



# GATEWAY



July-August 2023 - - Vol. LVII No. 4



*The West Covina Buddhist Temple dancers turned out in force to celebrate the 2023 Obon festival.*

## OBON FESTIVAL 2023

June 24, 2023, another wonderful Obon took place with family and friends. Although this year's Obon festival was held in an abbreviated format, with the heart felt Manto-e ceremony, lively bon-odori, and delicious food, it was a great success. It was wonderful to see everyone in attendance enjoying the company of friends and family that was not possible in the past few years. Thank you to all of you that came out to West Covina Buddhist Temple to make this year's Obon so festive and, overall, experience a great time! A BIG THANKS to the Sangha, families, and friends that assisted in the preparation, the day's events, and clean-up that is necessary for a successful Obon. Obon would not have been possible without your participation and support. I look forward to next year's Obon and the chance to create more glorious memories.

With gassho,  
Bruce Whang  
WCBT Obon Chair



# T H E G A T E W A Y

## DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

The Dharma School staff wishes to congratulate the nine graduates who were recognized during the June 18th temple service. The following are our 2023 graduates:

From Preschool: Kai Calvo and Lauren Jucksch

From Elementary School: Jacob Jucksch, Tyler Kobayashi, and Stella Reynolds-Hale

From Middle School: Maya Hendrickson and Andy Kobayashi

From High School: Spencer Correa

From University: Sachiko Correa

We hope you will have wonderful experiences in your new schools!

Dear Dharma School students, did you have fun at our Obon this year? Meeting with friends, eating delicious food, and participating in the dances reflects the “Joyous Gathering” of Obon.

Obon has been held in Japan for over 1,000 years. Its origin comes from the Ullanbana Sutra which tells the story of one of Buddha’s disciples named Mogallana. The story tells of Mogallana’s great sorrow seeing his mother’s suffering. With the Buddha’s help, he was able to release his mother from her pain. Mogallana was overjoyed and began to dance to show his happiness.

Today we dance to express gratitude and love to our ancestors without whom we wouldn’t be here. To remember them with joy and to thank them is why we celebrate Obon.

Gassho,  
Claire Hansen

## *The Essence of Obon Festival*

**Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi**

I was truly grateful that this year’s “Comeback” Obon Festival turned out very successful despite its abbreviated format. WCBT was one of the temples which kicked off this year’s Obon season. We saw so many people eagerly waiting for this fun summer event, enjoying delicious chicken teriyaki, cold beer, and of course, Bon Odori. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincerest appreciation to all of you who made this year’s Obon Festival possible.

Some may be surprised to hear that our familiar Obon Festival is actually a unique tradition of Japanese Buddhism in the U.S. In Japan, all temples

conduct Obon service but do not usually host a festival or Bon Odori. When my parents visited me during Obon at Betsuin, they were amazed to experience our Obon Festival, including dancing Bon Odori with many songs (usually, they dance only a few songs repeatedly).

In order to hold an Obon Festival, temples need a lot of help and support. Not only members but also their families and friends that are willing to work hard, from setting up to cleaning up. This Obon we saw more people helping in the kitchen than ever before. They were so busy, yet seemed to have a great time. I was moved to see them because I felt that our temple

was finally able to fulfill its role as a gathering place after a three-year hiatus.

This year’s Obon Festival made me again realize its significance as a bridge between people.

Among those who joined the Manto-e Service right before Bon Odori, was a woman who lost her father this year. She confessed that she had not been really interested in Buddhism even though her father had devoted himself to the temple. When her children and grandchildren asked about Buddhism, she knew nothing about it. Realizing this, she wondered about the meaning of the temple for her

*Please see OBON, con’t on pg. 6*





# 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. 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 passcode. Whichever 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.

### Obon/Hatsubon Service

A hybrid Obon / Hatsubon Service will be held on Sunday, July 16 at 4:30 pm. Please join us as

we welcome our special guest speaker Rev. Patti Usuki. We look forward to listening to Rev. Usuki's Obon message.

### August Schedule

WCBT will be taking a summer break this August and there will be no Sunday Services on August 13, 20 and 27. All Thursday morning Discussions Classes as well as the bi-weekly Tuesday evening Study Classes will be taking August off. Enjoy your summer holiday break!

### September Schedule

Services will resume with Shotsuki service on Sunday, September 3.

### 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.

### AUGUST BIRTHDAY

Barbara Shirota, 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, Vickie Takemura, Joy Ormseth, Frederic Brenion, Gregory Williams, Bill Dubble, Karleigh Nakata, Hideko Ikehara, Kylie Noguchi, Garrett Godoy

### GATEWAY Staff

*Layout & Editing:* Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Hisako Koga, Claudia Haraguchi, Richard Kagawa

*Contributors:* Claire Hansen, Joanie Martinez, Lee Ezaki, Tanya Kato

*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:*

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)

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



### JULY BIRTHDAY

Sally Ariza, Mikio Earley, Jamie Nakatani, Sylvia Ena, Jaylene Gutierrez, Kevin Hata, Lauren Koga, Russell Martinez, Merrick Martinez, Laura Miyake, Margaret Takemoto, Ryoko Kodama, Richard Haraguchi, Elijah Godoy, Craig Taguchi, Corey Taguchi, Pat Sato, Garrett Kawaguchi, Tyler Kobayashi, Steven Kuwahara, Marcus Nishihara, Lillian Nishihara, Kurt Kowalski, Jamie Teragawa, Jonathan Hoey, Jeffrey Akune, Anthony Gutierrez, Sam Kozono, Susie Kozono, Emi Haraguchi Calvo



# T H E G A T E W A Y



## Low Gross Winners

Erick Liscio, Johnny Yun,  
Kaila Higgins, Nico Mendoza

## 2nd Place Winners

Fumio Tanabe, Ben Takagi,  
Rev. Shumyo Kojima, Keiji Ukai

## 3rd Place Winners

Jeremy Yamamoto, Nick Albert,  
Zack Balaban, Joel Yamamoto



Gil Correa and Rev. Miyoshi  
Witnesses for Hole In One Contest

## Consolation Winners

Linda Mizufuka, Dianne Ishida,  
Kathy Taguchi, Lillian Nishihara

Registration Table - Ruby & Richard Kagawa,  
Hisako Koga, Reiko Ikehara-Nelson,  
Barbara Shirota, Sumie Arnheim

## WCBT 26<sup>th</sup> Golf Classic A Record Success!

The forecast for Monday, June 5, 2023, by KTLA meteorologist Vera Jimenez was spot on, overcast with morning drizzles and to continue into early afternoon. Despite her forecast, one hundred enthusiastic golfers participated in our 26<sup>th</sup> Golf Classic.

This year's Classic was a record setting successful fundraiser. This was not possible without the many generous tee sponsors, donations for our raffle and items for the player's goodie bag. Thank you for all your support.

Below are the winners of the tournament.

Low gross team (-14 under par): Erick Liscio, Johnny Yun, Kaila Higgins, Nico Mendoza

2<sup>nd</sup> place team: Rev. Shumyo Kojima, Fumio Tanabe, Ben Takagi, Keiji Ukai

3<sup>rd</sup> place team: Nick Albert, Jeremy Yamamoto, Joel Yamamoto, Zack Balaban

Consolation (high gross): Lillian Nishihara, Linda Mizufuka, Kathy Taguchi, Dianne Ishida

Putting contest-Jimmy Puzon; Men's Accuracy Drive-Tony Quon; Women's Accuracy

Drive-Cheryl Teragawa; Men's Long Drive-Nico Mendoza; Women's Long Drive-Lisa

Nakasone; Men's Closest to the Pin-Ray Baysa; Women's Closest to the Pin-Joyce Nagatani

Congratulations to all of the winners!

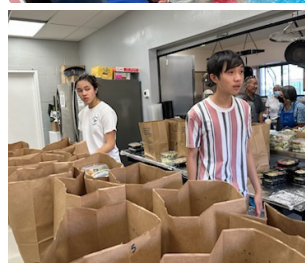
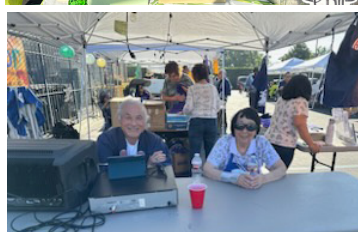
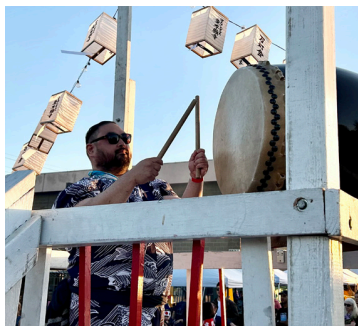
On behalf of the golf committee (*Yukiko Kovacs, Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Lillian Nishihara, Judy Takemura, Denise Underwood, Steve Underwood, and Roy Takemura-Chair*), thank you to all the participants, tee sponsors, raffle prize and snack items donors, and all the on-course volunteers. With your support the 26<sup>th</sup> Golf Classic was a tremendous success. We look forward to your continued support in WCBT's future tournaments.





# T H E G A T E W A Y

## 2023 Obon is Back!







# T H E G A T E W A Y

*OBON, con't from pg. 2*

father and what she has received from him throughout his life. This realization made her pay a visit to the temple.

There was a young couple who had two children. Their parents are temple members, and they grew up with Obon Festival. Now the young couple brings their children every year, and the whole family helps with the festival. Obon Festival always brings them fond memories, so they love to continue the tradition for their children. As parents who have young children, they have new ideas to attract young families. Their ideas could draw many more young people to our future Obons.

Amid this year's Obon Festival, I recalled my first experience of the Obon Festival in Los Angeles. The devotion and enthusiasm of members who worked so hard under the hot weather affected me deeply. I wondered what moved them to dedicate their time and effort to make our Obon such a success every year. It was during the pandemic when I reconsidered the spirit of the Obon Festival.

We took it for granted that our Obon Festival would continue year after year. Until COVID-19 forced us to close the temple, we never imagined that we would have to cancel our Obon Festival. These past three years were the time to reflect upon the meaning of the Obon Festival for each of us. It was also an opportunity to be aware of the spirit of the Obon Festival, which we all share within ourselves. The essence of this festival is a profound wish we have received from those who walked before us and a sense of

responsibility to hand it down to the generation to come. This awareness encouraged us to discuss "How to continue our Obon Festival?" instead of "Whether we keep this event or not."

Having an Obon Festival is a lot of work. Nevertheless, this festival has continued for more than fifty years. This proves that there were those in the past who put so much effort into this event. Our temple has so many people who listened to the teachings and received strength and positive energy through the teachings. Their hardwork and enthusiasm was an expression of their appreciation for the temple. At the same time, it is a profound aspiration to maintain this temple so that many people in the future could also receive the benefit.

Thanks to them, we are together as a Sangha at this temple. Having this temple as a place to listen to the teachings is a great benefit, and we all receive the benefit from those in the past. Through the Obon Festival, their wishes are delivered to us. I truly feel that we all realize that their wishes now become our own wishes and help us keep moving forward for the next generations.



(「お盆」9頁からの続き)

験した時、私自身がその活気に驚き、これほど大変な行事を毎年続けていく原動力は何なのだろう、と思ったものでした。

続いていくことが当たり前と思っていたお盆まつりは当たり前ではなかった、ということにコロナを通して気づかされました。それは先の人から受け継いだことを次の世代に引き継いでいきたいという内なる願いへの気づきだったと思います。だからこそ、お盆まつりを中止せざるを得なかった期間、私たちが話し合ったことは「お盆まつりを続けていけるか否か」ということではなく、「どのような形でお盆まつりを続けていくか」でした。お盆まつりの開催は大変な労力を必要とします。多くの人の力を借りなければ実現することは難しい行事です。その行事が私たちにまで届けられているということは、多くの方がこの行事を大切なこととしていただき、それを私たちにまで届けたいと願ってくださった、ということではないでしょうか。お盆は先人の生き方を通してその声を聞く時間です。その声に耳を傾ける時、私たちもまた大切なことをいただいている身であることに気づきます。その大切なこととは何なのか、人生を通してそのことを尋ねていくのが聞法の歩みであり、その場を開き続けていくのが聞法道場としてのお寺の役割ではないか、と感じます。

お盆まつりの形は時代や人々に合わせて変わっていくことでしょう。けれどもお盆まつりを通して受け取った願いは、今を生きる私たちの願いとなり常にその原動力となっています。そしてそれは次の世代の人々に手渡され、その人たちの力となっていくのだと思います。受け継がれていく願いが世代を超えた人々のつながりとなっていく、そのことを改めて感じた今年のお盆まつりでした。



T H E G A T E W A Y

WEST COVINA  
Higashi Honganji  
BUDDHIST TEMPLE

July 7, 2023

Dear Members and Friends,

The West Covina Buddhist Temple and its Board of Directors cordially invites you to attend the Obon and Hatsubon Service which will be held on Sunday afternoon, July 16, 2023 with both in-person and Zoom. This is a combined memorial service not only for those members who specifically have lost a loved one in the previous 12 months (Hatsubon means "first Obon service"), but also a universal memorial service for all our loved ones who have passed on.

The schedule for the service is as follows:

Date: Sunday, July 16, 2023  
Time: 4:30 PM  
Dharma Message: Rev. Patti Usuki (English)

Following are the Meeting ID and Passcode for joining the service via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 833 3999 6824

Passcode: 259907

Toban A will serve Otoki to take home after the service. Please let Rev. Miyoshi know if you are planning to attend the service in-person.

The Obon Service is held to remember our ancestors and to celebrate our life and is one of the most important observances of the year. Please join and gather again this year to resolve to deepen our understanding of Buddhism.

Gassho,

Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi, Minister

Mr. John Martinez, President of the Board of Directors



# T H E G A T E W A Y



(C) Art. Kaedo





# T H E G A T E W A Y

## お盆まつり 見義信香

去る6月24日(土)にお盆まつりが開催され、大盛況のうちに終わることができました。コロナ後初めてとなる今年のお盆まつりは例年よりも規模を縮小して行われましたが、それでも私たちのお寺がお盆まつりシーズンの先陣を切っていたこともあり、再開を心待ちにしていたたくさんの方々が足を運んでくださいました。参加してくださった方々、準備や当日の開催、そして後片付けまでご尽力くださった方々など多くのお力を借りて滞りなくこの大切なイベントを遂行することができました。この場をお借りして皆さまには深く感謝申し上げます。

ご存知のようにアメリカでは浄土

真宗のお寺を筆頭として日系のお寺の多くで6月末から8月上旬までの期間にお盆まつりが開催され、それは夏の風物詩となっています。日本では一寺院が夏祭りのようなイベントを主催することはあまりないので、私の両親をはじめ日本から来た多くの方には大変驚かれます。またお盆まつりのハイライトである盆踊りでは毎年10曲近くの曲に合わせて踊ること、そのため一ヶ月前からは練習会も開かれること、などもアメリカのお盆まつりならではのようです。

お手伝いには大変多くの方が今年は特に駆けつけてくださいました。私たちのお寺はメンバー数が約75名という小さなお寺ですが、お盆まつりの週末はそのメンバーの家族はもちろん、親類からお友達までが一緒になって働いてくださいます。キッチンの裏では小学生ぐらいの女の子が出来上がったチキン照り焼きのお弁

当を運んでくれていました。お寺にこれほどの笑顔やおしゃべりが溢れるのは本当に久しぶりのことで、人が集う場所としての本来のお寺の姿が戻ってきたように感じました。

また今年は参加された方々の思いに触れる機会もいただきました。

盆踊りの前に勤められる万灯会法要に参加された方の中に亡くなったお父様が熱心にお寺に通っておられた女性がいらっしゃいました。ご自身は特にお寺と関わりをもつことなく過ごしてきたが、子供や孫から仏教のことを聞かれて何も答えられなかった、とおっしゃっていました。その事実がお父様にとってお寺がどういう存在であったのかを考えるきっかけとなり、お寺に足を運ぶご縁となりました。

また小さなお子さんと一緒に毎年お手伝いに駆けつけてくださるご夫婦は、ご自身も小さな時から両親に連れられてお盆まつりを楽しんだ方々です。自分の子供にも楽しい思い出を作りたい、と「新しいお盆の形」のアイデアもたくさんおもちです。

初めてアメリカのお盆まつりを体

(「お盆」6頁に続く)

## お盆まつりのお礼

6月24日に開催されたお盆まつりは家族や友人と過ごす素晴らしい時間となりました。今年は規模を縮小しての開催となりましたが、それでも大盛況でした。お盆の意義を伝える万灯会法要や賑やかに行われた盆踊り、美味しい食べ物など、お盆まつりの雰囲気に戻ってきたようで多くの方に喜んでいただけました。また家族や友人と久しぶりにゆっくりと過ごす楽しい時間ともなりました。お盆まつりにお越しいただいた方、大きな成功に導いてくださった方々のご尽力に、この場をお借りして心から感謝申し上げます。特にメンバーの皆さんをはじめ、そのご家族やご友人には金曜日の準備から日曜日の後片付けに至るまでお力をお借りしました。皆さんのお手伝いのおかげで今年のお盆まつりを無事に終わることができました。来年も皆さまには楽しい思い出を作りたいと思っています。

ありがとうございました。

合掌  
お盆委員会委員長  
ウォン・ブルース

## お寺ニュース

### お盆 / 初盆法要

英語によるお盆 / 初盆法要は、7月16日(日) 午後4時半より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。ご講師には宇宿パティ師をお招きいたします。ご家族、ご友人お誘い合わせの上、是非お参り下さいますようお願い申し上げます。

### 法話会祥月法要

8月の祥月法要は8月3日(木)、9月の祥月法要は9月7日(木)にお勤めします。いずれも時間は午前10時です。

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

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## July

- 9 10:00 am Sunday Service-online
- 11 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 13 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 16 4:30 pm Obon/Hatsubon Service-hybrid
- 23 10:00 am Sunday Service-hybrid
- 25 6:00 pm Study Class-online
- 27 10:00 am Discussion Class-online
- 30 10:00 am Sunday Service-hybrid

## August

- 1 7:00 pm Board Meeting-online
- 3 10:00 am Howakai Japanese Service
- 6 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-hybrid
- 13 No Sunday Service
- 20 No Sunday Service
- 27 No Sunday Service

## September

- 3 10:00 am Shotsuki Service-hybrid

## 2023年7月行事予定

- 9日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーオンライン
- 16日 午後4時半 お盆／初盆法要  
ーハイブリッド
- 23日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーハイブリッド
- 30日 午前10時 日曜礼拝ーハイブリッド

## 8月行事予定

- 1日 午後7時 理事会ーオンライン
- 3日 午前10時 法話会
- 6日 午前10時 祥月法要ーハイブリッド
- 13日 日曜礼拝お休み
- 20日 日曜礼拝お休み
- 27日 日曜礼拝お休み

日曜礼拝は9月3日（日）の祥月法要より再開します。

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再び通らぬ 一度きりの  
尊き道を いま歩いている

榎本栄一