

LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

jihō

WWW

No. 476

January-February 2023

NEW YEAR'S GREETING



KOJUN OHTANI, MONSHU

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

In view of the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022, as Nembutsu followers who have deeply inscribed in our hearts and minds Shinran Shonin's message of "May there be peace in the world," we firmly stand against the military infringement of the other nation's sovereignty, and also aspire for immediate return of peace in Ukraine.

Over the last year, COVID-19 continues to be a global pandemic. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who fell victim to the disease and express my sympathies

to those who are undergoing treatment. I would also like to express my respect and sincere gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and other frontline medical professionals who have been engaging in the treatment of infected people, as well as all essential workers who have made it possible for us to continue with our lives.

The pandemic has forced us to learn firsthand that we will continue to be confronted by unexpected situations even in modern times despite technologies both in science and medical fields being highly developed. Sakyamuni Buddha, who passed on the Dharma to us, made clear that there is no life nor entity in this world that lasts forever. This truth, the principle of impermanence, has never changed even in this time and age approximately 2500 years since his time. Another fact that does not change is our inability to accept this truth as it is, and because of this, we continue struggling.

This is the very reason why, regardless of the pandemic, we can rely on the Jodo Shinshu teaching clarified by Shinran Shonin, which guides us as a spiritual foundation that enables us to move forward even when being overwhelmed with difficulties. A gathering at the temple with Amida Buddha as its center provides a great opportunity to receive the Dharma as well as an occasion in which people can support and reassure one another as fellow practitioners who follow the same teaching.

I hope you will continue to share the teaching within the greater society through various

(continued on page 2)

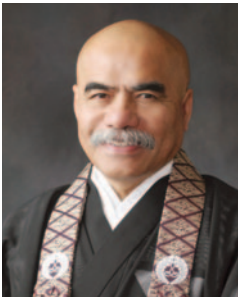
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RIMBAN'S MESSAGE

THOUGHTS ON THE PAST THREE YEARS

**RIMBAN
WILLIAM BRIONES**

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates vision for tomorrow.”

It's hard to believe that after three years of dealing with COVID, the County of Los Angeles is experiencing yet another increase of COVID cases and hospitalizations. So please if you have not yet received the new COVID-19 bivalent booster, please do so.

When we closed our doors in March of 2020, we faced a number of challenges. A major concern was our ability to sustain the temple financially. Without our major fundraisers, especially Obon, funerals, memorial services, we feared a significant impact on our finances.

Fortunately, an outpouring of generous donations from our temple members and friends, the reopening of our parking facilities as well as our first ever Obon Drive Thru, BWA Silent Auction, Salmon Bowl fundraisers, we were able to sustain the daily operation and maintenance of the temple.

As I reflect on our accomplishments during these past three years in spite of the Coronavirus pandemic, I am truly grateful for all the support and enthusiasm that Betsuin has received from our members and friends. We have much for which we should be grateful. As 2022 comes to a close, let us pause and take measure of the sources of gratitude in our lives, to reflect upon them.

I look forward to another rewarding and meaningful year. To come to Betsuin and be in the company of dharma friends and sharing their fellowship is a wonderful experience. And though our fundraising and temple activities are a very important aspect of temple survival, least we not forget the importance of our spiritual growth and understanding of the nembutsu. Let us reflect and be mindful of those innumerable causes and conditions that brought us to this New Year. To recognize and be totally aware of the causes and conditions that surround us will result in experiencing the transforming power of gratitude and appreciation. This is the basis of the truth reality with which Jodo Shinshu is concerned.

As the year comes to a close, my heartfelt gratitude to all

our members, affiliate organizations, friends of the Betsuin for all your time and support. Many thanks to our Betsuin staff and our volunteers. My deepest appreciation to the board of directors and komon for their guidance and patience during this time. And of course, to Rev. Hibiki Murakami for his tireless devotion and commitment to keep the nembutsu teachings central within our temple activities.

As the year 2022 comes to a close, I would like to wish you and your family a very meaningful and fulfilling 2023. To continue to be able to share the nembutsu teaching under during these challenging time, with you has been a truly meaningful experience for me.

To be sure 2023 bring many more challenges and changes as we transition out of this pandemic. Changes within our temple as well in our own lives. The change may bring encouragement or discouragement, it may create happiness or unhappiness, it may give us joy or anxiety, it may open doors or it may close them. In any case change is change. It is reality.

May gratitude and appreciation enter your life through your understanding of the nembutsu teachings.

Namo Amida Butsu



(GOMONSHU - continued from page 1)

ways and your temple will or continue to serve as a place where people can gather and find comfort in its activities. I humbly ask for your understanding and cooperation in support of your temples. I would like to conclude my new year's greeting with my heartfelt appreciation to you all.

January 1, 2023

OHTANI Kojun

Monshu

Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

THE DARKENED HEART BRIGHTENED BY THE LIGHT

by Rev. Hibiki Murakami



REV. HIBIKI
MURAKAMI

Last autumn, one of our dharma school teachers recommended an animated series to watch on Netflix. According to her, a former Nishi Betsuin dharma school student was one of the executive producers and voices of three characters. She wanted to use his anime for her class if the story was appropriate for the dharma school kids. By her request, I started watching the Netflix series, “ONI:

Thunder God’s Tale.”

The storyline goes like this. On a sacred mountain, kami, who are Japanese gods and spirits, live in a village. Naridon is a good father, but he is mysterious. His daughter, Onari, is a courageous girl who wants to become a great hero. She goes to school to find and learn her hidden power to defeat, with her classmates, evil spirits, who are called oni. Every hundred years, their village faces the oni’s attack. The oni is getting closer and closer, and eventually, fear overwhelms the kami of the village. Onari and Naridon will face the truth about their secrets through the oni’s attack.

After watching the series, I was impressed by the amazing and colorful visuals. For these reasons, it deserves to be watched. Since the story is based on Japanese culture, “Oni” would be good anime to watch. I did, however, have to figure how it related to Shin Buddhism for dharma school.

I found a Japanese writer’s article explaining well the theme of Oni. Oni is said to be the darkness of fear. The contrast of brightness and darkness stands out visually throughout the Oni series. It seems to indicate the theme: What is oni? How does Onari push back the oni? How does she overcome the oni when their village is breached? I thought the way she found it can be a good message to our dharma school students.

We ask ourselves the same question that Onari faced, “How can we overcome the darkness of fear?” Suppose you are devastated when your way doesn’t work well. It may make a dark spot in your mind. Gradually, the dark spot spreads outwardly and eventually penetrates the surface of your heart. When you’re overwhelmed by the darkness, you might be jealous of someone else’s success or you could feel anger. You might even wish to drag down someone else. In the darkness, literally, the heart is strongly pulled by negative emotions of fear. Furthermore, these emotions are passed on from person to person and

eventually, everything in sight could be covered with darkness. In such a situation, the it is the ray of light that keeps the person from falling into this abyss of darkness would be your belief or something that you can truly rely on.

It reminds me of the first chapter of Tannisho:

Amida Buddha proclaimed never to abandon us. This is the ray of light that prevents you from falling into the abyss of darkness. The fact that we are wished by Amida’s active compassion illuminates the darkness. The light of compassion always shines around us. We need not to see only the dark spot. Once awareness illuminates all, even the dark spots, created by us, can be embraced by the universe of the Primal Vow.



“Oni: Thunder God’s Tale”

Note: Robert Kondo is the former dharma school student mentioned in Rev. Murakami’s article. Robert is the son of Betsuin members, Roy and Jean Kondo.



2023 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Valid from January 1 through December 31, 2023

\$250 FOR EACH ADULT FAMILY MEMBER

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throughout the year of **2023**

BETSUIN PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



PAM TABATA

Happy Year of the Rabbit! I hope you and your families are healthy and safe. The temple continues to have in-person services and the fundraisers will be in-person with continued drive-thru. I am specifically speaking of Surf & Turf, March 4, and Obon, July 8 and 9. Both will be different because of the change in dynamics of the temple. As you get the information

regarding these events, please be sure to read it since it will not take place as it was previously and as you may have remembered.

In the November-December Jiho, I misstated. *Ingo* has nothing to do with any memorial services. If your loved ones received a Buddhist name (*homyo*), they are acknowledged with the daily, monthly or annual memorial services whether the family is just attending or scheduling. If your loved ones have a Buddhist funeral, they received *homyo*. Since Buddhism is the only religion that has memorial services, I feel it is a thoughtful way to bring family and friends together and these services are important. As the third generation to attend this temple, I have been very lucky to have known many of its members. Now, as the president, I am very grateful to be able to attend these many services. As names are called, I think about the impact that their influence has placed on my life. Rimban often speaks of *ichi-go ichi-e* – “A once in a Lifetime Encounter.” Each time we meet, it’s never the same and I am very grateful. I am only me because of the influences of everyone I have encountered and I am forever grateful for all those encounters. Please accept my apology for any confusion that I may have created and if you’re still confused, you can always ask the ministers.

Have a Happy New Year and I hope we encounter one another soon.

In *gassho*



REV HIROSHI JOKAI ABIKO 1941 - 2022

Rev. Hiroshi Jokai Abiko, a BCA minister for 42 years, passed away on October 6th at the age of 81 at his home in San Francisco with his family present. The funeral was held on October 27th at the Buddhist Church of San Francisco.

Rev. Hiroshi Abiko was born in 1941 at the Japanese Hospital in Boyle Heights community in Los Angeles. He was born to parents Rev. Giko and Hiroko Abiko. His brother, Koki, was born there two years earlier.



**Rev. Hiroshi Jokai
Abiko**

At the time, the elder Rev. Abiko was serving as one of the several ministers at the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji. With the outbreak of the war, he was picked up by the FBI and sent to Santa Fe, New Mexico and the rest of the family was sent to Santa Anita and eventually to Jerome, Arkansas. Eventually, the family was transferred to Tule Lake and was later joined by the elder Rev. Abiko.

With the end of the war, the Abiko family returned to Japan, ending up at the Abiko home temple, Shokoji Temple in Shiga Prefecture. Over the following years, the fam-

(continued on page 8)



NISHI HONGWANJI MINISTERIAL FAMILIES, 1942

Photo taken in front of Betsuin Office, 119 No. Central Ave.

Front Row: (children) **Koki Abiko**, Yoshitaka Mohri, Seibi Okita, Kuniye Kow (Odama) Second Row: (children) Hiroshi Ohno, Reiko Mohri (Ishihara), Morio Kow, Takao Kow (adults) Rev. Newton Ishiura, Helen Mie Kow (Nishimura), Mrs. Kiyoka Ohno with (baby) Junko Ohno, Mrs. Myoko Hayashima, (baby) **Hiroshi Abiko** with **Mrs. Hiroko Abiko**, Mrs. Hanayo Mohri, Mrs. Chiyoko Okita, and Mrs. Asae Kow.

REMEMBERING AMY

by Jean Kawakami

What is it you remember most about **Amy Miyakawa**? She was 98 when she passed on September 8th so for those fortunate enough to have known her for decades and decades, the memories and stories may be endless. Was it her crinkled eyes and warm smile, or her hearty laugh? Or her beautiful penmanship? Microsoft could create a new font and call it Bachan Amy's Font, although they may not be able to do it justice. The name on your membership cards were beautifully penned, single handedly by Amy until 2021.



Amy Miyakawa

What about the 1960s? Do you remember how you spent your days 60 years ago? Amy's children remember vividly what they were doing on Sundays in the 1960s... waiting patiently for their okaasan Amy, to finish her volunteer office work so they could finally go home, long after the sangha had already left. We all wonder if anyone from the temple remembers exactly when Amy began volunteering. If so, we'd like to know.

There wasn't anything Amy could not do. Stenographer, past PTA president, BWA president, treasurer, Disneyland chaperone, bachan to everyone, and even a special guest on the King of Horror's talk show, the star of The Fly and House of Wax – Mr. Vincent Price himself! Can you imagine Amy wearing a kimono, showing Mr. Vincent Price how

to fold origami? Didn't think so.... That's why we included a photograph.

We've lost our dearest friend, a true pioneer, outstanding leader, our most knowledgeable historian, and the wisest, sincerest, gentlest, and most helpful volunteer. Although small in stature, she was a giant, and so many of us have been inspired by her. We hope that we too, will live long enough to make even half the difference that she has in everyone's lives. Her gratitude towards life was evident in her motto, "I'm still here!" So proclaim your stake in life, find your ikigai or purpose, and live every moment to the fullest. Amy would want that for all of us, and through us, she will continue to live on.

In *Gassho*



Amy Miyakawa showing Vincent Price how to fold origami

OUR SPECIAL HONDO

by Jean Kawakami

Happy New Year, everyone. As we begin the Year of the Rabbit with renewed and "hoppy" optimism, the BWA also prepares for their annual BWA Memorial Service on February 5, 2023 where we are given the opportunity to reflect on the lives of all of our BWA members who have passed since the last Kisaragi-ki Service in February 2022. As we go about our daily lives, there are moments when we realize just how much our loved ones and departed friends continue to influence us, days and years later. During Kisaragi-ki Service, our loved ones' photographs will be displayed, rekindling a whirlwind of memories and a flood of thoughts and emotions, which we hold so close to our hearts.

So I ask you, if it's true that a picture is worth a thousand

words, what on the flip side, is the value of one word? What might that be worth? When you hear the word kitchen, do you picture a refrigerator, or are you reminded of the smell of favorite foods? How about emotional feelings; what do you feel when you hear the word shikatanai? Some may feel resignation in being unable to control the situation; others may feel liberated in knowing nothing can be done, and that it is what it is. The Japanese have many special words which evoke a cascade of emotions. Wabi sabi, irusu, natsukashii, and komorebi are examples. These words require several English sentences to capture the essence of what one feels in hearing even one of these words.

(continued on page 9)

KISARAGI-KI

On **Sunday, February 5th**, the Los Angeles Betsuin Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) will be observing Kisaragi-ki as well as a memorial for the passing of BWA members.

Lady Takeko Kujo, was founder of the Buddhist Women's Association, who promoted women's status and redefined women's role at temple. Lady Kujo was born as the second daughter of the 21st Monshu of Hongwanji, Myonyo Shonin. She was a devout Nembutsu follower who not only was an avid listener of the Dharma but also took an active part in community service. Lady Kujo was instrumental in the construction of the Asoka Hospital, one of Japan's first modern medical centers, after the Great Tokyo Earthquake in 1923. She was also founder of the Kyoto Joshi Gakuen (Kyoto Women's Schools) and known for her poetry expressing her deep appreciation of the Nembutsu teaching. Lady Kujo passed away in 1928 at the age of 42. To honor her great contributions to the Hongwanji and also community, we hold Kisaragiki Memorial Service on February every year.



Lady Takeko Kujo

The World Federation of Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha BWA respectfully carried over the Dana (selfless giving) spirit of Lady Takeko Kujo and established the annual Dana Day in 1965 to be observed in February every year and practicing Dana by benefitting offertory collections to charitable and social welfare agencies. Our temple BWA members are currently joining in visitation to nursing and care home residents to practice Dana. Let us practice to put into action the caring mind and the compassion Lady Kujo has shown us to follow.

We are also observing BWA Late Members' Memorial Service in conjunction with Lady Kujo's Memorial. It is a time to remember and honor all those who have passed away before us and to recognize the continuation of the influence of their deeds upon our lives. Let us gather at temple the opportunity given by Lady Takeko Kujo and passed members of BWA for listening to their Dharma messages delivered by ministers.

KISARAGI-KI

The Los Angeles Betsuin will be observing **Ho-onko** at the Sunday service on **January 15** from 10 am.

Ho-onko is a time to express gratitude to **Shinran Shonin**, the founder, on the day of his death, January 16, 1262. Literally, the Japanese characters, "Ho-On" means "return of gratitude" and "Ko" means "to clarify the meaning of."

Ho-onko is the most important for the Jodo Shin Buddhists because it is a day to pay our respects to the founder of the sect, Shinran Shonin. We commemorate the anniversary of his death. On this occasion, we assemble together to pay our homage to his memory and to Amida Buddha for having awakened us to the existence of life's supreme debt of gratitude.

Shinran Shonin lived in the Kamakura Era, Japan. In a time of disunity and violence, Shinran Shonin sought a way for all beings to attain perfect peace equally. Shinran Shonin interpreted Buddhism on the level of common people. During the period in Japan, to become a Buddhist meant having to leave one's home and family to enter a life of strict practices and intellectual study of Buddhism. Shinran Shonin, however, lived the life of an ordinary person – the same as that of the farmers and fishermen. Shinran Shonin had a wife and children. He ate meat and fish. Shinran Shonin lived a nembutsu life with his family and opened up the path to Buddhism to the common people. If Shinran Shonin had not clarified the teachings of the Primal Vow, our temple and Sangha would not be in existence today. For this, we praise the virtues of our founder Shinran Shonin, express our sincere appreciation for having encountered his teachings, and reconfirm our true entrusting minds to listen and live his teachings each day.



*"Kagami No Goei"
portrait of Shinran
National Treasure of Japan at
Nishi Hongwanji, Kyoto*



DID YOU KNOW?...

by Eiko Masuyama

*Continuation of "Did you know?..." article,
Nov/Dec 2022 JIHO issue*

**C.Y.B.L. (California Young Buddhist League)
by Sanford A. Sato, Homba Hongwanji Betsuin JIHO,
March 1, 1941**

While the Southern California [S.C.] District is to sponsor the event, the brunt of the preparatory work is vested in the L.A. Betsuin groups. Here a capable executive committee headed by Noboru Ishitani and a horde of special events chairmen are conscientiously planning the four-days' activities to include the interests of every delegate who attends.

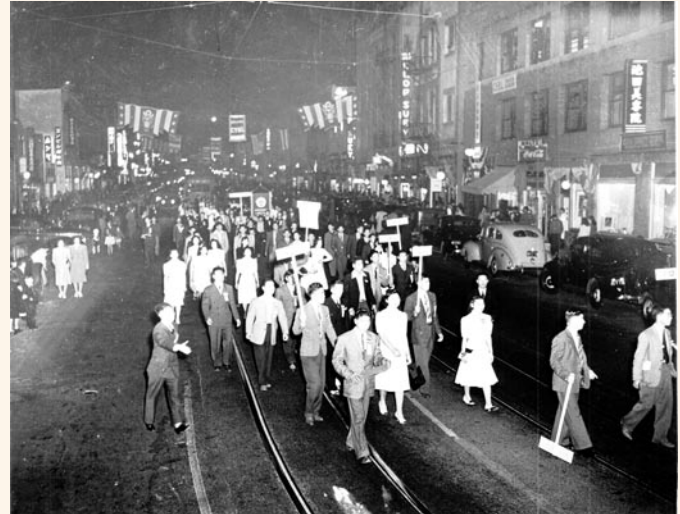
Commencing with a radio show over radio station KGER on Wednesday night, March 26, under the direction of Thomas Ozamoto, the four-days' events will cover religious study, lecture sessions, panel discussions, demonstrations in home economics and agriculture, parade to the City Hall, oratorical contests in English and Japanese, sightseeing trips, statewide basketball finals, and socials as the highlights.

In planning the varied program, the committee has taken the general receptive attitude to activities by past convention delegates as the standard of interest and has added a few novel touches of its own design. The committee does not claim to satisfy the wishes of every delegate, for the degree of satisfaction rests entirely upon the air in which the delegate attends the various events.

In order to achieve harmony in brotherhood, it is essential to be acquainted with those whose interests follow similar channels. After each one has found his place in these small groups, then can the total of the groups be brought together in harmony. To harmonize means how well one can blend with another. Hence, it requires the submission of some qualities and the assertion of the better. In order that these delegates may locate one another, such attractions as the photograph contest, poster contest, writer's guild, demonstrations in agriculture and home economics, panel discussions on Sunday School, development of Buddhism in America, young Buddhists in civic life, and harmony in Sangha are scheduled for their selection.

No doubt there are those who look forward to the C.Y.B.L.'s accomplishing idealistic features on a concrete basis, such as the creating of a vocational guidance program, or the establishment of a Buddhist hospital, or a Buddhist university. Are these important factors beyond our limitations? Of course these are long-range projects. But who doubts the desirability of such institutions?

These and countless other topics will be discussed during



March 29, 1941 CYBL Parade returning (turning corner on Central Avenue to LA Betsuin) from march to Los Angeles City Hall. Right side, Ikeda Beauty Shop, Far East Chop Suey Café, another chop suey restaurant, CYBL banners hanging across the street; Left side, book store; streetcar (P-car?) in the distance, delegates (YWBA women in light colored dresses, YMBA men in jackets/suits) with visible signs from San Diego, Mesa, El Centro, Brawley, Phoenix. Parade being directed by Nishi Betsuin RAM members.

the numerous meetings. From these verbal thought waves may there result the desired objectives for the present day young Buddhists and especially for those of the future.

C.Y.B.L. CONVENTION PROGRAM

WED., March 26, 1941

9:05-11 P.M. – Radio Broadcast KGER, Thomas Ozamoto

THURS., March 27, 1941

1:00 P.M.-Registration

2:00 P.M.-Bd. Of Dir. Meeting (Betsuin), Carl Sato

Ping Pong Tournament (Koyasan), Lily Inouye

Sight Seeing Excursion (Huntington Library),

David Akashi, Ed Yanagisako

4:00 P.M.-Bd. Of Dir. Tea at Consulate, Consul Fukushima

6:00 P.M.-Pioneer Banquet (Kawafuku), Jack Iwata

8:00 P.M.-Get Acquainted Social (Koyasan),

Teruko Ikemura

FRI., March 28, 1941

9:00 A.M.-Opening Ceremony (Betsuin), Meiko Fujihiro

11:00 A.M.-Lecture Hour (Betsuin), Bert Doi;

Rep. Meeting (Zenshuji)

12:00noon-FREE PERIOD

1:00 P.M.-Demonstrations

a. Home Economics (Times Bldg.), Mrs. Oshiki

(continued on page 8)

(KNOW? continued from page 7)

- b. Agriculture (Betsuin), Ichiro Okada
-Nominations Bd. Meeting
- 3:00 P.M.-Panel Discussions
 - a. Sunday School (Zenshuji), Fred Nitta
 - b. How Can We Develop Buddhism in America?
Noboru Honda
 - c. Bussei in Civic Life (Betsuin), Tad Hirota
 - d. Harmony in Sangha (Betsuin), Katherine Nakaso
- 5:30 P.M.-General Meeting, Carl Sato
- 7:30 P.M.-Welcome Banquet & Entertainment
(Deauville at Santa Monica),
Michiko Konishi, Shizuo Nakashita
- SAT., March 29, 1941
- 8:00 A.M.-Memorial Service (Betsuin), Manabu Fukuda
- 9:00 A.M.-Separate Men's [YMBA] & Women's [YWBA]
Meetings:
Men-John Koyama,
Women-Katharine Nakaso
- 10:30 A.M.-Debate: Bay vs. C.C.; Coast vs. S.C.;
Takamitsu Ito
-Rep. Meeting
- 11:30 A.M.-Group Luncheon, Haruko Fujita
Writer's Guild, Ayako Noguchi
- 1:30 P.M.-Sight Seeing Trips (Huntington Library,
N.B.C. Studio), David Akashi
- 5:30 P.M.-Banquet by S.C. temples, Yoshitomi Fukushima
- 7:00 P.M.-Parade (Japanese Town), Nishi RAMS
[Royal American Men's Society]
- 8:00 P.M.-Oratorical Contest (Betsuin),
English-Ronald Ota; Japanese-Akiye Kodama;
Entertainments-Sakaye Inouye
- SUN., March 30, 1941
- 9:00 A.M.-English Service (Betsuin), Tsutomu Ikeda
- 10:30 A.M.-Installation Ceremonies (Betsuin),
Takeo Yoshihara
- 11:30 A.M.-Picnic (Elysian Park), Mrs. Sumi Uyeno,
S.C.Fujinkais;
CONVENTION PICTURE, Eichi Nakazono
- 2:00 P.M.-General Business Meeting (Betsuin),
Incoming President
- 3:30 P.M.-Closing Service (Betsuin), George Kuratomi
- 4:15 P.M.-Basketball Finals, Shigeaki Eya, Kazui Oshiki
- 6:30 P.M.-Reunion Banquet, Eizo Masuyama
- 8:30 P.M.-Sayonara Dance, Sanaye Yoshimura

* * * * *

Thank you to Rev R Furumoto for the donation of a panorama photo, Kazumi Shintani and Neil McGuffin for books for the library, family of late Amy Miyakawa for many panorama photos of ABA events, and many other anonymous donations to the library and archives.

(ABIKO - continued from page 4)

ily would be re-assigned to Hiroshima and then Hokkaido. Eventually the family returned to the U.S. to provide a better education for the boys. While the family was assigned to the Alameda Buddhist Temple, Rev. Abiko attended elementary and high school. He started at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and transferred to Cal State University Sacramento majoring in Philosophy. At that time the elder Rev. Abiko was serving as Rimban at the Sacramento Betsuin.

The mid-60s, with the Cultural Revolution, Vietnam War, riots, and demonstrations was an exciting time for Rev. Abiko. He had a growing interest in the world of Buddhism so he enrolled in Ryukoku University in Kyoto for post graduate studies.

The four years in Kyoto being the highpoint in his life, Rev. Abiko graduated with a master's degree in General Buddhism, received *tokudo*, *kyoshi*, and *kaikyoshi* from Nishi Hongwanji, Kyoto.

Before returning to his family in California, Rev. Abiko traveled around the world, visiting Buddhist and historical sites throughout China, Southeast Asia, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, as well as Europe.

Upon returning to California, his first BCA assignment was the San Jose Betsuin where he married his wife, Misaye Kamigaki and served for 12 years. He was then transferred to the Palo Alto Buddhist temple and 18 years later to the Buddhist Church of San Francisco.

With Rev. George Matsubayashi retiring in 2009, Rev. Abiko became Rimban of the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji, coming full circle to where he was born. He served as Rimban until 2013 when he retired as a minister of BCA.

Rev. Abiko retired to Sebastopol where he pursued country style of living with vegetable gardens, fruit trees, fences, and a riding mower. He also helped out at the nearby Enmanji Buddhist Temple.

Rev. Hiroshi Jokai Abiko is survived by his wife, Misaye (Kamigaki), daughter, Kaori and her husband, Chris Le, son, Ryo, and older brother, Koki Abiko and his family. He is predeceased by his parents and sister Nariye, who died as a toddler in post-war Japan.

Note: The information for this article was taken from the May-June 2009 issue of the Betsuin Jiho and the December 2022 issue of the Wheel of Dharma.

(SPECIAL HONDO - continued from page 5)



Betsuin Hondo

Do you have a special word that floods you with intense emotions? That means so much more than the word itself? Hondo does it for me. I initially think of the smell of incense and the softly lit lighting, followed by the comforting solace of peace and calm, and the anticipated ringing of the kansho and chanting by the senseis. I feel safe in being able to leave my external worries outside, and as I sit calmly, I reflect on my parents and all those around me. Yes, literally as I look to see who else has joined me for service. After many years of Sunday services in the hondo, I can now actually experience and feel all of these emotions by just hearing the word, "hondo". It's such a powerful word to me. What does it mean to you?

My wish for 2023 is for all of us to return to the hondo, together, to experience, listen, and to share the feelings of oneness, gratitude, and entrusting, while listening to the Buddha dharma. Your friends are there, the memories of your loved ones are there, and the Three Treasures are there. Nurture the emotional connection we all need, by putting our hands together, yours with mine, and join me in our hondo for an invaluable inspirational sensory experience.

On behalf of BWA, I thank all of you for your generous and continued support, and look forward to another year of friendship and many memorable moments.

Okagesamade.

In *Gassho*



LOWER YOUR TAX LIABILITY



Contact: Bruce Shinohara
bshino@NishiHongwanji-LA.org

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BETSUIN VEHICLE DONATION



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

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

BETSUIN PHOTOS



The Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) members gathered for the annual Eshin-ni/Kakushin-ni Memorial Service followed by a luncheon in the Lotus Room.



BWA Sponsored Flu Clinic
Waiting to get their shots, Pam Tabata (left) and Carol Hida. Inset: Ken Kawasaki getting his "shot."



The Adult Buddhist Association (ABA) observed its 25th Anniversary since the re-establishment of the organization at the LA Betsuin with a special service.



L-R: Revs. Hibiki Murakami, Yukari Torii, Hiroya Sato, & Ryuta Furumoto (Senshin)

Revs. Torii and Sato visited the Los Angeles Betsuin as part of the International Ministers Orientation Program (IMOP). This is a three month program where they take daily English conversation classes, attend lectures about other religions, social and LBTQ+ issues, and learn from other ministers about the life of a kaikyoshi (overseas minister). Visiting BCA temples, participation in internship at a temple, and doing volunteer activities is also part of the program.



Eitaiyo Service Ministers
L-R sitting: Rev. Hibiki Murakami, BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. Seikan Fukuma Standing: BCA Minister Emeritus Rev. George Matsubayashi

ADOPT AN OBUTSUDAN
 Connect the family to the Buddha-Dharma
 Cleaned, pre-owned, valuable obutsudan.
 Contact the Betsuin office: 213-680-9130

BETSUIN MOCHITSUKI



The LA Betsuin Dharma School Parents organized an opportunity for the dharma school students to take part in the “*mochitsuki* experience.” Preschool aged children through high schoolers were able to enjoy, learn, and take part in the process of making mochi from seeing the steamed rice, pounding, forming, and eating the mochi.



HALLOWEEN



Jr. YBA members who helped with the dharma school Halloween Party.



Dharma School Parents organized a Halloween party for the dharma school students, helped out by the Jr. YBA members.



Those who came to observe the festivities.



Nishi Jr. YBA members join the Gardena Buddhist Church Jr. YBA to help with their Halloween party. They all enjoyed playing games and having lunch together. This photo shows the members from both groups. The Nishi members are: Laurens Chao, Verena Chao, Liam Safranek, Tatsumi Capela and Matthew Hayashi.



The Hayashi Family



The Chao/Gerard Family

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*

9/16/2022 - 11/15/2022

September 2022	20 Jun Okimoto
16 Hideko Virginia Hirami	26 Umeno Iwamoto
17 Sumiko Okamuro	31 George Hiroshi Hongo
28 Kayoko Uno	
30 Chizuru Kato Melendez	
October 2022	November 2022
4 Irene Kikuko Takai	3 Shojun Yukawa
8 Tatsuo Yoshida	4 Frank Teruhisa Oda
15 Kimiko Sizumura Yokoyama	12 Takashi Takemoto

MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR 2023

The following years are the dates of special services for the deceased. The temple will send out notices to the next of kin. In the event that a notice is not sent, please notify the *Betsuin* office for an appointment at 213-680-9130.

Memorial Observance	Year of Death
1st memorial	2022
3rd memorial	2021
7th memorial	2017
13th memorial	2011
17th memorial	2007
23rd memorial	2001
25th memorial	1999
33rd memorial	1991
50th memorial	1974

Betsuin Jiho

Editor-in-Chief: Rimban William Briones
English Editor: Elaine Fukumoto
Japanese Editor: Rev. Hibiki Murakami
Photos: Koichi Sayano & Glen Tao

2023 MEMBERSHIP

A "member" of the L.A. *Betsuin* is one who has donated to the annual membership.

The following is a list additional members who have submitted their membership during the **September 16** through **November 15, 2023**. Your continuing support of the temple is greatly appreciated.

Okita, Seibi F./Moruko	Watanabe, Sherry Kanemura
Tasaka-Mejia, Pamela Kimiko	Yoshimi, Sharyn Reiko
Toguchi, Leslie T./Ethel A.	

"LETTER ON WHITE ASHES" HAKKOTSU NO GOBUNSHO

This letter by Rennyō Shōnin is often read by the minister at Jōdo Shinshū funeral services.

When I deeply contemplate the transient nature of human existence, I realize that, from beginning to end, life is impermanent like an illusion. We have not yet heard of anyone who lived ten thousand years. How fleeting is a lifetime!

Who in this world today can maintain a human form for even a hundred years? There is no knowing whether I will die first or others, whether death will occur today or tomorrow. We depart one after another more quickly than the dewdrops on the roots or the tips of the blades of grasses. So it is said. Hence, we may have radiant faces in the morning, but by evening we may turn into white ashes.

Once the winds of impermanence have blown, our eyes are instantly closed and our breath stops forever. Then, our radiant face changes its color, and the attractive countenance like peach and plum blossoms is lost. Family and relatives will gather and grieve, but all to no avail.

Since there is nothing else that can be done, they carry the deceased out to the fields, and then what is left after the body has been cremated and turned into midnight smoke in just white ashes. Words fail to describe the sadness of it all.

Thus the ephemeral nature of human existence is such that death comes to young and old alike without discrimination. So we should all quickly take to heart the matter of the greatest importance of the afterlife, entrust ourselves deeply to Amida Buddha, and recite the nembutsu.

Humbly and respectfully.

—Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha Service Book 2018

BETSUIN 2023 CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 New Years' Service (*Shūshō-e*)
- 2 Betsuin Closed
- 8 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 14 Ho-onko Seminar
- 15 Ho-onko Service
- 29 Joint Installation, New Member Welcoming & New Year Part

FEBRUARY

- 5 BWA *Kisaragi-ki*, Lady Kujo & Late Members' Memorial Service
- 12 Nirvana Day Service (*Nehan-e*)
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service

MARCH

- 4 Surf and Turf Fundraiser
- 12 Girl Scout Sunday
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 18 Spring Ohigan Seminar
- 19 Spring Ohigan and Rimban-ki Memorial Service
- 26 Rennyō Shonin Memorial Service

APRIL

- 2 Betsuin Hanamatsuri
- 9 Butsuren Hanamatsuri
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service

MAY

- 14 Mother's Day Service
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 21 Gotan-e & Infant Presentation (*Hatsumairi*) Service
- 28 Memorial Day Sunday Service
- 29 Memorial Day Hakamairi

JUNE

- 11 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 18 Fathers' Day Service
- 25 Graduation & Attendance Award Service

JULY

- 4 Independence Day (Betsuin Closed)
- 8-9 Obon Festival & Odori
- 15 Hatsubon Service
- 16 Obon & Hakamairi Services
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service

AUGUST

- 6 Atomic Bomb Memorial
- 13 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service

SEPTEMBER

- 4 Labor Day (Betsuin Closed)
- 10 Dharma School Registration
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 16 Autumn Ohigan Seminar
- 17 Autumn Ohigan Service

OCTOBER

- 2 Eshinni/Kakushini Memorial Service
- 8 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service

NOVEMBER

- 5 Betsuin General Sokai Meeting
- 12 Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 19 Betsuin Eitaikyo Service
- 23-24 Thanksgiving (Betsuin Closed)

DECEMBER

- 3 General Temple Clean-up
- 10 Bodhi Day Service (*Jōdō-e*)
Eitaikyo Monthly Memorial Service
- 17 Oseibo Taikai Kansha (Appreciation) Service
- 24-25 Holiday (Betsuin Closed)
- 31 Year End Service (*Joya-e*)



Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, services will continue both in-person and virtually. This, however, may change at any time. Please call the office for more information. Tel: 213-680-9130

Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

SURF AND TURF DINNER



MARCH 4, 2023

4:00 PM – 7:00 PM

\$35 per plate

PRESALE ONLY

**MENU: STEAK and SALMON
• RICE • SIDES**

Meals will be packed as "TAKE OUT"
DINE IN and enjoy your meals with family and friends

The number of meals to be sold will be limited.
Unclaimed dinners will be donated after 7:00 pm

NO MEALS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

All proceeds will go to the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple.

Save the Date !!!

It's FINALLY time.....

Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple presents :

“You Make Me Feel Like Dancin”

Saturday, April 22, 2023

815 East 1st Street, Los Angeles

Benefit Dance with music performed by

