



GATEWAY



December 2020 - - Vol. LV No. 9



Our WCBT Dharma School children joined the San Mateo Buddhist Temple's children in their Halloween activity making mummy pizzas while their parents participated in the Eshinni/Kakushinni Memorial Service via Zoom.

Mara in Me: My First Dharma Seeds Retreat*

Tanya Kato

On Saturday, October 10, 2020, Lee Ezaki and I attended our first Dharma Seeds retreat as third generation program participants over Zoom, the video conferencing software. The Dharma Seeds program seeks to educate select temple members on the history, rituals, and teachings of Jodo Shinshu that can be shared with fellow sangha members and beyond. The other participants included Reverend Nobuko Miyoshi of the West Covina Buddhist Temple; Elsie Lum, Christopher Pong, Arthur Yamashita, and Reverend Ryoko Osa from the Berkeley Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple; Nancy Kurihara-Johnson, Penny Murata, Leslie Wong, Reverend Peter Hata, and Bishop Noriaki Ito from the Los Angeles Betsuin; Shigeo Nagayama from the Newport Beach Higashi Honganji Buddhist

Temple; and Reverend Masashi Fujii and Reverend Tomoyuki Hasegawa of the North America District office. Unfortunately, Akira Izushima from the Newport Beach temple could not attend.

Our virtual retreat began with a welcome by Bishop Ito and self-introductions. We then had a lecture and discussion led by Reverend Hata on Dharmakara Bodhisattva and Shakyamuni Buddha. Reverend Hata lectured on the great matter of birth and death and Shakyamuni's struggle with it.

In a prerecorded lecture by Reverend Hata, he shared that for the Mahayana, the essence of the Buddha's message was not so much Shakyamuni's exact words, but what it was that created Shakyamuni---the dharmakaya, or dharma body, es-

entially the ultimate reality of the impermanence and interdependence of all things. This teaching, known as Dependent Arising, was explained as: "In the constant flow of impermanence, all things arise dependent on other things. Therefore, all things are also empty of an independent 'self' nature." It is the dharmakaya, the eternal creative reality, that creates all buddhas. According to Buddhist Studies scholar, Paul Williams, the dharmakaya is the flow of buddha qualities, and in taking refuge in the Buddha, one actually takes refuge in the dharmakaya. Thus, it is a stress on the centrality of what it is that uniquely makes a buddha a buddha. Reverend Hata went on to say that because it is not really possible for ordinary sentient beings to comprehend

Please see MARA, con't on page 2



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

On Sunday, October 18, our Sangha was invited by the San Mateo Buddhist Temple to attend their Eshinni/Kakushinni Memorial Service via Zoom. At the same time, the San Mateo Dharma School invited our children to their own zoom for a Halloween activity. With the help of their parents, some of our youngsters, under the direction of the San Mateo instructor, made their own mummy pizza! Using Grands! refrigerated biscuits, olive slices, marinara sauce, and string cheese, each child made his/her own pizza. The olive slices were the eyes and the string cheese was the mummy's wrappings. The results were scary, but delicious! Many thanks to the San Mateo Dharma School Staff for including us—we had lots of fun!

The second activity envelope is being prepared and will be sent to our students very soon. This lesson will be about Hoonko—Shinran Shonin's memorial service. We hope the children will learn about Shinran Shonin and enjoy the activity.

On November 22, Dharma School will recognize our youngsters who have turned 7, 5, or 3 years old during 2020. They will be receiving a small gift in the mail. Congratulations to you all!

As 2020, the year of the Rat closes, we will be welcoming 2021, the year of the Ox. Wishing you Happy Holidays!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen

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the ultimate truth of the dharmakaya directly, the Amida Buddha of the Pure Land is used as a symbolic representation of it.

Reverend Hata also explained that the Larger Sutra is really about what created Shakyamuni. The Larger Sutra describes the universal path that can lead everyone to Buddhahood or awakening. It includes the 48 Vows that the seeker, Dharmākara, created to try to bring all beings to Buddhahood, or be born in the Pure Land, the realm of bliss. In order for Dharmākara to fulfill the vow of leading all beings to Buddhahood, he listens to and studies from as many great buddhas or teachers as he can through a visitation practice. The visitation practice is described as going out and deeply listening to and receiving what they teach him.

Dharmākara comes to appreciate all beings as teachers and all beings as buddhas. Thus, it is attaining Buddhahood that changes him and not other people, for in the absence of the self, all beings become buddhas.

We then had time to ask questions about the ritual instruction provided by Reverend Hasegawa in previously recorded videos explaining parts of the altar and the correct way to offer incense in the Higashi tradition.

At the end of the retreat, participants shared the types of activities that have been taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic since the temples have been closed to in-person gatherings. Like West Covina, many temples have had online study classes and have seen an increase in participation from individuals who

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**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.*

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You shop. Amazon gives.

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!



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. 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!

Discussion Class

The weekly discussion class will be 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.

Study Class

An evening Study Class is held every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm and we invite those who are unable to attend the morning Discussion Class to join us. The Study Class focuses on the history and teaching of Jodo Shinshu. If you are interested in purchasing "The Teaching of Jodo Shinshu and the

History of the Honganji Community" book which will be used as reference, please contact Rev. Miyoshi.

Mochitsuki

Mochitsuki will be cancelled this year due to the pandemic but we look forward to next year with great anticipation!

Year-end Service

Our Year-end Service will be celebrated via Zoom on Sunday, December 20, at 10:00 am.

New Year's Day Service

A special online service to commemorate the New Year will be held on Friday, January 1, 2021, at 11:00 am.

Eitaikyo & General Meeting

Eitaikyo and General Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 24 at 10 am via Zoom.

WCBT Seminar

Because our annual Family Retreat at San Luis Obispo was impossible to do this year, the Temple Communication Staff is planning a wonderful alternative. A virtual WCBT Seminar on Saturday, February 20, 2021 with guest Dr. Franz Metcalf speaking on "What Would Buddha Do in Our

Divided Society?" More information will be sent out as the seminar gets closer but please plan on joining us for this timely discussion.

A very nice attendance of old and new WCBT members appeared on Zoom to meet and greet Rev. Kawawata, Jeanne, and Kevin who joined us for our Hoonko Service.



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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DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

Allison Haraguchi, Kyle Kagawa, Aki Kamimura, Chris Nakano, Denise Underwood, Larry Oshima, Susan Iwama, Johnny Martinez, Tristan Miyashiro, Helen Nakawatase, Sandra Nakano, Jonathan Ogino, Kristin Dubble, Merry Jitosho, Jessica Saucedo, Taylor Saucedo, Katrena Sakaue, Brandon Kwan, Brett Miyamoto, Chau Chen, Wesley Zhao Chen, Julie Griffith, Jack Wear, Dawn Masai, Sean Underwood, Richard Kagawa, Autrina Underwood, Takashi Takemoto, Michiko Oku, Stephanie Akune, Max Shimomura, Kai Haraguchi Calvo



T H E G A T E W A Y

September 12th, 2001

Phillip Underwood

I know what you're thinking, or probably thinking. You're thinking that I've gotten the date wrong, and if you're thinking about the day of the World Trade Center terrorism event, then yes, you're correct. It didn't happen on September 12th, it happened the day before; the day that hijacked airliners were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan, New York; into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania; and into the Pentagon in Washington D.C. That was a terribly gruesome event for most of the people of this nation, and I was no exception. It was early Tuesday morning on September 11th, and I was getting cleaned up and, preparing to head home after a 24-hour shift at Fire Station 34, in the Jefferson Park area of Los Angeles, and I was due to be off for the next 4 days. I had turned on the tv set in my quarters so I could catch up on the news from the day before...and there it was; the picture of smoke pouring out of one of the twin towers. As a Fire Captain on the Los Angeles City Fire Department, with over 25 years experience, I thought I was ready for almost anything. But this was something completely out of the ordinary. A jetliner had crashed into a high rise building in New York City! What if it had happened here in Los Angeles? My training caused me to quietly assess any given situation and develop a plan of response. I tried to, but my training had not prepared me for what was before my eyes that morning. I went downstairs where the incoming and outgoing crews were glued to two TV sets in the kitchen and the training room. And then it happened; a second jetliner crashed into the second tower, and it became clear that this was no accident.

I'm not sure how long I stayed at the station, but it was a while before I found myself on the freeway heading toward the San Gabriel Valley. Most of the other drivers that I saw had the same look of disbelief that I had. I listened to the news on the way home (which I rarely did) thinking that it might help me make sense of the event, but that didn't really help. Everyone had more questions than answers. I headed home to an empty house. My wife, Trina, worked in downtown LA at Fire Department Headquarters on the 10th floor of City Hall East. She worked with the Chief Officers that actually ran the department. I talked to her but it seemed that there was just as much confusion there as anywhere else. That confusion for me lasted about another 24 hours.

I joined the department in 1975 as a firefighter, and made my first promotion in 1980. I became an Apparatus Operator (AO), meaning I drove the ladder truck. Usually the ladder truck leads a 3-piece Task Force (the ladder truck and 2 engines) and the Task-Force Commander (or TFC) rides in the front seat of the truck, next to the AO. A Task-Force in the LAFD is made up of 10 or 11 members. With the TFC in such close proximity I was able to listen to how the commander controlled and directed the members of the Task Force, so it was an invaluable experience for me to learn what, or what not, to do in various situations. I was promoted to Captain-1 in 1986, my second promotion. My final promotion, to the rank of Captain-2, happened in 1992. Being in charge seems easy, but it isn't. In emergency services your decisions affect people's lives, both civilian and uniformed.

One of the other decisions that I made around 1989 was to become a member of an organization called Critical Incident Stress Management, or CISM. This was an organization formed to answer the question, "who helps the helpers"? Working in emergency services, members are exposed to emotional trauma that can have major impact on their well-being. For instance, if you see a horrendous occurrence, or if a member of your crew or team is seriously injured or killed on the job, it will affect you tremendously. Without counseling your response might be to try and drink it away, or use drugs, or to suddenly make an expensive purchase, like maybe a new truck, or even to be unfaithful to your loved one; whatever you think you need to make you feel better. Your private life would be turned upside down which, in turn, affects your professional life, and that could be dangerous to everyone around you. So CISM became the mandate to protect the members of some departments, although many members rejected the training and the notion that counseling helped. I didn't. I wanted to help the helpers, so I signed up for the training to become a counselor. The way that the system worked was that a trained professional with a degree in psychology would be sent to visit a crew that had worked at an emotionally upsetting incident, accompanied by a uniformed member that served as an ice-breaker. This was because most uniformed members didn't feel the need to be counseled because that fact might make them seem to be weaklings or sissies. The counselors were very professional, and in the long run provided direct steps to lessen the emotional baggage.

So, all of that emotional upheaval was in play as I made my way home on the morning of September 11th, 2001. And I'm sure that I wasn't the only one. I knew that thousands of civilians and probably hundreds of emergency workers had perished. I wondered what to do. Over the next few hours my emotions didn't change much. And as bad as it was, I couldn't help thinking 'were we next?' I didn't sleep very well that night and I'm not sure who did. The next day, September 12th, was worse. I found myself once again glued to the TV set trying to grasp the full scope of the death and destruction from the day before. And just like everyone else I hoped for trapped victims to be found and rescued by the search and rescue teams, but that wasn't to be. It became clear early on that the focus primarily would be recovery, not rescue, and the reports on the numbers of missing people, both uniformed and civilian, began to narrow down. And all the while there was reporting on possibly more attacks, retaliation, our nation going to war, you name it.



T H E G A T E W A Y

SEPTEMBER, con't from pg. 4

And then my phone rang. I was informed that the decision had been made to send our CISM Team to New York City to counsel members of the New York Fire Department (FDNY) and the New York Police Department (NYPD) to help them deal with their trauma and loss. The plan was for our team to travel on Saturday, September 15th and to stay about 7 to 10 days. We would be sending enough members to make between 4 to 6 teams. Many cities nationwide, including Los Angeles, were rapidly making plans to send Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Teams to the World Trade Center Site, which would soon become known for all time as Ground Zero. Their mission would be the rescue and/or recovery of victims. Our mission would be to counsel them, with the goal of lessening their emotional trauma. Was that possible? Could it work? No one knew the answer; only time would tell.

So, Wednesday, September 12th, 2001 became one of the longest, most frightening days of my life, because of the known and the unknown. I was speechless. That was the day I had to come to grips with the fact that I was going to New York City to try to counsel New York's finest, on how to manage and deal with their grief and loss. Was I prepared and ready for that? I would soon find out.

MARA, con't from pg. 2

do not ordinarily attend services.

Not long after the retreat, I was asked what I had thought of it. I had responded by saying "underwhelming" to Reverend Miyoshi and Lee. Since the West Covina sangha had been engaging in lively conversations during our study classes and post-service discussions this year, I had expected the same during the Dharma Seeds retreat. However, this is a very subjective point of view. In the weeks that have passed since the retreat, I realize that I did not consider all of the work in making

the retreat possible. I had only been thinking about "my own satisfaction" in the process. I did not consider the time the ministers dedicated to preparing and recording the videos and organizing the retreat. I did not think about the time that the other participants and ministers took out of their Saturday morning to come together for the discussion. I also did not consider the value of the lectures or question and answer sessions since I carried preconceived notions of what a "dynamic" retreat might look and sound like. And of course, I did not even think of all of the causes and conditions that led me to the morning of the retreat. I guess one could say I was having a bonbu moment.

I recall during the 2019 San Luis Obispo family retreat, I was asked to judge the winner of a game of charades. However, I could not decide on the winner because both groups had creatively executed their given assignment. It was so easy for me to hesitate to name a winner in that circumstance, but when it came to the Dharma Seeds retreat, I could not give the same consideration that I had for a simple game. I cannot even count all of the other situations in which I am not conscious of others' efforts to support my everyday life because of my narrow focus.

We often hear that we are bonbu, foolish or ordinary beings. I am definitely a person with a constant stream of bonbu thoughts, words, and actions. This is not something to be ashamed of or to run away from. It is just how I am. In some circumstances, it may feel like a very serious matter, especially if it has hurt another person, but as I continue to listen to the dharma, I can learn to be a little kinder, maybe a little wiser, and get to know Mara, the architect of my ego, a little more.

**Mara:* In Buddhism, *Mara* is the embodiment of our base passions, such as greed and ignorance.

(「魔」7ページからの続き)

のです。私は自分を満足させることについてしか考えていませんでした。他の参加者や先生方が時間をとって参加しているという事実の大切さを考えていませんでした。自分が描いていた活発な研修会のイメージにとらわれるあまり、その思いを通して今回の研修会を判定し、レクチャーや質疑応答から学ぶことがどれほど多く、大切なことかを見落としていました。そして何よりも私をこの研修会に参加させてくれた多くの縁についても思いが至りませんでした。この気づきがもしかしたら私にとっての凡夫の目覚めなのかもしれません。

昨年行われたサンルイスオビスポでのリトリートのことを思い出しました。夕飯の後のゲームの時間で私は審判を任せられました。二チームのどちらが勝者かを判定するのです。けれども私は勝者を決めることができませんでした。どちらも上出来だったからです。両チームのメンバーが遊びとはいえ真剣に取り組む姿を見て、勝敗を決めることができないというのは自然なことでした。簡単なゲームを通して見えていたことが、ダルマシーズの研修会では見えていなかったのです。きっと研修会に限らず、日常生活においても私の狭い見方のせいで、私を支えてくれている多くのはたらきに気づかずにいたのだらうと思いました。

「私たちは凡夫である」という言葉をよく聞きます。私は間違いなく自らの思いに立って考え、発言し、行動しています。そして結果として多くのことを見落としています。まさに私の身は凡夫そのものです。人を大きく傷つけるようなことでもない限り、事の重大さには気づかないのかもしれません。聞法を通して、思いやり身の処し方を少しずつ学んでいます。そして私のエゴの源である魔と向き合うことを学ばせてもらっていると感じています。



T H E G A T E W A Y



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Online Donations

The Living Dharma website now has a link (<https://livingdharma.org/index.php/donations/>) for donations and membership dues. 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.



T H E G A T H E R I N G

私の中の「魔」 第一回ダルマシーズ 研修会に参加して 加藤ターニャ

10月10日土曜日に第三期ダルマシーズ参加者の初めての研修会がオンラインで開催されました。ウェストコビナのお寺からは江崎リーさんと私が参加しました。ダルマシーズプログラムは各お寺から選ばれたメンバーが浄土真宗の教えを総体的に学ぶことのできる開教区のプログラムです。また学んだことをお寺に帰ってから他のメンバーと分かち合うことも願われています。参加者はバークレーのラム・エルシーさん、ポンダ・クリストファーさん、山下アーサーさん、別院の栗原・ジョンソン・ナンシーさん、村田ペニーさん、ウォン・レスリーさん、ニューポートビーチの永山繁雄さんです。ニューポートからはもうお一人参加の予定でしたが残念ながら欠席ということでした。

オンライン研修会は伊東監督の挨拶で始まりました。続いて自己紹介を行いました。研修のメインは幡開教使の講義とディスカッションです。法蔵菩薩と釈尊についてのお話でした。釈尊が生死の問題に苦悩されたことを話してくださいました。

参加者は事前に録画された幡先生の講義を聞くようにいわれていました。そのなかで大乘仏教において、仏教のエッセンスは必ずしも釈尊が言われたお言葉そのものではない。むしろ、釈尊を釈尊とならしめた法とは何かを聞いていくことだと教えてくださいました。そしてその真理こそがあらゆるものが諸行無常であり縁起の存在であるということでした。あらゆるものが縁による存在であるということは、常なるものや「我」という存在はありません。この法こそが普遍の真理であり、仏を仏なら

しめている法身なのです。仏教学者のウィリアムズ・ポール氏は、法身は仏の本体であり、したがって仏に帰依するとは人としての釈尊に帰依するのではなく、釈尊の本体である法身に帰依するということなのだ、と説明しています。幡先生は続けて色も形も無い法そのものを私たちが理解することはできないので、その法が形をとって顕れたものが阿弥陀仏であり、阿弥陀仏の浄土であると説明してくださいました。

また『大無量寿経』について、それが釈尊を仏とならしめた教えであると知りました。『大無量寿経』はあらゆる人を目覚めへと導く普遍的な道を説いています。あらゆる人を救うと誓った法蔵菩薩が立てた48の願はそこに含まれています。法蔵菩薩は願を成就させるためあらゆる優れた仏や師の元へ赴きその言葉を全身全霊で聞きました。深く聞くというその修行を通して、一切衆生が師であり仏であるということに目覚め、そのことを喜んだのでした。悟りとは法蔵菩薩自身を変えるはたらきであり、我執から解放される時、あらゆる生きとし生けるものが仏であるということに目覚めるのだということをこの物語は私たちに教えてくれています。

研修会に先立って、内陣や焼香作法についても、長谷川先生が作成された動画を通して学びました。研修会では長谷川先生との質疑応答の時間も設けられていました。

研修会の終わりには、コロナ禍の中での寺院活動について参加者が報告し意見交換を行いました。どのお寺でもオンラインに切り替えたことで法要や勉強会の参加者が増えていると報告されました。

研修会への参加後まもなく、見義先生から感想を聞かれました。その時私は「少し物足りなかった」と答えました。ウェストコビナのお寺では、勉強会や日曜礼拝の法話のあといつも活発なディスカッションが行われています。ですから私は他のお寺の人たちとそうした

時間をもてると期待していたのです。その期待とは違ったという気持ちでした。けれどもやがてこれがとても自分勝手な見方であったと気づきました。研修会から時間が経つにつれて、今回の研修を実現するための多くの努力に目が向いていなかったことに気づいた

（「魔」5頁に続く）

お寺ニュース

季節が秋から冬へと移る中、コロナウィルス感染者の数が再び増加傾向にあります。感謝祭やクリスマスなど本来であれば家族が集まる機会が増え、私たちもそれを楽しみにしていました。けれども今年はそうした集まりも自粛をお願いされている状況です。寂しいホリデーシーズンになりそうだとため息をついていらっしゃる方も多いのではないのでしょうか。このような時だからこそ、できないことに目を向けるよりも、今できることに心を傾けることが大切なかもしれません。

法話会では今後もオンラインによる法要を続けていきたいと思っております。12月の法話会は12月3日(木)、新年1月の法話会は1月7日(木)を予定しております。時間はいずれも午後7時となっております。法要参加に必要なインフォメーションは法話会案内として皆さんのお手元に郵送でお届けいたします。

また修正会法要は2021年1月1日(金)午前11時より同じくオンラインにてお勤めいたします。

皆さまのお元気な顔を拝見できることを楽しみにしております。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。

これまで予想もしなかったことが次々と起こった一年もあと一ヶ月半ほどとなりました。どうぞお身体に気をつけて健やかに年末年始をお過ごしくださいませ。

East San Gabriel Valley
Japanese Community Center, Inc.

West Covina Buddhist Temple
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THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GATEWAY

December 2020 - - Vol. LV No. 9

December

- 3 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 3 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service-online
- 6 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 6 10:00 am Shotsuki/Bodhi Day Service
-online
- 8 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 10 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 13 7:00 am Mochitsuki-cancelled
- 13 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 17 10:00 am Study Class-online
- 20 10:00 am Year-end Service-online

January

- 1 11:00 am New Year's Day Service-online
- 3 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 3 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-online
- 7 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 7 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service-online
- 10 10:00 am Sunday Service-online

2020年12月行事予定

- 3日 午後7時 法話会—オンライン
- 6日 午前8時半 理事会—オンライン
- 6日 午前10時 祥月法要—オンライン
- 13日 午前7時 もちつき—キャンセル
- 13日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—オンライン
- 20日 午前10時 年末家族礼拝—オンライン

2021年1月行事予定

- 1日 午前11時 修正会法要—オンライン
- 3日 午前8時半 理事会—オンライン
- 3日 午前10時 祥月法要—オンライン
- 7日 午後7時 法話会—オンライン
- 10日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—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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本尊とは何か、本当に尊い事である。
物ではなく尊い事である。

廣瀬 果