



# MEGUMI

慈恩

GARDENA BUDDHIST CHURCH  
1517 W. 166th Street, Gardena, CA 90247  
Phone: 310-327-9400 FAX: 310-327-4660  
E-Mail: [info@gardenabuddhistchurch.org](mailto:info@gardenabuddhistchurch.org)  
Rev. John Iwohara, Rev. Sala Sekiya



## Gardena Buddhist Church

### July 2020

Volume LIII No.7



**Rev. John Iwohara**

## “The Three Dharma Seals of Buddhism”

The Three Dharma seals of Buddhism (三法印, san bou in) are the three doctrinal points that distinguish Buddhism from other religious schools of thought. Put in another way, if you do not teach these three things

as a minimum you cannot claim to be a school of Buddhism. The three Dharma seals are: (1) all that is caused to arise is impermanent (諸行無常, sho gyou mu jou), (2) all that which has form is non-substantial (諸法無我, sho hou mu ga), and (3) nirvana (extinction of troublesome worries) is tranquility.

Religion is meant to help us to understand our lives and through that understanding to live our lives with courage and inspiration. That, I think, is the practical application of religion. How do these three Dharma Seals help us to do that now, in our current situation? The first is rather simple. If we learned the lesson of impermanence, then nothing that we are experiencing now should cause us fear. It is just how everything changed. It is what it became. However, because our current situation is something that arose these circumstances, too, must change over time. All that is caused to

arise is impermanent.

The second seal is sometimes also interpreted as “inter-dependence.” Nothing can exist in and of itself. We find ourselves in a very unique situation. We are not only in the middle of a pandemic, but we also witnessed the eruption of the social movement called Black Lives Matter. What the covid-19 pandemic made painfully clear is that we are all in this together. Covid-19 does not care what your socioeconomic status is, it does not care what color your skin is, it does not care what gender identity you may have. If you are human you are a target of this disease. If even one person is careless in how the virus is dealt with the disease can spread to everyone. The Black Lives Matter movement, because we are being forced to see how we can treat another human life, is also helping us to see how we are all connected to each other. To borrow the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” We are all in this together.

Understanding the first two Dharma Seals together can help us to understand what it is that we have at the temple. We discover, more clearly now, that the moments we have with each other are limited. For example, we have lost many friends during this “stay

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at home period.” The temple, unfortunately, remains closed. We are being shown that the ability to meet with our friends at the temple is not something that we should just expect to happen. We are being shown that these meetings were beautiful opportunities that we were allowed to share. We cannot gather by ourselves. We need each other to do that. The pandemic is making this painfully clear.

The final seal, nirvana is tranquility, is where we discover the meaning of our experiences with the first two seals. Things changing, losing loved ones to death all cause us to feel sorrow

and pain. Ignoring how we are all related to each other, failing to see how we are “all in this together” also causes us and others pain and anguish. This third seal is letting us know that Buddhism has been able to discover that we are not just fated to suffer endlessly. Instead, these experiences that caused us to suffer can move us to seek the path. Through following the path we can gain understanding and wisdom. With this understanding and wisdom we become capable of sharing compassion.

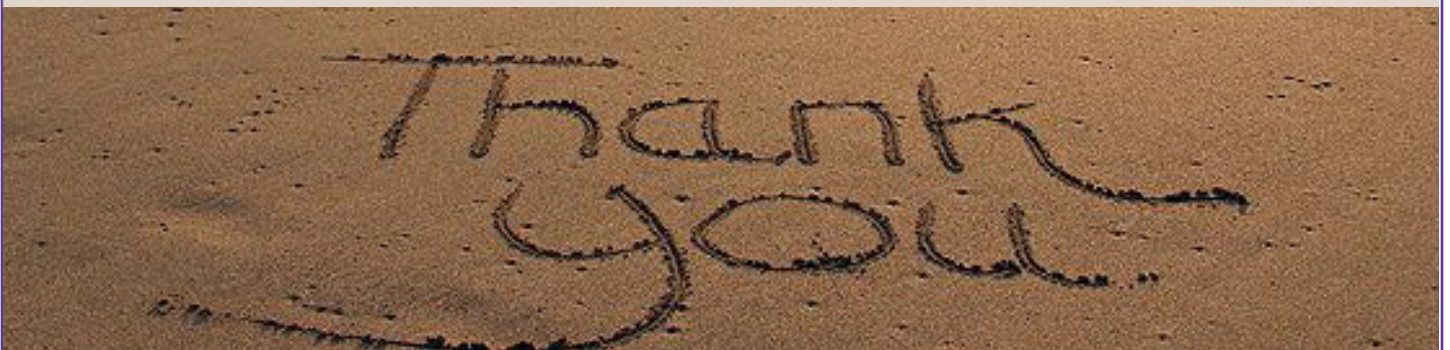
Next month: The Three Dharma Seals and Jodo Shinshu

## Congratulations! & Thank you! to Rev. Sekiya

John Iwohara

In my July article I wrote about the Three Dharma Seals of Buddhism. In that article I mentioned that the first Dharma Seal is “All that is caused to arise is impermanent.” When people come together a new “group” is formed. However, because every group is also “caused to arise” or is formed, every group must also be impermanent. When Rev. Miyaji retired we were very fortunate to have Rev. Sekiya come so quickly to help us at the Gardena Buddhist Church. We are a very busy temple. Although it could not have been an easy transition to go to a temple that has daily morning services and daily messages in both English and Japanese; weekly Dharma School Services, Adult English Language Services, and Japanese Language Services; monthly study classes; and memorial and funeral services, Rev. Sekiya allowed us to continue all these different programs. I would like to express my gratitude to Rev. Sekiya for working so diligently in helping us to continue all these programs and in particular for helping us to maintain our Japanese Language programs.

Although I’m sure that everyone will miss Rev. Sekiya’s presence at the Gardena Buddhist Church, I would also like to express my congratulations to Rev. Sekiya upon being promoted to the resident minister of the San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. Best wishes to Rev. Sekiya as she continues to share her understanding and appreciation of the Nenbutsu teaching to the members of our sister temple!







## TUESDAY SOCIAL

I wish we were able to gather and see each other. But currently, it is not possible, so we will just send out VIRTUAL handshakes, hugs, high fives, and how are you's. I hope this finds you safe and healthy.

The month of June was an incredibly sad month, as we lost 3 very dear friends: Aki Kawamoto, Sue Okazaki, and Ellie Ozawa. Our sincere heartfelt condolences to each family. We will always remember Aki for her HanaFuda playing skills, Sue for her special chicken salad recipe, and Ellie for her weekly delicious soups. Thank you, we will miss you.

Many have heard the news that the BCA has re-assigned Rev. Sala Sekiya to the San Fernando Valley Buddhist Temple effective 8/1/2020. Sekiya Sensei, we will miss you at Sunday Services and at our Tuesday Social gatherings. We appreciate your conversations with us, and your interaction with all our Tuesday Friends. We will always think of you when we say "... with deep gratitude, Itadakimasu". Thank you.



June was a great month for Mr. Bill Nishimura, who turned 100 years old. His drive-birthday celebration was captured by TV station ABC7. A nice article was printed in the Rafu Shimpō about Bill's amazing 100 years. Bill also received a congratulatory certificate from the BCA. HAPPY BIRTHDAY BILL! Enjoy your special year.



Certificate from BCA

Masks continue to be mandatory when in public places. If anyone needs a mask, please let us know. We have wonderful seamstress that are still making masks. If anyone needs assistance for anything, please reach out to someone. There are many of us that can help you. Please don't hesitate to call. Please take care and be safe.



## The Community Projects Group

Thanks again to everyone for their support of our group. As the church has been closed since March, we have been working at home on our many projects. We were able to fill a number of graduation lei orders, as well as work on items such as happi coats, scissors holder, aprons, all sorts of kitchen goods and face masks.

We are looking forward to the day when we can again meet at church for our bi-monthly gatherings.



(Meeting in 2019 discussing events & projects)

## ABA News

Beginning on Father's Day, June 21, ABA, together with the rest of the Sangha, has been enjoying Sunday Services again via ZOOM. Although we can't be physically together, it's still so nice to "see" everyone! Thank you to Rev. John, Rev. Sala, the chairpersons and technicians for making it all happen.



We were saddened to hear that, as of August 1, Rev. Sala will be leaving us to go to San Fernando Buddhist Church. While we will no longer be able to hear her cheerfully say, "Good Morning! Ohayō!" before Sunday services or listen to her Dharma messages, ABA gratefully appreciates all the guidance Sensei has provided the group. We wish Sensei and Sophie all the best! ♥ We look forward to the day when conditions will permit GBC to hold a farewell party...ABA members love a party!

Take care, stay safe, stay healthy. Much love and gratitude to everyone from ABA.

## ICHI-MI CLUB

Reflecting back on June, which is LGBTQ pride month we would like to thank the sangha for your support. People in the LGBTQ community have been marginalized for a long time but we appreciate the sangha for hearing us and giving us a safe space within the sangha to be able to know we are not alone in this journey.

Ichi-mi members have been working on transferring programs such as the Gender Language workshop to a virtual platform. Our hope is that we will be able to keep teaching, learning and growing with the sangha to keep working towards creating a safer place for LGBTQ individuals, their families and friends even during this COVID-19 pandemic. We have also started working on creating ichi-mi masks for our group to help us stay safe during this pandemic.



In Gassho,



## Wisteria Chugakko

### Congratulations to Tyler and Kaitlyn!!

Last summer, Wisteria Chugakko took a field trip and spent the day at the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) in Los Angeles. At the museum students learned about the lives of seven individuals who experienced the consequences of World War II (pre-war, wartime, post-war), participated in a scavenger hunt for historical artifacts, and viewed the documentary, "From 9066 to 9/11". We concluded the day with lunch on the steps of JANM, and shopping in Little Tokyo. It was a wonderful day of learning and shared experiences.

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Based on their experiences gained from this field trip, two of our Wisteria Chugakko students not only participated in, but were recognized for their dedicated efforts to research history and to write and create a project on this period of history. Our Wisteria Chugakko students were recognized by the Manzanar Committee Student Awards Program after submitting their projects. We would like to congratulate our Wisteria Chugakko students of whom we are so very proud.

## Tyler Higuchi

Congratulations! It is our pleasure to announce that you are a winner! Your project was selected as our 1st place winner in the 6th – 8th grade Level, Visual Arts Category of the Manzanar Committee Student Awards Program. Your project showed a great deal of thought and work. (Please view his artwork and read his written piece below.)

***“Compare and Contrast What is Happening In the Muslim Community with the Japanese American experience. What can you do to support the Muslim community today?”***

The situation with the Muslim American community reflects the situation with the Japanese Americans during World War II. Both groups have been unfairly treated as traitors and/ or prisoners in their own communities. On Dec. 7, 2015 President Trump called for a shutdown of Muslims entering the U.S. because he seemingly believes all Muslims are potentially terrorists. Coincidentally, on Dec. 7, 1941, Japanese planes attacked the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, HI. The next day, the U.S. declared war on Japan and entered World War II. A few months later, Americans of Japanese descent were incarcerated in isolation camps because, “few if any could be trusted.” Anti Japanese sentiment was allowed to flourish in our country during this time. Alarmingly, more than seventy five years later, Muslim Americans are, like the Japanese Americans, being unfairly treated as traitors in their own country and anti-Muslim attitude is being allowed to grow strongly.



Today, I am creating artwork to remind our country of the parallels between the Muslim American and Japanese American experiences to help ensure that the injustices suffered by my Japanese American great grandparents are not repeated in this country.

**Name: Tyler Higuchi Grade: 7th**

**School: Adams Middle School, Redondo Beach**

**Sponsor: Charlene Hirotsu, Principal Wisteria Chugakko**

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## Kaitlyn Quach

Congratulations! It is our pleasure to announce that you are a winner! Your project was selected as our 2nd place winner in the 6th – 8th grade Level, Written Category of the Manzanar Committee Student Awards Program. Your project showed a great deal of thought and work. (Please read her essay below.)

### “Uniting the World for the Better”

**By: Kaitlyn Quach**

Many people say rude or mean remarks when they are not thinking, jealous, or in need of someone else to blame. An example is on the morning of December 7, 1941, more than a hundred planes launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, a United States Navy Base near the capital of Honolulu, Hawaii. These Japanese fighter planes destroyed almost 20 American naval vessels, eight battleships, and more than 300 airplanes. After the damage was done, more than 2,400 Americans died and 1,000 people were injured. In World War I, Japan and the United States were allies, but that quickly changed in World War II. America declared war on Japan leading to the start of the Second World War. Why did Japan bomb America? Well, you could say Japan was insecure. They believed that in order to solve their economic and demographic problems, they had to expand their territory and collect their resources. This shows that when people feel threatened, they act out. This disagreement led to many lives lost and a bloody war that was unnecessary. Many people made sacrifices. For example, Nikkei that lived in Hawaii and the Western United States were relocated to concentration camps that were away from vital areas like docks, oil wells, shipyards, and air bases. This happened because the United States government did not want any Nikkei spies in these crucial areas. Most of the Nikkei obeyed, but some men challenged the government, which led to incarceration. Two-Thirds of the Nikkei that relocated were born in America and making them move showed how people still discriminated against different ethnic groups.

Although America is a free country, people still went behind other citizen's backs saying they were not loyal just because of their race. This leads to people not trusting each other and not standing together as one.

Concentration camps segregated Nikkei. For this reason, I think we should not have had concentration camps. These camps separated people based on their ethnicity and were used for physical isolation or forced labor. These camps were a sign of the government's physical and legal power. When people are forced into these camps, they were isolated from everyone else by barbed wire and guard towers. The Nikkei were wrongfully imprisoned without a trial. This was bad for the internee's mental health because it caused depression and loneliness. People should also be able to interact with others, especially their family members.



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When the war was over, Nikkei people were released from concentration camps and returned to their homes to start building their communities. They had to fight for jobs and real estate because everything they had owned before had been sold to other ethnic groups. Later Americans found out that the Nikkei's incarceration happened not because of military necessity, but because of their race. This shows that when people feel threatened, people forget about the Constitution, but instead do what "they think is right," even if it is not fair. This event led to the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and a presidential apology with 20,000 dollars to every surviving Japanese American citizen that was unjustly detained during this tragic period. This exemplified to us the importance of making our voice heard because an event like this should never happen again. People should not be discriminated against because of their ethnicity, gender, religion, or cultural background. Today, we can fight for and support immigrant families by speaking up on social media, volunteering your time, and meeting with other people that believe in the same goal and values.

A recent major event is the COVID-19, a disease that can spread quickly. In this situation, it would be good to have a separate camp for those that are ill. This will prevent the disease from spreading to those who are vulnerable. But, just because the COVID-19 originated in China, it does not mean Asians have the illness. At school, some people joke around that they have the disease or someone else has the COVID-19 because they are Chinese. This makes people feel bad about themselves and just puts people down even if they are kidding. Even though segregation is over, stereotypes still exist in this world. One thing that we can do to make the world a better place is when someone is in need of a friend because they were bullied or excluded, be a kind

friend. A good person will try to cheer them up, support them, stand up to bullies and tell them that we are here to support you. In communities, schools, and work spaces, we should encourage a safe and respectful environment. This will create a safe place for people if they need cheering up or just feel like talking to a person that cares. We can all do our part to stop discrimination and change the world for the better.

## Tyler and Kaitlyn:

We hope that this experience was a good learning opportunity and beneficial to you as you grow into young adults. We commend you for your self-motivation to research, write and edit your essays, as well as lay the atmosphere for you to present your ideas through art. Continue to express your feelings and ideas in your future endeavors. We are proud of both of you.



WE ARE  
SO PROUD  
OF YOU

We would like to thank Jenny Chomori, Co-chair Manzanar Committee and Janet Fujii, Co-chair Manzanar Committee Student Awards Program, for sponsoring and leading this endeavor to connect our young adults to their past.

With Gassho,

Reverend John Iwohara  
Wisteria Chugakko Headmaster

Charlene Hirotsu  
Wisteria Chugakko Principal



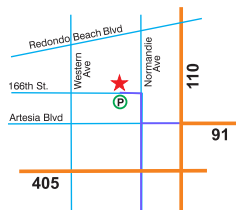
# Wisteria Chugakko 2021

We look forward to seeing you at Wisteria Chugakko 2021!  
Please email [wisteria.chugakko@gardenabuddhistchurch.org](mailto:wisteria.chugakko@gardenabuddhistchurch.org) for more details.



**Gardena Buddhist Church**  
★ 1517 W. 166th Street  
Gardena, California 90247

**From 91 or 110**  
• Exit West on Artesia  
• Right at Normandie  
• Left at 166th  
• Church will be on the right  
• Parking Lot on the Left (P)



**From the 405**  
• Exit Northbound on Normandie  
• Left at 166th  
• Church will be on the right  
• Parking Lot on the Left (P)



## Mission Statement

The Wisteria Chugakko (Middle School) is established to enrich the academic experience, and the religious and cultural understanding of its students in order to develop academics and a greater appreciation for the potential and dignity of human and all life.

Especially created for  
7th and 8th Grade Students  
(in the Fall of 2021)

Please join  
the Gardena Buddhist Church  
**Wisteria Chugakko  
Summer School**



Monday, June 21 – Wednesday, July 14  
**2021**

Reverend John Iwohara  
Gardena Buddhist Church Resident Minister  
Wisteria Chugakko Headmaster

Charlene Hirotsu  
Wisteria Chugakko Principal  
Alan Kita  
Jodoshinshu Education and  
Culture Committee Chairperson

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## Wisteria Chugakko Daily Schedule

8:30-8:55	9:00-9:25	9:30-10:30	10:35-11:20	11:25-12:10	12:15-1:00	1:05-1:50	1:55-2:40	2:45-3:30	3:30-6:00
Morning Assembly Sign-in	Morning Service	Period 1 (60 mins) for 15 minutes for painting	Period 2 (45 mins)	Period 3 (45 mins)	Lunch	Period 4 (45 mins)	Period 5 (45 mins)	Period 6 (45 mins)	After School Supervision

Students will have multiple teachers in the following content areas:

Calendar  
Calligraphy  
Car Mechanics  
Cartooning  
Chanting  
Collage  
Cooking  
Creative Writing  
Event Planning  
Excel  
Haku Poetry  
Ikebana  
Illustrations  
Japanese  
Taikwondo  
Kokeshi Dolls  
Lei Making  
Line Dancing  
Math  
Obon Dancing  
Physical Education  
Photography  
Preserving Stories  
Pulp to Paper  
Sewing  
Shakyo  
Buddhism  
Jodoshinshu  
Rituals and Etiquette  
Taiko  
Digital Citizenship  
Onsenju Making  
Tea Ceremony  
Yukata Dressing

## Teachers and Staff

Aponte, Kimberly  
Fuji, Janet  
Fujimoto, Fumie  
Harada, Edie  
Hirotsu, Charlene  
Hirotsu, Russell  
Hirotsu, Stephanie  
Ikeda, Bey  
Imada, Brian  
Imada, Imogene  
Inose, Kay  
Isomoto, Lynn  
Iwohara, Jean  
Iwohara, John  
Iwohara, Sean  
Kashimoto, Eric  
Kita, Alan  
Kushi, Devin  
Lai, Ming  
Maruyama, Phyllis  
Mayemura, Louise  
Mayemura, Tommy  
Mikami, Lynn  
Minamitani, Izumi  
Miwa, Alan  
Miwa, Christine  
Miya, Arleen  
Miyaji, Nobuo  
Miyaji, Yoshiko  
Motoyasu, Aya  
Nakagawa, Mai  
Nakamoto, Christine  
Nakamoto, Jane  
Nishimura, Elaine  
Nishimura, Patti  
Sasaki, Emiko  
Sasaki, Kiyoko  
Sekiya, Sala  
Shibasaki, Chigusa  
Shimizu, Gary  
Shimizu, Jean  
Shimizu, Linda  
Shimizu, Mitzi  
Takao, Dianne  
Takao, Donna  
Takashima, Debbie  
Tsuruta, John  
Ujiki, Reiko  
Uyemura, Cathy  
Viola, Eddy  
Yamanaka, Jeanne  
Yasaka, Allie  
Yasaka, Chris  
Yokota, Gladys  
Yokota, James



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## Gardena Buddhist Church Wisteria Chugakko Summer Program

Reverend John Iwohara, Gardena Buddhist Church Resident Minister, Headmaster

Charlene Hirotsu, Wisteria Chugakko Principal

## Student Interest Form

**June 21 – July 14, 2021**

I am interested in registering for Wisteria Chugakko for the Summer of 2021.

I will be in the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade in the Fall of 2021.

Student's Last Name	Student's First Name	Student's Gender Pronoun Preference
Student's Date of Birth	Student's Grade in Fall 2021	Student's School District
Father's Last Name	Father's First Name	Father's Cell Number
Mother's Last Name	Mother's First Name	Mother's Cell Number
Father's Email Address	Mother's Email Address	Buddhist Church Affiliation (Gardena, Senshin etc.)



## Fujinkai / BWA Buddhist Women's Association

### Happenings

- June 13th, Saturday - We had our quarterly SDBWA meeting on Zoom.
- June 14th, Sunday - We attended GBC Father's Day service virtually.
- June 20th, Saturday – We met at 10:00 to have a cabinet meeting on Zoom. It was nice to see everyone and catch up.
- June 28th, Sunday – Julie Miyata and Chizuko Morimoto attended Coordinating Council Meeting

### Announcements:

- July 12th, Sunday – July Regular Meeting will be held at 11:00 am on Zoom.
- October 3rd, Saturday – Southern District/BWA Conference will be held virtually. Rev. Yuika Hasebe from Homa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin will be the guest speaker.



*Dear Gardena Members,*

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Gardena Buddhist Church and the temple members for your support, trust, friendship and guidance during the three and a half years of my assignment here. I will be assigned as a resident minister to the San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple effective August 1st. I was shocked and still am to this day to think that due to the pandemic I would have to leave without seeing you in person, and properly

expressing my deep appreciation and how much I am going to miss each of you. I've already been in shock ever since the closure of the temple in March to see us separated for such a long time. Of course, through Buddha's teachings I have learned to be patient with conditions even if they are undesirable to me, but this has been a true reminder, a wake up call to the impermanence of all things. Thus, I have been reciting the nembutsu, reassured by finding you and myself together in the light of Amida Buddha. In that illumination, I see, as if they were not too far, the kind smiles on yours, the fun conversations among members, and friendly contacts.

Thank you to many people who have given me warm messages on this new journey. Your kind words of support have always meant so much for me. I continue to wish you the best. And my heart is with you through these difficult times.

I am deeply saddened to leave, but I am glad that I will be in the same Southern District, so I hope I will be able to see you once our society is back to safety and continue on our friendships.

Thank you, my sincere friends on the bright white path.

In Gassho,  
Rev. Sala Sekiya



*From GBC Board Chairperson*



**Imogene Imada**

### **To our Sangha Members and Friends,**

Hope you are all safe and healthy. It's been 3 months since we were last together at Sunday service but it seems much longer. This pandemic has shown us how important a role the temple plays in our lives and how much we treasure the time we spend with each other. I wish I could tell you all that we will be able to gather again soon but the rise in new cases continues. The church board is monitoring the Covid-19 situation to see when it will be safe to reopen. I know everyone is anxious to return to temple for services and see each other again but we ask that everyone be patient. Although the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health

and the City of Gardena has announced places of worship can reopen with appropriate safety protocols in place, it is also strongly recommended that places of worship continue to facilitate remote services and other related activities for those who are vulnerable to COVID-19 including older adults and those with multiple health conditions. The majority of our Sangha falls into this at-risk category and we do not want to put our members, employees or visitors at risk. So, there are no plans to re-open in the immediate future. A committee has been formed to start planning for the eventual reopening of the temple but again there are no plans to reopen soon. With the recent increase in new Covid-19 cases the temple advisors have recommended extending the temple closure through August 31st.

To keep our Sangha connected with the Dharma and each other, our Religious and Buddhist Education Committees (BEC) are working on virtual options for our services. The committee recently established live streaming Sunday services. Our Dharma School classes are now virtual and many of our affiliated organizations are holding virtual meetings. The BEC is also focusing on other options for bringing the Dharma to those that may not be able to take advantage of virtual services. We welcome any ideas to help the committee plan for future events or improve our virtual services.

It is with regret that I announce the reassignment of Rev. Sekiya to San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple effective as of August 1st. With the retirement of Rev. Patti Usuki, the Bishop decided to have Rev. Sekiya replace Rev. Usuki. Rev. Sala has been a wonderful minister to us and it saddens us to have to lose her. We will miss her but appreciate all of sensei's hard work and are grateful for the 3 years she has been at Gardena. We wish her much success at San Fernando Valley. Due to the pandemic situation we are not able to plan a farewell party for her yet but once we are able to gather again safely we will have that event. Luckily she will still be in Southern District so she won't be far away.

#### **July 2020**

10	Ad Hoc Committee Meeting via Zoom	7:00pm
11	GBC Board meeting via Zoom	1:00pm
12	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am
	BWA meeting via Zoom	11:00am
	Ichi-Mi Monthly meeting	12:30pm
16	BEC meeting via Zoom	7:00pm
17	Young Adult Dharma	6:30pm
19	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am
26	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am

#### **August 2020**

2	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am
3	Megumi Articles due	
9	Obon/Hatsubon Hoyo Service via Zoom	9:30am
	Ichi-Mi Monthly meeting via Zoom	12:30pm
16	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am
23	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am
30	Sunday Service via Zoom	9:30am



関谷沙羅開教使

## 『有難うございます — 門前の小僧習わぬ経を読む』

タイトルと全く違うテーマのようですが、今回は『暁』[あかつき]について書こうと決めていました。皆さん、暁がどのようなものかご存知でしょうか？先生が前に話してたから知ってるよ！という方もおられるでしょう。私はこの暁の話がとても好きなので、若干繰り返していると思います。それでも最終回の今回、暁でしめようと思いました。

復習になるかもしれませんが、暁という、今では多くの方が、朝の太陽が昇る少し前の、東の空が少し明るんできた頃のことと思っているそうです。明るさが含まれている。しかし、それは本来は曙という時間帯だそうです。また、曙になる直前の、空が明るくなり始める時間帯は東雲といいます。暁はその前、朝の3時から4時頃の、まだ真っ暗な時間帯です。

昔の人達はこの夜中である暁にこそ、神仏が現れて導いてくださると思われていたそうです。その時代、親鸞聖人は比叡山での修行に行き詰まりを感じられ、ご自身の進むべき道を問うため六角堂での百日間の参籠を決意されました。そして、その95日目の暁に、救世観音の化身とされた聖徳太子の夢告にあずかったといわれています。まさに、暁という時間は仏様が現れる時間という当時の常識に則ったところがありました。『恵信尼消息』に「そのあか月出でさせたまひて」とあるように、親鸞聖人は夢告を受けるやいなやすぐにその足で法然聖人のもとへ向かわれたのです。この暁の、暗闇の中での親鸞聖人の歩みこそが、後には誰もが歩むことのできる他力念仏の道の第一歩となったの

です。

『尊号真像銘文』の中で親鸞聖人は「正信偈」について解釈されていますが、そこに暁についてこのように書かれておられます。

「『摂取心光常照護』といふは、信心をえたる人をば、無礙光仏の心光つねに照らし護りたまふゆえに、無明の闇はれ、生死のながき夜すでに暁になりぬとしるべしとなり。『已能雖破無明闇』といふはこのころなり。信心をうれば暁になるがごとしとしるべし。」

親鸞聖人の時代の暁についての理解は先に説明した通りですから、聖人はここで、信心をうれば明るくなる、と仰っているのではないことがわかります。無明といわば変わらない、暗闇ではあるのです。しかしその闇はただの闇ではない。必ずや明ける時が来る、東雲や曙の前である闇であり、そこには大きな違いがあるのです。

親鸞聖人は修行を進めるが進めるほど、人間の無明の深さを思い知らされたのですが、その闇の中に他力念仏の道を見つけられて、仏道の歩を大きく進められました。それまでとらわれていた人間の世界、他の人達の意見や迷いを、ようやく退けて、暁の独りの道の中で、佛に遇われたのです。そして、仏様の用意された道を、自然に沿って行かれた。それが親鸞



(12ページに続く)



(11ページからの続き)

聖人の暁でした。

時を戻して今、私達が暮らすパンデミックの時は、世界に問題が目白押しのように、長い闇に迷い込んだように思える日々となっているかもしれません。家族に会えない。お友達に会えない。皆さんに会えない。何も思い通りにいかない。いつまで雲の中が続くのか分からない。この先何が起こるか、世の中は大丈夫なのか。孤独や絶望を感じそうになる時もあるかもしれません。しかし、私達の闇は、私達次第で夜明けの前の暁となることができると、親鸞聖人は示してくださいました。闇の中にあっても歩んでいくことのできる道がすでに阿弥陀如来様より与えられてあったと知らされるということです。私達は仏様に遇う中で、これがただの闇ではないことに目が開かれるのでしょう。今、この同じ闇の中、この中に、何かが詰まっているのです。

色々なことが不確かで、難しい日々ではありますが、どうか皆さんは表のことに惑わされず、たとえ闇の中でも、光の名告りを聞いて安心を共に喜ばれて、仏様の道を歩まれてくだ

さることと、念じております。仏縁をどうしていただけてきたのか不思議に思える中途半端な僧の私ではありますが、門前の小僧習わぬ経を読むといえますか、心配止まぬ仏の方より、有り難いみ教えを聞き続けることのできる環境をいただいているように感じて生きてきました。暁の中、私は皆さんと歩んでいきたいと思えます。私達の道は分かたれることはありませんから、今後も御同行としてよろしくお願いいたします。

南無阿弥陀仏



## 婦人会便り

- 6/13(土) 南部教区婦人会例会がzoomにて行われました。
- 6/14(日) 父の日礼拝が初めてのvirtualスタイルでスタート。バーチャル参加ご希望の方は仏教会にお問い合わせ下さい。
- 6/20(土) 婦人会幹部会が開かれました。初めてのZOOM会議で久しぶりに懐かしいお顔を見させて頂きました。議題については例会にて発表します。
- 6/28(日) 附属団体連絡協議会も バーチャル会議 で両会長が出席しました。 合掌

## アナウンスメント：

- 7/12(日) 午前11時より婦人会例会が開かれますが今回からしばらくZOOMにてスタートです。
- 10/03(日) 南部教区婦人会大会セミナーが開催されます。本派本願寺西本願寺主催でハワイ西本願寺からの御講師の初瀬部 唯可（ハセベ ユイカ）師です。このセミナーもバーチャルスタイルですがお一人でも多く参加下さいませ。





### 『異動のご挨拶』

本来は直接お話しし、ご挨拶申し上げたいところではありますが、パンデミックにより仏教会が閉鎖となり、それが叶わず、書面でのご挨拶となりますこと、お詫び申し上げます。7月末をもちまして、ガーデナ仏教会から異動となります。これまでガーデナの皆様と仏法を聴聞させていただき、日々一緒にお念仏申させていただくご縁をいただきましたこと、大変感慨深く、心から感謝しております。3年半前、初め

て皆さんにお会いした時のよろこびを覚えています。お一人おひとり私の方に来て自己紹介してくださって、一緒に写真を撮ったりしました。今では亡くなられた方もいらっしゃると思いますが、こうしてお念仏の中で一緒に歩む深いご縁をいただいていたこと、共に過ごさせていだいた様々な時間を、振り返っております。早起

### 関谷沙羅

きして美しいお料理を作る皆様の姿、ご法事で涙される姿、お朝事に集ってこられる姿。笑顔が目には焼き付いています。

開教使の有り難いことの一つは、お寺に来られる皆さんお一人おひとりと話す機会をいただくことであります。かけがえのないそれぞれである皆様が、私を支え立たせてくださって、なんとかやっていくことができました。お育てをいただきましたことを深く感じております。皆様のご親切とあたたかく接して下さった優しいお心に、心からお礼を申し上げたいと思います。本当にありがとうございました。また通常に戻る時が来ましたならば、その時こそは、しっかりとお話しさせていただきたいと思います。8月からはサンフェルナンドバレー本願寺仏教会に配属となります。同じ南カリフォルニアでありますので今後もご縁をいただけますよう、どうぞお氣楽にご連絡くださいませ。

皆様が お体を大切に安心の中に過ごされますことを心から念じて感謝の言葉とさせていただきます。合掌

## Obon & Hatsubon Hoyo お盆&初盆法要

Date & Time: Sunday, August 9 at 9:30AM

Location: Remote via Zoom

日時：8月9日（日）午前9時半

場所：Zoom

