



GATEWAY



March-April 2021 - - Vol. LVI No. 2



WCBT held its first online seminar on February 20, 2021 with Dr. Franz Metcalf as its featured speaker. Over fifty participants from California and throughout the US and Canada took part in our seminar of reflection and learning about the Dharma.

What Would Buddha Do In Our Divided Society?

Report on WCBT's Online Seminar-February 20, 2021

Johnny & Joanie Martinez

We found the following description written by Pat Sato about WCBT's first online seminar stunning: "It has been a deadly, frightening, outrageous, frustrating 12 months. The November election has shown us how truly divided this nation is. We have heard and seen more division in our life as it relates to the pandemic, political, social, and economic issues, etc. The arguments have been passionate, hateful and untrue. How does one, especially those that follow the Buddhist path, live more peacefully and balanced in a society that can be easily ignited by either side of the issue? These people are our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, community leaders or a passerby. What would Buddha do in our

deeply divided society?" Kudos to Pat for this very thoughtful and eloquently written piece. It also grabbed the attention of about 50 people who participated in this event. Besides our own WCBT, members from Higashi Betsuin, Guadalupe, Berkeley, Chicago, Colorado, and Canada also joined in this seminar. We also had at least 6 ministers join us. Our guest lecturer was Dr. Franz Metcalf who is currently a Religious Studies instructor at Cal State University, Los Angeles, and who is also an active leader in the Forge Institute of Spirituality and Social Change. He is the author of *What Would Buddha Do?* *Being Buddha At Work*, *Buddha in Your Backpack*, and *Just Add Buddha*. Some of us are familiar with Dr. Metcalf who

had previously spoken at a couple of our retreats from about 15 years ago in San Luis Obispo. He kindly and graciously acknowledged a special feeling he has with our Sangha and we have come to consider him a dear friend.

Our TCS (Temple Communications Staff) led by Pat Sato and Rev. Miyoshi asked Dr. Metcalf if he could speak about this topic of dealing with divisions in our society from a Buddhist point of view. That would be a challenging task for any experienced speaker, but he engaged us with examples both personal and worldly. We listened with great interest to his intriguing, well-paced, dynamic, down-to-earth, and thought-provoking pre-

Please see BUDDHA, con't on page 4



T H E G A T E W A Y

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

The Spring Equinox is one of the best times of the year—not too hot and not too cold. The flowering cherry, plum, and peach trees are lovely, and the days are getting longer. Lady Bird Johnson beautified her native state by spreading Texas wildflower seeds throughout the region, and said “Spring work is going on with joyful enthusiasm.” We hope that this signals that our country’s recovery from this horrific pandemic is on its way!

The Dharma School students received a New Year’s lesson and activity in time for the Lunar New Year. In addition, they were introduced to the idea of New Year resolutions. If they will share with us, it will be interesting to see what their resolutions are!

Very soon they will get their Spring Ohigan envelopes which will reintroduce them to the meaning of the equinox and why it’s important to Jodo Shinshu. (They learned about the Fall Ohigan about six months ago.) Along with the lesson, there will be another activity.

Dear Parents, we hope you are saving your childrens’ work in your three hole binders. The Dharma School Staff want to eventually exhibit the childrens’ work when our Obon Festival resumes “live and in person”. We would like to thank you very much for your support. If you need extra copies, please let me know.

Keep Safe!
Gassho,
Claire Hansen

The Middle Path

Yukiko Kovacs

“Too much of a good thing is a bad thing”.

In Jodo Shinshu, no one can tell you what you should do, because everyone is on a different and unique path. Jodo Shinshu allows you to make choices and to change your mind. It allows you to say thank you and to say “I’m sorry”. It allows you to laugh at yourself. Jodo Shinshu allows you to be yourself.

The “right path” for one person is not necessarily the right path for someone else. A long time ago, I was told that each person needs to be treated differently. At the time, I thought that everyone should be treated the same: no favoritism. But now I agree.

What does a person need to have, in order to become the best version of him/herself? Each individual has a different need. That need could be the opposite of someone else’s need.

Life is a balancing act.

Do something or do nothing. Go all-in, or ignore it. There is nothing wrong with each position, but there is no good trying to harass someone into thinking the same way you do.

We must try to remember that there is no right or wrong, good or bad, in Jodo Shinshu. What you might think is obvious could be puzzling to someone else.

Walk the middle path trying not to take sides. Listen patiently to both sides.

Until we ourselves are enlightened, we really cannot help others.

Walk the middle path. Try not to be too much of anything.

amazonsmile
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 10am 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 each month at 6:00pm and we invite those who are unable to attend the morning Discussion Class to join us. The Study Classes will focus on the history and teaching of Jodo Shinshu and will be held on March 9 & 23 and April 13 & 17. 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.

Spring Ohigan Service

Spring Ohigan will be observed on March 21 at **11:00am** via Zoom. Look for the email invitation to join the service.

LABTF Hanamatsuri

The Federation Hanamatsuri Service will be held virtually on April 4 beginning at 10:00.

Cherry Blossom Festival

Cherry Blossom Festival will be on Saturday, April 24, from 12:00-6:00 pm at ESGVJCC. Due to the Covid situation this year's festival will feature only food and will be drive-thru by appointments with online pre-orders.

Mother's Day Service

A Mother's Day family service will be held online on May 9, at 10:00 am. A special tribute to all mothers will be presented so please attend this special service.

Tanjo-e & Hatsumairi

The Tanjo-e and Hatsumairi (new baby) Service will be held on May 16 at 10:00am via Zoom. There will be a special ceremony to acknowledge new additions to our Sangha. Please contact Rev. Miyoshi if you or your family member has had a new baby in the last year.

**APRIL BIRTHDAY**

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

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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(626) 689-1040

Website: www.livingdharma.org

Facebook: facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple

E-Mail: wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com

MARCH BIRTHDAY

Brandon Kawaguchi, Kendra Kagawa, Brion Martinez, Edward Miyashiro, Cathy Nakano, Glen Fujimoto, Karolyn Fujimoto, Mae Horie, Joy Kitaura, Kelley Sakoda, Kathy Masai, Bob Yamashita, Danny Iwama, Lee Ezaki, Karen Ezaki, Andrew Kenji Ezaki, Claire Hansen, Dick Koga, Leo Kowalski, Miki Fukusumi, Tamara Teragawa, Alyssa Arnheim, Dana Yamada, Gavin Godoy, Kai Godoy, John Erickson, Bruce Whang, Emi Wexler, Reiko Ikehara-Nelson, Mitsuru Oshita, Tatsuo Okamura, Manuel Ortiz, Patricia Endo, Steve Underwood, Cayla James Yoburn, Rev. Akira Miyoshi



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BUDDHA, *con't* from pg. 1

sentation. Time just flew by. He spoke for over an hour, and around half-way through led us in a stand and stretch exercise. After his talk, we took a 10 minute break from our screens. Upon returning from our break, it was explained that all participants had been pre-arranged into 7 groups that would then go into Breakout Rooms with about 6 or 7 people in each group. If you have never experienced a Breakout Room in Zoom, it is like the smaller discussion groups we separate into at any kind of regular retreat/seminar. The groups are isolated from one another so you don't hear the other group. The smaller groups are more intimate and encourage interaction. In our Breakout Rooms we each introduced ourselves and informed one another of our temple affiliation or how we heard about the seminar if we did not have a temple affiliation. Each group had a moderator who was one of WCBT's Dharma Seeds, with the addition of Rev. Fred Brenion. For these Breakout Rooms, Dr. Metcalf had created about 4 scenarios; these could serve to stimulate discussion relating to division encountered in family, social, political, etc. situations. A volunteer/chosen participant from each group would then share a 2 minute summary of what was addressed when we all reconvened in the main room.

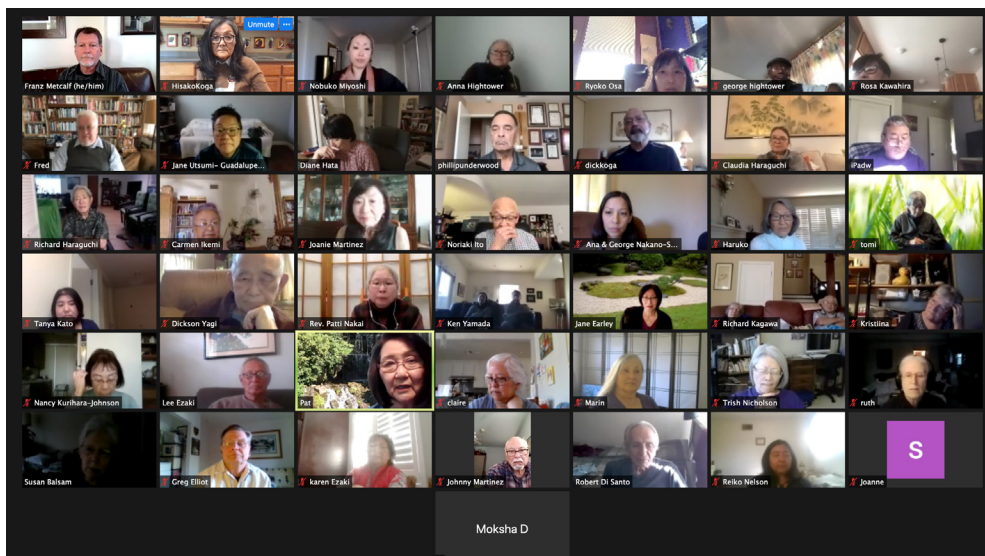
Our challenge as followers of the Buddha is what we do or don't do when we encounter these divisions, particularly those growing out of ignorance and/or anger. The process begins and ends with Acceptance. The following are Dr. Metcalf's Stages of Challenging Division:

1. Accept that division exists (Our logic, sensibilities, and experiences differ, etc)
2. Experience your reaction, whether horror, hurt, anger, frustration, shock/surprise (or not), disappointment, discomfort, etc.
3. Transform negative emotions into positive energy (if you're angry, take a few moments to just stop, take deep breaths, and just listen; separate the person from the issue, find common ground, remember that everyone needs to feel valued, respectfully agree to disagree, etc).
4. Find your folks- Support from like-minded and interested individuals
5. Engage in the work - "Walk the Talk" as it is a process of Stage 3.
6. Live in the balance of inspiration and acceptance - This

stage lasts longer than our lives; Always try but accept that you might not reach some people, and that sometimes we find the best option is to disengage from the situation.

How we relate to one another and to society is of utmost importance... it is how we all get along. Dr. Metcalf gave an extreme example of how being unable to deal with divisions can manifest itself. Some individuals are so unquestioningly committed in their faith or beliefs that they will "swallow the Kool-Aid" or attack their own institution and others. If one believes that "you're either with me or against me" it offers no middle ground or common ground. There is a refusal to communicate with constructive dialogue or to deny facts. Dr. Metcalf recalled the term "swallow the Kool-Aid" from his youthful days when he lived in San Francisco in 1978. This term arose from the Jonestown mass suicide in Guyana. How deep was the conviction of parents who gave the poisoned Kool-Aid to their children and then to themselves following the instructions of the cult leader Jim Jones? They had refused to listen to and communicate with their families and others, and this division led to a separation from society. The People's Temple was located in San Francisco, and they moved to the jungles of Guyana. In the end, it led to its own self-destruction and the death of over 900 members.

What would Buddha do in America's divided society? He would accept that division will always be a reality, and it constantly causes *duhka* (suffering, things not going our way). As impossible or difficult as it may seem or is, we can lessen our negative experiences by practicing skillful ways to connect with one another. We should never give up when we encounter divisions. Dr. Metcalf pointed out that anger is trapped energy. We need to find a way to chan-



Please see *BUDDHA, con't* on pg. 5



T H E G A T E W A Y

BUDDHA, con't from pg. 4

nel that powerful energy to bridge our divisions. But we realize that there are situations where we are unable to connect and agree on common ground; sometimes we need to walk away and not waste the energy. At another time, perhaps, a situation can give us the opportunity for another starting point and begin anew. This is a process-oriented path. Jodo Shinshu asks and encourages us to be open and willing to change by continuously questioning ourselves and exercise self-reflection. We are always more generous and forgiving of ourselves than others. We accept that we won't always convince others and change their minds. I have come to understand that the only person I can change is myself. Are we on the Pure Land path or are we losing ourselves and/or being misled? By being mindful of the two main tenets of our teachings, Wisdom and Compassion, our efforts will allow us to more easily accept and hopefully find a positive way to deal with divisions we encounter in America today. Dr. Metcalf gave so much of himself in the preparation and content of this challenging topic. His thoughts confirm our understanding of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. We know that the lessons we've been learning such as the Buddhist truth that everyone deserves to be treated equally and with respect sounds so basic and simple; yet it can be a very difficult thing to practice. Buddhism views how my shortcomings and mistakes can be my teachers. Sincerely saying I'm sorry also brings me closer to other human beings, showing me that I am on the right path. We feel grateful and richer for having attended this seminar.

(「仏教」9頁からの続き)

はないでしょうか。メトキャフ氏はさらに、それぞれの違いを超えて私たちを結びつけてくれるはたらきに目覚めることの大切さも教えてくれま

した。あらゆるシチュエーションに間に合う答えはありません。時には意見が対立する人のそばから離れることも必要です。それぞれの場面で私たちは新たなことを学び、また歩みを始めるのです。

浄土真宗は自らの考えを絶対化しようとする私たちに常に問い続け、自らの姿に出会い続けることを勧める教えです。それは変化を柔軟に受け入れる生き方を私たちに教えてくれます。他人と意見が衝突する時、相手の意見を変えることはできない、と知ることとはとても大切なことです。私が変わることができるのは私自身です。智慧と慈悲が私たちにはたらく時、深刻な分断社会となった今日のアメリカにおいて違いを認めながら共に生きる道を探し続ける生き方が始まるのではないのでしょうか。メトキャフ氏の講義を通してより深く真宗を味わうことができました。仏教が常に語る真理、すべての人は等しく尊い、だから誰もが敬われるべき存在である、ということとはとても基本的でシンプルなことのように聞こえます。けれどもその真理の通りに生きるとはとても難しいのです。仏教は私たちの欠点や間違いが私たちの先生となってくれることを教えてくれます。心から相手に申し訳なく思うその心が私と相手を繋げてくれ、たしかに道を歩んでいると実感させてくれるのです。

今回このセミナーに参加できたことをとてもありがたく思います。



Buddhism Quiz

Rev. Miyoshi has been sharing the history of Jodo Shinshu and the Honganji community in our bi-monthly Study Classes. The following questions are taken from her lectures.

- Shinran had many names in his lifetime. In his childhood he was known as _____.
a. Matsuwaka-maru
b. Juhachiko-maru
c. Matsu-marō
d. All of the above
- At what age was Shinran ordained to become a monk in the Tendai sect of Buddhism on Mt. Hiei?
a. 16
b. 15
c. 9
d. 11

Answers: d, c

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.

**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.*



T H E G A T E W A Y

WEST COVINA HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

February 26, 2021

Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Spring Ohigan Service which will be held on Sunday, March 21, 2021 via Zoom. The information for the service is as follows:

Date:	Sunday, March 21, 2021
Time:	11:00 A.M. (via Zoom)
Dharma Message:	Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi (The Buddhist Temple of San Diego)
Meeting ID:	838 8482 9604
Passcode:	761247

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

門信徒の皆様へ

立春を過ぎて日に日に寒さも緩んできました。コロナウィルスのワクチン接種も始まり、皆様におかれましては健やかに過ごしのことと存じます。さて春のお彼岸法要を下記の如くオンラインにてお勤め致しますのでご案内申し上げます。お彼岸は古く聖徳太子の時代より行われてきた伝統ある法要です。私ども先達はこの機会を仏様の教えを聞く良き機会としてまいりました。ご家族で一緒にお参り下さい。

記

春のお彼岸法要

日 時 2021年3月21日 午前11時 (Zoom にて)
 法 話 赤星ケンジ師 (サンディエゴ仏教会) (英語)
 ミーティング ID : 838 8482 9604
 パスコード : 761247

合 掌

Nobuko Miyoshi, Minister
開教使 見義信香

Johnny Martinez, President
理事長 ジャニー・マルティネス



T H E G A T E W A Y





T H E G A T E W A Y





T H E G A T E W A Y

分断社会に生きる仏教の教え

オンラインセミナーレポート

マルティネス・ジャーニー

マルティネス・ジョニー

去る2月20日にウェストコビナのお寺にとっては初めてのオンラインセミナーが開催されました。案内のチラシには次のようにセミナーの主旨が説明されていました。「恐怖や怒り、不満に満ちた12ヶ月を私たちは過ごしてきました。11月に行われた大統領選挙は、この国がいかに分断されているかを如実に表していました。パンデミックや政治、社会問題や経済の格差などに関して、私たちは生活の中で考え方や立場の違いからくる対立を肌で感じています。感情に任せた発言、憎しみを込めた言葉、真実ではない記事が蔓延しています。どちらかの意見に偏ってしまうことが多い現代社会において、仏教徒として平和的にバランスを保った生き方とはどんな生き方でしょうか。私たちは意見の異なる人とも様々な関わりをもって生きています。仏さまはこの分断された社会でどのように振る舞い生きられるでしょうか。」

委員会委員長の佐藤パットさんが書かれたこのセミナーの主旨説明文に私たちは感銘を受けました。セミナーの内容に惹かれたのは私たちだけではなく、別院やガタルーペ、バークレーやシカゴ、そしてカナダなどお寺の内外から約50名が参加しました。また6名の開教使も参加されました。セミナーが多くの人々の人気を集めたのは、魅力的な講師のおかげでもあります。メトキャフ・フランツ博士は多くの本を出版されています。そのどれもが日常生活やそこで直面する問題に仏教の教えがどう応えていくか、

ということをテーマにしています。ウェストコビナのお寺ともご縁が深い方で、15年ほど前から御講師として研修会に来てくださっています。メンバーとは長年の親しい友人のような方です。

深刻な分断を抱える社会を仏教はどう見るのか、これはとても難しいテーマだったろうと思います。けれども、メトキャフ氏は個人レベル、そして一般的なレベルでの多くの例を用いながら、このテーマと私たちを結びつけてくれました。参加者は氏のダイナミックで、それでいて誰もが共感できる、示唆に富んだ講義に魅了され、時間の経つのを忘れるほどでした。

1時間の講義の後、6、7名の小グループに分かれてディスカッションが行われました。少人数の良さが生かされ、誰もが気軽に発言することができました。お寺のダルマシーズとブレニオン開教係が各グループの司会を務めました。参加者はメトキャフ氏が用意したシナリオについて、自分だったらどのように対応するか、などについて話をしました。実際に自分の生活の中で起こってもおかしくないシナリオについて考える中で、無智や怒りから引き起こされる衝突に直面した時、仏教徒としてどう振る舞えばいいのか、その難しさを改めて感じました。

どのように他者と、そして社会と関係を結んでいくのか、これはあらゆる人とともに生きていく上でとても大切な課題です。メトキャフ氏は1978年に900名以上が集団自殺によって命を落とした人民

寺院の惨劇を例にとって、自らの見方や生きている環境を疑うことなく絶対無二の事実として信じてしまう時、人は敵か味方かしかなくなり、自分たちの世界観と相容れない社会とは断絶する道しかなくなる、ということを私たちに教えました。その道の行き着いた先がまさに人民寺院の悲劇だったのです。

仏が分断されたこのアメリカ社会にいたなら、どうされるでしょうか。まず相違があるということが社会の現実である、と受け入れることでしょう。そこから苦しみを引き起こされる、というのも私たちの生活の事実です。私たちの社会の現実と、苦しみ之源に目覚めることによって、嫌な経験が人との関わり方を学ぶための経験として生かされていくので

(「仏教」5頁に続く)

お寺ニュース

日本語春のお彼岸法要

日本語春のお彼岸法要は3月法話会、祥月法要を兼ねて3月4日(木)午後7時よりオンラインにてお勤めいたします。

また英語によるお彼岸法要は3月21日(日)午前11時より同じくオンラインにてお勤めいたします。サンディエゴ仏教会の赤星ケンジ師をお招きして法話を聴聞します。英語法要にもご家族では是非お参りください。

4月の祥月法要は4月1日(木)午後7時よりオンラインにてお勤めいたします。

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

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THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GATEWAY

March - April 2021 - - Vol. LVI No. 2

March

- 14 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 18 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 21 11:00 am Spring Ohigan Service-online
- 23 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 25 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 28 10:00 am Sunday Service-online

April

- 1 7:00 pm Howakai Service-online
- 4 10:00 am LABTF Hanamatsuri-online
- 8 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 11 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 11 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-online
- 13 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 15 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 18 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 22 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 24 10:00 am District Seminar 1-online
- 24 12-6 pm Cherry Blossom Festival
- 25 10:00 am Sunday Service-online

2021年3月行事予定

- 14日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—オンライン
- 21日 午前11時 春季彼岸法要—オンライン
- 28日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—オンライン

4月行事予定

- 1日 午後7時 法話会—オンライン
- 4日 午前10時 仏連花祭り—オンライン
- 11日 午前8時半 理事会—オンライン
- 11日 午前10時 祥月法要—オンライン
- 18日 午前10時 日曜礼拝—オンライン
- 24日 開教区セミナー—オンライン
英語：午前10時～午後12時
日本語：午後1時～3時
- 24日 センター桜祭り—オンライン
- 25日 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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みな如来の御弟子なれば、
みなともに同行なり

『口伝鈔』