Buddhism declares that “All of us are equally precious” as the universal truth. This statement seems to be widely accepted in our society. Some may even feel that it is so obvious and nothing special. However, when we look back on our history this principle may not have been accurate all the time.

During Shinran Shonin’s time, the value of people was determined by birth and occupation. No one ever imagined that an aristocrat landowner and a peasant or fisherman were equal. It is truly remarkable that Shinran Shonin relied on the teaching of equality which was contrary to common belief at his time.

Many of us feel fortunate that we are in the 21st century when equality is regarded as a virtue. However, our society does not truly reflect this quality. Achievement of equality for all, is still a long way off. We sometimes forget and are indifferent to those who struggle for their dignity. It is delusional to think that our society is more advanced than the time of Shinran Shonin. In actuality, the problem we have is as critical as it was during his time.

In Buddhism, our world is called sahā. Śākyamuni Buddha describes sahā as the world where ‘the strong vanquish the weak.’ Rev. Akira Yotsutsuji says, “In this place, people solely depend on power. If you have power, you can be a center and rule the place. If you do not, you are neglected and exploited by the strong.” In sahā world, people adhere to their own benefit and struggle for power. Reflecting upon our society, we realize that we are truly in the sahā world.

What gives you the power might have varied according to the times. Birth and occupation gave you the power as in Shinran Shonin’s time. Today, the numbers of nuclear weapons determine the strength of countries. More so, economic power is what everyone and every country is vying for.

Regarding the economy, immigrants are often seen as cheap labor. The strong do not hesitate to use them to make more profit. There is no equal relationship and they are not treated as human beings but just like tools to use.

The idea of equality is contrary
Dharma School News

Hope all of you had a good Thanksgiving! This month will be very busy with mochitsuki and the Year-end service. The Dharma School students will give a short presentation to the Sangha during the Year-end. We hope you will enjoy it!

The children experienced a fun activity during the Hoonko service. Mrs. Sato put together a kit that the students used to make a Shinran Shonin figure. They were told about the life of Shinran and then proceeded with the activity. They did a good job. Mrs. Sato even made miniature ojuzus for the Shinran figures. Thank you Pat!

On November 25 the children who turned 3, 5, or 7 during 2018 were honored by our temple. They each received a gift in recognition of their respective milestone years.

Congratulations to:

3 years old
Jordan Kiyomi Jucksch
Parents: Kendra & Randy Jucksch
Grandparents: Ruby & Richard Kagawa

Ollie Reynolds-Hale
Parents: Lauren and Vere Reymonds-Hale
Grandparents: Hisako & Dick Koga

5 years old
Riley Logue
Parents: Stacy & Tanner Logue
Grandmother: Lillian Nishihara

7 years old
Jayden Logue
Grandmother: Lillian Nishihara

Derrick Noguchi
Grandmother: Haruko Mayeda

Cayla James Yoburn
Grandfather: Phillip Underwood

Because our society behaves unlike the teaching of Buddhism, it is critical that we listen to the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism is not to make us feel good or satisfy our expectation. Instead, Buddhism awakens us to our problems.

Relying upon the teachings of equality, we come to realize the serious issues we face. When this realization brings us a sense of responsibility to our own society, our path would be more clearly defined to achieve the goal of “All of us are equally precious.”

Buddhism Quiz

Today's Buddhist quiz: Getting back to basics.

Difficulty Level: Easy Peasy

1. Hoonko service at Higashi Honganji began around 1294 on the occasion of Shinran’s 33rd Memorial Service. Hoonko is also called
   a. Wasan
   b. Bando Bushi
   c. Goshoki

2. Hoonko service at Higashi Honganji in Kyoto is observed annually:
   a. For seven days and nights from November 21-28.
   b. On the second Sunday evening in November.
   c. For three consecutive days in September.

Answers: c, a
The Study Class
The Study Class will meet on December 11 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.

Mochitsuki
WCBT’s annual Mochitsuki will be held on Sunday, December 9. The special mochi rice, which will be passed out to Sangha members beforehand, should be washed and soaked the night before and brought to the Temple ready for steaming at 7:00 AM. When the mochi rice is steamed to perfection it is ready to be poked and pounded and eventually shaped into smooth traditional mochis. Some are filled with sweet bean an and others are made into the traditional New Years symbolic offering, okasane. Breakfast will be provided so come and join us in this annual tradition.

Year-end Service & Oseibo
Our Year-end Service, Oseibo gift presentation and dinner will be held on Sunday, December 16 at 4:00 PM. Entertainment will be provided by the Dharma School and other members of the Sangha. This year the Center kitchen will be under renovation so we are changing our usual pot luck dinner for Taqueros who will provide tacos, beans & rice. Toban C will provide salads, desserts and drinks. We are asking everyone to donate $5 to offset the cost. If you’re planning to come please contact Dick Koga at (213) 305-2545 or dickkoga@gmail.com so we will know how many tacos we’ll need.

Please join us for a fun evening of entertainment and feasting.

New Years Day Service
A special service to commemorate the New Year will be held on Tuesday, January 1, 2019, at 11:00 AM. Please let Rev. Miyoshi know if you’re planning to attend.

Board Meeting & Shotsuki Service
The January 2019 board meeting will be held on Sunday, January 6 at 8:30 AM followed by the Shotsuki Service for January.

Eitaikyo & General Meeting
Eitaikyo will be held on Sunday, January 13 at 10 AM. followed by the General Meeting.

A bento lunch will be provided by presale so please order your Eitaikyo lunch tickets by contacting Rev. Miyoshi or a Toban A member who will be selling lunch tickets to be determined. 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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West Covina, CA 91793
(626) 689-1040
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DECEMBER BIRTHDAY
The 10th Annual Kiku Crafts & Food Fair turned out to be our biggest and the most successful one yet. We had more vendors with a variety of wonderful creations, we had authors signing books & doing readings from their books, customers doing some serious shopping, people enjoying the delicious food and some multi-taskers shopping and eating at the same time. Thank you to everyone who came out to support this fundraiser and invited their friends to come as well. A special thanks to Dickie Koga and Jen Higa and the entire kitchen crew for their organization and hard work, and to the purple Kiku crew for their support and enthusiasm.
Shichi-Go-San Service on November 25 recognized Children turning three, five and seven years old in 2018. Pictured from top left: Tyler Kobayashi; Top right: Jordan and mother Kendra Jucksch; Lower right: Riley Logue and grandmother Lillian Nishihara; Lower left: Jaydon Logue with Rev. Miyoshi.
Support WCHABT through AmazonSmile

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This is the name of the charity you wish to support.

To change the name of the charity, put your cursor on the word CHANGE and press Enter.

Type West Covina Higashi and move your cursor to the Search icon and press enter.

Move your cursor to Select and press Enter. Your Supporting field should now show West Covina Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple.
The 2019 Family Retreat:
How Buddhism Enriches My Life
A Dynamic Dialogue with Rev. Unno

Lecturer: Rev. Tetsuo Unno

Date: Feb. 16 (Sat.)~17 (Sun.), 2019
(Presidents’ Day Weekend)
Location: San Luis Obispo Buddhist Temple
6996 Ontario Road
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
Fee: $45.00/adults; $20/students (including college)
children under 12 are free
Checks payable to: WCHHBT
Mail to: West Covina Buddhist Temple
P.O. Box 1616 West Covina, CA 91793

More Info: (626)689-1040

revnobuko@gmail.com (Rev. Miyoshi) or pishsato@gmail.com (Pat Sato)

About the Lecture
Rev. Unno will explain, with the use of familiar, everyday examples, key terms of Shin Buddhism Shin such as Amida, Faith ("Shinjin"), Salvation ("Sukui"), Pure Land and Nenbutsu. Following his lecture, the floor will then be open for a free-flowing discussion, with ample time for Questions and Answers with regard to the explanations that had been put forth at the beginning of the lecture or any questions about Shin Buddhism.

Rev. Tetsuo Unno was born in 1933 in Fukuoka, Japan and raised in the U.S.. He studied at UC Berkeley, Ryukoku University, Tokyo University, and UCLA. He has taught at CSU Northridge and Long Beach in the Department of Religious Studies. He served as a minister at the Seattle Betsuin, Senshin Buddhist Temple and is currently working part-time at Pasadena Buddhist Temple. Rev. Unno also works energetically on translations and editorials and participates as a speaker or a lecturer on Panel Discussions at Religious Conferences at UC campuses (Berkeley, Irvine, etc.), CSU campuses (Dominguez Hills, Fullerton, etc.), Colleges (Whitman, Smith, etc.) and private institutions (USC, Harvard).

The $45.00 fee includes all meals, and there is free lodging available at the temple (though space is limited and you must bring a sleeping bag); nearby motels are also available.

Name(s):

Number of Attendees: E-mail:

Cell phone*:

*Please provide instead of home/landline number for communications at the retreat.
Quote of the Month

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.
一切平等を説く教え
見義信香

仏教はあらゆる人を等しく尊いということを真理として説く教えです。「全ての人は平等である」この言葉は私たちにとっては耳慣れたものです。けれども、およそ800年前の日本、親鸞聖人の時代は、人は生まれや職業によってその価値が決められ、それが当たり前の社会でした。そのような時代の中であらゆる人が平等であるという教えを実質として聞け続けていたのが親鸞聖人という方でありました。その方を祖師と仰ぐということは、私たちもまたその教えを聞き続けていくことである、という教えになっています。

親鸞聖人の時代と21世紀の私達の時代は違う、と多くの人が思えるでしょう。たしかに「人は平等である」という考えは今や広く受け入れられているように見えます。表立って異論を唱える人は少ないでしょう。けれども、私たちは本当にこの真理に基づいた社会を作り出しているか、と聞かれると自信をもって答えられる人はほとんどいないのではないでしょうか。その意味では、「あらゆる人は平等である」という言葉は理念としてははっきりしていますし、反論もしない。けれども生活とは特に周囲のない耳障りのいい言葉でしかありません。それはつまり私たちもまた一切平等が当たり前ではない社会に生きていく、ということなのです。

仏教では、私達の生きる娑婆世界とは「強き者は弱きを伏す（強者伏弱）」世界であると示しています。四囲売氏をそれを、力を持った者が世の中の中心となり幅を利かせ、その一方力を持たない者は、力を持った者に利用され隠され追いやられる世界である、と表現されています。私たちは力を奪い合うために争います。そこは共に生きる世界ではなく、いかに自分の利益をより多く得られるかに執着する世界です。そして同時に自らの力によって傷ついている人々の苦しみに気づくことのできない世界です。

なにを最も有効な力とするかは時代によって変わります。出身や職業が文字通り権力を示すこともあるあります。国レベルでは、核爆弾を含む兵器をどれほど多く所有するかで国の力を示してきました。そして今は個人においても、国家間においても経済力が手の力のパロメーターになっています。

力の奪い合いに必死な世界においては、平等は相容れない考えです。ですからそれは隣に追いやってくれる癒される存在はありまし。けれども、私たちはこの世界を築いて来た人々の尊さを忘れてはなりません。文字通りそれは人ではなく、利用すべき「モノ」なのです。必要なら受け入れ、いらなくなったら切り捨てるだけの存在です。力の内容は変わっても、根本的な構造は何一つ変わっていません。親鸞聖人の社会を通して見える問題は、今を生きる私達の問題でもあるのです。

「あらゆる人は平等であり、敬われるべき存在である」という仏教の教えに真っ向から背いているのが私達の社会です。そしてそれはどれほどの苦しみを生み出しているかに全く気づいていません。その社会の間違いに気付かせるのが、「お寺ニュース」を含む8頁に続く。
December
2  8:30 am  Board Meeting
2  10:00 am  Shotsuki/Bodhi Day Service
6  7:00 pm  Howakai Year-end Service
9  7:00 am  Mochitsuki
11  10:00 am  Study Class
16  4:00 pm  Year-end Service

January
1  11:00 am  New Year’s Day Service
3  7:00 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
6  8:30 am  Board Meeting
6  10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
8  10:00 am  Study Class
13  10:00 am  Eitaikyo Service/General Meeting
20  10:00 am  Sunday Service
22  10:00 am  Study Class
27  10:00 am  Sunday Service

平和のために何をしたらよいか。
君自身が平和の人となり給へ。
毎田周一『片片』