

BUSSEI SCRIPT

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Reflections on the Invasion of Ukraine

By Rev. Marvin Harada, Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America

It has been disturbing to see the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. To see a country without any provocation be invaded by another country is appalling.

When I think of how large Russia is as a country, it makes me wonder what more Putin wants. Isn't Russia big enough for him? Why take over a neighboring country, unless it is just a manifestation of the hungry ghost realm in which you never have enough of anything. For such a world ruler – or maybe I should say dictator – there is never enough of anything.

When we look back at the history of the world and of civilization, isn't this a recurring theme, like a broken record? Conquerors, dynasties, kingdoms, war after war, battle after battle. Where does it end?

In ancient India, there was a ruler named King Ashoka, who helped to build and establish Buddhism. Although King Ashoka was a Buddhist ruler, he did not start out that way. In fact, he was a tyrant, a dictator, a conqueror. He had sent his army into battle to conquer again, and then went to see how the battle went, after the fact. King Ashoka was devastated to see the horrors of war that he had caused by sending his army into battle. Death and destruction were everywhere. "What have I done?" thought King Ashoka.

From that day on, King Ashoka turned to Buddhism and became a ruler of peace, not war.

How Buddhists respond to war is also something to reflect on. Tibet was invaded by Communist China. Temples and monasteries were destroyed. Sutras and ancient texts were destroyed. Monks were killed. But despite the travesty, the Dalai Lama continues to find a peaceful resolution and continues to work to restore his country of Tibet, in which he was both the spiritual and secular ruler.

Perhaps you recall some years ago, the Taliban began to destroy the ancient Buddhist statues in Afghanistan. The ancient statues were huge, carved out of the mountainside. They had been there for centuries, created out of the devout faith of Buddhists. They were like Mount Rushmore or the ancient pyramids of Egypt. Yet, the Taliban saw them as false religion and tried to destroy them. First, they used tanks and artillery to bomb the statues, but they still stood strong. Eventually, they were destroyed.

There were worldwide objections and protests to the destruction of the statues, but Buddhists did not go to war over the issue. I cannot help but think that for Buddhists, the thinking was, "You can destroy the statues, but you cannot destroy the Dharma. The Dharma resides in the hearts and minds of Buddhists as a living teaching, as a living truth. It cannot be destroyed by rockets or artillery. It cannot be destroyed by tyrants and dictators. The Dharma will long outlive dynasties, empires, and kingdoms. Dynasties, empires, and kingdoms will come and go, like the waves that hit the shore. But the Dharma is timeless."

The Dharma was transmitted across the Asian continent for the past 2,500 years despite opposing rulers and kingdoms. It has been transmitted secretly amidst caves. It has been transmitted during the internment camps. It has been transmitted even in the wake of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It is my hope and aspiration that the Dharma will flourish, such that there will be more world leaders who have an appreciation of the Dharma, and will find it appalling to invade another country like we have seen in Ukraine.

All the more – there is a need for the Buddha-Dharma in this world.

(Reprinted from the BCA's Connect online news of the Wheel of Dharma)



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By LuAnn Lee

March is here and brought the beautiful cherry blossoms that were featured at the Japanese Friendship Garden. Their timing was perfect as the trees were vibrant with pink blossoms.

Thanks to a dedicated group of volunteers, we were able to participate. The crowd enjoyed our BTSD Odori dancers, Taiko group and they ate our delicious, barbecued chicken skewers with rice and even had red bean and peanut butter Daifuku for dessert.

It was a smaller event but still a successful start towards our fundraising efforts for 2022.

Bill Teague and I attended the virtual National Council Meeting hosted by Central California District Council along with Fresno Betsuin, Buddhist Church of Parlier, Reedley Buddhist Church, Buddhist Church of Fowler, Visalia Buddhist Church & Hanford Buddhist Church.

We attended the two day meeting along with Reverend Gregory Gibbs and both Ministerial Assistant's Rev. Laverne Imori and Rev. Smitty.

The conference offered many workshops opened to all the BCA members and we thank many of our members for attending. The Town Hall meeting was packed with great ideas and information on how to grow membership, one of the greatest challenges facing BCA, local churches and temples. There were presentations on Youth Protection, Endowment, Dharma forward and the BCA Music committee presented a workshop on ideas and resources to enhance temple services and engaging your Sangha through music. The theme Strength in Sangha was perfect for 2022, very meaningful and could be all the temple's theme, it is what helped us make it through the past couple of years and will be what carries us forward. A highlight of the weekend was the installation of the first women BCA President, Teri Omori. She will do a great job and let's support her and the BCA. Hope you were able to see our very own Dr. Reverend Kenji Akahoshi, BCA minister emeritus, as he gave the Dharma message for the Eitaikyo service. Also, see Bishop Harada's reflections on the invasion of Ukraine.

Although things are opening up, we are cautiously optimistic. As of now, we are moving forward with events including in person Spring Ohigan and Hanamatsuri service followed by the New Year party, Dharma School, Bazaar, Father's Day picnic, Golf tournament and possibly group meetings. It has been two years that the world declared Covid-19 a pandemic. We hope to see you in person soon. Thank you, Sangha and friends, for your patience, understanding and support.

In Gassho,
LuAnn Lee

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Board of Directors met on March 10th -

1. Rev. Gregory Gibbs installed the 2022 Board. Welcome to new Directors Michael Ong and Brian Sasaki. Thank you to Carol Baker for her service on the Board.
2. Funds for the repair/renovation of the main building exterior or stairs on Dodson Street were approved.
3. All affiliated groups and standing committees provided updates on their activities.
4. As the temple works toward re-opening to in-person services and events, the Ministers Assistants, re-opening committee, operations and others are addressing as many of the Sangha's concerns and needs as possible.

BWA NEWS

"FRATELLI TUTTI: Papa Francisco's Encyclical {message} where he calls on us ALL...SISTERS AND BROTHERS throughout the world, to become ONE BODY.

Here is my very own personal message: Papa Francisco emphasizes fraternity and social friendship. Based on these, we can choose a way of life marked by the flavor of the Gospel to us Catholics, by the Dharma to the Buddhists, the Tonak to the Jewish or the Coran to the Arabs.

Just like the ocean was given to us free of pollution, so we were given a clean heart of mercy and we can extend that mercy and fraternity to come to the aid of our poor and vulnerable sisters and brothers in Ukraine.

Here is my concern today, I myself am suffering from serious back problems and can comfortably walk just about a block. How many of the Ukrainian migrants may have pain such as mine and had to walk for days, carrying their babies part of the journey through snow and unknown paths, not even knowing when or where the journey would end. That's only the physical pain.... how about the moral pain of having left behind their sons, husbands, fathers, grandfathers, uncles.... with the uncertainty of ever seeing them again! How many shoes/boots were worn out, how many blistered feet? and they just had to carry on and face their limitations.

On the other side of the world are we! Enjoying our cities, our homes, the company of family and friends, enjoying a good cup of coffee or a homemade meal. How blessed we are! How thankful we are!

Are we going to stay still and not follow our religious teachings? In short: let's show our gratitude for our blessings and let's help the Ukrainians and give them back their dignity and respect. We cannot remain indifferent...let them feel our fraternity and our social friendship. They deserve our unconditional love, our admiration and care."

(For more information about helping the Ukrainian people, please contact Ghean Maksimow. c: (619) 888-1936, ghean@bowgenie.com)

In Gassho, Mani Ryan

ACTIVITIES NEWS

Happy Spring Time! Several of us volunteered at the Cherry Blossom Festival to make and sell teriyaki chicken skewers plates and Daifuku manju while the Taiko and Odori groups performed at the event. This being our first "outside" event in a couple of years, we continued to use recommended safety protocols, a reduced menu and number of servings to ease into working such events. There was a great turn out and the Cherry Blossoms were in full bloom!

Spring also brings the Hanamatsuri service on April 10, scheduled to be an in-person service. Please see the important logistical information elsewhere in this issue of the Kaiho. The Temple New Year Party will be held in conjunction with the Hanamatsuri Service. While writing this report, we are not sure of what the New Year Party will entail, more information will be announced as soon as it is made known. For those who ordered bento by the March 21 deadline, you will receive it after the service. We hope to have an in-person bento lunch in the Annex, the final decision will be made in the upcoming weeks with the recommendation of our Temple Reopening Committee. Regardless of the decision, you are always welcome to take your bento to enjoy at home. Everyone's health and safety continue to be a primary concern on our minds while planning events.

Other events on the horizon are the Temple Golf Tournament, Bazaar, "mini" rummage sale, Panda Express fundraising event and the 100th Temple Anniversary! Look further in this and future issues for more information.

In Gassho, Activities Committee

CHERRY BLOSSOM VOLUNTEERS

The temple is extremely grateful for the efforts of the many who made our first external event participation since 2019 successful and enjoyable. The beauty of the Japanese Friendship Garden and the great entertainment (including our Odori dancers and Taiko group) helped "ease" us into this fundraising activity.

We'd like to thank -

Coordinator with Japanese Friendship Garden and schedule wrangler, event permit, transporting equipment and supplies, booth set up and supply purchase Michael Kinoshita
JFG liaison, equipment transportation, propane - Ken Muraoka

Teriyaki sauce wizard (without the sauce, there would be no chicken!) - Jeff Sakai

Daifuku - Aki Tomiyama, Florence Ozaki, Florence Koga, Ann Yamamoto, Susan Yonekura, Suz Moribe, Michael Kinoshita, Nancy Martinez

Rice prep - Glenn Torio

Signs- Linda Redenbaugh

Food booth volunteers - Michael Kinoshita, Carol Baker, Floyd Sumida, Harold Lee, Arturo Rubio, Glenn Torio, Laura Yoshida, Kimberly Kruse, Christina Guiang, Ryan Torio, Keiko Negoro,

Jeff Kruse, Steve Sato, Janna Domingo, Isaac Martinez, LuAnn Lee, Nancy Martinez

PayPal administrator - Kimberly Kruse

Breakdown and clean-up - in addition to many of the above, a few of the Taiko group helped us out too!

Thank you again for your good nature and hard work.

Gassho



Photo credit: Efton Woodford

Taiko and Odori at Cherry Blossom Festival

Thank you very much to the BTSD Taiko and the BTSD Ondo Dancers for their energetic participation at the Cherry Blossom Festival. Beginning their preparations months in advance, these two groups serve as ambassadors for our temple, while sharing the Japanese-American culture and spreading the Dharma. We express our appreciation to the participating taiko members Bobby Koga, Chelsey Koga, Margo Spears, Sue Moribe, Laura Yoshida, Karly Maruyama, and Junko Kajita. We are also grateful to the following members of the BTSD Ondo Dancers: Lori Hara, Elise Kajita, Junko Kajita, Margie Kitano, Aila Koga, Bobby Koga, Chelsey Koga, Kiana Koga, Jaden Kruse, Kimberly Kruse, Carolyn McDonald, Sue Moribe, Noriko Kitada Nguyen, Shirley Omori, David Santos, Janice Shigehara, Wilbur Shigehara, Stephen Smith, Yukari Williams, Carolyn Wood, and Laura Yoshida. Special thank you to Bobby Koga for accompanying us on the taiko, and to Tim Kajita for recording and playing our music.

Dave Scott, the weekend meteorologist on KUSI evening news, also showed a brief video of our BTSD Taiko and BTSD Ondo Dancers on the March 12 10:00 news. Wilbur Shigehara invited his friend and former intern at KUSI to the festival. However, there was confusion with the program schedule, and Wilbur and Mr. Scott missed seeing each other. He spoke with the BTSD Taiko group and told the story of how Wilbur kindly took him under his wing when he was starting out his career at KUSI as a meteorologist. With tearful eyes, he expressed his deep appreciation to Wilbur for being so kind to him. Thank you to Wilbur for inviting Dave Scott, which enabled our coverage on KUSI, and for all that you do for our temple.

DONATIONS

The Buddhist Temple of San Diego is grateful to the following individuals or their recent donations to the Temple and its affiliated organizations.

BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Anonymous
Terada & Sasaki Families
IMO Yukiye Terada
Seymour, Leslie
Ryan, Mani
Mac Alpine, John
Krynski, Peter
Estes, Carol - In honor of
Mitch & Naomi Himaka -
Kansha Award
Tomiyama, Alan - Bussei Script
Sanada, Donna
Martinez, Nancy - Cherry
Blossom Expenses
Seymour, Leslie
Sasaki, Sharon &
Robert Yamamoto
Morinaka Family
Kawasaki, Mildred & Trace
IMO Karen Kawasaki
Donation
Teague, Bill & Bill
IMO J.R. & Betty Teague
IMO Fred & Rutsu Nabeta

95th ANNIVERSARY

Cross, Joe

COVID-19

Sasaki, Brian & Lorin

BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

Kaneshiro, Gale
Ochi-Fontanott, Janet
Sumida, Floyd & Kaytee

DHARMA SCHOOL

Nakamura, Jake K. & Patty
Yamamoto, June
Tanizaki, Gary
Ring, Linda
Yanagihara, Tom Masaru &
Colleen

FLORIAL OFFERING

Kida, Katsumi
Yamanishi, Miyoko
Nakamura, Jake K. & Patty
Yamamoto, June
Ring, Linda
Yanagihara, Tom &
Colleen

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Kida, Katsumi
Yamanishi, Miyoko
Nakamura, Jake K. & Patty
Yamamoto, June
Ring, Linda
Yanagihara, Tom Masaru

HANAMATSURI

Yonekura, Susan
Ohara, Ann
Kawasaki, Mildred & Trace

HO ONKO

Teague, Bill & Joyce
Yamanishi, Alan & Karen
Shigehara, Wilbur & Janice

Kawasaki, Mildred & Trace

LADY KUJO MEMORIAL

Ohara, Fumiko
IMO Mitsu Ohara
IMO Mine Imai
Ryan, Mani
IMO Masa Nishinaga
Yamamoto, Ann
Tomiyama, Aki
Omori, Shirley
IMO Kiyoko Omori
Skinner, Carolyn
IMO Mitsuye Hanano
Sugiyama, Yukiko
Hashiguchi, Tsuneko
Ochi Family
IMO Kayoko Ochi
Masumoto, Chiyoko
IMO Yuki Masumoto
IMO Peggy Tsurudome
IMO Tsuruye Tanaka
Kida, Katsumi
Torio, Betty
Yamanishi, Miyoko
Kawasaki, Ted
IMO Toshiko Kawasaki
IMO Misao Kawasaki

Aoyama, Alice
Yonekura, Susan

MAP (Ministers Assist)

Kida, Katsumi
Yamanishi, Miyoko
Nakamura, Jake K. & Patty
Yanagihara, Tom Masaru &
Colleen
Kawamoto, David H.
Honda, Mikiye
Kawasaki, Mildred & Trace

MEMBERSHIP

Kida, Katsumi
Yamanishi, Miyoko
Nakamura, Jake K. & Patty
Kawamoto, David
Yamamoto, June
Tanizaki, Gary
Kawai, Noriko
Sakai, Jeffery
Azuma, Adam
Negoro, Glenn
Rubio-Torres, Arturo
Seymour, Leslie & Sean
Ring, Linda
Ochi, K Kay
Moribe, Susan & Lee
Maruyama, Karly
Kaneshiro, Gale
Martinez, Nancy
Yanagihara, Tom Masaru &
Colleen
Teague, Bill
Mac Alpine, John

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Teague, Bill & Joyce
Yamanishi, Alan & Karen
Kawasaki, Mildred & Trace

NIRVANA DAY SERVICE

Koga, Florence
Yamanishi, Miyoko
Tomiyama, Akie
Kawasaki, Kiyoshi & Aileen
Spears, Margo
Moribe, Susan & Lee
Tsukamoto, Wayne
Moncrief, Mayko
Martinez, Nancy
Teague, Bill & Joyce
Yamanishi, Alan & Karen
Kawasaki, Mildred & Trace

OHIGAN SERVICE

Anonymous
Ohara, Fumiko
Yamamoto, Jane
Torio, Betty
Oto, June
Monji, Yoshiko
Hashiguchi, Tsuneko & John
Martinez, Nancy
Moncrief, Mayko
Tsukamoto, Wayne
Moribe, Susan
Spears, Margo

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Nakamura, Jake K. & Patty
Yamamoto, June
Tanizaki, Gary
Ring, Linda
Yanagihara, Tom Masaru

SHOTSUKI HOYO

Koga, Florence
IMO Mary Sugimoto

Uyeji, Masako
IMO Eda Asamen
IMO S. Kodama
Pang, Valerie
IMO Carl M. Ooka 5-19-1991
Tomiyama, Akie
IMO Masao Santohigashi
Estes, Carol
IMO Michael Kawamoto
Ohara, Fumiko
IMO Buyemon Ohara
Torio, Betty
Yamamoto, Jane
IMO Mary Yagura
IMO Iwao Yagura
Oto, June
IMO Motono Oto
Suyenaga, Irene
Yagura, Ronald
IMO Mary Yagura
Otsuji, Dennis & Elaine
IMO Ayako Otsuji
IMO Haruhiko Otsuji
Honda, Mikiye
Honda, Ralph & Avis - March
Liss, Kathryn Moriyama
IMO Sakuhichi Yano
Rubio-Torres, Arturo - April
Amano, Takeko - March
IMO Sam Amano
Martinez, Nancy
IMO Fred Nabeta
IMO Mas Yoshioka
Tsukamoto, Wayne - March
IMO S. Tsukamoto
Kawamoto, Mitsuko
IMO Michael Kawamoto

DHARMA SCHOOL NEWS

In March, Dharma School students enjoyed attending a virtual DS exchange with Vista Buddhist Temple DS students via Zoom. They had fun playing Pictionary and a Menti game, as well as doing a scavenger hunt with their DS friends from Vista. Students enjoyed attending the temple in person and participating in a fun activity with their DS friends last month.

At the end of April, our DS teachers and staff will participate in the 2022 virtual FDSTL Conference hosted by the Northern California Dharma School Teachers' League. The theme for the conference is "Cheers to finding a new norm!"
In Gassho, Lisa Umekubo

JR YBA NEWS

Hello! On March 5, members attended Southern District's Religious Retreat and participated in workshops and discussions centered around the Jodo Shinshu Creed. Jrs also participated in the Dharma School Exchange with Vista on March 6 and led the chanting during the Family Service on March 13.

Thank you to the BWA for their generous monetary gift to our organization. We greatly appreciate your support!



APRIL SHOTSUKI (MONTHLY MEMORIAL) LIST

This month's memorial service will be posted to the temple's YouTube channel on Sunday, April 24. Families and friends of anyone who passed away in April are urged to view the video, burn incense at your home O Butsudan and Gassho in memory of your deceased loved ones. Please share the video and Dharma messages with family members and friends who do not have access to the internet. If you find an error, wish to add a name to the list or receive the link for the YouTube video, please contact the temple at (619) 239-0896 or email info@btsd.net Gassho.

*The Temple and Sangha offers sincere condolences to the family and friends of:
Kengo Yamamoto March 5, 2022*

DECEASED

FAMILY MEMBER

Toyosaburo Yanagihara (4-23-1930).....Yanagihara Family
 Saburo Sugiyama (4-10-1936)..... Sugiyama Family
 Seiichi Tsurudome (4-2-1943)..... Tsurudome Family
 Shizuko Kasubuchi (4-27-1947)..... Naoye Kasubuchi
 Masaichi Kuroda (4-30-1948).....Toshio Kuroda
 Yoshitaro Matsumoto (4-19-1952) Eiji Matsumoto
 Yukichi Okuma (4-16-1953)..... Okuma Family
 Yohichiro Torio (4-24-1954)..... Betty Torio
 Hiromi Moribe (4-26-1954)..... Lee Moribe
 Mansaku Shinohara (4-6-1956)..... Shinohara Family
 Yoshiko Haseyama (4-5-1958) Noboru Haseyama
 Saburo Oyama (4-5-1963)..... Oyama Family
 George Kozuma (4-9-1966)..... Tomiko Kozuma
 Shinzaemon Fujii (4-28-1967) Katsumi Kida
 Shizuyo Izumo (4-1-1970)Yanagihara Family
 Ume Inouye (4-10-1970)..... Inouye Family
 Iwaguma Tsuneyoshi (4-9-1973)..... Motoo Tsuneyoshi
 Buheiji Tanaka (4-12-1975)..... Yoko Ozawa
 Hajime Kyutoku (4-10-1978)..... Tamio Tsurudome
 Ryohei Tsujimura (4-5-1980)..... Roy Tsujimura
 Kuzo Sugiyama (4-23-1980) Sugiyama Family
 Magoichi Hamano (4-3-1983)Toru Hamano
 Isao Imaizumi (4-27-1983) Imaizumi Family
 Kazumi Sugioka (4-29-1985) Sugioka Family
 George Yukio Kodama (4-19-1986)..... Vivianne Jones
 Chiyo Yamagata (4-27-1987)..... Harold Yamagata
 Mike Hagio (4-7-1988) Quimico Hagio
 Frank Tachiki (4-6-1989) Les Tachiki
 Terry T. Doi (4-28-1989)..... Patrick Doi
 Mine Takeshita (4-27-1991)..... Takeshita Family
 Zenbei Iwashita (4-11-1992) Iwashita Family
 Benso Tsuji (4-6-1993) Laura Katsue Tsuji
 Setsugo Taniguchi (4-14-1993) Wilbur Takashima
 Yoshiko Sueyoshi (4-2-1995)..... Sueyoshi Family

DECEASED

FAMILY MEMBER

Shizuko Yanagihara (4-30-1995)Yanagihara Family
 Ai Yamada (4-27-1996) Keisuke Yamada
 James Kasubuchi (4-12-1998) Naoye Kasubuchi
 Muneo Torimaru (4-30-1998)Ricky Torimaru
 Hazel Ito (4-13-2000) Ito Family
 Shigenori Tsurudome (4-30-2000) Tsurudome Family
 Taro Matsui (4-29-2001) Matsui Family
 Kenshi Tachiki (4-30-2001)..... Lewis Tachiki
 Haruko Muraoka (4-13-2002) Takenori Muraoka
 Yoshiko Takashima (4-21-2002) Wilbur Takashima
 Shinichi Okuyama (4-07-2003)..... Mai Kawaguchi
 Kosaburo Ochi (4-27-2004)..... Emi Ochi
 Toshio Hayakawa (4-11-2005)Emiko Hayakawa
 Yoshiko Miyazaki (4-29-2005) Madoko M. Miyazaki
 Armando Leal (4-11-2006).....Rubio Family
 Kaneko Houdek (4-09-2006)John Houdek
 Kikuo Uyeji (4-21-2006)Chieko Takeguchi
 Kattie Magotsugu Uyeji (4-15-2007) Masako Uyeji
 Hidetoshi Akiyama (4-25-2007) Terry Akiyama
 Masao Santohigashi (4-06-2008) Kiku Graeber
 Judi Shigeko Shinohara (4-18-2009)Janice Shinohara
 Shimako Uda (4-26-2009) Georgiana Uda
 Setsuko Himaka (4-24-2011)..... Lynn Fuchigami
 Earl Isoki Osaki (4-21-2013)Gail Furuya
 Robert C. McDonald..... Bruce McDonald
 Kazuo Kiyono (4-6-2014)..... Norman Kiyono
 James Noboru Nakashima (4-7-2014).. Tomoye Nakashima
 George Tachiki (4-22-2014) Miyako Tachiki
 Hiro Tsurudome (4-19-2015).....Joanne Tsurudome Garcia
 Mildred Pocock (4-2016).....Pocock Family
 Kimiko Kitano (4-24-2018).....Margie Kitano
 Jeanne Inouye (4-8-21).....Nabeta Family
 Helen Kikuko Takashima (4-15-21).....Takashima Family
 Yoshiko Honda (4-20-21).....Honda Family

M E M O R I A L S E R V I C E S

MEMORIAL SERVICES allow us to pay homage to loved ones who have passed away. In our Jodo Shinshu tradition, family members hold a service at certain intervals following a relative's death to express gratitude for and acknowledge their continuing influence in our lives. If you wish to schedule a memorial service for a loved one, please call during weekly office hours.

2022 is the memorial year for those who passed away in:

1st Year Memorial	2021	13th Year Memorial	2010	27th Year Memorial	1996
3rd Year Memorial	2020	17th Year Memorial	2006	33rd Year Memorial	1990
7th Year Memorial	2016	25th Year Memorial	1998	50th Year Memorial	1973

マウンテンビュー仏教会「回向」 二〇二二年四月法話

転ぜられる人生

駐在開教使 向嶋裕史

先月、当仏教会でガールスカウトの日曜礼拝がありました。そこで今日は、浄土真宗を代表する真の念仏者中村久子さんを紹介したいと思えます。久子さんは日本本のヘレンケラーと呼ばれ、重い障害を抱えながらも凄まじい努力で自らの人生を切り開かれた女性です。

久子さんは一八九七年に飛騨高山でお生まれになり、三歳の時に突発性脱疽という重い病気を患い、両腕は肘そして両脚は膝関節から先を切断しました。

父親は久子さんが七歳の頃に急死、母親はその後再婚するのですが、久子さんは養父から執拗な虐待を受け、ストレスで両眼が見えなくなっていました。その為母親は絶望に陥り、久子さんを抱いて投身自殺を図るのですが、「お母さん、怖いよ」という泣き声を聞いて思い留まります。その後、何とか視力を取り戻した久子さんではありましたが、他人に頼れない現実を目の当たりにした母親は、久子さんが一人で生きていけるよう人が変わったように厳しく躾けるようになりました。

母親は「掃除せよ、洗濯せよ、炊事せよ」と何でも一人でこなすよう命じ、久子さんが「できない」と言っても決して許すことはありませんでした。しかし、気の強い久子さんは食事の際、両手に包帯を巻き、そこに箸を差し挟んで一人で食べることを習得しました。縫物をしよう命じられた際は、試行錯誤の末、二本の麻糸を口の中で結び、針を肘で挟んで、口で針の穴に糸を通すことを編出し、更には布を両肘で押さえ、針をく

わえて頭を上下に動かしながら縦に縫われました。また、口で文字を書いたり、包丁を脇に挟んで食材を切つて炊事をこなしたりと、必死に努力を重ね自分一人の力で日常生活を送れるようになりました。

母親は「できるまでやりなさい。できないのはあなたに横着だからです」と言いつつ決して諦めることを許さなかつたと言います。他人の心無い久子さんへの態度を見て、自分が心を鬼にしてでも一人前にするしか娘の生き残る道はないと悟られたのだと思えます。

そうした母親の厳しいしつけにより一人の女性として自立した生活を送れるようになった久子さんですが、母親に対しては「これも親が。鬼だ」とずっと恨んでおられました。その後一人で生計を立てるために養父に身売りされる形で「だるま娘」の名で見世物小屋で芸人として働かれましたが、その時代においては障者に対する偏見が酷く屈辱も大きかつたそうです。

「何故、私ばかりこんな目に」という大きな不満が、相手の顔を見ただけで「私を差別している」と感じ、自分の心の中で何人もの人を殺したと言われています。しかし興行先で観客の一人であつた書道家から「泥の中の蓮であれ」という励ましの言葉が久子さんの心を救いました。その後、歎異抄に出遇われた久子さんは親鸞聖人の言葉「煩惱具足の凡夫、すなわち、煩惱を引き受けよ」という教えに目覚められました。それは、「煩惱とは何か」と思索するうちに「煩惱の出所は両手両足の無い我が身であつた。人殺しをするような心になつたのも、「これでも親か」と厳しい母親を恨んだのも、全部両手両足の無い身体が原因であつた。煩惱とは両手両足の無いこの身体であつた。」と「煩惱を引き受けよ」ということは、両手両足の無い身体をそのまま引き受けよということだと気づかれたのです。そして、人と比較することをやめ、両手両足の無い我が身を受け入れた途端、「私は肘から先がない。皆は五体満足で羨

ましい」という思いが転ぜられて「肘まで腕があつた」という現実を喜ばれたのです。久子さんが念仏から教えられた世界は、「肘から先がない」のではなく、「肘まであつた」という感謝と感動の世界でした。

蓮は泥の中で成長しますが、蓮の花は泥に染まることはありません。久子さんは念仏に出遇うまでは、両手足のない身体をつねに憎み、心の中で多くの人を殺すような泥に染まった生活をしていました。しかし、念仏の教えに導かれた久子さんは、煩惱の原因であつた不自由な身体をそのまま受け入れることによって、愚痴や妬み、そして怒りの生活から「肘まであつた」という感謝に満ちた日暮らしに転ぜられていったのです。

そして、母親の厳しい躾がなければ自立した生活を送ることは不可能であつたと、幼少の頃に経験した厳しい生活の裏に母親の深い愛情を見出し、鬼と憎んでいた母親を悲母なる菩薩であつたと仰がれ、念仏のみ教えに出遇えたのも両手両足の無い不自由な身体のお陰であつたと自分の病気にまで感謝されました。

一九三七年に来日したヘレンケラーは久子さんと対面した際、「私より不幸な人、私より偉大な人」と称賛されました。手足がないという障害こそが自身の素晴らしい人生を作りだしてくれたのだとする久子さんの力強い生き方が多くの人々に大きな勇気と希望を与えました。久子さんは亡くなるまで、婦人会、学校、刑務所、お寺など全国で講演活動を重ね、心に響く名言を残されています。「人の命とはつくづく不思議なもの。確かなことは自分で生きているのではない。生かされているのだと言つてことです。どんなところにも必ず生かされていく道がある。すなわち人生に絶望なし。いかなる人生にも決して絶望はないのだ。」と。

念仏によつて、「ない」ことへの絶望の人生から、「ある」ことの感謝と喜びへと転じられた久子さんは、その人生に見事な蓮の花を咲かせられた真の念仏者でした。

Buddhist Education and Our Ministerial Staff in April

Bill Teague, Buddhist Education Committee

Many thanks especially to **Rev. Maribeth Smith** and **Rev. Laverne Imori** for increasing the number of live events as we wind our way through what we hope is a fading pandemic. The ministers are now offering **two live services a month** for the immediate future.

Here are the list of services and Dharma talks for April:

SUN 04/03: **YouTube** video dharma talk

SUN 04/10: **Hybrid** Hanamatsuri Service

SUN 04/17: **YouTube** video dharma talk

SUN 04/24: **Hybrid** service (Shotsuki Hoyo memorial)

Note: Hybrid (In-person + online) services may revert to Zoom or YouTube *Streaming* if COVID conditions change.

Upgrades in Technology

As we experiment with hybrid services – with some people attending in the Hondo and others logging in remotely – we hope to deliver a better experience on the technology side for both audiences. For people in the Hondo, we will use the large screen to let you see what the folks at home are seeing, and also the slides that will contain the words to sutras and gathas. For people at home, the technical team of **Ken Mu-raoka** and **Tim Kajita** are using new solutions and equipment to deliver high-resolution video and clearer audio.

Flexibility with Schedule and Delivery

Delivery. We ask your flexibility because we are still juggling ways to integrate these technologies. For some services we may be sending out a YouTube link to live stream (but not interact) with the service; others may involve the Zoom approach we have used for almost two years now.

Schedule. To allow for a live Shotsuki Hoyo hybrid service, the Temple has permitted the ministerial staff to schedule the Shotsuki for April on April 24, and in future months it may also fall on a Sunday other than the first Sunday service.

SPRING O HIGAN SERVICE HELD IN-PERSON TECHNOLOGY BRINGS SANGHA TOGETHER



Rev. **Maribeth Smith** and Rev. **Laverne Imori** lead the Sangha with opening meditation during the temple's O Higan service on March. 20.

Approximately 70 adults and children attended the first in-person service of 2022. The service was also live-streamed on the temple's YouTube channel.

The Sangha listens to Rev. **Laverne Imori's** O Higan Dharma message and views the slides that are being shared to participants both in the hondo and online.

Hanamatsuri, April 10: Welcome Rev. Blayne Higa



The Temple welcomes Rev. Blayne Higa as part of our observance of Hanamatsuri, and we hope to have a yellow hibiscus, the Hawaii state flower, among the other blossoms present in our flower festival.

Rev. Higa will address us remotely from Hawaii, during our transition from online services only to live and hybrid services. We are grateful that we will be able to hear his Dharma in this fashion, and hope he visits us in person some day. Welcome Sensei!

About Rev. Higa

Rev. Blayne Higa is the Resident Minister of the **Kona Hongwanji Buddhist Temple** on the Big Island of Hawaii, the island where he was born and raised.

He holds a Master of Divinity degree from the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, California with a focus on Shin Buddhist ministry and chaplaincy. He previously served as Assisting Minister of the **Moiliili Hongwanji Buddhist Temple** and as Assistant Chaplain for the **Pacific Buddhist Academy** in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Before entering the ministry, he spent over 17 years in state government and non-profit fundraising. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree and a Certificate in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

Rev. Blayne is the Chair of the **Committee on Social Concerns** for the **Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii**. He also serves on the Board of the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii and Vibrant Hawaii. He is a past President of the Moiliili Hongwanji Board of Directors and former First Vice President of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

Rev. Blayne received *Tokudo* ordination in 2012 and *Kyoshi* certification in 2018 from the **Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha** in Kyoto, Japan.

Some Temple members know Blayne Sensei for his messages and posts, available in several iterations online, especially "It's OK Not to Be OK: An Affirming Shin Buddhist Spirituality," well worth your attention.

Requesting your Flower Photos for Hanamatsuri 2022!

Send in your flower photos! Since we live in ever-changing and challenging times, we'd like to get photos from you of your flowers to display for our Hanamatsuri Service again this year. Last year's service on Zoom included a slideshow of flower pics sent in by sangha members, and we'd like to continue that tradition again for this year's Hybrid service. Please send photos of flowers in your yard, your neighbor's yard, bouquets that you have received, your vacation pics posing in front of a flower garden, pets and flowers, kids and flowers, kid's drawings of flowers, your artwork of flowers, grandma's flower garden, grandma in her flower garden, picnicking under cherry blossoms, etc, etc. Please send your flower photos to btzd.ministerial.team@gmail.com by Wed., April 6 for inclusion in this year's Hanamatsuri Service!

In gassho, Smitty