee that we will never be disappointed in ourselves. “Just as we are” may be far from any image that we want to be or should be. However, no matter who you are, or what happens, the Truth about our preciousness will never waver. Nothing can destroy this Truth. As a result, realizing our own preciousness just as we are, we will never be disappointed, or abandon ourselves. This is the moment when we are finally able to believe in the importance of our life.

Moreover, those who come to realize their own invaluable existence are able to realize the invaluable preciousness of each single life, of all sentient beings. When each of us can declare that, “I alone, am the World-Honored One,” simultaneously, we become aware of the countless number of voices from all sentient beings also saying, “I alone, am the World-Honored One.” Therefore, the Truth reveals to us that the lives of all living beings are as equally precious as my life. Being aware of the Truth, we also come to sense that each of us is connected with all sentient beings in respect to receiving precious life and living at this moment. This is the world of warera, “we” or “us” for Shinran Shonin, and the true meaning of “I” in Šākyamuni’s words.

Here, I would like to introduce my favorite poet, Tomihiro Hoshino, because his poetry and paintings clearly show us such a world. One such poem is entitled “Licorice.”

Once I saw a weed
Waving in the wind
I felt its weakness
Today I see a weed
Waving in the wind
I realize its strength

Hoshino is completely paralyzed from his neck down due to a terrible accident when he was a gymnastic teacher. In the hospital, he started to write and draw holding a pen in his mouth. A museum for his works was established in 1991, and today many people visit there and are inspired by his poetry and paintings.

However, he is special and precious not because he can paint and write beautiful poetry holding a pen with his mouth, or because his works move our heart. Rather, it is him who became aware of his own preciousness and great joy in living at this moment. He is paralyzed and needs help from others for his everyday living. Yet, his health condition does not cause any doubt and negation about the preciousness of his life. Moreover, such awareness lets him realize the invaluable existence of all living beings that surround him. The world of true equality, and the deep connection with all sentient being, that is, the world of “warera” according to Shinran Shonin, is revealed in him. It must be this world that becomes his strength and enables him to write inspirational poetry and create beautiful paintings. When we are touched by his work, I believe that they show us this world. This means that, through Hoshino’s poetry and paintings, Shinran Shonin’s words, and Šākyamuni’s life, each of us are also deeply inspired to encounter this unlimited and boundless world.
Rev. Fred Brenion spoke at our Spring Ohigan Service where we were joined by special guests from the Honzan and Betsuin. They were served delicate cups of tea by Yukiko Kovacs. The special otoki that followed was highlighted with an amazing presentation of kamaboko created by Denise Underwood. A special thanks to Toban CI.

Oldies 59 was another fun-filled evening of great music, “groovy” dancing, some imbibing & lots of laughter. The Sangha members who work behind the scenes always seem to have as much fun as the dancers who come for a good time.
Calling All Current and Past WCBT Members Bring Your Family and Friends

WCBT FAMILY & FRIENDS FUN DAY

You are all invited to join us for an afternoon of Games, Potluck Lunch and Good Times!

Date: Sunday, April 29, 2018
Service: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Fun & Food: 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
   Snacks/Mingle: 11:00 a.m. – 11:30 am
   Activities: 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
   Lunch: 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Finger Food Potluck Lunch
Share Your Favorite
Pupus/Tapas/Appetizers/Desserts/Your choice
Pizza and Drinks will be provided
Activity/Social Hour: 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Place: West Covina Buddhist Temple
(Social Hall)
1203 West Puente Ave. West Covina, CA

For More Information Contact: Pat Sato 626-826-7386 pishsato@gmail.com
HIGASHI HONGANJI NORTH AMERICA DISTRICT

2018

Southern California Local Dōbō Retreat

We wish to invite you to attend the 2018 Southern California Local Dōbō Retreat of the Higashi Honganji North America District. The lecture and discussion sessions will be given separately in English and Japanese. The theme for this year’s English group is “Questions, Creating Our Journeys: Explorations that Lead to the Buddhist Path.” To register, please send the application form below to your local temple.

Date
Saturday, April 14, 2018

Time
9:30 am — 4:00 pm

Speaker—English Group
Rev. Frederick Brenion (Los Angeles Betsuin)

Speaker—Japanese Group
Rev. Akinori Imai (North America District)

Location
Higashi Honganji Los Angeles Betsuin
505 East Third Street, Los Angeles, California 90013
Phone: (213) 626-4200

Fee
$12.00 (Lunch included)
Please make your check payable to Higashi Honganji North America District.

If you have any questions, please contact your local temple or the district office at:
Higashi Honganji North America District Office
505 E. 3rd St., Los Angeles, California 90013
Phone:(213) 621-4064 / Email: northamerica@higashihonganji.org

I would like to participate in the SoCal Dobo Local Retreat (English Group).
Name

Phone # or email

Fill out the form below and send it to your temple by April 7 (Sat).
This will be Frank Tanji’s last treasurer’s report for Gateway.

Our dear Sangha member has retired from his position after many years of dedicated service to our WCHHBT.

We extend to him our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation.

Buddhism Quiz

Today’s Buddhist quiz: Happy Hanamatsuri!

Difficulty Level: It’s not Rocket Science!

1. Hanamatsuri celebrates the birth of
   a. Siddharta Gautama
   b. Shinran
   c. Shakyamuni Buddha
   d. Amida Buddha

2. Hanamatsuri always falls on
   a. The first Sunday in April
   b. The first Sunday after the full moon that occurs after the Spring Ohigan
   c. April 8
   d. April 1

Answers: a & c, c

Quote of the Month

There are two great days in a person’s life - the day we are born and the day we discover why.
-William Barclay
四月八日は釈尊がお生まれになった日とされ、こころざしに富士山が満ち溢れる大きな花がちに本願寺でお祝いされます。後に釈尊が生まれた日の祝日は、かちとしに諸行事が催される日を指すのです。この日、私たちが釈尊の教えを思い起こすことで、「唯尊い」ということわざが用いられるのです。花が咲くこの日、私たちが釈尊とならんで、人に向けた心を深めることを願っています。

お寺ニュース

花まつり法要

本年は4月8日（日）午前10時よりお勤めいたします。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。また同日午後1時半より、小東京の西本願寺別院にて仏教連合会主催の花祭りが開催されます。ご家族お誘い合わせの上、ぜひご参詣下さい。

WCBT 基金募集ゴルフ大会

お寺の第22回基金募集ゴルフ大会が、5月11日（金）、インドストリーム・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。ただ今参加者とティースポーンサー、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していただきます。皆様のご協力を賜りますよう、よろしくお願い申し上げます。詳しくは、見義信香開教使までお問い合わせ下さい。

母の日家族礼拝

5月13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、メンバーや方による母の日のメッセージがございます。どうぞ皆様のご一緒にお参り下さい。
April
1 8:30 am  Board Meeting
1 10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
5 7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
8 10:00 am  Hanamatsuri Service
8 1:30 pm  LABTF Hanamatsuri
   @ Nishi Hongwanji LA Betsuin
10 10:00 am  Study Class
14 9:30 am  NAD Local Retreat
15 10:00 am  Sunday Service
22 10:00 am  Sunday Service
24 10:00 am  Study Class
29 10:00 am  Sunday Service
29 11:00 am  WCBT Family & Friends Fun Day

May
3 7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
6 8:30 am  Board Meeting
6 10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
8 10:00 am  Study Class
11 11:00 am  WCBT Golf Tournament

2018年4月行事予定
1日  午前8時半 理事会
1日  午前10時 祥月法要
5日  午後7時半 法話会
8日  午前10時 花祭り法要
8日  午後1時半 仏連花祭り
   （於 西本願寺羅府別院）
14日 午前9時半 南加地区同朋研修会
15日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
22日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
29日 午前10時 日曜礼拝
29日 午前11時 お寺家族パーティ

5月行事予定
3日 午後7時半 法話会
6日 午前8寺半 理事会

どこまでしあわせの道具をそろえたら
人間はしあわせですと
いうのでしょうか
金子大栄