

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 503

JANUARY 2021

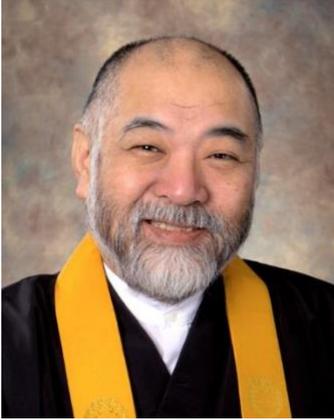
JANUARY

Please be advised that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the following church activities for the Fowler Buddhist Church have been cancelled:

January 1 New Year's Day Service

We appreciate your patience and understanding.
We hope everyone remains safe and healthy.

Namo Amida Butsu



A Happy New Year to You

~I hope that this New Year will be the happiest and the best yet~

On January 1st, we observe “Shushoh-ye” (New Year gathering) with a service. The New Year’s celebration is the most important annual event in Japan’s society and lasts for seven days in all the temples throughout Japan. Homes are cleaned and debts must be paid before New Year’s Day. “O-Shohgatsu” (New Year’s Day customs) exceedingly vary from prefecture to prefecture, but the foods and decorations all have to do with symbols of long life, happiness, luckiness, prosperity, and fertility.

What do you think is the happiest and luckiest life for the Buddha-dharma followers? It must be our lives knowing the true and real meaning of our Universe (Buddha-dharma) and living with no delusion.

There are three seals of Buddha-dharma:

*Anitya (in Indian Sanskrit)

Sho-gyoh mu-joh 諸行無常 (in Chinese) : <属性> Is-sai kai-ku 一切皆苦

Everything in this Universe is changing moment by moment.

< Attribute > All existence in this universe can never be controlled.

*Anātma (in Indian Sanskrit)

Sho-Hoh mu-ga 諸法無我 (in Chinese) : <属性> Is-sai Shoh-ki 一切性起

Everything in this Universe has no entity; so Nothing can exist by itself.

< Attribute > All existence in this universe is originated inter-dependently.

*Nirvāna (in Indian Sanskrit)

Ne-han Jaku-joh 涅槃寂靜 (in Chinese): <属性> Is-sai kai-kuh 一切皆空

Buddhahood is total relaxation.

< Attribute > All existence in this universe is occurring moment by moment in the state of Void-ness as Dependent Origination.

Once people realize these truth-realities, even in the unconscious level, their lifestyle turns positive and optimistic. Nothing fictitious could become an obstacle in their lives.

We could change the course of our lives freely anytime when we recognize it may be wrong or not appropriate. We don't care about anything prepossessed because nothing was decided in advance before we were born. We are now creating our own lives moment by moment right here in Central California.

New Year's Day becomes a symbolic day for starting over a new life. Particularly, the New Year's Wishes are important for the Buddha-dharma followers. Even in present Japan, millions of people visit temples or shrine and report this year's wish to the Buddha or the Shinto gods on the very first day of the year and start to make it real.

If you think you were unfortunate in this last year, examine your acts and try to change the course of living. It is stupidity to attach what has already been done for a long time out of mere habit.

If you were fortunate in this last year, advance your wish to the higher level. There is no limit of human potentialities until someday we would reach the state for being able to establish the ultimate Wish-for-the-World, as well as attaining Buddha-hood.

Gassho,
Reverend Kakei Nakagawa, Rinban





**The teaching of Amitabha (Namo Amida Butsu)
continuously teaches us how we can appreciate our
everyday life**

Rev. Kaz Nakata

Happy New Year to all Central California Sangha friends!

I am writing this article in mid-December. Under the new the “stay at home” directive for Central Cal since December 7, we have been unable to conduct in-person service in the Hondo, except Fresno Betsuin. I sincerely appreciate all CC temple and churches for opening their church early on Sunday and setting up their altar for our streaming services for the last nine months. As you know, the vaccine for Covid-19 has finally launched so I hope we can restart our streaming service at all CC temples and churches soon.

Over the last nine months, Covid-19 has completely changed the way we live our everyday lives. I guess the biggest change for most Americans is wearing of facemasks. In the beginning of the pandemic, many scientists and medical professionals expressed various opinions and stood opposite each other on the necessity of masks. By April, I had started seeing many people wearing masks in public. The use of facemasks was not in the American culture and many felt uncomfortable in doing so. I read a psychological research article published by Hokkaido University and the University of Glasgow, on why many Americans feel uncomfortable wearing masks. The article states that one of the main reasons is that American reads others’ mind by seeing their mouth. Blocking and covering the mouth makes them feel uncomfortable. I personally felt a longing to see them wearing masks in public. The reason I felt a longing is because people in Japan regularly wear masks in public. When I went grocery shopping in Japan, all the customers and workers were wearing masks. When I entered the store in Fresno, I was under the impression that I was in a Japanese grocery store in Japan! It was a weird experience.

When I was in an elementary school, I learned many old sayings. One of the sayings I learned was “*the eyes speak more eloquently than lips*” or “*the eyes cannot believe one's true thoughts*”. This is how majority of Japanese read others’ feelings, and the reason why they wear masks all that time was no problem. They do not need to see the mouth to know what others feel or think, because the eyes tell everything. I will share one of my experiences. I first arrived in the U.S. to the San Francisco International Airport during the summer of 2003. It was my first trip to the abroad, and first time seeing so many foreigners, Americans at that time, and many were wearing sunglasses. I was shocked to see them and said to myself “Oh my buddha! I cannot sense what they are

thinking or how they are feeling. They look like an alien who has big black eyes!” I was not surprised to see a big hamburger or a steak in SF, but I had cultural shock when seeing people covering their eyes. That is why I can personally understand why many Americans felt uncomfortable covering their mouths at the beginning of the pandemic.

As I mentioned above, Covid-19 has completely changed the way how we live everyday life since March. But the teaching of the Jodo Shinshu to our everyday life does not change with the current pandemic. The teaching is an appreciation of our everyday life. Since Jodo Shinshu was founded 800 years ago, many Sangha members have overcome many pandemics and epidemics.

Even Shinran Shonin himself encountered an epidemic multiple time during his lifetime. There is no manual on how to live our everyday life, but Jodo Shinshu is a guide for how we can be grateful to live our everyday life. 100 years ago, Fresno Betsuin supporters built their Hondo in the last year of the 3-year Spanish flu pandemic. It is pretty amazing, isn't it? I am sure that the Spanish flu completely changed the way Central Californians lived, but it did not change how Central California Sangha members enjoyed their ways of living with the teaching of Namo Amida Butsu. I believe that with their appreciation of the teaching, they built the Hondo while suffering from the pandemic. I am sure that these temple events during that pandemic became the hope for all Central California Sangha members.

Recently, I wrote a main objective of our teaching in plain English. I like to share it with you.

“The teaching of Amitabha (or Namo Amida Butsu) embraces not only human beings, but also other sentient beings, and leads all to the state of equanimity, and tranquility. This state, in our tradition, is known as Sukha. Sukha is recognized to be the equivalent of one who is reached enlightenment in other Buddhist traditions. Shinran Shonin states that one of the ten main objectives of Jodo Shinshu is to enter the state of Sukha, here and now. Once reaching the state of Sukha, one can deeply appreciate everyday life with a humble and sincere attitude. Because of the simplicity of the teaching, it has been widely shared in Japan. The teaching avoids petitionary prayer, magic, or other superstitions.”

Everyone has a different way of living, and the teaching encourages us to pursue it with the sense of the gratitude. We had to change how to live our everyday life, but we do not need to take the current situation pessimistically or negatively.

As a conclusion to my article, I would like to share my message which I shared on the Thanksgiving Day in November.

“All things that began in the past will end in the future. We need to be careful, but not scared. May we all attain tranquility and equanimity.”new years ikebana arrangement

May all have wonderful year 2021, and I am so excited to see you in-person soon.

Gassho



**VIRTUAL NEW YEAR'S DAY
SERVICE AND HO-ONKO AND
JANUARY SHOTSUKI MEMORIAL
SERVICE**

Jan 1 @ 10:00 a.m. New Year's
Morning Service. CC Combined
Service will be live streamed on
Twitter

Jan 3 @ 10:00 a.m. CC Combined
Shotsuki Service from Reedley

Jan 10 @ 10:00 a.m. CC Combined
Sunday Dharma Service from Parlier

Jan 17 @ 10:00 a.m. CC Combined
HoOnko Service from Visalia

Jan 24 @ 10:00 a.m. CC Combined
Dharma Service from Fresno

Jan 31 @ 10:00 a.m. CC Combined
Dharma Service from Fowler

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If you have any questions or need
assistance, please call the Betsuin
office Monday-Friday, (559) 442-
4054 or Reverend Kaz (424) 666-
7101

The Shotsuki names in the month of
January are:

Shitsu Yamamoto
Shika Sera
Sakuhei Nakayama
Yaichi Kikuta
Sadakichi Shimoda
Motoshiro Kurata
Tame Ii
Mitsuyo Sakohira
Shunsuke Uchiyama
Rika Okudo
Shizuye Morishige
Tane Hiyama
Hikoichi Hiyama
Otomatsu Ninomiya
Harue Nishina
Hatsuno Nishina
Becky Honda
Taka Taniguchi
Tamayo Nakamura
Yoshio Tokubo
Hideichi Yamane
Takeo Fujikawa
Otona Hagihara
Toyoso Kuramoto
Toshio Nakagawa
Frank Namito Masui
Hatuye Natori
Dick Iwamoto
Fred Akira Honda
George Miyake
Vernon Mayebo
Ichio Takeno
Dorothy Morita
Teri Uchiyama
Ayako Shimizu
Mikio Uchiyama

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND
TOBAN**

**JANUARY 2021
District III**

Riji: Kimihiro Sera
Kevin Nagata

Toban: Aiko Kamine
Irene Hara

BWA NEWS

We would like to thank the following families for their donations: Keith Nakayama, Susan Driss, Linda Matsumoto and Gerald Nakayama for \$50.00 in memory of Florence Nakayama. Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Nakayama for \$50.00 in memory of Betty Nakayama.

Please mail the \$15 membership dues for 2021 to Janice Yoshimoto. Honorary members, 90 years and older, have their dues waived.

The Fowler Fujinkai would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year and to thank you all for the support and hard work you have given throughout the year.

December 2020 Donations

\$ 500.00 Kimihiro & Hitomi Sera
\$ 250.00 Joe & Irene Hara
\$ 150.00 Art & Alice Fujikawa
\$ 150.00 Shig & Aiko Kamine
\$ 100.00 Rev. Bob & Patti Oshita
\$ 100.00 Ron & Maxine Yoshimoto
\$ 100.00 Ann Yoshimura
\$ 100.00 Howard & Satomi Hiyama
\$ 50.00 Ben & Jan Fujikawa
\$ 25.00 Rodney Kikuta

Shotsuki

\$ 100.00 Robert & Rose Mayebo
\$ 50.00 Ron & Maxine Yoshimoto
\$ 30.00 Howard & Satomi Hiyama
\$ 25.00 Art & Alice Fujikawa
\$ 25.00 Art & Alice Fujikawa
\$ 25.00 J.L Hayashi
\$ 25.00 Earl Honda
\$ 25.00 Earl Honda
\$ 25.00 Earl Honda
\$ 25.00 Shig & Aiko Kamine
\$ 20.00 Barton, Sharon & Lani
Ashida

Special Donations

\$ 500.00 Janie Yuen
In Memory of Ken Yuen
\$ 120.00 Calligraphy Class
Yasuko Henry, Aiko Kamine,
Jeane Naito, Megan Naito,
Midori Nakagawa, Taiko Nakagawa,
Fumie Inouye

BCA J.A.M.S.

Jodo Shinshu Artists & Musicians Showcase

FREE FAMILY CONCERT



EVENT DATE:
SUNDAY 1PM (PST)

**JAN10
2021**

REGISTER: <https://bit.ly/3pMLtsG>



SAVE THESE DATES!
2021 CBE VIRTUAL PROGRAMS
JANUARY ~ APRIL All events listed in Pacific Time.

<p>SATURDAY JANUARY 9 11 am - 1 pm Register online</p>	<p>SHIN BUDDHISM AND SCIENCE FICTION Speakers: Rev. Harry Bridge Buddhist Church of Oakland Rev. Jon Turner Orange County Buddhist Church & Rev. Landon Yamaoka Palo Alto Buddhist Temple <i>Venture into dharma explorations inspired by science fiction films.</i></p>
<p>SUNDAY JANUARY 10 1 pm</p>	<p>BCA YOUTH CONCERT! JODO SHINSHU ARTISTS & MUSICIANS SHOWCASE (JAMS) <i>Enjoy a variety of performances by BCA youth.</i></p>
<p>SATURDAY JANUARY 30 5 pm - 6:30 pm Register online</p>	<p>RELEVANT AMERICAN BUDDHISTS (RAB) Speaker: Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka Musashino University <i>Who and what were the RAB? Stories from BCA's 1970s program for young adults.</i></p>
<p>SATURDAY FEBRUARY 6 10 am - 11:30 am Register online</p>	<p>EVERY DAY BUDDHISM BOOK TALK "DISCOVERING BUDDHISM IN EVERYDAY LIFE" Speaker/author: Rev. Marvin Harada BCA Bishop <i>Listen to the stories behind this collection of heartwarming essays.</i></p>
<p>SATURDAY FEBRUARY 13 11 am - 1 pm Register online</p>	<p>"HONEN AS RELIGIOUS REVOLUTIONARY: THE PERSON WHO DEFINED THE BUDDHISM WE IDENTIFY AS JAPANESE TODAY." Speaker: Dr. Mark Blum University of California at Berkeley</p>
<p>SATURDAY MARCH 6 11 am - 1 pm Register online</p>	<p>ZEN & SHIN BUDDHISM - PART 1 "LETTING GO: A ZEN & SHIN APPROACH TO LIBERATION" Rev. Dr. Duncan Ryuken Williams Author, <i>AMERICAN SUTRA</i></p>
<p>SATURDAY MARCH 13 11 am - 1 pm Register online</p>	<p>ZEN & SHIN BUDDHISM - - PART 2 (Please note change of date) "ZEN PRACTICE" Speaker: Rev. Anton Tenkei Coppens Roshi Zen River Temple, Netherlands</p>
<p>SATURDAY APRIL 10 5 pm - 6:30 pm Register online</p>	<p>SOCIALLY ENGAGED BUDDHISM Speakers: Prof. Mitsuya Dake Ryukoku University Rev. Kiyo Kuwahara Berkeley Buddhist Temple</p>
<p>SATURDAY APRIL 17 11 am - 1 pm Register online</p>	<p>3 BISHOPS: "WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF BUDDHISM IN THE WEST?" Rev. Marvin Harada Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America Rev. Eric Matsumoto Bishop, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Rev. Tatsuya Aoki Bishop, Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada</p>

(v8)

VISIT BCA WEBSITE FOR UPDATES: FLYER, FREE REGISTRATION LINKS & TO DONATE (OPTIONAL)
BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG EMAIL: CBE@BCAHQ.ORG TEL: 510.809.1460