



GATEWAY



November-December 2022 - - Vol. LVII No. 6



These happy Sangha members turned out in force to make the return of our 2022 Kiku Craft & Food Fair a whopping success!

Dharma Seeds Retreat #5: The Inner Lemming

Tanya Kato

On Saturday, October 22, 2022, the third generation Dharma Seeds met for our fifth retreat. This time, we had the option of meeting in person at the Higashi Betsuin in downtown Los Angeles. During this retreat, our guest lecturer was Professor Yasushi Harry Kigoshi of Otani University.

Although Professor Kigoshi's lecture started with a focus on the Shoshinge, he thought it would be more beneficial to discuss the religious life that we are expected to lead as Shinshu followers. He explained that simply knowing that all beings get old, become ill, and die does not make one a Buddhist. While many people "know" this, most of us are not truly "awakened" to this fact of life. He likened this to French phi-

losopher Blaise Pascal's illustration of individuals running towards a cliff with a shield over their eyes.

Professor Kigoshi asked us to participate in an exercise that gave us an opportunity to face our own death. In this exercise, we were told that we only had 24 hours left to live and that we were to write down what we would do in those 24 hours, divided into four-hour segments. After thinking for several minutes, I decided the easiest way to accomplish this exercise was for me to write what I typically do when I visit northern California around Christmas time. This includes visiting friends and family, eating at some of my favorite spots, and visiting places in my small hometown and surrounding cities. When it was time to share with the

group, I started choking up when I said that I would visit the cemetery to see my grandparents and other buried relatives. One of the reasons why I got teary eyed was because of a similar situation I faced with my first dog. When I was a child, the family dog had to be put down to sleep. When it was time to leave my dog to be put down, I cried a lot; not so much because he would no longer be with us, but because he was likely unaware that this was the last time he would see me. For my grandparents, I was saddened to think that they would not know that this would be my last visit with them.

Before Professor Kigoshi's lecture began, I was asked a question which has slipped my mind. But I

Please see LEMMING, con't on page 4



THE GATEWAY

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

November and December are busy months for our Sangha with three special services. In November, we will honor the memory of Shinran Shonin. This gathering is called Ho-on-ko. At this service we express our gratitude for Shinran's profound teachings. Ho-on-ko will be held on November 20 at 4:30 p.m. It will be a hybrid service.

On November 27 we will be honoring the children who have reached the ages of 3, 5, or 7 during 2022. This hybrid service, that starts at 10 a.m., is called the Shichi-Go-San ceremony. The children will be recognized during the service and each will receive a gift through the mail. We hope that the children will be able to attend this service either in-person or on Zoom.

The first hybrid service in December is Bodhi Day. Siddhartha Gautama became Enlightened under a Bodhi tree in early December about 2500 years ago. There will be a short story for the children about the awakening of the Buddha. Our service will be on December 4 at 10 a.m.

There is one more special day—Thanksgiving! We hope you have a wonderful time during this holiday. Dharma School Students: can you make a list of 10 reasons for which you are thankful? The Dharma School staff will do the same. Perhaps in the future we will be able to share our lists with one another.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Gassho,
Claire Hansen



Friendship

Yukiko Kovacs

I have been a member of Higashi Honganji for 22 years now. I have frequently felt frustrated.

Because Jodo Shinshu refuses to tell me what to do while criticizing me and my motives, I have felt lost.

I remember when a brand-new reverend asked a group of us, "Why are you here?". I answered that I was looking for friendship, and he said, "Wrong answer."

And yet, at this very moment, in our discussion group which meets every Thursday at 10am on Zoom, people are starting to say that they cherish the friendship of our group. It feels great to be able to say whatever we want without judgement. There is a lot of laughter in the group.

As our leader, Reverend Miyoshi, selects readings for us the day before. She always starts and ends our sessions with gassho. She always has a well thought out introduction to our discussion. Then, we are all free to respond to the topic of discussion, or not. The conversation typically goes off topic, but that is all right.

I have been a member of the West Covina discussion/study group for over 5 years, first, in person, and now since Covid, through zoom.

I feel like I have learned quite a bit from everyone, yet have a lot more to learn.

A friend is not someone who thinks like you and agrees with you. A friend is someone who accepts you as you are.



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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 are now hybrid with both in-person and Zoom participation. In-person participants must submit proof of vaccination to the Community Center or a negative Covid-19 test 72 hours prior to Service. A temperature check will also be given when entering the Social Hall. If you're not quite ready for social contact just look for an email from Rev. Miyoshi or Rev. Fred inviting you to the services with the Zoom meeting ID and password. Which ever way you decide, please join us because it's always a pleasure to see all of your familiar faces!

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

A virtual 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 Thursday morning Discussion Class to join us. The Study Classes will focus 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, or to get an email invitation, please contact Rev. Miyoshi.

Ho-on-ko

A Hybrid Ho-on-ko Service (a memorial service for Shinran Shonin) will be held on Sunday, November 20 at 4:30 pm. Our guest speaker will be

Rev. Hibiki Murakami from LA Nishi Betsuin. Please join us as we welcome Rev. Murakami for this special service. Otoki will be enjoyed by those attending the service in-person. Please contact Rev. Miyoshi or Joy Kitaura if you plan to attend.

7-5-3 Service

7-5-3 or Shichi-Go-San Hybrid Service will be held on Sunday, November 27 at 10 am. This special service is to recognize anyone who has reached the age of three, five or seven this year. Please inform Rev. Miyoshi if you have a family member or know of someone who will be the perfect age for this service.

Mochitsuki

Mochitsuki will again be cancelled this year due to an abundance of caution but we look forward to next year with great anticipation!

Year-end Service

A hybrid Year-end Service will be celebrated on Sunday, December 18, at 4:00 pm.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAY

Travis Hamachi, Erika Haraguchi Haines, Kyle Sato, Brandon Kanemaru, Jennifer Higa, Michelle Harrison, Jill Kato, Jean Nakatani, Hiroko Takemoto, Wesley Kawaguchi, Frank Tanji, Andrew Kochi, Lauren Oshiro, Mariko Correa, Sachiko Correa, Lynette Godoy, Kaylyn Godoy, Shinyuki Okamura, Metzli Ortiz, Brian Endo, Sany Nafarrete, Jordan Jucksch, Thomas Le, Katsuhide Kinjo

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

Facebook: facebook.com/westcovinabuddhisttemple

E-Mail: wcbt.livingdharma@gmail.com

DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

Allison Haraguchi Calvo, Kai Haraguchi Calvo, 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, Takashi Takemoto, Michiko Oku, Stephanie Akune, Max Shimomura



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

LEMMING, con't from pg. 1

think the gist of it was if I wanted our sangha gatherings to be fun. I think I ended up saying something like, "no, they don't have to be fun." After I responded, I thought, hmm, what a strange and unexpected response. Of course, I want our gatherings to be enjoyable! However, I think my response was in light of what I have witnessed over the past 4.5+ years attending West Covina Buddhist Temple; we are able to make light of many situations! Whether it be hybrid Zoom service audio issues, food preparation, or trying to evenly load the gymnasium chairs, we have shared many laughs.

I have also learned that life doesn't have to be fun. Some of our sangha members and friends are going through very difficult times right now, possibly some of the most scary and uncertain times they will ever face. Before I began attending temple, I held a lot of resentment, anger, and sadness. I can't say I am completely free of these feelings, but I am not the shell of a person I once was. I credit many of you in this sangha for your courage, kindness, generosity, strength, and perseverance despite past and present struggles. Thank you for being an example to me.

I used to think that the Buddha was foolish to ever want to leave the comfort and luxury of his palace life. Why would anyone want to see suffering, or worse yet, experience it themselves! Think of yourself one of the "lucky" ones if your life isn't full of hardship and tragedy. There have been so many times when I wished my life was perfectly curated, where everything went flawlessly, and aligned to my liking. However, as Reverend Miyoshi shared in one of her recent Dharma messages, it is okay to be a fool. There are so many aspects of my life that I cannot control. I guess it would be more foolish to think that I have control, than to

just lean into the not so tidy aspects of myself and accept that I cannot always control my circumstances. But isn't it so much harder to accept things that are painful and deeply wounding? Interestingly, when I was thinking about those last 24 hours of mine, my thoughts did not fixate on past hurts, but on savoring the last moments. Now, I just need to learn to cultivate that same mentality in my everyday life.

No matter how many Dharma talks we hear, books we

read, discussion and study classes we attend, or number of times we recite the nenbutsu, we will continue to fall short of the Buddhist aspiration of awakening. But when you do run towards that cliff, with that shield over your eyes, just know that you can turn to your side, and see me running with you. You've got your Dharma friends by your side.



Kiku Crafts & Food Fair Report

Hisako Koga - Kiku Crafts & Food Fair Chair

After a two-year hiatus WCBT's Kiku Crafts & Food Fair returned on November 6 with excitement and anticipation that we could go back to a familiar social event. While attendance was down from pre-Covid days, it was still well attended, and it was such a pleasure to see everyone in person and have that face-to-face human interaction.

There were fewer crafters this year due to wider aisles allowing for social distancing but also the retirement of many crafters, another consequence of the long pandemic. We really appreciate all the crafters for their support, some of whom have been with us from the beginning in 2009. And a special thank you to our new vendors, one of whom was particularly generous in teaching us about dana.

We simplified our usually large menu with two options, Teriyaki Chicken and Chow Mein plates. Pre-ordering the bentos and choosing pick-up times helped to make our food fundraiser easier. Thank you to Dick Koga for tirelessly prepping and cooking the meals and Jen Higa for assembling the awesome kitchen crew.

Thank you to Joy Kitaura for taking care of the permits, Roy Takemura for the music and audio set-up, Claudia Haraguchi and Diane Hata for calling the raffle and Reiko Ikehara-Nelson for taking care of the finances and last-minute changes that were added. A special thanks to Bruce Whang and his crew whose tarp rolling expertise we depend on. And thank you to everyone who volunteered and helped where it was needed whether it was checking customers for proof of vaccination, giving vendors a lunch break or barbecuing with or without beer. Everyone stepped up.

It really does take a village and we are so appreciative of everyone's support in making the return of 2022 Kiku Craft and Food Fair a resounding success.



T H E G A T E W A Y

Kiku Crafts & Food Fair Returns in 2022!





T H E G A T E W A Y

WEST COVINA Higashi Honganji BUDDHIST TEMPLE

November 9, 2022

Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invite you to attend the Ho-on-ko Service which will be held on Sunday, November 20, 2022 with both in-person and Zoom. The information for the service is as follows:

Date: Sunday, November 20, 2022
 Time: 4:30 P.M. (hybrid)
 Dharma Message: Rev. Hibiki Murakami
 (Los Angeles Hampa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple)
 Meeting ID: 820 2979 8426
 Passcode: 294220

Ho-on-ko is the annual memorial service of the founder of Jodo Shinshu, Shinran Shonin. Shinran lived from 1173-1262 and devoted his life to studying and sharing the teaching of Nembutsu. On this occasion we gather to express our appreciation to Shinran Shonin.

Gassho,

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi
 Johnny Martinez, President
 Board of Directors

門信徒の皆様へ

十一月に入り急に寒くなってまいりましたが、皆様におかれましては健やかにお過ごしのことと存じます。さて今年も報恩講の季節がやってまいりました。報恩講は親鸞聖人のご命日法要で私どもの信仰生活を見直す機会とされてまいりました。本年は下記の如くオンラインと対面のハイブリッド形式にてお勤め致しますのでご案内申し上げます。ご家族で一緒にお参り下さい。

記

報恩講法要

日 時 2022年11月20日(日) 午後4時半

法 話 村上響師(西本願寺羅府別院)(英語)

ミーティングID: 820 2979 8426

パスコード: 294220

合 掌



T H E G A T E W A Y





T H E G A T E W A Y

(「レミング」9頁からの続き)

らです。悲しいことも困難なことも起こらない人生を私たちは「恵まれた人生」と考えます。自分の人生が思い通りになって、完璧な人生になってくれば、と何度も願いました。けれども見義先生の法話で愚かであることは問題ではない、と教えられ愚かさについてのイメージが変わりました。本当の愚かさとは思い通りにいかない人生を思い通りにしようとすることだと気付きました。完璧とは程遠く愚かさをもつ私ですが、そんな自分を受け入れ、そして思い通りにいかない状況を引き受けていく、ということは愚かとは言わないのでしょうか。けれども辛い体験や深く傷ついたことを受け入れるというのはとても難しいと思いませんか？驚いたことに、人生残り24時間という課題に取り組んでいた時、過去の辛い経験に囚われることはありませんでした。むしろ残された時間に感謝する思いで心が満ちていました。このような経験を日常生活の中で重ねていきたいと思います。

どれほど法話を聞いても、また本を読んだり、勉強会に参加しても、またどれほど念仏を称えても、私たちは仏教が勧める目覚めの道から遠ざかり眠り込んでしまいます。前が見えないフェイスシールドを付けたまま崖に向かって一直線に向かっている私たちはさながら崖から集団で海に飛び込むレミングのようです。けれどもそのときふと横を向いてみてください。私もあなたと一緒に走っています。法の友はあなたのすぐそばにいるのです。



A pirate & a hula maiden joined our temple on Halloween and chanted the Shoshinge with us!

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.*

Buddhism Quiz

1. The Buddha gave his first sermon in beautiful Deer Park near Benares, India. This sermon contained the foundation of the Buddha's teachings.
 - a. The Six Paramitas
 - b. The Four Noble Truths
 - c. The Eightfold Path
2. Ho-on-ko service is observed annually for seven days from November 21 to 28. It is significant in Jodo Shinshu Buddhism because
 - a. It is Thanksgiving Day when we express our gratitude for the bounty in our lives.
 - b. It is the perfect time in the Fall when we reflect on our efforts to strengthen our commitment to the Buddhist life.
 - c. It is Shinran Shonin's memorial service during which time we gather to express our gratitude to him for showing us the teachings of the Nembutsu.

Answers: 1-b, 2-c

Quote of the Month
Shin Buddhist practice
is not based on
belief in
an uncertain better future
but instead
places emphasis
on the present moment
-a moment made possible
by the causes and conditions
of the past.
-Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi



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

内なるレミング

第五回ダルマシーズリトリート

加藤ターニャ

去る10月22日に5回目の研修会がダルマシーズ第三世代を対象に開かれました。会場は別院で今回は対面とオンラインのどちらかを選ぶことができました。ご講師は大谷大学の木越康教授でした。

木越先生の講義は「正信偈」についてでしたので、先生は「正信偈」についての話を始めました。けれども限られた時間で「正信偈」について十分に話すことが難しいこともあって、私たちがより身近に感じる課題、つまり真宗門徒としての生き方について話し合うこととなりました。先生はすべての人はいずれ老い、病にかり、そして死んでいく、ということを知っているだけでは、それは仏教徒とは言えない、と語られました。老病死のことを頭で理解している人は多いと思います。けれども自らの事実としてそのことに目覚める人はそれほど多くないのです。先生はそれを個人が目の前に不透明なフェイスシールドを付けて崖に向かって突進していく人の姿、それはフランスの哲学者ブレイズ・パスカルが示したイラストですが、それとつなげて説明してくださいました。

また木越先生は参加者に課題を出されました。それは私たちにとって自らの死と向き合う練習となりました。課題とは、もし残された時間が24時間と知らされた時、その時間をどのように過ごすかを考えるもので、24時間がさらに4時間ごとに区切られており、それぞれの時間でしたいことを参加者は記入していきました。少し考えた後、私はいつもクリスマス時期に北カリフォルニアに帰省した時にすることをそのまま記入して

いくことにしました。友人や家族と時間を過ごし、お気に入りのレストランで食事をして、地元である小さな町や周辺の地域に足を運ぶことです。書いたものを発表したのですが、祖父母や親戚のお墓参りをする、と書いた部分を読んでいる時涙で声が詰まってしまいました。それは初めて飼った犬との思い出とリンクしたからでした。私がまだ幼かった頃、家族はその犬の安楽死を決断しなければならませんでした。いよいよその時を迎えた時、私は号泣しました。けれどもそれは彼ともう一緒にいられなくなるから、というよりも彼にとってこれが私たちと会う最後の瞬間だと、彼が気づいていないことからくる悲しみでした。そして同じような感覚を祖父母の死の前にした時も感じたのでした。

講義が始まる前に質問されたことがあるのですが、残念ながら正確には覚えていません。確か「僧伽が集うのは楽しい時間を過ごすためだと思うか?」というようなことだったと思います。私の答えは「ただ楽しいだけの集まりである必要はない」でした。正直そう答えた自分に驚きました。もちろんメンバーと楽しい時間を過ごすに越したことはありません。けれども私の答えはウェストコビナのお寺に通い始めてから今までの4年半に僧伽を見て感じたことから導かれたものでした。お寺で色々な時間、シーンを見てきました。ハイブリッドでのサービスが始まった時の音声トラブル、食事の準備、ジムの倉庫から椅子を運び出すなど、たくさんの笑い笑顔と共有してきました。

その一方で私たちの人生は常に楽しいだけではない、ということも学

びました。メンバーやその友人の中には困難な状況の只中にいる人もいます。先が見通せない不安の中にいる人もいます。どんな困難や不安な状況に直面しても平気でいられるようになった、とは決して言えませんが、それでも自分の殻に閉じこもっていた以前の私とは違うということが言えます。多くのお寺のメンバーから勇気と思いやりと寛容な心、強さ、そして過去や現在の困難を引き受けていく忍耐強さを教えられました。すばらしい模範になってくれたことに心からありがたいの気持ちを伝えたいと思います。

かつての私は釈尊を愚かな人だと思ったことがあります。せっかく恵まれた生活を送れる環境に生まれたのに、わざわざそれを捨てて苦しい生き方を選ぶなんて、と思ったか

(「レミング」8頁に続く)

お寺ニュース

法話会祥月法要

12月の祥月法要は12月1日(木)、新年1月の祥月法要は1月5日(木)にお勤めします。いずれも午前10時よりお勤めいたします。

報恩講法要(英語)

本年度の報恩講法要は対面とオンラインのハイブリッド形式でお勤めいたします。日時は11月20日(日)午後4時半となっております。ご家族でご参加いただきますようお願い申し上げます。

修正会法要

修正会法要は2023年1月1日(日)午前11時より対面とオンラインのハイブリッド形式にてお勤めいたします。新しい年を迎えて初めてのお参りにご家族お揃いでお参りください。

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

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DATED MATERIAL

THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE

GATEWAY

November - December 2022 - Vol. LVII No. 6

November

- 17 10:00 am Discussion Class (online)
- 20 4:30 pm Ho-on-ko Service (hybrid)
- 22 6:00 pm Study Class (online)
- 27 10:00 am Sunday Service/753 Service (hybrid)

December

- 1 10:00 am Howakai Japanese Service
- 1 10:00 am Discussion Class (online)
- 4 10:00 am Shotsuki/Bodhi Day Service (hybrid)
- 6 7:00 pm Board Meeting (online)
- 8 10:00 am Discussion Class (online)
- 11 10:00 am Sunday Service (hybrid)
- 13 6:00 pm Study Class (online)
- 15 10:00 am Discussion Class (online)
- 18 4:00 pm Year-end Service (hybrid)

2022年11月行事予定

- 20日 午後4時半 報恩講法要 (ハイブリッド)
- 27日 午前10時 日曜礼拝／七五三法要 (ハイブリッド)

12月行事予定

- 1日 午前10時 法話会
- 4日 午前10時 祥月法要 (ハイブリッド)
- 6日 午後7時 理事会 (オンライン)
- 11日 午前10時 日曜礼拝 (ハイブリッド)
- 18日 午後4時 年末家族礼拝 (ハイブリッド)

*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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私たちは、自分を正当化するための
暴力を正義と言ってきました。

祖父江文宏『悲しみに身を添わせて』