



# GATEWAY



May 2021 - - Vol. LVI No. 3



*A few fully vaccinated seniors spent an afternoon testing out the brand new WCBT BBQ grill. It was the first step in getting our Sangha and the equipment ready for any upcoming fundraisers.*

## REIMAGINED 2021 OBON FESTIVAL IS COMING!

It has been almost a full year since we had to cancel the WCBT Obon. While we can still remember our loved ones who have passed on, we are still unable to gather to celebrate their lives as a Sangha. The traditional WCBT Obon Festival will be cancelled this year, 2021. However, a modified Obon will be provided on a very limited basis on Saturday June 26th. At this time, we are making plans for a raffle event and WCBT famous Teriyaki chicken dinner. Manto-e lanterns may also be available. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Please be careful and safe!

With gassho,  
Bruce Whang  
Obon Committee Chair



## WCBT 24th Golf Classic Is Back!

Please see page 4 for more information.



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

Spring 2021 has brought us a ray of sunshine. Hopefully with the covid vaccines and the continual wearing of masks and distancing, we can come back to “in person” services soon! Dharma School can finally resume. Our staff is looking forward to that day!

The students have been sent the Spring Ohigan lesson and the Hanamatsuri lesson by mail. We hope that they will read the narratives and enjoy the simple activities that were included.

The month of May has two important special services. Tanjoe/Hatsumairi and Mother’s Day. Hatsumairi is the Infant Presentation Ceremony. This ceremony is done in conjunction with the Tanjoe service. Tanjoe commemorates the birth of Shinran Shonin. Part of the aristocratic Fujiwara family, Shinran was born during a turbulent time in the year 1173. He is the founder of our Jōdo Shinshu sect of Buddhism. Our staff will continue to instruct our students about Shinran’s life and teachings in the coming year.

The second special service is Mother’s Day. We wish to thank all of our Moms for the love and support they continue to give us. Dharma School wants to wish you a Happy Mother’s Day!

Keep safe!  
Gassho,  
Claire Hansen



## Third Generation Dharma Seeds Report

Lee Ezaki

On March 13, a virtual second retreat was held for the third generation Dharma Seeds. Tanya Kato and Lee Ezaki represented the West Covina Buddhist Temple. Members of the Higashi Betsuin and Berkeley Temple were also in attendance. The topic was “History of the Nembutsu Teaching: Shoshinge” presented by Michael Conway from Otani University. He presented this lecture in about one hour which he says takes 15 weeks to cover the same material for his students in Japan. The contents of the Shoshinge can be divided into two parts: The first half is made up of verses praising Shakyamuni for spreading the teaching of the nembutsu based on the Original Vow of Amida Buddha. (Tanya Kato made an excellent report on Bodhisattva Dharmakara in the December 2020 issue of our Gateway.) The second part is made up of verses praising the Seven Patriarchs who properly understood the teachings of Shakyamuni and clarified it for followers of Jodo Shinshu.

Michael Conway did not focus on each of the Seven Patriarchs except to say that these historical people brought the nembutsu teachings to us and, thus should be so honored. He praised how they clarified the way Tathagata’s original aspiration is realized. In the Shoshinge, Shinran says “All we must do is accept the teachings of these wise monks”.

I will try to summarize my understanding of the key points of Michael Conway’s lecture. Bodhisattva Dharmakara wished that all sentient beings reach the Pure Land. The Pure Land could also be called awakening or shinjin or life of wisdom and compassion. Wisdom is to perfectly understand and accept the Fourfold Noble Truths, which is to understand the cause and nature of suffering. To relieve this suffering Buddha prescribed the Eightfold Noble Path. (Right View, Thought, Speech, Behavior, Livelihood, Effort, Mindfulness and Concentration). Buddhist practice would be to understand and follow the above teachings which can lead you to the state of the Pure Land. The problem with the above path is that it is unrealistic for us as sentient beings because rarely are our hopes realized. We are consumed with our ego, selfishness and worldly passions. Our good practices are always mixed with the poison of self-centeredness. But Shinran presents a solution to this. He says recite the nembutsu (Namu Amida Butsu) for it triggers a call for attitude adjustment to set aside our wants and expectations and see ourselves as we truly are. All we need to do is recognize how fortunate we are as human beings and enjoy what gifts we already have. Adopt the practice of living a life of accepting what we already have which will be liberating and put you on the path to shinjin.

Namu Amida Butsu is the key. Namu is to entrust our life to the infinite depths of the all-knowing wisdom and all-embracing compassionate love. We simply entrust our lives to Amida Buddha, come what may. In the Shoshinge, Shinran says to entrust ourselves to the promise of the Primal Vow and the teachings of all the masters that have come before us.

### Quote of the Month

Mindfulness must be engaged.

Once we see that something needs to be done,  
we must take action. Seeing and action go together.

Otherwise, what is the point of seeing?

-Thich Nhat Hanh





# 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!

### 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 6:00 pm 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 May 11 & 25. 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.

### 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 is the celebration of the birth of Shinran Shonin. The service will be held on May 16 at 10:00am via Zoom. Hatsumairi (new baby) Service is cancelled this year.

### WCBT 24th Annual Golf Classic

WCBT will hold their 24th Annual Golf Classic on Monday, June 7, at the Hacienda Country Club in La Habra Heights. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic a shotgun start will not be allowed and instead there will be individual tee time starts. Registration will begin 30 minutes prior to tee time. The first tee will begin at 10:00 am with early tee times based on receipt of entry forms.

Entry forms and sponsorship forms have been mailed to Temple members. If you are able to help on the day of the golf tournament or have any questions, please call Roy Take-mura at (909) 973-2580.

For more information see the flyer on page 4.

### Dads & Grads Family Service

A Father's Day & Graduation Family online service will be held on June 20, at 10:00 am. All graduates will be honored so please contact Rev. Miyoshi (213) 219-6140 with the names of graduates in your family. Join us for this special event.

### Obon 2021

Please see the article on page 1.



## 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:*

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

*Website:* [www.livingdharma.org](http://www.livingdharma.org)

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

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## MAY

Dina Mayeda, Stacey Miyashiro, Teri Ezaki, Takashi Ena, Say Masai, Ted Hamachi, Kay Sakaue, Garrett Hamachi, Kaylin Kanemaru, Claudia Haraguchi, Sara Kawai, Chimako Matsukiyo, Susan Mita, Russell Hombo, Derek Nakawatase, Cheryl Teragawa, Celina Meites, Ryden Harrison Meites, Ruby Kagawa, Jakob Yoshio Jucksch, Richard Hiroshima, Blake Kimio Le, Judy Takemura, Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Rev. Bill Briones, Shinran Shonin



# T H E G A T E W A Y

*Hooray! WCBT  
24th Golf Classic  
is back.*



Unfortunately, like all of our Temple's activities and fundraisers, the 24th Golf Classic was cancelled in 2020. "It's back!" Yes, the 24th Golf Classic is scheduled for **Monday, June 7th** at the **Hacienda Golf Club** with a few changes. Hacienda Golf Club has assured us that all CDC protocols will be met to ensure a safe environment to conduct our fundraising tournament.

Sponsorship and player entry forms were mailed to all our Sangha members and friends and the golf committee hopes you will support this event. You can support WCBT by playing or encourage anyone you know that plays golf to participate. You can also support the temple by being a tee sponsor and/or volunteering at the event. If you would like to donate items such as trail mix, cookies, nuts, granola bar (no chocolates) for the player's goodie bag, please call Rev. Miyoshi at (213) 219-6140.

As in the past, all monies from tee sponsors will not fund the tournament but will support temple programs and activities. So, please let's all support WCBT!

Thank you from the Golf Classic committee: Roy Takemura (Chair), Barbara Shiota, Lillian Nishihara, Yukiko Kovacs, Denise and Steve Underwood, Phil Underwood and Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please call Roy Takemura at 1 (909) 973-2580.

**amazon**smile  
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!



## 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 E W A Y

## The Hardest Word to Accept in Jodo Shinshu

Yukiko Kovacs

It is so difficult to translate Japanese into English. Japanese people tend to beat around the bush or to talk in negatives. Because of their stress on appearing humble, they don't want to appear as a know it all.

They talk in Questions rather than Statements.

In the year 2000, the acceptable translation of Bonbu was the evil one. For an American, this is a very difficult pill to swallow. Evil is probably the worst description that one can have. To admit to being evil was and is just about impossible.

Later, the translation for Bonbu became less harsh. It became foolish or ignorant. I believe that this was still hard to say about yourself, but much easier than evil. Because my mother called me "baka" every day, it was relatively easy to accept myself as Bonbu.

Shinran Shonin called himself a Bonbu because he felt that reaching enlightenment was impossible through his own efforts and that he would need outside help. Amida symbolizes the help that everyone can receive. Because the story of Amida can be traced back to Shakyamuni Buddha, the "Pure Land Teaching" is an essential part of Buddhism.

Getting back to the word Bonbu, it is now translated as ordinary being. Unfortunately, in America, everyone wants to be extraordinary.

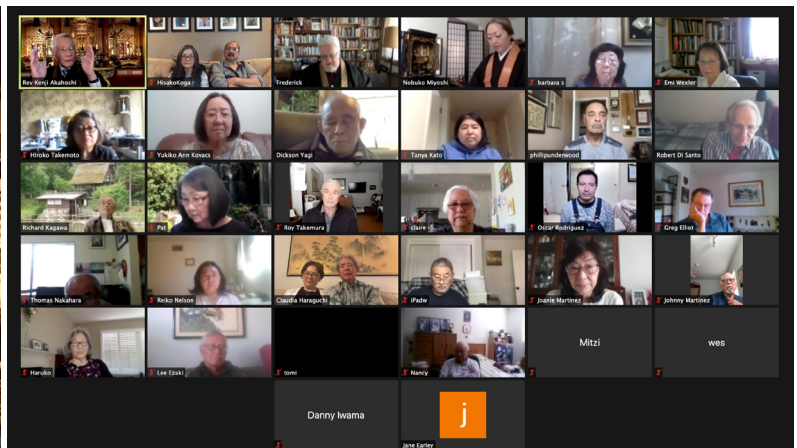
If someone can admit to being a Bonbu, that is an important step in the Jodo Shinshu journey.

Self-examination is what is expected of a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist, but I don't think that you are expected to beat yourself up. Just look at your suffering to see if you yourself are the cause of your own suffering. Because if you are the cause, you can fix it. You cannot change someone else, but you can change yourself. Maybe the change is not permanent, but maybe it is enough to stop your suffering at the time.

Trying to change yourself is not necessary if you are happy, but maybe just check to see if your happiness is causing someone else to suffer.

Being yourself is important in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. People around you will know you better than you know yourself. You need other Sangha members to help you to see yourself. Stop doing what is expected of you or to please others. Don't let society tell you what to feel, say, and do.

I am a bonbu. I am capable of evil. I am self-centered. I am foolish. I am an ordinary being. I am not perfect. I am angry. I am greedy. I am ignorant about myself, the world, and the universe.



Rev. Akahoshi, from the Buddhist Temple of San Diego, gave an engaging Dharma talk at our March 21 Ohigan Service and shared information about his annual weekend Idyllwild retreat.

*\*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.*





# T H E G A T E W A Y

HIGASHI HONGANJI (SHINSHU OTANI-HA)  
NORTH AMERICA DISTRICT SEMINAR (ENGLISH)

## Jōdo Shinshū in the Interfaith World

**Rev. Patti Nakai**

Resident Minister, The Buddhist Temple of Chicago



### Saturday, May 15, 2021

10:00–12:00 am (PDT)

12:00–2:00 pm (CDT)

1:00–3:00 pm (EDT)

**Lecture: 90 min., Q&A: 30 min.**



Please register from [here](#) (you can also scan the QR code above) to receive the Zoom link. The fee is \$10. We can only take check now. Please send us your check payable to:

Higashi Honganji North America District  
505 E. 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA 90013.

*Most of us live in communities with people of different faiths, but as followers of Jōdo Shinshū, how should we respectfully interact with them? For too long, people misinterpreted Shinran (1173–1262) as putting down other religions and forms of Buddhism, but the Pure Land teachings actually tell us to go out and learn from the wisdom of diverse people. When we can hear the nembutsu coming from the followers of Islam, Christianity, Wicca etc. then we appreciate more deeply the Shin Buddhist path.*

#### About the Lecturer

**Patti (Honda) Nakai** was born in Chicago and graduated from the University of Minnesota. At the Buddhist Temple of Chicago, she studied under Dr. Nobuo Haneda who encouraged her to study in Japan. She received an M.A. in Shin Buddhist Studies from Ōtani University and was ordained as a *kyōshi* at Higashi Honganji. She worked in banking and real estate, serving as a part-time minister at the Los Angeles Betsuin 1987–95, then at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago before becoming the full-time resident minister in 2013. She has been active in many interfaith activities, including the 2015 Buddhist-Catholic dialogue in Rome with Bishop Noriaki Ito, and in 2018 returned to Rome as part of the Buddhist-Catholic green housing project delegation. Also in 2018 she did a presentation on Queen Srimala as part of a panel on historic women religious leaders at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Toronto. Currently she serves as chair of the Japanese Buddhist Federation in Chicago. She has been interviewed and quoted in Tricycle Magazine and other publications on Buddhism.



# T H E G A T E W A Y





# T H E G A T E W A Y

SHINSHU CENTER OF AMERICA (HIGASHI HONGANJI)

## SPECIAL ONLINE LECTURE



### *Esoteric Buddhism and Jōdo Shinshū*

**Dr. Aaron P. Proffitt**

Assistant Professor  
Japanese Studies Department of  
East Asian Studies,  
University at Albany, SUNY

**Saturday, June 12, 2021**

**3:00 pm (EDT), 2:00 pm (CDT),  
12:00 pm (PDT), 9:00 am (HST)**

**90 minutes including Q&A**



Register from an online form [here](https://forms.gle/35mDZqDq7CWSi7yM7)  
(<https://forms.gle/35mDZqDq7CWSi7yM7>) to receive the  
Zoom link (limited space). You can also scan the QR code  
above to access the form.

Registration is free—donations gratefully accepted. Checks payable  
to:

Shinshu Center of America, 505 E. 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA 90013

#### Title and Description

“Esoteric Buddhism and Pure Land Buddhism”

Some scholars contend that Pure Land Buddhism emerged in medieval Japan as a rejection of Esoteric Buddhism. However, the histories of the traditions scholars have come to refer to as “Esoteric Buddhism” and “Pure Land Buddhism” are far more complicated and interconnected. In this talk, I will consider how these two traditions have been constructed in the scholarly imagination, and propose ways of thinking about the diversity of Mahayana Buddhist approaches to the Pure Land.

#### About the Lecturer

**Professor Aaron P. Proffitt** is Assistant Professor of Japanese Studies at the University at Albany-SUNY. He received his PhD in Buddhist Studies from the University of Michigan in 2015, and from 2014-15 he conducted dissertation research at Ōtani University, Ryūkyō University, and Kōyasan University thanks to funding from the Fulbright Foundation. Professor Proffitt's book, entitled *Esoteric Pure Land Buddhism*, is under contract with the Pure Land Buddhist Studies Series at the University of Hawaii Press.

SHINSHU CENTER OF AMERICA

505 E. 3rd St., Los Angeles, CA 90013

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

# 今年のお盆祭りについて

昨年のお盆祭りがキャンセルになってから一年が過ぎました。亡き人の生き方を振り返りながら過ごす一年だったのではないのでしょうか。残念ながら現在もお寺に集い追悼行事を勤めることはできません。従いまして通年通りのお盆祭りは今年も実施することはできないと判断しました。その代わりとしまして、限定された形でのお盆イベントを6月26日(土)に開催したいと思います。現在のところラッフル抽選と照り焼きチキンプレートの販売を予定しています。万灯会提灯は今年もご購入いただけます。イベントの詳細につきましては次号に掲載いたします。イベントでみなさまとお会いできるのを楽しみにしています。

どうかお身体にお気をつけてお過ごしください。

合掌

お盆祭り実行委員長  
ウオン・ブルース

## 第三期ダルマシリーズ研修会 江崎リー

去る三月十三日、第三期ダルマシリーズの二度目の研修会がオンラインで開かれました。別院とパークレーの参加者とともにウェストコビンからは加藤ターニャさんと私が参加しました。

今回の研修テーマは「正信偈に学ぶ念仏の歴史」です。大谷大学のコンウェイ・マイケル先生がご講師でした。学生たちには十五週に渡って教える内容を一時間にまとめてお話くださいました。「正信偈」は二部構成になっています。前半では阿弥陀仏の本願をもととした念仏の教えを私たちに伝えてくださった釈尊を讃嘆しています。(加藤ターニャさんの法蔵菩薩についての素晴らしいレポートは先月号に掲載されています。)そして後半部分は釈尊の教えを深く聞き、真宗門徒に伝えてくださった七高僧を讃える詩となっています。

七高僧それぞれについて詳しく語る代わりに、コンウェイ先生は七

高僧の歴史全体が私たちに念仏の教えを届けてくださったのだ、ということをお話くださいました。さらに、「正信偈」の最後の一句「唯可信斯高僧説」を引用しながら、どのように七祖が如来の本願を明らかにしてくださったのかをお話くださいました。

コンウェイ先生の講義の内容を私なりにまとめてみたいと思います。法蔵菩薩はあらゆる衆生を浄土へと導きたいという願を立てました。浄土はまた「目覚め」「信心」「智慧と慈悲の命」とも表現されます。智慧とは仏教が説く四種の基本的な真理、苦の性質と原因、を明らかに理解し受け入れることです。苦からの解放の道として、釈尊は八正道(正見、正思惟、正語、正業、正命、正精進、正念、正定)を示してくださいました。仏道修行はこの教えを理解し、この教えに沿って生きることであり、私たちが浄土へと導く道なのです。

しかしながら、この道は歩むのが

非常に難しい道です。なぜなら私たちのほとんどが本当の願いに気づいていないからです。深い願いへの目覚めを妨げているのは、私たちの自己中心的なあり方であり、世俗的な快楽を求め続ける生き方です。どれほどそれが真摯なものであっても、私たちが行う修行は常に自己中心という毒が混ざっています。この問題の答えを見つけたのが親鸞聖人でした。それが念仏の教えです。念仏を称えるということは、自分の都合や欲求を差し置いて、ありのままの自分を見る、そのような姿勢の変化を促す呼び声を聞くということなのです。私たちが目覚めるべきことは、人として生まれたことの有り難さであり、すでに賜っていることのかげがえのなさなのです。その目覚めこそが私たちを真に解放し、信心の道へと導いてくれるのです。

南無阿弥陀仏は要です。南無とはありのままに見通す限りない智慧とあらゆるものを包み込む量り知れない慈悲の深さに深く帰依することです。様々なことが起こる人生の中でただ一筋に阿弥陀仏を拠り所として生きるということです。親鸞聖人は「正信偈」において、本願と聖人に先駆けてその本願の教えを全身を上げて聞き届けた七高僧の方々に帰依すると宣言しておられるのです。



## お寺ニュース

### 法話会祥月法要

5月の法話会の祥月法要は5月6日(木)、6月の祥月法要は6月3日(木)にお勤めします。いずれも午後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

May 2021 - - Vol. LVI No. 3

## May

- 2 8:30 am Board Meeting-online
- 2 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-online
- 6 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 6 7:00 pm Howakai Japanese Service-online
- 9 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 11 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 13 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 15 10:00 am NAD Seminar 2-online
- 16 10:00 am Tanjo-e Service-online
- 20 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 23 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 25 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 27 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 30 10:00 am Sunday Service-online

## June

- 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 Service-online

## 2021年5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 法話会ーオンライン
- 9日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 16日 午前10時 誕生会法要ーオンライン
- 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

## 6月行事予定

- 3日 午後7時 法話会ーオンラン
- 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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同一に念仏して別の道なきがゆえに。  
遠く通ずるに、  
それ四海の内みな兄弟とするなり。  
親鸞聖人