

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

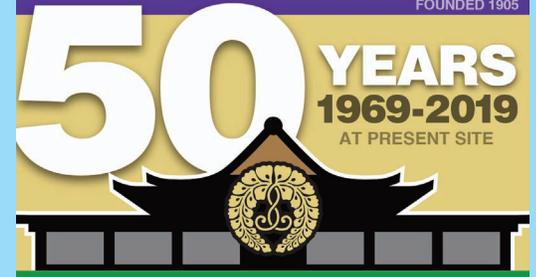
No. 455

July-August 2019

jihō

WWW

LOS ANGELES HOMPA HONGWANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE
FOUNDED 1905



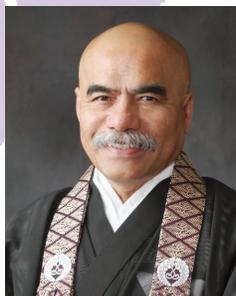
RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON BETSUIN AT FIRST AND VIGNES

"It would be impossible for a child to repay their parents for their gracious kindness, even if they could carry their father on their right shoulder and their mother on their left for one hundred long years.

And even if they could bathe the bodies of their parents in sweet-smelling ointments for a hundred years, serve as an ideal child, gain a throne for them, and give them all the luxuries of the world, still they could not be able to repay them sufficiently for the great indebtedness of gratitude they own to them."

—Teaching of the Buddha



RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES

The year was 1969 when the first man stepped foot on the moon, the Beatles played for the last time on the roof of Apple Records, over 400,000 people gathered in Woodstock for "Three Days of Peace and Music" and approximately 2,000 people gathered at the corner of

1st Street and Vignes to attend the dedication of the new Los Angeles Hampa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. A traditional *chigo* parade made its way from the old Betsuin on 1st and Central to the new site at 815 E. First St. And there **Gomonshu Kosho Ohtani** officiated the Dedication and Confirmation Service.

It's hard to believe that within a few months, after five years of fundraising and planning, our Betsuin members and friends will be celebrating the Betsuin's 50th Anniversary of being at the present site. All the various committees have been working diligently on the 50th celebration so that we may have successful and joyous celebration. And since we initiated the 50th Anniversary committee, we've completed numerous remodeling project such as the restoration of the onaijin, improved the air conditioning system in our kaikan, replaced HVAC in all upstairs and downstairs rooms and several other much needed repairs around our temple.

However, in all our busy-ness and anticipation of our celebration we should not forget why and how this was made possible. The Betsuin 50th Anniversary project is truly a testimony to our Betsuin pioneers, whose intent was to establish a firm Jodo Shinshu foundation here in the Los Angeles area. It is through the hard work, dedication and sacrifice of our past members of the Betsuin ... be it our grandparents, parents, relatives or friends that we are able to realize Betsuin's 50 years at the present site.

The reading I began with is from the *Teaching of Buddha*. Though it may sound rather embellished I think it poetically tells that we, chil-

(continued on page 5)

Los Angeles
Hampa Hongwanji
Buddhist Temple
815 East First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

TEL: 213.680.9130
FAX: 213.680.2210

WEB: nishihongwanji-la.org

EMAIL: info@nishihongwanji-la.org



JULY 13 & 14
Carnival & Bon Odori

Detailed information can be found on page 10

50TH ANNIVERSARY AT THE CURRENT SITE

by Rev. Koho Takata



REV. KOHO TAKATA

Over five years ago, at the General Membership Meeting held on November 10, 2013, our temple for a resolution was announced to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple at its current site in 2019. Soon afterwards, the core committee for the anniversary was established and its first meeting was

held on February 21, 2014.

In 1969, the LA Betsuin moved from the First Street and Central Avenue location to its present site and new temple. As seen through various announcements of 50th anniversary service and related events from temple newsletter, preparations are being made to welcome **Monshu Kojun Ohtani**, the resident minister of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha in Kyoto, Japan. He will visit the Betsuin to commemorate the anniversary event. The Monshu is a direct descendant of Shinran Shonin, founder of Jodo Shinshu tradition, and has assumed the responsibilities of the 25th Monshu as the Spiritual Leader of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha.

50 years ago, in 1969, the Dedication Ceremony for the installation of present altar and completion of the construction of present temple building was officiated by former **Monshu Kosho Ohtani**, grandfather of present Monshu. There were many dedicated members who made tremendous financial sacrifices to engage in their strong commitment to hand down the essential teaching of nembutsu to the generations to come and spread the Buddha-dharma to all by constructing the temple. Many of them have since passed but their founding spirit of the propagation of the Buddha-Dharma is still alive today within our sangha and temple.

Shinran Shonin quoted the following passage into the postscript of his major work called *"The True Teaching, Practice, and Realization of the Pure Land Way."*

"I have collected true words to aid others in their practice for attaining birth, in order that the process be made continuous, without end and without interruption, by which those who have been born first guide those who come later, and those who are born later join those who were born before. This is so that the boundless ocean of birth-and-death be exhausted."

(CWS P.291)

While in Japan, I often heard that voices of our loved ones

who recited nembutsu and lived in the nembutsu with joy and happiness are penetrating into altar ornaments and ceiling, floor, and walls of the hondo and temple building. The voices keep calling us to listen to the voice of the nembutsu. The dedicated members who already passed away and became Buddha of Infinite Light and Life, Boundless Wisdom and Compassion is proactively guiding us to the temple hondo to listen to the Teaching of Primal Vow of Amida Buddha.

If we look at our altar, we can see many ornaments which represent the working of Amida Buddha's resolution, Primal Vow in a tangible form. Amida Buddha is colorless and formless as well as the Pure Land like wireless internet. For those who cannot see the perfection of the true reality by our inner eyes which are always covered by our ego, attachment, and self-centered nature such as me, Amida Buddha manifests the Universal Truth of Oneness in a form of body as the most compassionate, wise, and noble figure and also in a form of space and time which is our temple altar, as the world of Infinite Light and Life.

It is my wish that each and every one of us becomes mindful of the intentions and fulfillment of Amida Buddha's resolution, Hongan or Primal Vow and live a fulfilled life in the Nembutsu. I also hope all of us to join in the commemoration events for our 50th anniversary on September 7th and 8th to realize and renew the true intent of establishment of our temple, LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, which is primarily a place for listening to the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha.

L.A. BETSUIN BOOK CENTER



**OBUTSUDAN
BUDDHIST BOOKS
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
NENJU • CANDLES •
INCENSE...**

NENJU REPAIR



**SUNDAY: 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
WEEKDAYS - BETSUIN OFFICE PERSONNEL WILL
ASSIST WITH PURCHASES**

VISITING LOVED ONES' GRAVES

by Rev. Kazuaki Nakata



REV. KAZ

Hi everyone! The Obon season is coming closer! For this 2019 Nishi Obon, you will see a new food booth. It will be called *Takoyaki Booth*. Do you know what takoyaki means? *Tako* is octopus and *yaki* is baked. It looks like a baked pancake ball and a chopped octopus is in it. At the Nishi Girl Scouts parents' meeting, I cooked takoyaki and

served it to the parents for tasting. There were many positive comments so I've decided to give it try. When you see my takoyaki booth, please come and taste it. If you don't like it, I will refund to you!

The Nishi Betsuin Jiho newsletter is published bi-monthly and I usually need to submit my article two months prior to the upcoming issue. I've just completed the Memorial Day weekend special services at the cemeteries. I have been responsible for conducting services at the Rose Hills Memorial Park and the Olivewood Memorial Park for last 5-6 years. Those who go to Rose Hills are regular Nishi attendees, and I often see them at Nishi. On the other hand, I only see people who come to the Olivewood once a year during the Memorial Day weekend service. The memorial park is located in Riverside County, and it takes about an hour from Nishi after driving on four different free-ways. There are three graveside services. One is for everyone and other two are for individual big families. The first service starts at 10 am. I usually leave LA around 8:30 am to make sure I have enough time to get there for services. When I arrive early, I have plenty time to talk with people. Some people come early to visit their family graves. While I had conversations with them, I noticed that most of them see each other once a year. When we get old enough, we do not recognize how much we are aging every year. But for babies, their appearances change every year when they see each other in the Memorial Day weekend. People say such things as, "Oh! he is already walking. He was a newborn baby, when last time I saw him!"

Four years ago, I talked about, "Every encounter is once in a lifetime opportunity, *Ichigo-Ichie*" as my talk at the Olivewood. I said, "We assume we always meet each other every year here at the Olivewood, and we say see you next year after the service. But who can guarantee we see again? We lost one family member last year. I remember that last year we said to him see you next year. But he was not able to come and join us today. Next year, one of us may not able to come here..." I suggested that they

take a group photo every year so now it has become an annual thing. Some of their graves are only engraved in Japanese. I assume the English engraving was not necessary in back then. I noticed that some of gravestones at the Evergreen Cemetery are same format as the Olivewood ones. I helped family to recognize who they are on these gravestones. When I read a Japanese kanji name on a gravestone, a gentleman said, "Oh,! That is my grandpa's brother. He died in young." For many years, the family did not recognize whose gravestone is next to their grandparents' because they did not tell their children about it. Now grandchildren know their grand uncle's grave there even they did not have a chance to know him while he was alive. A cemetery is a place where we can meet our unknown ancestors and our elders can tell who they are and how they relate to younger generations, so that the younger generations can seek their roots, and they can more appreciate their lives through these newly recognized ancestors. I believe that a cemetery visit gives us an opportunity to re-think the meaning of our life, and you may find "long-time no-see relatives" at cemeteries.

Again, Obon is coming closer. Obon is a Buddhist observance to show our appreciation to our loved ones who passed away, and it is a time for Buddhists to visit their family grave. Your life has been supported by numerous beings since before you are born. I hope many of you will visit your family graves and gain the sense of appreciation to yourself from them. Your appreciation to your loved one will reflect to you. *Gassho*

BETSUIN VEHICLE DONATION



HAROLD'S CAR DONATION SERVICE

Donate any vehicle:
car, truck, motorcycle, or boat

The vehicle need not be operational.

Funds received will go to the Betsuin general fund and donors can get full amount credit towards income tax.

OBON DHARMA SERVICE

by Rev. Koho Takata

The annual Hatsubon (First Obon) Service for those who passed away from last Obon until today is scheduled for **Saturday, July 6, 2019 at 10:00am and 1:00pm.**

The annual Obon service is scheduled for Sunday, July 21, 2019, with guest speaker, the **Rev. George Matsubayashi** of Former Rimban of LA Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple for English and Japanese Service, guiding us through this reflective time.

We also schedule to observe Obon Service at **Evergreen Cemetery at 9:00 am** and at the **temple columbarium (Nokotsudo or Muryo Koju do) at 11:30 am** on the same day with our annual Obon Service at temple, **Sunday, July 21st.**

The term Bon is an abbreviation of a Japanese Buddhist term "*Urabon*," which is derived from the Sanskrit term "*Ullumbana*." "*Ullumbana*" means to be liberated from a spiritual state of pain and hunger caused by greediness, one of three blind desires.

Even as we reflect on the sorrowful consequence of basic human defilement, we, as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, joyfully reflect on the Primal Vow Power of Amida Buddha which has been fulfilled, thus enabling us to live in gratitude. The Bon Service is called the "Gathering of Joy" in Jodo Shinshu tradition, instead of being merely called a "Memorial Service."

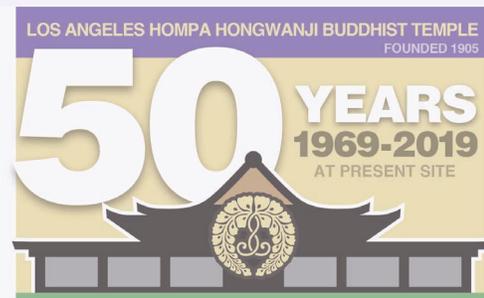


Rev. George Matsubayashi

(Rimban - continued from page 1)

dren, are unable to truly repay our parents. Try as we may ... "*bathe their bodies in sweet-smelling ointments for a hundred years, serve as an ideal child, gain a throne for them, or give them all the luxuries we can never repay them in true gratitude*".

Literally, many of us could never repay our parents. Throughout all these years, our parent's have given unselfishly. Their love seems so unconditional. Our parents undergo many sacrifices for their children without asking for special favors from their children. As you reflect upon your own parents, I'm sure you can agree with me that we could never truly repay our mothers and fathers in true gratitude.



However Buddha continues in this reading ... "*but if we lead our parents to Buddha and explain the Buddha's teachings to them... then we will be more than repaying them.*"

My understanding of this is that we can repay our parents, we can repay our Betsuin pioneers, if we continue to spread the teaching of the Buddha-dharma. Of course one way to accomplish this is if we continue to maintain our temples so that Buddha's teachings will continue to be available to anyone who wishes to listen.

The restoration of the onaijin, and the many projects that have completed is precisely what you, the Betsuin members are doing. You are continuing to maintain the Betsuin so that Shinran Shonin's teachings can be heard, not just for this generations, but for generations to come.

As we become more aware of the inconceivable causes and conditions of the 114 year long history of Nishi Betsuin, we are able to inwardly realize the wisdom and compassion of Amida Buddha and outwardly live with gratitude for the life made possible for us not only by the Issei pioneers but to the Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei and to the entire community.

It is the responsibility of this generation to keep the light of Buddha-Dharma shining not only for ourselves but for the next generation and for generations to come. In this way, we may truly repay our parents, our grandparents and the innumerable lives that made our life possible.

Namo Amida Butsu

**How happy and grateful am I
for being awakened by
the six-syllables!
While saying the name,
I pick red coffee berries.**

— Jutaro Oshima b. 1886 Jpn
Kona, HI

Oshima was nicknamed "*Namo Amida Butsu-Man*" by his Filipino neighbor because he was constantly reciting the nembutsu.

DID YOU KNOW?

by Eiko Masuyama



Collage: Nishi BWA In Action, Throughout The Years (by Elaine Fukumoto)
ARIGATO, OBAACHAN/THANK YOU, GRANDMOTHER/ありがとう おばあちゃん



**BCA 2019 Calendar, ARIGATO OBAACHAN
 Buddhist Women and the
 Buddhist Churches of America**

“Since 1900, Buddhist women have played an important and integral part in the propagation of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism with the Buddhist Churches of America. Through their sacrifice, hard work, dedication, generosity, and pursuit of the Buddha Dharma, they have shown and continue to show us all how to “Live the Nembutsu”. Through this year’s BCA Calendar, we honor and say thank you to our grandmothers, mothers, aunties, and other female rela-

tives who have guided us to a deeper understanding of Shinran Shonin’s Nembutsu teaching. The BCA Federation of Buddhist Women’s Association is honored to host the 16th World Buddhist Women’s Convention in San Francisco, California on August 30 – September 1, 2019 at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis.”

**Message: Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop,
 Buddhist Churches of America**

“...For the Buddhist Churches of America, the Buddhist Women’s Association played a very big role in its growth. Issei and Nisei women were really strong, yet warm

(continued on page 7)

(Did You Know? - continued from page 6)



2019 BCA Calendar Page

hearted. I firmly believe that they were able to live through their difficult lives because of their churches and temples, friends, and the Nembutsu teaching.

...It is entirely appropriate for us to dedicate this year especially to those ladies who have helped all of us, directly or indirectly, to encounter the Nembutsu teaching. Please look at the photos of our Obaachans

and reminisce in the past history of our churches and temples. At the same time, let us remember their dedication and their contributions.

Arigato Obaachan. Thank you Grandmother."

Message: Richard A. Stambul, President, Buddhist Churches of America

"...120 years ago, the Buddhist Church of Americas (BCA) and its predecessors came into being. Only a few months following the arrival of our first kaikyoshi on American shores in 1899, the first Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) was established. Thanks to that confluence of events, BCA has prospered to become the oldest and largest Buddhist organization in the United States.

We therefore join together in 2019, deeply grateful for the support, wisdom, and guidance provided by all women of the BWA. All of us unite together in a shared wish: that BWA and BCA continue to provide a foundation for the propagation of Shin Buddhism in America"

The 2019 BCA Calendar, month of August (seen above), shows our Nishi BWA (Fujinkai ladies with Rimban Kow: Hideko Harada, Masano Fujihiro, Kayo Mihara, Toki Aratani, ?, Mrs. Kijima, Horino, and Hiroshima, and Yo Umekubo) in 1947 decorated Obon booth ready to sell o-sushi and watermelon with a smile, supported, in the kitchens and at home, by many, many ladies and okusans!

... Arigato, Obaachan (seen and unseen)!

* * * * *

**Reported in SANGHA, LOS ANGELES YBA, August 10, 1947 issue
"YBA Obon Carnival Attracts Capacity Crowd of 10,000"**

The first post-war two-day Obon Carnival, sponsored by the Los Angeles YBA on July 19 and 20, attracted approximately 10,000 people who jam-packed the spacious

Kudow's Parking Lot adjacent to the Nishi Hongwanji Temple.

Twenty-five booths, with responsibilities delegated to various groups of the Buddhist Church, were artistically decorated in individual color schemes. The organizations represented were Fujinkai, West Los Angeles YBA, Sen-shin YBA and the Jr. and Sr. YBAs.

It has been reported by downtown businessmen that their business soared to an all-time post-war peak during the carnival weekend.

On behalf of the carnival committee members and YBA, Dr. Ryo Munekata, Bill Kitayama, and Sam Kuratomi, carnival chairmen, expressed their sincere gratitude to the public for its kind patronage and all who contributed wholeheartedly towards the success of the affair.

Financial chairmen, June Tokuyama and Frank Suyenaga, have reported a gross income of about \$2,000.

Because of the favorable public response and pecuniary success, the YBA contemplates instituting this activity as an annual YBA function.

"Amy Around Town"

...What's a carnival without some refreshing food? There were plenty of it when the local Fujinkai with chairmen Mrs. Aratani and Mrs. Tamari, went all-out and served ice-cold watermelon (500 lbs.!), Tokoro-ten* and o-sushi. They, incidentally, toasted the best decorated booth with paper lanterns and all the trimmings...

*Japanese cuisine made from seaweed (tengusa, ogo-nori), boiled, pressed, and shaped into noodles, eaten as hot or cold snack or dessert

* * * * *

Thank you to the **Munekata Family** for the donation of Buddhist and cultural books, and altar items.

**BOY SCOUT TROOP 738
50TH ANNIVERSARY**

by Cindy Tomita

All current and former Nishi Boy Scouts and their families are invited to celebrate the 50th anniversary of troop 738 to be held on August 18 in the kaikan.

For further information please contact Nishi Boy Scouts at: nishiscouts@gmail.com



BETSUIN PHOTOS

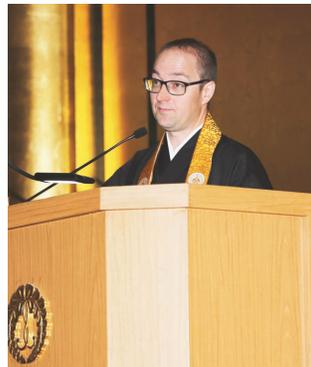


HATSUMAIRI PARTICIPANTS AND EXTENDED FAMILIES

Participants were (in alphabetical order): Steve & Kristen Gani and son, Ace Kenzo; Michael Kondo & Tzulin Lee and daughter, Elise Mitsuko ; Grant & Hayley Saita and daughter, Aurelia Aki ; Trevor & Leanne Silverthorne and son, Otis Kohei ; and Ted & Amy Tsugawa and daughter, Emi Jen



The BWA celebrated Rim-ban Briones' 70th birthday with an awesome cake and champagne.



Rev. Henry Adams served as guest speaker at the Gotanye/Hatsumairi Service.



Scouts from the Nishi Scout Troop 738 deftly flip pancakes at their annual fundraising Pancake Breakfast on Mothers' Day.

BETSUIN PHOTOS



5th Annual 50th Anniversary Dance

top left: Rimban Briones is front and center flanked by the Nishi ABA members dancing in celebration of the final 50th Anniversary Fundraising Dance. Music was provided by the popular Kokoro Band. top right: Toru Nagao giving dance lessons to those who wanted to learn new moves. bottom left: Christina & William Safranek in the background & Dennis & Barbara Okita in the foreground. middle: Jean Kawakami, Harumi Hatakeyama, & Junie Obi. right: Rimban Briones with wife, Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi



Nishi Center Activities

left: Students observe Gotanye by bringing flowers for the statue and singing "Happy Birthday." above: The Kindergarten class' annual Momotaro play as part of the Japanese class that is held weekly. The play is put on in both Japanese and English. Insert: Momotaro in the boat with the dog, monkey, & pheasant.

SO. DISTRICT OBON ODORI SCHEDULE

July 13

Oxnard 6:00 (Saturday Only)

July 13 & 14

L.A. BETSUIN 7:00 / 6:00

July 20 & 21

Orange County 7:00/7:00
 Pasadena 6:30/6:30
 Santa Barbara 4:00 (Saturday Only)
 Venice 7:00/7:00

July 27 & 28

Vista 6:30/6:30
 West Los Angeles 6:30/6:30
 San Diego (@ Temple) 6:30 (Sunday only)
 Higashi 6:30/6:30

August 3

San Diego (@ Balboa Park) 6:30
 Las Vegas 12:45

August 10 & 11

Gardena 6:00/6:00



OBON PROGRAM SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

CARNIVAL 3⁰⁰ - 10⁰⁰
BON ODORI 7⁰⁰ - 9⁰⁰
BINGO 4⁰⁰ - 10⁰⁰
DEMONSTRATIONS
 Tea 2⁰⁰ - 4⁰⁰
CULTURAL DISPLAYS
 2⁰⁰ - 6⁰⁰
STAGE PERFORMANCES
 Nishi Center @ 3⁰⁰
 Ho' Aloha Polynesian
 Dancers @ 3⁴⁰
 Meet & Greet @ 4³⁰
 ABASonics @ 4⁵⁵
 Taiko Ichiza & Kizuna Taiko
 @ 5³⁵
 Dance to Kokoro
 @ 9⁰⁰ - 10⁰⁰

SUNDAY

CARNIVAL 3⁰⁰ - 9⁰⁰
BON ODORI 6⁰⁰ - 8⁰⁰
BINGO 4⁰⁰ - 8³⁰
DEMONSTRATIONS
 Tea 2⁰⁰ - 4⁰⁰
CULTURAL DISPLAYS
 2⁰⁰ - 6⁰⁰
STAGE PERFORMANCES
 Nishi Center @ 3⁰⁰
 ABASonics @ 3⁴⁰
 Matsutoyo Kai @ 4³⁰
 Taiko Ichiza @ 5⁰⁰
RAFFLE DRAWING @ 8³⁰



IN MEMORIAM

The *Nishi Betsuin* extends its deepest condolences to the families of the following members who have recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the *Nembutsu*.

--*Namo Amida Butsu*

March, 2019

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 14 Betty Hideko Fujii | 17 Tsutomu Ota |
| 18 Satoshi Uota | 20 Hidetaka Yonemitsu |
| 20 Yoshi Fukubayashi | 22 Haruko Rose Tademaru |
| 30 Bennett Takao Mori | 23 Lydia Miyako Takeshita |
| | 25 Hisao Hamanaka |
| | 29 Takeshi Arthur Omoto |

April, 2019

- 12 Taeko Virginia Oto
 15 Frances Asaco
 Sasajima

May, 2019

- 12 Emiko Sakamoto

OBON DANCE PRACTICEFI



July 2, 9,
11 @ Sakura Gardens @ 6:00 - 7:00 pm
 325 S Boyle Ave 90033

July 27 @ Kei-Ai @ 1:45 - 2:30 pm
 2221 Lincoln Park Ave 90031

Betsuin Jiho

Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones

English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto

Photos: Koichi Sayano and Glen Tao

ATOMIC BOMB VICTIMS MEMORIAL SERVICE



*“May there be peace in the world and
may the Buddha Dharma spread”*

– Shinran Shonin

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sunday, August 4, 2019 @ 10:00 am

English: Rev. Koho Takata
Japanese: Rev. Kazuaki Nakata

Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

JULY 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Independence Day Temple Closed	5	6 Hatsubon Service 10 am
7 Regular Service 10 am Eitaiyo Shotsuki Service 1:00 pm	8	9	10	11	12	13 OBON 3:00-10:00 
14 OBON 3:00-9:00 	15	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm	17	18	19	20
21 Obon Services 9 am @ Evergreen Cemetary 10 am @ Betsuin 11:30 @ Nokotsudo	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Family Service 10 am	29	30	31			

AUGUST 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Memorial Service 10:00 am	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Regular Service 10 am Eitaiyo Shotsuki Hoyo 1 pm	12	13	14	15	16 Go-Meinichi-ko 1:30 pm	17
18 Family Service 10:00 am	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Family Service 10:00 am	26	27	28	29	30	31 BWA WORLD CONVENTION @ SAN FRANCISCO 1st