

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 510

AUGUST 2021

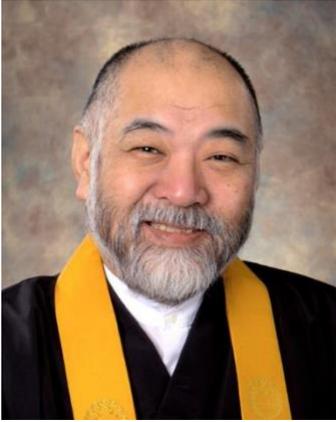
AUGUST

Due to the concerns of Covid-19, all **in-person** Sunday services, classes and activities will continue to be on hold until further notice.

We appreciate your patience and understanding.

We hope everyone remains safe and healthy.

Namo Amida Butsu



As the Fresno Betsuin Sangha anxiously awaits the completion of the Hondo, plans are currently underway for the Grand Opening service and celebration. My original thought was to conduct a “Kikyo-shiki Affirmation Ceremony” as part of the opening service but due to time constraints and capacity limitations, the ceremony will take place on a different date, with date and time still to be determined.

For the Central California District, receiving this "Kikyō-shiki" will be a condition for the direct conferral of the Dharma name at the time of the official visitation of His Eminence Monshu Kōjun Ohtani of Nishi Honganji to the United States after the end of this current pandemic.

The "Kikyō-shiki" Affirmation Ceremony is an important ceremony to make the vow to become a disciple of the Buddha and to live in the Buddha-dharma. Before Amida Tathāgata, the image of Namu-Amita-abha,* one renews one's consciousness as a member of Shin Buddhism, the Mainstream Mahāyāna Tradition, undergo "Okamisoru," the act of symbolically shaving the hair, and receive the Dharma name of "Shaku ○ ○".

The Dharma name you receive is a global sign that you are a disciple of the Buddha. The Dharma name begins with the character "Shaku (釋)" and is expressed with three characters, including the two characters of one's buddhist name. Incidentally, the character "Shaku" is the surname of Śākyamuni Buddha, symbolically indicating that one has become a member of Buddha's family.

Incidentally, in Shin Buddhism, the "Dharma name (Hō-myō)" is given to those who are emerged individuals with Buddha-nature by the working of Buddha's Amita-abha,

while in most of other schools, the "Precept name (Kai-myō)" is given to those who follow the strict precepts and follow the same path of Śākyamuni Buddha. Neither of these names is originally intended to be a memorial service for the deceased.

This is a once-in-decades opportunity to officially become a member of the world Dharma Sangha and receive an official Buddhist name in the Central California, U.S.A. Please watch for more information on this ceremony. Soon, applications will be made available to anyone wishing to receive their Dharma name.

* Namu-Amita-abha (*Namomitābha* in ancient Indian): “Namu” means ‘Entrusting oneself’ and “Amita-abha” means ‘The (Buddha’s) merciful wisdom and kindness which contains the nature of boundless-light’

In Gassho,

Rinban Kakei Nakagawa



Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin – Current situation of Adult Buddhist Education and Youth Buddhist Education in Central California

Hello, all Central California Sangha friends! It is a Flaming Hot Summer! Ah-Tsu-eeee!! This is my third Summer since I have moved to Central Cal in 2019. I mow my own lawn. In May, I was doing it in the late afternoon. Now I must start yardwork in the early morning and finish by 9am. I am gradually learning how to deal with the hot summer.

Last month, some Central California temples and Churches hosted in-person Hatsubon/Obon Service and, or Obon Dance activities. I posted some pictures and videos from our Obon activities on Twitter. Please view them if you missed them.

I usually write an article on one of eight essential teachings of Jodo Shinshu. I have written 4 articles on this topic so far and I plan to continue writing another 4 articles. But in this article, I am writing on a different topic: “Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin.” Have you seen this word somewhere in the Central Cal temples or churches? If you are a Parlier Sangha member, you cannot say you do not know, unless you have never attended activities at Parlier Buddhist Church. In front of the entrance of the church, there is a stone monument (left to the entrance). The word, “Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin” is engraved on the front surface of the monument, and appears with Kanji letters, 学-佛-大-非-心 **on it.**

When I studied Jodo Shinshu at Ryukoku University in Kyoto (founded in 1639 for the purpose of ministerial training), one of my professors, Risho Ohta *Kangaku* told me that Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin is one of the most important activities for Jodo Shinshu Sangha. I was a freshman at that time, so I did not know what he meant. When I was a junior, I had a chance to research Zendo, (Shan-Dao), one of the seven masters in Jodo Shinshu.

I found the word Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin in his commentary on the *Contemplation Sutra* of Jodo Shinshu.

Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin appears as a part of an introduction to his commentary. The introduction is known as Ki San Po Ge (Gatha of Taking Refuge in the Three Treasures). It is used at a traditional funeral service with a casket. So, if you have attended these services, you have probably heard it being chanted. Now I would like to share the meaning of Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin, explained by Jitsuen Kakehashi *Kangaku*. He is one of my favorite Jodo Shinshu Scholars. He states:

“the word is expressed by Zendo to honor and respect people who live a life of the Buddhist way, and it means People who are always eager to learn (Gaku) the heart (Shin) of great (Dai) compassion (Ji Hi) of the Buddha, as a lifelong student. Learning the Buddhist way equals to learning the heart of great compassion as the Buddha’s intention. Hi is an abbreviation of Ji Hi, compassion. Ji is a wishing will or heart to guide all sentient beings to the state of equanimity, which is transcending human desires and hatred. Hi means empathy for pain of all sentient beings. The teaching of Amitabha Tathagata embraces us with the heart of great wishing will (Dai Ji) and great empathy (Dai Hi), and it guides us all to the state of equanimity, pure realm which has no boundaries between supporter and opposer.”

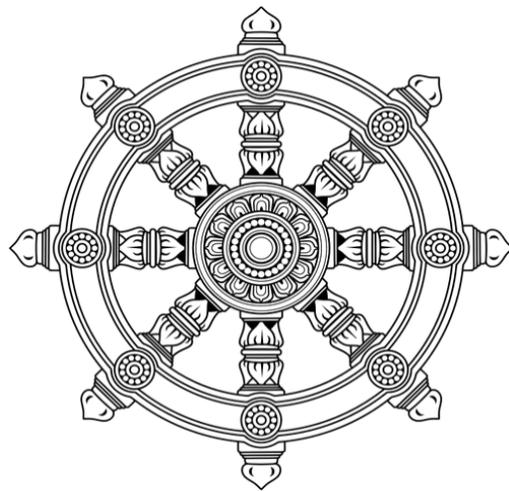
Since I have become a minister, I have always had an ambition to share the Buddhist teaching with as many people as possible. I initially started a weekly Adult Buddhist Study class at Sacramento Buddhist Church in 2004. Since then, I have held the Study class or lecture at various locations, including at a Public-School Teachers’ Association, VA hospitals, the White House and the office of the Congress. I have conducted adult discussions right after Sunday Services since being assigned to the Central Cal district. I announced a plan of a district level Adult Buddhist Education in 2020, and started it this January. For the spring semester, more than 20 people participated in classes, and half of the participants were registered as Ministerial Assistants at CC temples and churches. I hope they have encountered and understand Gaku Butsu Dai Hi Shin

through classes. I hope more and more people will join in this wonderful opportunity to reach the state of equanimity.

I also put extra effort into Youth education for the last 9 years. Currently, I teach weekly Applied Jodo Shinshu Buddhist studies to middle school and high school students (currently on summer break). It is a 2-year or 72-hour credit course. They learn Buddhist teaching in Sanskrit (original text language in India), Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, and English. You may wonder why they are learning in so many languages. The reason is that there are so many misconceptions or misinterpretations of Buddhism in English. I asked these students to write an essay on the Buddhist teaching after they spent more than 30-hours of study which included their homework. I was so honored and pleased to read their essays, because they properly understand the Buddhist teaching. It indicates that our Buddhist teaching and society will continue to the 22nd Century! I am including Makayla Kubo's essay in this issue. You may notice some differences between how you understand Buddhism and her explanation on Buddhism. I am sure you will enjoy her essay and feel confident that we as Central Cal have a bright future with the youngsters!

Gassho

Rev. Kaz Nakata



Duhkha

Makayla Kubo

Throughout my years of Dharma school at our temple, I have always been taught about the concepts of suffering as they apply to Buddhism and have found that most people have misconceptions about these concepts. This leads to a misinterpretation of Buddhist teachings, and people are more prone to see Buddhism as a negative belief system. This, as most of us know, is not true. Through this Dharma talk, I would like to explain the concept of dukkha.

Many of the misunderstandings related to Buddhism stem from the mistranslation of “dukkha.” Although many people have translated it as suffering, a more accurate translation is “unpredictable.” The Japanese word, ku, also has the characters within it that means “old grass,” which is interpreted as “bitter.” From these more accurate translations, it can be deduced that the true meaning of these teachings is that unpredictability eventually leads to most of our suffering. It is human nature to try to predict the future, which ultimately leads to the bitter feeling of disappointment. For example, if you expect to get an A on your exam, but you end up getting a C, you are understandably disappointed and unhappy. The rift between your expectations and reality was what caused much of the suffering, rather than the actual result. This perfectly demonstrates the basic concept of the teachings related to dukkha.

When I tell people that I am Buddhist, some people have had the audacity to criticize my beliefs without actually having any knowledge of them. They use stereotypes and very general information that does not apply to me, and some people have even tried to convert me to their “ideal” belief system. One of the main arguments that I have heard is that Buddhists are very pessimistic about life. However, I respond that I think Buddhism is a very realistic belief system, and it does not sugarcoat the basic truths of life. The stereotype of Buddhists being cynical does stem in a large part from the misinterpretation of Buddhist teachings of dukkha. This concept, often being interpreted as “suffering” or “pain” rather than its true meaning, “unpredictability,” is the cause of many people’s close-minded opinions and one-sided views of Buddhism. If people actually took the time to understand these concepts correctly, people would see Buddhism for its clear connotations of life and its unpredictability.

By keeping an open mind and accepting events and results as they come to us, our lives would significantly improve. The expectations that we all hold for ourselves can often be unrealistic, and we are often met with disappointment. We must learn that sometimes things cannot be helped, and we cannot change the past. By accepting what has happened and moving on without regret, we can meet tomorrow with a fresh start and clear mind.

I know that it is extremely unrealistic for everyone to suddenly throw away their preconceptions and predictions about certain results. Of course, things like that are human nature and cannot be changed so easily. Changing that human nature is much harder than learning how to recover from disappointment and suffering that can arise from unmet expectations. By keeping our goals and objectives in mind, but not letting them define us, we can move forward with our lives and greatly reduce the amount of suffering that results from dukha. Life will always be unpredictable, and we must accept that as a fact in order to be more content.



CENTRAL CALIFORNIA MINISTERIAL ASSISTANTS BUDDHIST EDUCATION

We have learned that life is filled with change; each day is filled with hundreds or thousands of single moments that can never be repeated exactly the same. All of our lives have changed due to the “Pandemic”, with lock-downs, the wearing of masks, working from home and meetings and classes via ZOOM and Microsoft Teams.

Some changes were made to the Ministers Assistant Program (MAP), becoming the Central California Ministerial Assistants Program (CCMAP). Some of the criteria to be a part of the CCMAP is to take at least one class per semester. I chose to participate in the CCMAP so that I could continue to be available to assist the ministers in the Central Valley as needed.

From January through June, I took *Essence of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism*, (via Zoom) taught by Rev. Kaz. The class covered the eight essentials of Jodo Shinshu. Since Rev. Kaz has learned *Sanskrit*, he was able to give us a more direct translation of the Buddha Dharma. In fact, for the past three months, Rev. Kaz’s newsletter articles have been about the Eight Essentials of Jodo Shinshu. This class was so full of information, allowing me the opportunity to gain a better understanding of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism.

Most of the classes are open to all of you so please talk to Rev. Kaz if you are interested. The instructors for the various classes are Rev. Kaz, Rinban Nakagawa and Rev. Midori Nakagawa.

In Gassho,

Rev. Karen Mukai

AUGUST SHOTSUKI MEMORIAL

The Shotsuki names for the month of August are:

Sho Tokubo
Moriye Tokubo
Tora Shinkawa
Okazu Honda
Tsuneichi Taniguchi
Kikuyo Komoto
Tosaku Komoto
Yoshio Sakamoto
Ysuto Hata
Kats Matsumoto
Takeichi Matsumoto
Bessie Kondo
Ryan Kondo
Yoichi Otani
Yoneko Yamamoto
Torakichi Sera
Toshiro Yamamoto
Tadao Yamamoto
Shizuno Okasaki
Chitoshi Kuramoto
Eki Ideta
Katsumi Nakatsukasa
Henry Oba
Frank Kimura
Buichi Sakai
Peggy Reiko Yamaguchi
Toyo Yamamoto
Yuki Yamada
Daniel Masao Nishina
Grace Fukiko Ishiguro

Kazuo Hiyama
Harley Mitsugi Nakamura
Jitsuo Otani
Michiye Shimoda
Makoto Coke Mukai
Kazuyo Uyemura
Wichi Takeuchi
Alyce Taniguchi
Reverend Kyogo Miura
Setsuo Kikuta
Haruo Ii
Fumie Miyoko Honda
Tom Tokiharu Nagata
Alyce Tokiko Nakagawa
Mitsuno Tomoyasu

CONDOLENCES

The Buddhist Church of Fowler extends its deepest condolences to the Murashige and Mukai family on the passing of their loved one, Mrs. Flora Murashige and to the Shimoda family on the passing of their loved one, Mr. Richard Shimoda. May you always find comfort in the Nembutsu.
Namo Amida Butsu

CHURCH TOBAN FOR AUGUST	\$ 100.00	George Teraoka
District I & II	\$ 100.00	Keith & Heidi Nakayama
<u>Rijis</u>	\$ 100.00	Keith & Heidi Nakayama
	\$ 100.00	M/M Gerald Nakayama
Ken Hashimoto	\$ 100.00	M/M Gerald Nakayama
Rick Miyasaki	\$ 100.00	Bey & Susan Driss & Family
	\$ 100.00	Linda, Nick & Chris Matsumoto
<u>Toban</u>		
	\$ 100.00	Shizue Mukai
Marlene Miyasaki	\$ 100.00	Gary & Karen Mukai
Ken Hashimoto	\$ 100.00	Jane Nagata
	\$ 100.00	Brian Nagata & Colleen Alvarez
AUGUST SERVICES	\$ 100.00	Brayden Nagata & Akira Roueche
8/01/2021 - CC Shotsuki Service Kingsburg	\$ 100.00	Lynn & Mitch Nakashima
	\$ 100.00	Rick & Stacy Ideta
8/08/2021 - CC Dharma Service Fresno	\$ 50.00	Kenneth & Nymka Nakayama
	\$ 50.00	Carly Nakayama
	\$ 50.00	Ben & Amanda Nakayama
8/15, 8/22, 8/29 - No streaming Services	\$ 50.00	Ben & Amanda Nakayama
	\$ 50.00	Jason Crawford & Shannon Nakayama
JULY 2021 DONATIONS		
<u>Obon/Hatsubon</u>	\$ 50.00	Jason Crawford & Shannon Nakayama
\$ 300.00 Mitsuye Shinkawa	\$ 50.00	Mike & Kristin Rademaker
\$ 300.00 Terry Catron, Michael &	\$ 50.00	Ms. Sharon Asakawa
	\$ 50.00	The Nakagawa Family
	\$ 50.00	Craig & Tayoko Honda
\$ 200.00 Dale Shinkawa	\$ 50.00	Doren & Kathy Lee
Janie Yuen & Family	\$ 50.00	Kodo & Janet Umezu
Damon & Cindy Yuen	\$ 50.00	Yoshiye Ii
Miki & Jade Yuen	\$ 30.00	Greg & Gay Mukai

\$ 25.00 Mrs. Mary Masako Mukai
 \$ 25.00 M/M Gene & Gale Nakai
 \$ 25.00 Rick & Marlene Miyasaki
 \$ 25.00 Gary & Arlene Keithley
 \$ 25.00 Jan Yoshimoto
 \$ 20.00 Mrs. Kikuko Sadamitsu
 \$ 20.00 Mrs. Cindy Inouye
 \$ 20.00 Takaaki & Yoko Miyoshi

Shotsuki

\$ 100.00 Ann Yoshimura
 \$ 50.00 Alex & Roberta Araki
 \$ 50.00 Jim & Michiko Fujikawa
 \$ 50.00 Lynn & Mitch Nakashima
 \$ 35.00 Brian Nagata
 \$ 30.00 Arthur & Alice Fujikawa
 \$ 20.00 Craig & Tayoko Honda

**In Memory of Toshiaki Shinkawa,
One Year Memorial**

\$ 300.00 Mitsuye Shinkawa
 \$ 300.00 Terry Catron, Michael
 Shinkawa & Dale Shinkawa

In Memory of Kevin Nagata

\$ 100.00 Sam Umeda Family
 \$ 50.00 Thomas & Ruby Okamoto

In Memory of Flora Murashige

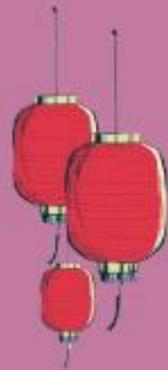
\$ 500.00 John & Melissa Murashige
 & Family
 Greg & Gay Mulai &
 Family
 \$ 450.00 John & Melissa Murashige
 & Family
 Greg & Gay Mukai &
 Family
 \$ 200.00 M/M Jeffrey Santoki
 \$ 100.00 Gary & Karen Mukai
 \$ 100.00 Mrs. Mary Mukai
 \$ 100.00 Matsumoto Family
 Doug & Linda
 Shaun & Anna
 Bradley & Sarah
 \$ 100.00 Margie Mukai
 \$ 100.00 Terry & Barbara Mukai
 \$ 100.00 M/M Gene & Gale Nakai
 \$ 50.00 Ruth Teigen
 \$ 50.00 Tina Kato-Clarey
 \$ 50.00 Rick & Marlene Miyasaki
 \$ 50.00 Howard & Satomi Hiyama
 \$ 50.00 Lisle Funeral Home
 \$ 40.00 Alex & Roberta Araki
 \$ 40.00 Diane & Dave Plaskow
 \$ 25.00 Sadako Sogioka
 \$ 25.00 Jane Moosoolian
 \$ 25.00 Lindsay & Chris Flood
 \$ 25.00 M/M Larry Nomura

Special Donations

\$ 400.00 Lisle Funeral Home
 In Memory of Vickie Michiko
 Hashimoto

2ND ANNUAL
**BCA VIRTUAL
OBON DANCE**

SUN 8/15/21 @ 1pm (PST)



Join us on Zoom for an Obon Dance
program featuring different temples
throughout the BCA

Please register here to receive the zoom link:

<https://tinyurl.com/2j3m73jw>

questions: cbe@bcahq.org or 510-809-1460

Central California Nikkei Foundation

Shredding Community Service and Fundraiser



Saturday, September 25, 2021

9am to 12 noon

Securely dispose of personal documents, tax papers,
Books-hardback & paperback.
Hard Drives.

Limit: 10 Banker Sized Boxes per car

Cost: \$15 per Banker Sized Box

\$15 per Hard Drive

Cash or Check only

Please make check payable to CCNF

Event will be Drive-Thru

Boxes will be emptied from your trunk/tailgate and returned

Held at Vintage Gardens

540 S. Peach Ave., Fresno

Questions contact: Susan Hayashi – 325-1457 or text 906-8540

Seniors who cannot drive to the event, call Susan by **September 10**
and arrange for pick-up.



BCA
Life of Gratitude

Photography Contest 2021



Do you love photography? The BCA appreciates all of the photographers within our community and would like the chance to highlight pictures you have taken of your temple, at temple events, or any Buddhism-related images. Winning photos will be chosen and posted onto the BCA website. DEADLINE TO SUBMIT PHOTOS FOR CONTEST IS 9/5/21



Submit your photos to the Google form.
<https://forms.gle/QDQ9x7aZhSRY8Cd59>

Any photos submitted are free to be used by the Buddhist Churches of America at their discretion

**Have you heard about the BCA Virtual Art Exhibit?
Join us in this first ever collaborative event!**

The poster features a background of abstract, textured brushstrokes in shades of blue, green, and brown. The text is overlaid on this background. At the top, 'BCA' is written in large, bold, black letters, followed by 'VIRTUAL' in smaller, grey, all-caps letters. Below that, 'ART' is written in very large, bold, black, hand-drawn style letters, and 'EXHIBIT' is written in bold, black, all-caps letters. A dark grey rectangular box contains white text: 'BCA Artists of All Ages', 'Submit your artwork to share with members of our BCA community.', 'All submissions are due by 8/15/21 and will be approved by the committee.', 'Please click the registration link for more info:', and the URL 'https://tinyurl.com/4urhwz4x'. At the bottom, a light grey rectangular box contains the dates 'SEPTEMBER 19 - 26, 2021' in bold black letters, and the website 'www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org' in bold black letters below it.

BCA
VIRTUAL
ART
EXHIBIT

BCA Artists of All Ages
Submit your artwork to share with
members of our BCA community.
All submissions are due by 8/15/21
and will be approved by the committee.
Please click the registration
link for more info:
<https://tinyurl.com/4urhwz4x>

SEPTEMBER 19 - 26, 2021
www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org

We're looking for:

- All forms of artwork in any medium
- Art from beginners to professionals
- Art created in your garage, backyards or school
- Doodles from your kitchen table
- Share anything that you think people would appreciate

**We want Buddhist Art Rising! B-A-R.
Help us Raise the BAR and set it high.
Please be a part of this amazing project!**