



GATEWAY



April 2020 - - Vol. LV No. 4



The Japanese tradition of hanami or cherry blossom viewing can be traced back at least a thousand years. It is an occasion for people to meet, eat, drink sake and bond with fellow workers, neighbors, friends, and family. In early March, WCBT enjoyed its own hanami under the fleeting pink petals of the cherry trees at our Community Center.

“An Ordinary Person Whose Mind Is Weak and Inferior”

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

It has been a challenging time amid this unpredictable situation with the coronavirus. I hope you and your family are well and safe, and to those who engage in essential services, I sincerely appreciate your hard work.

Due to a stay at home order announced in California on March 19th by Governor Gavin Newsom, West Covina Buddhist Temple has been closed and all services and activities at the temple have been cancelled. This serious situation makes me consider more than ever what I can offer to our members and how I can help them to connect with each other. There is no doubt that this is a challenging time, but it also can be

a meaningful opportunity to start something new to keep providing temple services to our members.

At the same time, I have come to realize that it is the time we truly need to listen to the teachings in our daily lives. When Jodo Shinshu teachings work in our lives, it gives us the strength to face reality and deal with it.

No one ever predicted this coronavirus epidemic. Uncertainty also stimulates our anxiety and fear. Some expect religions to make them strong so that they can overcome or get rid of their fear. However, Buddhism does not encourage us to be strong in this sense. Being afraid of something completely

unexpected is natural to all human beings, therefore, having a sense of anxiety is not a problem. The problem, however, is that we care only about ourselves in order to dispel our anxiety. This self-centeredness creates more troubles in our lives and societies.

Since the threat of the coronavirus has spread in our communities, we surprisingly see long lines at Costco and shelves for water and paper products are completely empty. Hoarding tons of stock at home is our common manner to make ourselves feel secure. Needless to say, this act is based on our anxiety and fear, which we all have.

Please see MIND, con't on page 6



T H E G A T E W A Y

Message from WCBT President

Dear Sangha Members and Friends,

How are you all doing during these extraordinary times of social isolation and heightened precautions? I miss seeing all of you and hope that you and your families are well as we deal each day with the effects caused by the viral threat. Rev. Miyoshi is exploring ways to interact with the Sangha online. On Sunday, March 22nd, as a trial, about a dozen of us connected online with her through an app called Zoom. We were able to see and interact with one another (one speaker at a time) through our computers and smartphones. We decided that this would be a worthwhile way for our entire Sangha to meet and listen to the Dharma. We can also conduct meetings this way, such as our board meetings, Buddhism study classes, or other temple business that may come up. As Rev. Miyoshi would be the host of this site, she would be emailing an invite letter to you, with directions to sign into our Zoom account. For now, you can just download the app to your computer and/or smartphone if you want, and then wait for Sensei's upcoming letter.

Until we can look forward to meeting each other once again, giving real hugs, being closer than 6 feet apart, and sharing otoki with one another, I look forward to seeing you on Zoom.

With Gassho,
Johnny Martinez

D H A R M A S C H O O L N E W S

Hope this finds all of you healthy and not too bored! Because we can't meet in person, I would like to share this Aesop's fable with you:

THE LION AND THE MOUSE

A lion was taking a nap one warm afternoon when a tiny gray mouse accidentally ran across his paw. This woke the lion up making him very cross! The lion scooped up the frightened mouse and roared with rage. Just as he was going to kill the mouse, the little creature begged the lion to let her go.

"Please Mr. Lion", pleaded the trembling mouse, "if you let me go, one day I will repay your kindness."

The lion laughed and laughed to think that this tiny mouse could help him one day. Because she amused him, the lion let her go.

A few weeks later some hunters laid a trap for the lion. The King of the Jungle was caught in a net and could not free himself. He roared and roared. The mouse heard the lion and ran to see what happened.

Miss Mouse knew instantly what to do! With her sharp teeth she began to gnaw at the rope of the net. Soon she set the lion free.

The lion was very grateful to the mouse. "Now you see that even a tiny mouse can help the King of the Jungle" chuckled the mouse. The lion roared with agreement!

Aesop said that the moral of the story is: A kindness is never wasted. This story also illustrates the concept of interdependence.

A suggestion to parents and grandparents: The following are a few books that you may want to share with your youngster(s): "When Buddha Was an Elephant" by Mark W. McGinnis and "Kindness" by Sarah Conover.

Take care of yourselves and Gassho,
Claire Hansen



T H E G A T E W A Y

T E M P L E N E W S

Due to the announcement from Gov. Newsom that all in California should stay at home amid the coronavirus outbreak, the status of the temple and temple activities are as follows.

Temple

The Temple has been closed until further notice. Sunday Services and Study Classes will be conducted via Zoom.

WCBT and LABTF Hanamatsuri

WCBT and the Federation Hanamatsuri Service have been cancelled.

WCBT Sangha Fun Day

The Sangha Fun Day has been postponed. A new date is yet to be decided.

WCBT Annual Golf Tournament

Our annual Golf Tournament has been postponed until June of 2021.



Golf Classic Announcement



"Fore!", "Great Shot!", "Nice Putt!" will not be heard this year at our 24th Golf Classic. The COVID 19 pandemic has forced many events to either be cancelled or postponed. Unfortunately, the golf tournament is not immune to today's course of events. Therefore, the golf committee decided to postpone the tournament to June of 2021. We are looking forward to another successful tournament in 2021.

On behalf of the committee, I wish you and your family to stay safe and keep healthy.

GATEWAY Staff

Layout & Editing: Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Hisako Koga, Claudia Haraguchi, Richard Kagawa

Contributors: Claire Hansen, Michael Jitosho, Joanie Martinez, Phillip Underwood

Circulation: Rev. Fred Brenion, Joy Kitaura

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:

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

Website: www.livingdharma.org

Facebook: facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple

E-Mail: wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com



APRIL

Kevin Kawawata, Tyler Koji Isaksen, Susan Oshima, Lauren Miyake, Randy Maekawa, Nancy Maekawa, Jacob Kato, Adriana Kochi, Kellie Komoda, Kristen Hiranaka, Tammy Lespron, Phillip Underwood, Lexi Shams, Maria Whang, Yuechen Zhau Chen, Mario Alberto Gonzalez, Nancy Hombo, Maddie Akari Mayeda, Sienna Mirai Martinez, Shakyamuni Buddha



T H E G A T E W A Y

Special Buddhism Quiz

How can we continue to demonstrate mindful behavior during this time of fear and uncertainty due to the recent pandemic that has gripped our lives?

One way is to be well informed with the latest updates from the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and our State and Local government officials.

Identify the following statements as True or False. The statements were taken from the CDC website (cdc.gov) and the California Department of Public Health website (cdph.ca.gov).

1. The COVID19 virus can ONLY be spread between people who are in close contact with another person through respiratory (micro) droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes and these droplets land in the mouths, noses and eventually into the lungs of people nearby.
2. "Community Spread" means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.
3. There are states in the USA that do not yet have the virus. These states are called "Safe Havens."
4. It's perfectly ok to reuse single use face masks to protect yourself from the virus.
5. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
6. The virus can spread from contact with contaminated surfaces or objects.
7. So far, the COVID19 virus is highly contagious and is spreading continually without stopping.
8. America is a free country. As long as we are symptom-free we can socialize in small groups of less than 30 people.
9. Two ways to protect yourself is to wash your hands often and vigorously with soap and water for 20 seconds after touching public/shared surfaces and very important, shelter in place. Stay at home!
10. Avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth with unwashed hands.
11. Hand sanitizers with 50% alcohol is a good substitute for soap and water.
12. Washing hands with expired beer is another good way to disinfect your hands. The alcohol in the beer will do the job!
13. Everyone in California is asked to stay at home (shelter in place) except for Essential Needs personnel in order to slow the rate of spread.
14. Some, but not all inclusive symptoms for COVID19 are fever, cough, shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, lack of energy, loss of smell and taste.
15. People between the ages of 20-50 years old are immune to the virus.
16. Older adults and people, regardless of age, who have underlying health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, heart problems, respiratory issues, an organ transplant, is a cancer survivor, etc. should be very vigilant and avoid public places and/or crowds and they should follow the CDC guidelines to stay virus free.

False: 1,3,4,8,11,12,15

True: 2,5,6,7,9,10,13,14,16



T H E G A T E W A Y



HIGASHI HONGANJI NORTH AMERICA DISTRICT

SHINSHŪ ŌTANI-HA HOKUBEI KAIKYŌ-KU

Greetings from Bishop Noriaki Ito

We send our best wishes to you during this extremely challenging period of living in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although it seems to be slowing down in some parts of the world, as of now, the number of infections and those who have died from the disease in our country continues to rise.

With the stay-at-home order throughout the state of California, we are all being forced to change our everyday lifestyles in ways we've never imagined before. Although this brings on new challenges, we also realize that this is the best way to slow down the spread of this dangerous disease and to keep ourselves and those around us healthy.

Our temples have also had to change how we operate and we are happy to see that you are exploring new ways to share the Dharma through virtual services that our members and friends can access through the internet. Our ministers are primarily working at their homes. But you can contact any of us through email or phone.

What we are experiencing is an example of the kind of unexpected impermanence that the Buddha said is an ever-present part of everyday life. It is extremely sad that so many people are suffering and dying from this pandemic. But it is also an opportunity to understand the true nature of life and to accept the challenges that we face as well. Impermanence also means that a return to our normal lives will eventually come.

I am reminded of the wise words of Rev. Yasuda Rijin who once said, "Nenbutsu is not the way to take the burden off one's shoulders, and be comfortable, but to give us strength and courage to shoulder any burden, even the ones we think are more than we can bear."

We hope that you are well and that you continue to take care of yourselves and your loved ones, and find the patience and resolve to get through this difficult time.

Gassho,

Noriaki Ito
Bishop/Director
Higashi Honganji North America District



T H E G A T E W A Y



MIND, con't from pg. 1

And when we are solely obsessed with getting rid of 'our' anxiety, we become blind to our surroundings and other people. As a result, the necessary resources cannot be provided to those who are in need. Seeing them makes us feel scared again, and we end up rushing to markets and buying more stuff. We are totally ignorant about the fact that we are the ones who create this confusion and fear.

Those who get caught up in self-centeredness and only care for themselves are described as "an ordinary person whose mind is weak and inferior" in the *Contemplation Sūtra* when Śākyamuni Buddha speaks to Vaidehī. Through their conversation, the sūtra shows us the serious problem we all have. "An ordinary person" is each of us without exception. And "mind is weak and inferior" means that, unlike Buddha's wisdom mind, our mind is always controlled by our desires and convenience. Our acts are based in the mind, therefore, we become self-serving, indifferent to others, and contrary to the truth of interconnectedness. Being obsessed with a mind of self-interest is not a problem of a certain group of people, rather, it is the inextricable human nature in all of us. In other

words, we, who criticize hoarders, also have the same problem of self-centeredness. Through listening to the teachings, we finally come to realize it.

There is nothing wrong with being cautious about our health under the current situation. We need to do our best to protect our families' safety and well-being. However, once we abandon ourselves to only benefit our families and ourselves, our world becomes narrow and inconsiderate. Other people are considered dangerous and jeopardize our health and life. Increased numbers of confirmed cases of the coronavirus are scary, but we do not see people's pain behind those numbers. We may even be relieved saying, "Good thing they are not my family."

Awakening to our ignorance is the only way to liberate us from our self-centered narrow world. Jodo Shinshu teachings do not make us a completely selfless person. Rather, they reveal to us that when we are genuinely aware of our ignorance, our selfish world is broken through. This is the moment we return to the world of interconnectedness and it enables us to empathize with patients, their families and friends, and medical staff who fight against the virus, and those who are struggling with their lives under this severe situation.



Haiku of the Month
 Skies couldn't be bluer,
 And the clouds
 couldn't be whiter,
 Air feels fresh, and yet...
 -Joanie Martinez



T H E G A T E W A Y

心想羸劣なる者 見義信香

世界中で新型コロナウイルス感染の拡大が止まりません。カリフォルニア州では3月19日に感染拡大を食い止めるため外出禁止命令が出されました。外出が制限され、連日報道される状況を見ながら不安な毎日を過ごしていられる方が多いと思います。ウェストコビナのお寺も当面の間日曜礼拝を始め全ての活動を自粛することになりました。

言うまでもなく、お寺は仏法を基礎として人々が集う場所です。そして僧侶の仕事は人と会って話をする事だと言っても過言ではありません。その機会と場所が奪われてしまった今、僧侶としてできることは何か、ということを考えずにはられません。同時に今こそ改めて真宗の教えを聞き直す時であるということに気づかされます。なぜなら真宗の教えとは、想像しなかった現実から目を背けたり、束の間忘れさせてくれる教えではなく、今起こっていることを社会全体の、そして私自身のこととして受け止め、現実に向き合って生きていく力をいただける教えだと思ふからです。

思いもしなかったことを経験する時、不安を感じるのはごく自然なことです。仏教は不安を感じないような強い人間になることを勧める教えではありません。変化を恐れるように、思いがけない出来事に不安を感じるのは、人間であれば誰でも当たり前のことだ、という事実をまずおさえてくれます。そして、私たちはその不安の解消を急ぐあまり、「自分さえよければ」という思いにとらわれ

て行動してしまいます。そのことが間違いだと教えてくれているのが仏教の教えなのです。

大型スーパーには長い列ができ、商店からは水とトイレトペーパーなどの紙製品が消えています。1ヶ月かけても使い切れないほどの品物を買いためするのは、まさに自分を安心させるための行動です。これは誰もがもつ不安が元となっています。けれども自分の不安を解消することだけに必死になる時、当然ながら周りが見えません。結果として必要な人に必要な物資が行き渡らないという状況を作り上げ、その状況を見てますます不安な気持ちが煽られていくのです。コロナウイルスによって私たちの生活や様々な活動が一変したのは事実です。けれどもパニックに近い状況や必要以上の恐怖や不安を作り出しているのは、私たちの「自分さえよければ」という思いではないでしょうか。

自分のことだけを考え、その考えから自由になることのできない私たちのあり方を釈尊は「心想羸劣（しんそうるいれつ）なる者」と表されました。これは『観無量寿経』において釈尊が韋提希に語りかけた言葉です。そしてそのあり方こそが凡夫の姿であるということをはっきりとされたのです。

自分や家族の健康や安全を案じるのは当然のことです。細心の注意を払って行動することも必要です。けれども、私たちが自分や自分の家族の安全だけに心を奪われると、他人は自分たちにウィルスをもたらすかもしれない危険人物としてしか見ることができなくなります。病院で治療を受けている患者を見ても「自分や家族でなくてよかった」と胸をなでおろすかもしれません。コロナウイルスは人と触れ合う機会を私たちから奪

いました。けれども人との心の触れ合いを奪っているのは、私たちの「自分さえよければ」という思いではないでしょうか。自己中心の思いがいかに私たちの世界を暗く狭いものにしているか、そのことに気づかせてくれる教えを私たちは信頼し聞き続けていくのです。「心想羸劣なる者」としての私の姿に目覚めた時、今まさにウィルスと闘っている患者やその家族、医療スタッフ、仕事を続けることができなくなった人、そういう人たちの痛みや悲しみに初めて触れることができるのではないのでしょうか。

お寺ニュース

皆さまもご承知の通り、新型コロナウイルス感染症が世界的な広がりを見せています。皆さまにおかれましては健康に留意しつつも不安な毎日をお過ごしのこととお察しいたします。

カリフォルニア州で3月19日に外出禁止の命令が出されたことを受けまして、ウェストコビナ東本願寺は現在お寺での全ての活動を自粛しております。つきましては4月2日（木）の法話会は中止にさせていただきます。5月の法話会につきましては現在のところ未定です。追って皆さまにはご連絡させていただきます。また日曜礼拝は当面の間オンラインを通してのみお勤めいたします。

皆さまにはご不便とご迷惑をおかけすることになり心よりお詫び申し上げます。どうかご理解いただきますようお願い申し上げます。

質問がございましたらいつでも見義開教使までご連絡ください。

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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 38
Covina, CA 91722

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL

THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GATEWAY

April 2020 - - Vol. LV No. 4

April

- 2 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service
-Cancelled
- 5 8:30 am Board Meeting -Online
- 5 10:00 am Shotsuki Service -Online
- 5 1:30 pm LABTF Hanamatsuri
@ JACCC -Cancelled
- 12 10:00 am Hanamatsuri Service -Cancelled
- 12 10:00 am Sunday Service -Online
- 14 10:00 am Study Class -Online
- 18-26 World Dobo Gathering in Kyoto
-Cancelled
- 19 10:00 am Sunday Service -Online
- 26 10:00 am Sunday Service -Online
- 28 10:00 am Study Class - Online

**If you have not received emails from the temple, please send your email address to us (wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com). We will send you invitations to services and updated information. Thank you.*

2020年4月行事予定

- 2日 午後7時半 法話会ーキャンセル
- 5日 午前8時半 理事会ーオンライン
- 5日 午前10時 祥月法要ーオンライン
- 5日 午後1時半 仏教連合会花祭りーキャンセル
- 12日 午前10時 花祭り法要ーキャンセル
- 12日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 18日-26日 世界同朋大会ーキャンセル
- 19日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 26日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン

*Emailをお使いの方はメールアドレスをお寺までお知らせください。(wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com)

オンラインでの日曜礼拝のご案内、最新の情報をお送りいたします。

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Main Article	1	Temple News	3
D.S.News	2	Acknowledgments	6
President's Message	2	Japanese Page	7

煩惱というのは、
真実の世界を気づかせるために
与えられておるものである。

米沢英雄