

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 494

APRIL 2020

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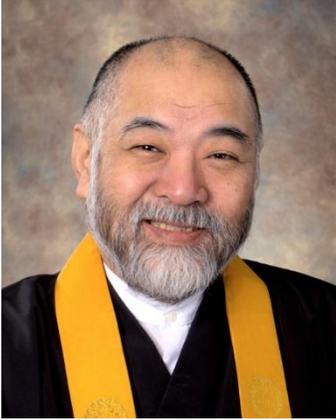
PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT DUE TO
COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

ALL APRIL CHURCH ACTIVITIES FOR THE
FOWLER BUDDHIST CHURCH
HAVE BEEN CANCELLED.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING.

WE HOPE EVERYONE WILL STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY.

NAMO AMIDA BUTSU



Now, We Are Reminded of “Right View”

Right View is the first lesson of the ‘Eightfold Noble Path’ and one of the essential foundations of Buddha-dharma.

Major teachings such as Shin Buddhism, are contrary to blind faith. Right View is always accompanied by our critical attitude. In reading Buddhist literature, we are surprised at sentences referring to “doubt” as the mother of “True and Real Awakening”.

Famous Zen master Ikkyu, best friend of our Rennyō Shōnin, once said, “If a Bodhisattva (=Bodhisattva) is to have a fatal disease, it would be the absence of ‘doubt’.” The original Buddhist word “Vicikitsā” which corresponds to the English word “doubt” means “sincere wish to understand”. From this critical standpoint, Śākyamuni Buddha advised his disciples to test everything by logic and not to accept anything out of regard for their authors or sacred books. He did not make an exception of himself either.

Kalama Sūtra says; “This I have said to you, Kalama, but you may accept it, not because it is a report, not because it is a tradition, not because it is so said in the past, not because it is given from the scripture, not for the sake of discussion, not because it appears to be suitable but if you, yourselves understand that this is so meritorious and blameless, and when it is for benefit and happiness, then you may accept it.”

Another Sūtra amplifies the above, saying, “As the wise test gold by burning, cutting and rubbing it (on a piece of touchstone), so are you to accept my words after examining them and not merely out of regard for me.”

This Right Viewing with critical examination which is entirely alien to blind faith (that all other religion requires) has made Buddhism unique among all way-of-livings.

Now, I am concerned about the mass-hysteria of the Pandemic caused by COVID-19. Please refer to the following information from credible England newspaper. And, please try to think logically with me, as Buddhists.

#The Guardian’s recent report on Wed. 18, Mar. 2020;

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/18/japanese-flu-drug-clearly-effective-in-treating-coronavirus- says-china>

Gassho,

Reverend Kakei Nakagawa, Rinban

with special thanks to Dr. Hunter Arakawa for his compassion and courage



Shinran's time and our time: we can learn from history

Hello, all Central California Sangha friends! How are you spending your time at home or somewhere else? I am writing this article after I watched our Governor's announcement on the statewide "stay at home" order. I am very sorry that I cannot physically reach out to you to encourage and cheer you up during this difficult time. When I moved to CC last summer, I started providing Sunday Service on the Internet which is called "live streaming." [https://twitter.com/fresno_nishi] Some of you may not know what live streaming is, so I'd like to explain what it is. When I conduct service at CC temple/church, I sometime record my chanting and Dharma talk. Providing it as a live show on the internet is called "live streaming". Nowadays, most TVs are internet capable, so you can watch my live streaming on your TV.

The third weekend of March, we were unable to hold our regular Sunday service due to the current emergency condition. We decided to hold the service without having any attendees. On March 15, Rinban Nakagawa, Rev. Midori, and I chanted Shoshinge and I shared my Dharma Talk for the service. It was provided as live streaming and saved online. We will provide this "Streaming-only Sunday service" until the current condition is over.

In the live streaming video of March 15, I talked about Ignorance - one of the three poisons. It is widely known as a Shinran Shonin's teaching, but we also can find it in an old Buddhist scripture, Nirvana sutra. Ignorance is one of the biggest factors to create a sense of fear. Ignorance does not mean "stupid." Ignorance should be understood as an "unknown condition". The sense of fear is a defensive / protective manner to deal with unknown conditions. It is a natural reaction of human beings. When we accelerate our sense of fear, we start panicking. Did you buy an extra toilet paper? If so, you should watch the streaming video.

To reduce our fear or prevent panic, what we should do? One of the solutions is to look back on our human history. Do you know what Malaria is? It is a mosquito-borne infectious disease. Less than 2,000 American people show symptoms of Malaria each year. Do you think it is a lot? According to the CDC, there were 228 million patients, and 405,000 lives lost in 2018 due to Malaria. It is a lot, isn't it? Why does Malaria not scare us or make us panic, although over 400,000 people die every year? Because there are preventive and curative medicines for the disease.

It is used to be known as one of the worst diseases in ancient Japan. The name "Malaria" first appeared in the Japanese Code of Taiho which was enacted in 701. It became a cause of epidemic, many times in Japan. Shinran Shonin was ordained and started his monastic life in 1181. A devastating famine and

epidemic occurred in the same year. A record of Hojoki states 42,300 citizens of Kyoto lost their lives. We don't know how he directly responded to or experienced the devastating circumstances. He shared his poem, when he requested Master Jien to conduct his ordination. He wrote "When we see cherry blossoms, we expect them to continue blooming tomorrow, although a storm may blow them away tonight." In this poem, he expressed his thought as "I want to live my life diligently in this present moment, because there is no guarantee whether I have tomorrow". I am sure that he was seeing or hearing of people dying from Malaria. Master Jien's brother, Kanezane Kujo was a big supporter of Shinran Shonin and his teacher, Honen Shonin. Some historic documents indicate that Kanezane's daughter, Princess Tamahi married to Shinran Shonin. Historians argue that Kanezane died from Malaria. In the 12th and 13th Centuries, there was no medication to cure Malaria. People knew what the symptoms were, but they did not know what kind of virus it was. In ancient time, rich patients hired shamans and let them pray and chant to cure their diseases. Kanezane was a high ranking noble. He might have hired them for his own longevity.

You may laugh at their reactions to Malaria or you may think they are stupid to hire shamans. If you were noble and lived in the 13th Century, you might also hire them. Who knows? While I am writing this article, thousands of researchers are working hard to find/create curative medicines to suppress the current pandemic situation. I have no knowledge or skill to create any medicines. I just sincerely thank all medical workers and researchers who tirelessly contribute their energy to save lives. Do you still feel fear or panic? Look at yourself. Your life is a gift from your ancestors who had survived through numbers of difficult situations such as war, pandemic, famine or disease, up until your generation. If Shinran Shonin would exist now, he would say "you are ok, do not worry", because he encountered famine and epidemic multiple times during 90 years of his life. Can you believe that the average age in the 13th Century in Japan was only in the 40s? Until his last breath, he did not lose his motivation for living. He focused on living his everyday life diligently. I am so fortunate to encounter Shinran Shonin and his teachings. He is a practical example on how to have a vital and positive living. Whenever you would like to chat with me, please call me. I am happy to talk to you. Please keep yourself, physically and mentally healthy. I hope to see you soon at Temple/Church or online!

Gassho.

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER Monthly Board Meeting March 10, 2020

Members Present: Barton Ashida, Sharon Asakawa, Ken Hashimoto, Tayoko Honda, Craig Honda, Arlene Keithley, Gary Mukai, Kimihiro Sera, Maxine Yoshimoto, Ron Yoshimoto, Craig Sakaguchi, Aiko Kamine, Cherie Nakayama, Gerald Nakayama, Kevin Nagata, Marlene Miyasaki, Rev. Nakata.

I Welcome/Gassho: Meeting was called to order by Pres. Barton Ashida, 7:05pm. Gassho by Rev Nakata

II Treasure's Report: Treasures report submitted by Ron Yoshimoto. Ron reported the Website Maintenance fee needs to be paid to Chris Mukai \$75.00 - \$150.00. Motion to accept treasures report by Craig Honda and second by Irene Hara and Motioned was passed.

III Approval of 02/11/2020: Minutes was corrected, "V d- \$100. Donation to Shin Zin for Camphor Tree". Gary Mukai Motion to accept the Minutes as corrected Sharon Asakawa 2nd. Motion was passed.

IV Old Business:

- A. BCF 2020 Food Bazaar; Ron Yoshimoto & Craig Honda will give final report after concluding March 17,2020 Meeting.
- B. Dharma School, Classrooms; Maxine reported there are 9 students. Classroom carpet needs to be cleaned.
- C. Rummage Sale; is postponed from March 21st to later date to be announced.
- D. Hanamatsuri; Kevin Nagata & Barton Ashida in charge, Luncheon "Teriyaki Don". Hanamido set up-Sat April 4, 5:00, & Hanamatsuri Service April 5, 10:00.
- E. Obon- June 20th Reedley BC, June 27th Visalia BC, July 11th Fresno, BC, July 18th Fowler BC, August 1st San Luis Obispo BC. Gerald Nakayama will transport Bins and plywood for stage/yagura. Organize Booths & Food; Dharma School-Games & Shave Ice, Fujinkai-Somen & sushi.
- F. Church Website- Gary Mukai will look into Compatible Programs for various computers (Joan, Karen, Barton & Church).
- G. N/A

V. New Business:

- A. National Council Meeting in Seattle-Gary Mukai reported BCA dues will increase to \$157.08 per member. BCA employees can be BCA member. Virtual membership is available to people who cannot access to BCA churches.

- B. Fowler Buddhist Church Golf Club will provide Breakfast/Lunch re: Service.
- C. Church Security Overview; Fowler Police Chief will come by and review the Church ground.
- D. Monthly Tobans; Front Sign changed & Water the ground as needed.
- E. 2020 FDSTL Conference OCBC; Barton Ashida & Gary Mukai will attend.
- F. Other N/A

VI. Reports:

Dharma School: 9 students, two family joined Fowler Buddhist Church

BWA: March 28th Bento Fund Raiser Cancelled. CCBWA Conference in Fresno
Dharma Center March 29th

Fishing Club: N/A

Golf Club: Spring Club Champion-Larry Nomura. Saturday April 18th Fowler Buddhist Church Fellowship Golf Tournament, Starting 11am, at Ridge Creek Dinuba Golf Club, Dinuba, California. May 17th Rancho Del Rey, Atwater. June 13th Glenn Annie Golf Course, Goleta, July 12th Telelei GC, Sonora, August 2nd Morro Bay Golf Course. August 15th Grizzlies- playing Las Vegas Aces, farm team of Washington National, promotion giveaway.

CCDC: National Council Meeting in February, 2020 in Seattle. Attending the meeting were Gary Mukai and Barton Ashida & Karen Mukai.

V & P: Informational Booth for Gay Pride.

CCMAC: What might happen when Rinban retires? 10 students aspirants, presently studying at IBS. Monthly fees of \$1890.00 for 3 ministers. The minister's assistance education and certificate will be administered by Reverend Nakata.

BCA: Presidents for next 2 years: Kent Matsuda 2020 President, Terry Omori 2022 president.

Bishop's Congratulatory and Testimonial Banquet for Reverend Marvin Harada and Reverend Kodo Umezu on Saturday June 6, 2020 at Hotel Kabuki.

Discussion: Membership for individuals who do not have a Buddhist Temple within 30 miles of their home will be allowed to pay a flat fee of \$50.00.

VII. Communications/Announcements:

FB Church New Members: Valerie Araki and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Torres.

Cancellation of; Rummage sale, Hanamatsuri, and future services due to Coronavirus.

VIII Next Meeting Tuesday, April 14, 2020

IX Acknowledgement/ Gassho:

Thank you to District 4; Maxine Yoshimoto, Sharon Asakawa, Arlene Keithley,
Tayoko Honda

Closing Gassho: Rev Nakata 8:00p.m.

Submitted by Tayoko & Craig Honda

The Buddhist Church of Fowler is disappointed to announce we will be cancelling Hanamatsuri service, luncheon and program, family service and Dharma school, meetings, and classes normally held in April due to the events surrounding the COVID-19 virus pandemic. The Buddhist Education lecture has also been cancelled. All future church events will be cancelled until further notice. Given that Sunday services have been suspended, Rinban Nakagawa, Rev. Kaz and Rev. Midori will be streaming Sunday service on Twitter. Please click on the link below to view: https://twitter.com/fresno_nishi
Please read Rev Kaz's Dharma message for information on this link.

CHURCH TOBAN FOR APRIL

District V

Rijis:

Cherie Nakayama
Diane Eskelsen

Toban:

Yoko Miyoshi
Alice Fujikawa

Fowler Fellowship Golf Tournament

We have postponed the April 18th tournament and secured **October 10th for our golf tournament at Ridge Creek golf course in Dinuba, 11:00 a.m. shotgun start.** We thank you for your understanding of the change and hope you are all being safe during this Coronavirus time.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you

Ken Okajima

Tournament Chairman

Cell 559 480-6530

March 2020 Donations

Shotsuki

\$ 100.00 Ada Yamamoto
\$ 100.00 Daniel & Karen Nitta
\$ 50.00 Greg & Patricia Miyake
\$ 50.00 Ken & Kim Miyake
\$ 30.00 Chuck Ideta
\$ 25.00 Ken & Janie Yuen

In Memory of Betty Nakayama

\$ 100.00 Mrs Yoshiye Yamagiwa
\$ 50.00 Sharon Yamagiwa
\$ 50.00 M/M Jeff Kane
\$ 50.00 Gordon & Susan Hayashi
\$ 30.00 Chuck Ideta
\$ 25.00 Kimihiro & Hitomi Sera
\$ 25.00 Jeff & Nancy Cole
\$ 20.00 Eiko Matsumura
\$ 20.00 M/M Joe Hara
\$ 20.00 Ms Karen Kondo
\$ 20.00 Nobie Osato
\$ 20.00 Dorothy Kobashi
\$ 20.00 Hideo & Linda Tsutsui
\$ 10.00 Teruko Sugimoto

Special Donations

\$ 400.00 Masumoto Family
In Memory of Carole Yukino Masumoto
\$ 300.00 Janis Sutow
Food Bazaar Donation