Reflecting within myself, I see that in the various teachings of the Path of Sages, practice and enlightenment died out long ago, and that the true essence of the Pure Land way is the path to realization now vital and flourishing.

—Kyōgyōshinshō

After twenty years of serious practices on Mt. Hiei, Shinran Shōnin had to admit that he could never attain perfect enlightenment and had no choice but to leave in despair. It was during this time when he encountered his teacher Hōnen Shōnin and his nenbutsu teachings. Hōnen’s sangha, which was open to all people, was the Buddhist sangha that Shinran Shōnin had never seen. Seeing the young and old, and female and male, who devotedly relied on the nenbutsu teachings, Shinran witnessed Buddhism come alive in people’s lives.

Hōnen’s ever-growing’s sangha, however, became a threat to established Buddhist schools. The accusation against Hōnen and his teachings ended up in severe persecution of nenbutsu teaching known as the Persecution in the Jōgen era in 1207. As a result, four disciples of Hōnen were executed, and he and six of his disciples, including Shinran, were stripped of their Buddhist name, given a layperson’s name, and exiled from Kyoto. Shinran Shōnin would later criticize people in power who instigated the persecution. At the same time, through this harsh experience, he came to deeply consider what was the true essence of Buddhism.

Shinran Shōnin expressed this truth of Buddhism with the passage above. He saw the reason why the teachings of the Path of Sages, which was the majority of Buddhism in his time, died out was, “altogether inappropriate for the times and beings of the last dharma-ages.” “Inappropriate for beings” means that their teachings were available to certain people and had no connection to “regular” people’s lives. Therefore, those teachings no longer become a strength for people to live their lives. Shinran Shōnin saw that those who instigated the persecution were Buddhist monks who diligently studied and practiced Buddhism. Buddhism should be the teaching of inclusive, not exclusive. Yet, under the name

"The Essence of the Pure Land Way"

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

the nenbutsu teachings, Shinran witnessed Buddhism come alive in people’s lives.

Please see PURE LAND, con’t on page 2
Dharma School News

Obon season is drawing to a close soon. Both West Covina and Higashi Obons were fun with lots of great food thanks to the hard work of everyone. To remember our departed loved ones, the Dharma School students will be constructing lanterns during our last class before vacation. Because we will not have lessons until we meet in September, the following is a little “homework” lesson for the children:

The Three Children and the Sea (An Aesop’s Fable)

Three boys were sitting on the sand by the ocean. They saw something bobbing up and down in the ocean. The first boy thought it might be a treasure ship full of gold and silver. The second boy said it must be a fishing boat filled with the day’s catch of delicious fish. As the object in the ocean became nearer to the boys, the third boy said it must be a treasure chest full of jewels.

At last the object reached the beach. Excitedly, the three boys rushed to the object, but all they found was a water soaked log—no treasures or delicious fish!

Aesop’s lesson was: “Do not let your hopes carry you away from reality” Using the Eight-Fold Path laid out for us from the Buddha, which of the eight paths seems to fit Aesop’s lesson? (Hint: ask your parents for help!)

Have a great summer vacation and keep cool! See you in September!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen

PURE LAND, con’t from pg. 1

of Buddhism, they made all effort to exclude those who had a different understanding of Buddhism without hesitation. The persecution revealed the grave contradiction within the monastic community.

The reading I began with is from Shinran Shōnin’s major works, Kёdogyёshinsho (Collection of Passages Expounding the True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land), Chapter VI. Initially when I read the passage I thought it was only a criticism against those who oppressed the nenbutsu teaching. Only recently, I came to realize that Shinran Shёnin also reflected upon himself as Buddhist through this passage.

Teachings have no connection to our real lives not because they are false but because we cut the teachings off from our lives. Understanding teachings and living following those teachings are two different things. However, we often confuse them. When we are confident of the teaching as true and right, the confidence misleads us that we who accept the teaching are also true and right. Once we see ourselves as right, we can easily be brutal to those who have different thoughts from us. We are ignorant that we merely want to prove our righteousness by using the teaching. Shinran Shёnin realized that one of the causes of the persecution is that we, Shinran included, are all ignorant about ourselves.

Shinran Shёnin recognized this within himself, in that he was no different than those who oppressed him. He undoubtedly assured that the essence of Buddhism is to make us aware of our reality, which we are never able to see by our efforts. In other words, to be able to see his ignorance proves that he surely has encountered the teachings. “The true essence of the Pure Land way is the path to realization now vital and flourishing” describes what he witnessed of how many people relied on the teaching and became nenbutsu followers. At the same time, it is the expression of his sincere gratitude to the teaching of Jodo Shinshu, which illuminates his ignorance.

Jodo Shinshu teachings reveals to us that we too could be the same as those who oppressed nenbutsu teaching. Listening and studying the teachings does not necessarily correspond to truly living with it. We always possess an element of danger by judging or excluding someone by using the teachings. In other words, we have the possibility to make the teachings of Jodo Shinshu to “the teaching of the Path of Sages,” which is inappropriate to the times and us. Therefore, the teachings of Jodo Shinshu ceaselessly works on us to awaken us. When we awaken to our mistakes, it confirms that we have encountered the teachings which Shinran Shёnin also encountered and deeply relied on throughout his life.

Our deepest condolences to the family and relatives of...

George Tamayose (102)  
May 22, 2019

Kazuichi Nakawatase (83)  
June 19, 2019

Namu Amida Butsu
August Schedule
We will take our annual summer break so there will be no Sunday Services on August 11, 18 and 25. Services will resume again on September 1.

September Board Meeting and Service
The September board meeting will be held on September 1 at 8:30 AM followed by the Shotsuki Service at 10:00.

September Study Class
The Study Class will resume in September meeting on September 10 and 24 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.

Fall Ohigan
The Fall Ohigan Service will be held on September 15 at 4:30 PM with guest speaker Rev. Ryuta Furumoto from Senshin Buddhist Temple. Please join us in welcoming Rev. Furumoto and stay for the complimentary otoki dinner following the service.

Oldies Dance LXIV (64)
Make Your Moves on the Floor at Oldies LXIV (64)” will be held on September 28. It’s our 64th Oldies with Steve Kikuchi & High Resolution providing favorite hits from the 60’s, 70’s and 80’s. Please note the new hours. The dance will begin at 7:00 PM and end at 11:00 PM with lots of dancing and fun in between. The earlier hours, although giving us less time to set up, will make it easier for the members who come to help clean-up after the dance. Presale tickets are $20 or $25 at the door. For info and song requests, contact Joanie at (626) 300-8947, joaniekmartinez@gmail.com or Lillian at (626) 780-9866, lilihan77@gmail.com. Your Toban chairs will contact you about work shifts and assignments. Plan to come to the Center by 4:30 PM to help with the set-up and at 11:00 PM to help clean-up since we may not have help available to us. Donations are welcome for raffle prizes and drinks. Sign-up sheets for drinks will be at our Sunday service.

AUGUST BIRTHDAY
Barbara Shirota, Jon Shirota, Brittany Kato, Wesley Hamachi, Derek Hamachi, K.C. Koga, Mark Mayeda, Brian Iwama, Aaron Aoki, Rick Fujimoto, Sachi Ezaki, James deLeon, Rene Kuwahara, Sharon Kuwahara, Chico Masai, Vickie Takemura, Joy Ormseth, Frederic Brenion, Gregory Williams, Bill Dubble, Karleigh Nakata, Hideko Ikehara, Kylie Noguchi

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY
Dean Hata, Marc-Mitchell Miyashiro, Callen & Kimberley Kitaura, Stephanie Jitosho-Gonzalez, Lindsay Ogino (Fiske), Ted Kato, George Tamayose, Oliver Reynolds-Hale, Evan Louise Yoburn, Cathy Nakano, Roy Takemura, Kevin Kuwahara, Brian Takahashi, Andrea Lespron, Catay Nakano, Toyomi Nakakihara, Miyoko Oshima, Leanne Komada, Sonali Ortiz, Erika Oshiro, Mei-Ling Chen, Edward Chen, Toshi Ikehara, Lauren Midori Jucksch, Rev. Etsuko Miyoshi, Yasmine Whang
The Temple has registered with the AmazonSmile donation program. For those of you who shop online with Amazon, the AmazonSmile foundation will donate 0.5% of your purchase price to the Temple, at no cost to you. You just need to login to “smile.amazon.com” which will connect you to the same Amazon website you know. It will display the same products, same prices, and same service. On your first visit select ‘West Covina Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple’ as the organization that you wish to support. It’s that easy.

Happy shopping!
Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Autumn Ohigan Service which will be held on Sunday, September 15, 2019. The schedule for the service is as follows:

- **Date:** Sunday, September 15, 2019
- **Time:** 4:30 PM
- **Dharma Message:** Rev. Ryuta Furumoto
  Senshin Buddhist Temple

We will be serving Otoki dinner immediately following the service.

Higan, meaning the Other Shore (of enlightenment), is a service is conducted on or about the vernal and autumunal equinoxes. At these times of the year, we endeavor to strengthen our commitment of the Buddhist life.

*法要後当番の皆様によるお齋がございます。

秋彼岸法要（英語）
日 時 2019年9月15日 午後4時半
場 所 日系コミュニティセンター
法 話 古本龍太師（洗心寺）

*法要後当番の皆様によるお齋がございます。

合 掌
Nobuko Miyoshi, Minister
John Martinez, President

P.O. Box 1616 West Covina, CA 91793
Telephone (626) 689-1040
WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE PRESENTS

MAKE YOUR MOVES ON THE FLOOR AT OLDIES LXIV (64)!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2019

*NEW TIME! 7pm to 11pm

🌟 At the ESGV Japanese Community Center
🌟 Tickets: $20 presale, $25 at the door
🌟 Music by guest HIGH RESOLUTION
🌟 Drinks available, must be 21 or over
🌟 Dressy Casual

For tickets and/or information Call or Text:
Joanie: (626) 300-8947 (calls only)
Lillian: (626) 780-9866
or email: lilnish77@gmail.com or joaniekmartinez@gmail.com

NO HEELS for Ladies.

WCBT/ESGVJCC is located about a mile north of the West Covina Fashion Mall. Parking in rear of buildings.
The West Covina Buddhist Study Center &
Dharma Seeds Program Present:

“Why I Think Jodo Shinshu Is Going to Disappear”

Speaker: Rev. Masao Kodani, BCA Minister Emeritus

Date: Mondays, October 7 & 14, 2019
Time: 7:30 pm~9:00 pm
Place: East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center, Room 3
1203 West Puente Ave.
West Covina, CA 91790
Fee: $20.00*
Info: (626) 689-1040
wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com

*Pre-registration is requested; but fee is payable either with pre-registration or at 1st class (make check payable to “WCHHBT”)
Quote of the Month

Let us cease from wrath, and refrain from angry looks.
Nor let us be resentful when others differ from us.
For all people have hearts,
and each heart has its own yearnings.
Their right is our wrong, and our right is their wrong.

We are not unquestionably sages,
nor are they unquestionably fools.
Both of us are simply ordinary persons.

-Prince Shotoku

生まれていったという事実と同時に、自らを迫害する人々の姿を通して、彼らのもつ無明の闇を聖人自身も間違いなく抱えているという真実を明らかにしてくれた浄土の真宗の教えの確かさと、そのはたらきに出遇ったという感動の表現に聞こえます。

そして私たちもまた同じ問題を抱える存在である、と親鸞聖人の言葉は私たちに教えてくれています。教えと実際の生活や態度が一致しない、ということは誰もが陥る問題です。真宗の教えを聞いていないから私は大丈夫、ということは決して言えません。さらに言うなら、私たちは真宗の教えを「機に乖く聖道の諸教」としてしまう危険性を常に孕んでいるのです。真宗の教えが私たちの生活に寄り添う教えである、ということは、自分では気づくことのできない問題を知らせ続けてくれる教えである、ということではないでしょう。犯している間違いに気づかせてくれる教えです。気づくことのなかった自らの間違いに目覚める時、間違いを知らせてくれる教えを信頼して生涯その教えを聞き続けた親鸞聖人と、同じ道を歩んでいると言えるのではないでしょうか。
浄土の真宗は証道いま盛なり 見義信香

『教行信証』(後序)

二十年間の仏道修行に破れ比叡山を降りた親鸞聖人が出遇ったのが、法然上人であり、上人の説く念仏の教えでした。性別や年齢、職業の隔たりなく様々な人が集う僧伽で生き出される熱気と仏道に生きる人の姿に、親鸞聖人は大きな衝撃を受け、「仏法こそにあり」と確かに頷かれたのです。

一方僧伽の外に目を向けると、法然上人の説く教えや、その教えに帰依していく人に対する批判は日に日に強まっていきました。そしてそれは、法然上人の弟子四名が死罪、上人と親鸞聖人を含む七名が還俗(僧の身分の剥奪)されると流罪となる「承元の法難」と呼ばれる念仏弾圧にまで発展します。

この念仏弾圧は親鸞聖人に「仏教とはなにか」という問いを直面させる機会となり、そしてその問いへの応えが冒頭で紹介しました「竊かに以みれば、聖道の諸教は行証久しく廃れ、浄土の真宗は証道いま盛なり。」という言葉ではないかと思うのです。

親鸞聖人は聖道の諸教が廃れたのを「機に乖(そむ)」いているからだと見ました。機とは仏法を受ける者、つまり私たち人間であり、しかもそれに特定の人のみではない、あらゆる人々のことです。「機に乖くとは、教えが私たちの現実から離れたものとなっているということであり、それゆえ教えが生きる力を奪っているということでしょう。また念仏弾圧は、僧の姿をし、修行にも真摯に勤めている人々が、一方では権力者までを動かして考え合わない者を徹底的に排除しようとする実を明らかにしました。その実を通じて仏教とはなにか」という問いがいよいよ親鸞聖人の課題となっていったのではないかでしょう。

教えは生活から切り離されるのを、教えの正しさによるのではなく、単に教えが私たちの現実から離れたものとなっているということに、親鸞聖人は大きな衝撃を受け、「仏教とはなにか」という問いがいよいよ親鸞聖人の課題となっていったのではないかでしょう。法然上人においては、自身の姿に対する目は、真宗の教えが確かに聖人にあってはいる証であったといわれるが「浄土の真宗は証道いま盛なり」という言葉は、念仏者が次々と証道をおこなっていることを示します。
August
1  7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
2-4  Las Vegas Trip
4  8:30 am  Board Meeting
4  10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
11, 18 & 25  No Sunday Service

September
1  8:30 am  Board Meeting
1  10:00 am  Shotsuki Service
5  7:30 pm  Howakai Japanese Service
8  10:00 am  Betsuin Hoonko
8  10:00 am  Sunday Service
10  10:00 am  Study Class
15  4:30 pm  Fall Ohigan Service
22  10:00 am  Sunday Service
24  10:00 am  Study Class
28  7:00 pm  Oldies Dance
29  10:00 am  Sunday Service

2019年8月行事予定
1日  午後7時半  法話会
2-4日  ラスベガス旅行
4日  午前8時半  理事会
4日  午前10時  祥月法要
11、18、25日  日曜礼拝休み

9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  日曜礼拝
15日  午後4時半  秋季彼岸法要
22日  午前10時  日曜礼拝
28日  午後7時  オールディーズダンス
29日  午前10時  日曜礼拝

現実を無視することや、現実をすりかえることが宗教ではありません。
現実を直視する力こそ、宗教的精神に外なりません。
藤元正樹