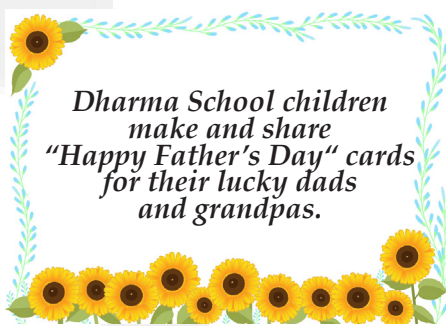
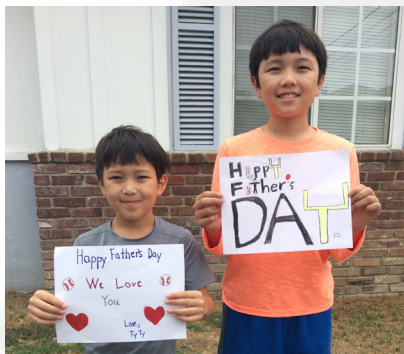
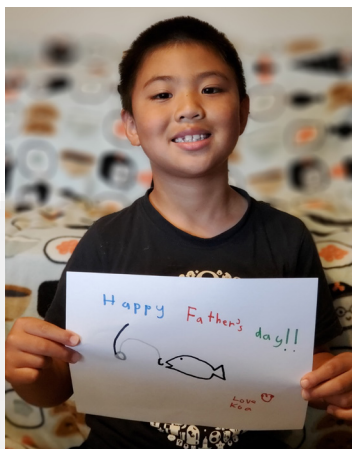




# GATEWAY



August-September 2020 - - Vol. LV No. 7



## Every Moment Is Unprecedented

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi

Time goes by so quickly, and August is almost around the corner. However, this summer has been quite different. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted many of our temple activities, including our Obon Festivals. Traditionally in the US, Obon is observed from the end of June to the beginning of August. With so many temples in Southern California, there is an Obon scheduled every weekend, and we always enjoy Obon food and Bon Odori at various temples. We are accustomed to enjoying the Obon festivities during the summer months, except for this year. Although some temples still offer a virtual Obon Festival, all of the Buddhist temples in Southern California and the US have had to cancel their Obon festival.

Not only have Obon festivals been

affected by COVID-19, but the virus has also had a significant impact on our lifestyle. It has deprived us of important contact with our families and friends. No one knows how long we have to put up with this inconvenience, and many of us feel anxiety about the future.

Instead of being depressed with the current situation, Buddhism encourages us to spend our time to consider something we hardly focus on ever, like the importance of getting together with our families and friends. There are many things we have taken for granted in our lives, and the meaning of having memorial services could be one of them to reflect upon.

Jodo Shinshu values a memorial service as an occasion of 'encountering.' It is a time for families to gather

together. Also, we receive an opportunity to re-encounter our loved ones as Buddhas who deliver the teachings through their lives. Therefore, having a memorial service is not for the deceased in order to send some good merit to them. Instead, it is an opportunity to listen to them and realize profound wishes and aspirations we have received from their lives.

"Listening to our loved ones" means to reflect upon their lives sincerely. As we reflect on their lives, we become aware that we have received numerous messages in the relationship with our loved ones. They are expressed both verbally and non-verbally. Perhaps it could be delivered through harsh words. However it might take a while for us to come to realize the true

Please see MOMENT, con't on page 5





# T H E G A T E W A Y

## DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

I hope you are keeping well during these difficult and hot summer weeks. Because of the global pandemic, we are unable to have Dharma School classes in person. How long this will last is uncertain. The Dharma School staff and Sensei will meet virtually to put together a curriculum that we hope will service our children until we can meet face to face again. We will keep you informed!

In the meantime, I will continue with stories that help our children understand Buddhist concepts. Please read and discuss with your youngsters the Buddhist lesson in this short Aesop's fable:

### "Mrs. Crab and Her Daughter"

*Mrs. Crab and her daughter were walking along the shore of an ocean. Mrs. Crab suddenly stopped to look at her daughter. She frowned and said, "Daughter! Stop walking sideways! You look ridiculous! Walk in a straight line toward me!"*

*As hard as she tried, her daughter could not do it. She asked her mother to show her how to walk in a straight line. Mrs. Crab tried and tried, but she, too, couldn't do it!*

What do you think about what Mrs. Crab demanded of her daughter? How do you think she felt when she herself couldn't walk in a straight line? How would you feel if you were the daughter? Ask your parents or grandparents about judgment from the Buddhist point of view!

Book Recommendation: Sadako and the Thousand Cranes by Eleanor Coerr

Stay Safe!

Gassho,  
Claire Hansen



## Congratulations 2020

Luke  
Kindergarten

**Graduates!**

Derek  
Kindergarten

Kalia  
8th Grade



Sabrina  
Orange Coast  
College

Sophia  
Mt. San  
Antonio College



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## T E M P L E N E W S

### Sunday Services

All Sunday services will be conducted via Zoom until further notice. Look for an email from Rev. Miyoshi or Rev. Fred inviting you to the services with the Zoom meeting ID and Password. If you have not received an email from them, please contact the temple [wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com](mailto:wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com). The attendance for the services are growing every week and it's such a pleasure to see all the familiar faces so please join us!

### August Sunday Services

WCBT usually takes a break during August but due to the COVID shut down and the great response we've had with Zoom services we will continue to have Sunday Services through the month of August and beyond.

### Discussion Class

The weekly discussion class will continue through August every Thursday at 10 am via Zoom. There is a different topic of discussion each week and a lively dialogue with a growing number of participants. Look for the email invitation with meeting ID and password or contact Rev. Miyoshi for the information.

### Private Memorial Services

Private memorial services can be conducted via Zoom. Please contact Rev. Miyoshi for more information and to schedule your service.

### Ohigan Service

Our Fall Ohigan Service will be held on September 20 at 10:00 am via Zoom.

### September Oldies

The September Oldies Dance has been cancelled.

### Online Donations

The Living Dharma website now has a link <https://livingdharma.org/index.php/donations/> for donations. You can use PayPal, credit and debit cards to make donations to the temple with a few simple clicks. Checks are still and always accepted as well for the traditionalist.

### Buddhism Quiz

Every Thursday Rev. Miyoshi leads a Study and Discussion class on various topics on Buddhism. In recent weeks the class talked about Dharma and Karma.

Identify the following descriptions/definitions as either karma or dharma.

1. Describes workings of cause and effect.
2. "...is always present, whether or not there is a Buddha to preach it or a sangha to practice it."
3. "...is the teachings delivered by the Buddha and added to by countless generations of accomplished and realized men and women."
4. "...Every action is conditioned by an interdependent set of previous actions, and every action provokes a subsequent cascade of resulting actions."

Answers: karma: 1, 4 dharma: 2, 3

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*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:*

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(626) 689-1040

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*Facebook:* [facebook.com/westcvinabuddhisttemple](https://www.facebook.com/westcvinabuddhisttemple)

*E-Mail:* [wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com](mailto:wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com)



### AUGUST

Barbara Shiota, Jon Shiota, Bob Kirk, 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, Garrett Godoy



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## Hope Is A Four-Letter Word

Phillip Underwood

A thesaurus is designed to help “find the words you need to express yourself more effectively and more interestingly.” That’s what it’s meant to do. We all have those moments when just the right word is as far from our brain as a jet-liner soaring overhead. Those moments when an idea is right at the tip of our tongue, but it might as well be a thousand miles away, because as hard as we may try, it just won’t peek from behind the clouds inside our head. And the harder we try, the more frustrating it becomes. I have a copy of the Oxford Thesaurus, and it defines hope as “ambition, aspiration, craving, desire, longing, wishing and yearning.” All of those are relatively good and desirable things. Whatever our situation may be, hope is always there encouraging us to stay the course, or as Jesse Jackson used to say, “keep hope alive.”

Just over a year ago hope became one of the most important concepts in my life. It was in June of 2019, when my wife, Trina, was diagnosed with metastatic cancer in her lung that had spread throughout her body and brain. Trust me when I say that very few things in my life have had such a devastating effect on all I know, believe and possess. It turned our world completely upside down. Now fortunately, my youngest daughter is a physician assistant in anesthesia at MD Andersen Hospital, located in the world renowned Texas Medical Center in Houston. MD Andersen is considered the pre-eminent cancer hospital in the country, and maybe in the world, so we immediately booked a flight to Houston, took up residence at my daughter’s house, and began months of treatments and therapies to beat this thing called cancer. And I honestly cannot tell you how many trips we’ve made to Texas between June and February.

One of the benefits we’ve had is that my daughter arranged for the head of thoracic oncology to be Trina’s attending physician. That means that the doctor who today has trained many associates practicing around the world, is in charge of the treatment and care of my wife. What more could I hope for? Other than a complete cure, I honestly don’t know. But just the fact that she was in such competent hands gave us immense faith...and hope. He explained to us that he knew of only 200 people worldwide that had a particular molecular deformity affecting them, and only 3 that had a different deformity that caused their cancer, but only 1 person that had both of these deformities. And that person is Trina. So, as difficult and frightening as this situation is, she is in great hands, because a leader in his field is learning from her case.

Additionally, a tremendous benefit of this situation is that we get to see both of my daughters and their families (5 grandchildren). They all live in the Houston area because both of our sons-in-law work for Exxon Mobile, which is headquartered just north of Houston.

All of the things that I’ve said, up to this point, give us hope. But that hope comes with considerable anxiety because there is still a great deal of uncertainty. Will the treatment be successful, and if so, for how long? How many treatments will be necessary, and how often? How many more flights? We hope, but as Reverend Miyoshi says, “we don’t know”. All we can do is continue to stay determined, trust the science and skills of the medical team providing her treatment, and...hope.

### BBQ Stolen

Greetings WCBT Sangha.

I hope everyone is being safe, vigilant, and healthy. Don’t forget your masks when out, better yet, stay at home. On a happier note, Pasadena Buddhist Temple held a Virtual Obon. I checked it out at their website and it looked really fun. They had a Manto-e ceremony, bon odori, and even a virtual market place. Also, our Betsuin will be having a Virtual Obon Festival on July 25<sup>th</sup>. I deeply regret not being able to enjoy our Obon. I missed seeing all the families and friends of the Sangha enjoying the festivities and each other’s company. On that note, during a time when people should be working together to make things better, some people have turned to taking things that are not theirs. Some people have taken our West Covina Buddhist Temple’s BARBEQUE! Our teriyaki chicken BBQ! I was shocked to hear of this. But, during desperate times, people do desperate things. I thought I should share this unfortunate occurrence.

With gassho,  
Bruce Whang





# T H E G A T E W A Y

*MOMENT, con't from pg. 1*

meaning behind those words. And some important teaching will reach out to us through their lives even if they might not have intended to do so. So when we do have a memorial service and reflect upon the life of our loved one, we will awaken to the fact that the teaching we receive through their lives illuminates our lives and leads us to the path we should take amid difficult and uncertain times.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, we hear the word “unprecedented” more than ever. No doubt the outbreak of this virus has caused an unprecedented impact on our lives in every way. No one ever imagined that we would not be allowed to be at our loved one’s side or hold their hand at their last breath. It brings further grief and pain to the family.

Also, because no one has ever experienced this novel Corona virus before, we do not have the right answer to deal with it. There is no way to predict our future. It is this uncertainty that brings us great frustration and anxiety. It is uncomfortable for sure. Yet, surprisingly, Buddhism does not see our current situation with pessimism. On the contrary, Buddhism reveals that these difficult times give us a rare opportunity to awaken to the reality of life—“Every moment in our lives is unprecedented.”

In actuality, our life is always uncertain. No matter how much we prepare, there is no guarantee that tomorrow goes as we plan. Some unexpected things could happen and cause havoc. Or, we may not be able to have tomorrow. Only because today is the same as yesterday or a week ago, we just assume that tomorrow comes as today or yesterday. A sense of security is merely based on our assumption, which is easily turned upside down in our reality. There is no certainty in life, whether we are with the virus or not.

“Everything should have an absolute answer, and we can get it immediately”—this is another illusion we have created about our lives. Due to

the remarkable progress of technology, we enjoy an extremely comfortable life. The navigation app gives us any location and estimate time. Smart speakers answer questions instantly. We accomplish a convenient lifestyle. However, such accomplishments reinforce our illusion about life. As a result, we think there is always an answer for our lives and we can control our lives as long as we get the answer. The COVID-19 pandemic has completely shattered this illusion and brought us back to life as it is.

Helping us to control our life is not Jodo Shinshu. Believing that we can control our own life is our illusion, and, as long as we rely on the illusion, we struggle with frustration and discontent. Through the teaching of Buddhism, Jodo Shinshu enables us to be aware of our delusional perspective of our lives and liberate us from it. This awakening gives us the strength to accept unprecedented events that happen to us and how to live with them. Rev. Ryojin Soga expresses this virtue saying, “Buddhism does not evaluate or judge what had happened to us. When we encounter the teaching of Buddhism, we are given latitude in living our life flexibly, even in the midst of devastation.”

When our delusional perspective of life is finally broken down, instead of wasting our time expecting someone to tell us what to do, we are able to focus on what we have to do ‘now’ and do our best. At the same time, we are able to realize that those who lived before us also lived in an unprecedented time in history. The realization lets us relate to them, learn from them, and respect them as Buddhas.

We are not the only ones who have gone through unprecedented times. For those who immigrated to this country from their homeland, those who were finally able to settle down and lost everything during WWII, and those who raised their voices for their dignity and the equality of everyone, their path was not pre-established. In their life, each moment was unprecedented,

and they did the best they could do. Re-encountering them through their lives, we receive the profound wisdom to live our lives in the midst of these challenging times.



(「未曾有」9頁からの続き)

見方が錯覚であり大きな勘違いだった、ということが今日の前に露わになったのです。

仏法は思い通りにいかない人生を思い通りにしてくれる教えではありません。人生はうまく準備をすれば計画通りに進むはずだ、という私たちの見方こそが大きな誤りである、ということに私たちを目覚めさせてくれる教えです。そして、未曾有の出来事の連続を自らの人生としてそこにしっかりと立つ歩みを開いてくれるのです。曾我量深先生はそのことを「仏法は事のすんだあとのことではなく、天地がひっくりかえる大事件の現在にあって、しゃくしゃくたる余裕を与える。」と表現しておられます。仏法に出遇う時、起こっている出来事を自らの人生として、その中で今できることに身を尽くす、そのような生き方が始まるのです。そして同時に、同じように未曾有の出来事の連続の中で人生を歩んでこられたたくさんの方々の生き方とつながることができるのではないのでしょうか。

未曾有の経験をしているのは私たちだけではありません。祖国を離れてアメリカに渡った人々、やっと生活が安定したと思った矢先に戦争によって全てを失った人々、厳しい差別にさらされながら自らのそしてその他の多くの人の尊厳のために声を上げ続けた人々、彼らの人生は決して予定調和的なものではありませんでした。未曾有の出来事の中でできる限りを尽くしてきたそうした先人の方々の生き方に、改めて出遇う機会を私たちは今まさにいただいているのではないのでしょうか。



# T H E G A T E W A Y





# T H E G A T E W A Y

Quote of the Month  
The scars and stains of  
racism are still  
deeply embedded in  
the American society.  
-John Lewis



*Wondering how to keep busy while sheltering at home during a Covid-19 pandemic? Try 1,000 piece jigsaw puzzle!*

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

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Happy shopping!



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## Statement Against Injustice and in Support of Black Lives

Discrimination, racism and police brutality have no place in a free society. The tragic deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and other Black Americans prove there's still much wrong in our world. Now is the time to protest against a system that breeds injustice and the senseless taking of human life. We must all work together towards much needed change.

Our Jodo Shinshu Buddhist temples and members in the United States are no strangers to discrimination and racism. Founded by Japanese immigrants more than a hundred years ago, our temples were vandalized, burned and shuttered during World War II. Many Japanese Americans were arrested and incarcerated without due process of law, solely based on their ethnicity. Entire communities—grandparents, adults, and children—were forced to abandoned homes and sent to concentration camps.

These actions were especially unjust because they were Americans, denied their civil rights and liberties as U.S. citizens. Today it's a sad fact that Black Americans still face ongoing systemic discrimination, racism and brutality. It's time for change.

The Buddhist teachings encourage us to hold all life as precious. Moreover, we all are interconnected and inter-dependent, so it's important to recognize these truths and try to work together and live in harmony. These are not merely sweet words without substance; they represent true reality. We must see them in our lives here and now. We must try to live in accord with these truths in our communities, in our country, and in our world at large.

However Buddhism also teaches us the greatest impediments to peace within ourselves and in the world are greed, anger and ignorance. We naturally are attached to our own views and strongly tend to be selfish and self-centered. We all must break through this cloud of ignorance to see the greater good.

Shinran Shōnin, founder of Jodo Shinshu, welcomed all who wanted to hear the Buddhist teachings. He treated everyone equally, calling them “fellow travelers.” With this attitude, we also are encouraged to see others as equals, to be helpful, and to support people in need.

In this spirit, let us strive for a more equitable and just society. Let us try to see ignorance and selfishness within our selves, to speak out against discrimination, injustice, and brutality, and to work together to create a more peaceful and harmonious world.

Bishop Noriaki Ito  
Higashi Honganji North America District





## T H E G A T E W A Y

## 未曾有の出来事 見義信香

今年はいつもとは異なるとても静かな夏になりました。例年であれば6月末から8月初頭にかけて、毎週末どこかのお寺で盆踊りの音楽を聞くことができます。しかしながら、コロナウィルス感染拡大の影響を受けて今年は全てのお寺でお盆祭りが中止となりました。また、初盆法要もオンラインを通してお勤めされ、ウェストコピナのお寺も例外ではありません。今の生活を不自由と感じる方はたくさんいらっしゃるでしょう。けれども、今まで当たり前に行ってきたことができなくなって初めて考えることもあるのではないのでしょうか。それは例えば、法要をお勤めする意味もそのひとつかもしれません。

浄土真宗では初盆法要や法事を「出遇いの場」として大切にしてきました。それは、普段離れて生活している家族や親類が集う場であると同時に、亡き人と改めて出遇い直す場でもあります。その意味で、浄土真宗では法要をお勤めするのは亡き人のために何か良いことをしてあげるのではありません。初盆法要、そして法事は亡き人から生きている私たちがいただいている仏縁であります。先を生きた大切な人がその人生を通して届けてくれている声に耳を傾ける、そのような場ではないのでしょうか。

私たちは亡き人からさまざまな声を受け取っています。それは日頃繰り返し語られていた言葉であるかもしれません。または直接かけられた優しい、あるいは厳しい言葉であることもあるでしょう。さらには、本人すら意識していなかった願いを、生き方を通していただくこともあるのです。法要を通して亡き人と出遇うということは、その願いこそが、困難な時

代において私たちが歩むべき生き方を照らす光となっていることに気づくということではないかと思うのです。

コロナウィルスの世界的流行の中で私たちは「未曾有の」という言葉をよく耳にするようになりました。「未曾有の」とは今まで一度も起こったことがないこと、全く予測しなかったようなことが起こるときに使われる表現です。確かにコロナウィルスによって私たちの生活は一変しました。今年の2月の段階で、全てのお寺の門戸が閉じられ、お盆祭りが中止になり、そしてなによりも家族や友人と自由に会えなくなる今の状況を誰が予想できたでしょう。

私たちにとってコロナウィルスの感染拡大が今まで経験したことのない出来事であることは間違いありません。だからこそ誰も正しい答えをもっていないし、「こうすれば来月にはこうなる」と教えてくれる人もいません。答えがわからないこと、そしてこの先どうなるのかが予測できない不安に私たちは大きなストレスを感じます。けれども別の見方をすれば、今抱えている不安を通して私たちは今までの生き方を見直すまたとないチャンス을いただいていると言えるのではないのでしょうか。それは、思いもかけない出来事の連続が実は私たちの人生である、という事実気づくチャンスとも言えます。

考えてみますと、コロナ禍以前においても、明日の自分がどうなっているのか、明確な答えをもっている人は誰もいません。昨日と同じ生活が今日も続いたから、きっと明日も続くはずだというのは私たちの予測に過ぎません。その予測をあたかも間違いのない事実のように信じ込んでいただけなのです。また、私たちの日常はますます便利になり、欲しい答えがすぐに手に入る生活を享受してきました。初めて行く場所までの行き方や所用時間はもちろん、ちょっと思いついた疑

問も指先ひとつ、または一声で解決することができるようになりました。そのような便利で快適な生活を送るうちに、私たちは人生とは予測した通りに進んでいくものだ、という錯覚に陥ってしまっていたのではないのでしょうか。そのような人生に対する私たちの  
(「未曾有」5頁に続く)

## お寺ニュース

今年の夏はまだ朝晩爽やかな風が吹き過ぎしやすい日々が続いています。カリフォルニア州ではまた感染拡大の波が到来し、相変わらず不安な毎日が続いています。状況の変化に応じて、宗教施設再開についてのガイドラインもその都度改訂されています。ソーシャルディスタンスの確保やマスク着用はもちろん、飛沫による感染を予防するため、勤行や讃歌斉唱などは行わないように、と求められています。また、65歳以上のメンバーについては、引き続き自宅待機が勧められています。このような状況を鑑み、理事会においては再開についての準備を進めていくものの、やはり再開には慎重にならざるを得ないという意見で一致しました。そのため8月の再開は見送り、9月に関しても感染状況を見ながら判断していくこととします。つきましては8月6日、9月3日(木)に予定しておりました法話会も残念ながら中止とさせていただきます。日曜礼拝は引き続きオンラインを通してお勤めいたします。

皆さまが安心してお寺に足を運んでいただけるよう細心の注意と準備をしまいたいと思います。今しばらくお待ち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。

不自由な生活が続いていますが、どうぞ健やかにお過ごしくださいませ。

East San Gabriel Valley  
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple  
1203 W. Puente Avenue, West Covina, CA 91790  
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# GATEWAY

August - September 2020 - - Vol. LV No. 7

## August

- 2 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 2 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-online
- 6 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 6 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service  
-cancelled
- 9 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 13 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 16 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 20 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 23 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 27 10:00 am Study Class-online
- 30 10:00 am Sunday Service-online

## September

- 3 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 3 7:30 pm Howakai Japanese Service  
-cancelled
- 6 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 6 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-online
- 10 10:00 am Discussion Class-online

## 2020年8月行事予定

- 2日 午前8時半 理事会ーオンライン
- 2日 午前10時 祥月法要ーオンライン
- 6日 午後7時半 法話会ーキャンセル
- 9日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 16日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 23日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 30日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン

## 9月行事予定

- 3日 午後7時半 法話会ーキャンセル
- 6日 午前8時半 理事会ーオンライン
- 6日 午前10時 祥月法要ーオンライン

\*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。

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仏法をば、ただ、  
より合い、より合い、談合申せ

『蓮如上人御一代記聞書』