

# BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



## THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 514

DECEMBER 2021

### DECEMBER

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

The following are December services:

**12/5** - CC Shotsuki - Parlier - on YOUTUBE

- Fresno Dharma School Service - Rev. Nakata - via ZOOM

**12/12** - CC Bohdi Day - Kingsburg - Rev. Nakata - on YOUTUBE

-Fresno Dharma School Service - Rinban Nakagawa (in person)

-Parlier Bodhi Day, Shotsuki Service & Board Installation - Rev. Nakata

**12/19** - CC Dharma Service from Fresno - Rinban Nakagawa & Rev. Nakata on YOUTUBE

-Fresno Dharma School Service - TBA

-Reedley Bodhi, Shotsuki - Rev. Nakata

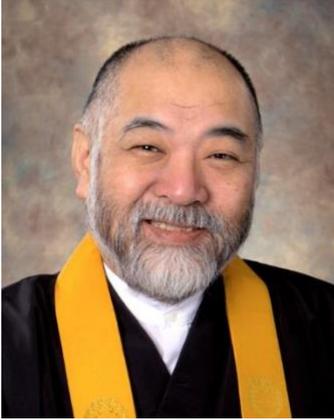
**12/26** - **CC Dharma School Service** - Fowler - Rinban Nakagawa & Rev. Nakata on YOUTUBE

**1/1/22 or 1/2/22** -Fresno: Reflection on 2021 - on YOUtUBE

We appreciate your patience and understanding.

We hope everyone remains safe and healthy.

Namo Amida Butsu



## **A Thought on Bodhi Day**

When celebrating Bodhi Day, the important fact for us as Buddhists is that we adore and respect a person named Gautama Siddhartha, the excellent teacher who was born, lived, and died as a human, just like us.

The first thing that makes him stand out amongst the saints of human history is the fact that he did not discriminate against the lives of all living beings. In fact, when he shared the Dharma, there are many accounts of animals appearing out of nowhere in his presence. The animals must have felt something precious, though not through words, and visited the Buddha without any hesitation. This is a reason so many non-human creatures appear in paintings and sculptures depicting the life of Buddha.

Every occurrence is truly realistic in the Buddhist tradition, so we sincerely observe them for propagating the Buddha's message.

For example, the pet memorial service we conducted in October was an opportunity to experience some of the Buddha's views and teachings on life through the memories of the pets we have lived with.

It is not a memorial service because they are pets, but a memorial service for the lives of interdependency we have ever encountered in our lives. It is a service to help people learn more about the wonder of life that all living things share.

There are many animals in the Buddhist scriptures. There is an old story from ancient India, "The Lion King." People innocently believed that this was one of the stories of Buddha's previous lives at that time.

Once upon a time, a rabbit went to sleep under a coconut tree. When he woke up, a big coconut fell on the ground and exploded with a bang!

At the sound, the rabbit jumped up and cried, "The earth is breaking up! The earth is breaking up!" He ran off as fast as he could, crying, screaming, "The earth is breaking up!" Soon another rabbit joined him, then another, until there were one hundred rabbits running and crying, "The earth is breaking up!"

A frightened deer heard their cries and joined in the flight, followed by a wild boar, an elk, a buffalo, an ox, a rhinoceros, a tiger, and even a wise elephant.

A lion king heard their cries and thought, “The earth is not breaking up. There is some mistake. And if I don’t do something, they will all run into the river and drown!”

He ran in front of them and roared, “Stop! Who says the earth is breaking up?”

The wild boar said, “The rabbit said.”

The buffalo said, “The elk said”

The rhinoceros said, “The ox said”

The elephant said, “The tiger said the earth was breaking up!”

All nodded and pointed to the first rabbit.

“Is it true the earth is breaking up?” asked the lion king.

“Yes, O great lion, it is” said the rabbit. “I woke up from my nap and heard the biiiiig sound of the earth breaking up!”

“Then,” said the lion king, “you and I will go back to the place where the earth began to break up and see for ourselves if it’s true!”

With the rabbit holding onto his back, the lion king ran off as fast as the wind to the coconut tree. When the lion king saw the broken coconut he said to the rabbit, “You silly rabbit! The sound of a coconut breaking up does not mean that the earth is breaking up!”

And they ran back to the other animals to explain the mistake.

When one person tells a falsehood, if one hundred repeat it loudly a hundred times, it would become a fact.

This story is not just for the children.

For those of us, the Dharma-followers, there is a basic teaching of Śākyamuni Buddha that we must check the exact matter of an occurrence for ourselves before referring to someone else’s words, even Buddha. We, as the Dharma followers, should be prevented from others brainwashing us into believing the practice of the dharma.

From “Kālāma Sūtra”:

Śākyamuni-Buddha said to Kālāma:

“Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it.

Do not believe in tradition because they have been handed down for many Generations.

Do not believe in anything because it is spoken and rumored by many.

Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious Books.

Do not believe in anything because it is merely on the authority of your teachers and elders.

When you find anything that agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it.

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.”

“Kālāma Sūtra” by Śākyamuni Buddha, 7~6 B.C.

[Anguttara Nikāya, Vol. I, 188~193]

Gassho,

Rinban Kakei Nakagawa



**Practice your intention and attitude**

**“I have to work at church”**

**or**

**“I enjoy helping at church”**

“As for me, Shinran, I have never practiced the Nenbutsu even once for accumulating my own virtue, making my departed father and mother comfort, or wishing their happiness in their afterlife.”

*Tannisho, A Record of Divergences, the Chapter 5.*

Hello, all Central California Sangha friends! Can you believe we have only one month to the year of 2022? How time flies! I hope everyone has lived the past 11 months actively and mindfully. Living actively and mindfully is always good for your physical and mental health. Although the year of 2021 is counted as another pandemic year for everyone on earth, I have been quite active in spreading the Dharma. Last month, I was invited to the Central California Christian High School in Visalia and was asked to provide “Introduction to Buddhism” to their bible class. They have 350+ high schoolers. They have a lot of students! So, I had to give this lecture on Buddhism multiple times from the first period to late afternoon. What surprised me was that many students came up and asked questions even after the bell rang at the end of the period. As the result, I did not have time to go to the restroom.

Their additional questions during their recess do not raise their GPA, so I realized that they are thirsty or eager to learn Buddhism as their personal interest. I saw that we have an immense potential to grow the Buddhist population in the Central Valley. Now we cannot say we have no Buddhists in the area!

In January, I was appointed to be a member of Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer’s Interfaith Cabinet. Since January, I have attended multiple cabinet meetings. One of my interests is a homelessness project. My first experience in joining a homelessness project was back in 2011, while a County Chaplain under the Department of Emergency Management in Fairfax County, Virginia. One of my tasks was to deliver non-perishable food to the homeless. Fairfax County is located next to Washington D.C., and they were working on a zero homeless project. (I used to tell my friends that I lived 30 minutes from the White House!) There was a homeless shelter one hour from my home in Fairfax. It was called a “shelter,” but it resembled a huge barrack on farmland. There were many people living in the barrack. There was no job training program back then. I hope their facility is improved by now.

Before I moved to Central Cal, I have lived in the City of LA for 7 years. I did not work for the government, but I joined an interfaith group and started helping a homelessness project in Downtown LA. As you may know, there are more than 40,000 homeless in the City of LA. The population of the city of Reedley is about 26,000 so you can now imagine how big the LA homeless population is. Although our interfaith group worked with LAPD for the homelessness project, it was not successful, because the number of the homeless population was overwhelming.

During one of Mayor Dyer's cabinet meetings, I shared my homelessness project experience. The City of Fresno has already purchased motels and converted them to temporary living space for the homeless. However, just providing food and living space to someone is not respecting the person's human nature. There is an old saying "instead of giving food, provide a fishing pole." How we can bring them back to the local community is a key to reestablishing their human nature and dignity. On October 23rd, the Prefab Tiny House project to bring back the homeless to a community, was launched. For the first day of this project, Mayor Dyer and his officials came to help build prefab houses. I asked our CC sangha members if were interested to help and fortunately, eleven people raised their hands. They were Tiffany Fernandez, Christian Romero, Hunter Arakawa, Gordon Misaki, Caroline Tao, Tomoya Ryan, Joyce Yamaguchi, Kent Yamaguchi, Josue "Jojo" Montes, Makayla Kubo, and James Kubo.

Participation was not mandatory, nor does participation accumulate any merit on virtue. Buddhism does not demand anyone to perform duties whereas those with faith in God are. I purely relied on people's intention and motivation. Buddhism raises our intention, action, and motivation positively. I did not grow up with or in Buddhism. I used to have a slightly negative personality or negative outlook on many things, due to economic turmoil and many natural disasters such as the earthquake in 1990's Japan. When I entered Ryukoku University where Jodo Shinshu is taught, after learning Jodo Shinshu, my whole intention and attitude changed. I still remember that my biggest lesson from the teaching is, "no matter what social status you have or how much wealth you have, everyone equally has 24 hours in a day. Your intention for how you spend your 24 hours makes you positive or negative. Life is impermanent. You may not have tomorrow, and so why not you live today positively." I was shocked when I read this, and I really liked the practical attitude of Buddhism.

I am an outsider, because I did not grow up in Jodo Shinshu (I am 1 sei Jodo Shinshu sangha!), I am curious how multiple generation members of Jodo Shinshu enjoy their Jodo Shinshu life. What I found is that a large number of members do not know Jodo Shinshu. In my 20 years of Jodo Shinshu ministry, I heard people said "Oh, I have to work at church/temple" while they were participating at a fundraiser. At that time, I wondered why these people feel like they have an obligation or duty to do things although Buddhism does not give any duty or obligation.

I served a temple in Fairfax, Virginia about 10 years ago. Most of their membership was a first generation to Jodo Shinshu like me. There were only a handful of families who grew up in the multi-generation Jodo Shinshu family. They struggled to increase membership. When my assignment began at the temple, I started to outreach. I visited universities, public schools, and libraries to share the Buddhist teaching. I always mentioned to my participants that "if Buddhist teaching makes sense to

you, and it provides you a positive attitude, please help our temple so that I can continue sharing the Buddhist teaching.” One day as I drove into the temple parking lot, I saw a Caucasian man sweeping around the temple entrance. In northern Virginia, there are wild turkeys, and they drop things around the temple building. He was cleaning their things with his bloom. I did not recognize who he is, so I said “Good morning, I am Rev. Kaz. Thank you so much for cleaning the ground. But I am so sorry, I don’t recognize you. ”Then he said “if you know me, you scare me because I was one of your Buddhist lecture participants at a public library. I really enjoyed your session. I really do not know why I came to your “church,” but it makes me feel positive. I grew up in the Catholic family, and I hate church. But now it is weird that I enjoy helping your church.”

Later, he started calling the temple “my church,” and enjoyed serving the temple as a board member. When I saw his transition, I was assured that the positive experience when I learned Jodo Shinshu, was so true.

Gassho.

Rev. Kaz Nakata

## **Streaming Services**

Please view, join and participate in the December virtual services on Twitter or YOUTUBE as listed on our cover page.

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

## **The Shotsuki names for the month of December are:**

George Shuji Kato  
Gunichi Kanenega  
Munjiro Miyasaki  
Sumiko Kondo  
Komatsu Shimizu  
Tom Kamikawa  
Machiyo Sakoda  
Minekichi Okasaki  
Shinichi Tokubo  
Tadaichi Morimatsu  
Toyojiro Shimamoto  
Hiroko Nakahira  
Sadahei Mukai  
Masato Mayebo  
Yoshino Mukai  
Tsunami Shimamoto  
Hisaaki Notori  
Shizuto Shimoda  
Suye Kawamoto

Haruo Yoshimoto  
Joe Sho Yokomi  
Emma Kataoka  
Toki Uchiyama  
Larry Kazuo Ashida  
Wilson Kawaguchi  
Sadayuki Bob Nakayama  
Sazae Kamine  
Donald Hashimoto

## **CONDOLENCES**

We wish to extend our condolences to the Inouye family on the passing of Rev. Sensho Inouye.

## **CHURCH TOBAN FOR DECEMBER**

### **District I/II**

### **Rijis:**

Kimihiro Sera  
Craig Sakaguchi

### **Tobans:**

Aiko Kamine  
Irene Hara

## MOCHITSUKI

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Fowler Mochitsuki has been cancelled. We hope to continue our traditional mochitsuki in 2022.

## CHURCH DUES

The 2022 church dues will remain the same as 2020 and 2021 and can be paid now. If you have not paid your 2021 dues, please do so by the end of the year.

\$ 50.00	Richard Fujikawa (November)
\$ 50.00	Tina Kato-Clarey
\$ 50.00	Earl Honda
\$ 30.00	Art & Alice Fujikawa
\$ 25.00	Gale & Gene Nakai (November)
\$ 25.00	Gale & Gene Nakai (December)
\$ 25.00	Gale & Gene Nakai (December)

### In Memory of Flora Murashige

\$ 30.00 Frank & Linda Fujikawa

### Special Donation

\$ 100.00 Nakayama Social Club

## NOVEMBER 2021 DONATIONS

### Shotsuki

\$ 100.00	T. Kawamoto Family *To Ministerial Fund
\$ 100.00	Rick & Marlene Miyasaki
\$ 50.00	Richard Fujikawa (September)
\$ 50.00	Richard Fujikawa (October)
\$ 50.00	Richard Fujikawa (October)

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK



## 2021 CBE Seminars Online For All

### FALL: SEPTEMBER ~ NOVEMBER

### SATURDAYS, 11 AM - 1 PM (PACIFIC TIME)

Explore topics in Jodo Shinshu Buddhist doctrine, practice & culture

<b>SEPTEMBER 18 &amp; SEPTEMBER 25</b> REGISTER ONLINE <a href="https://forms.gle/zQVG5ZEumMYCvw7">https://forms.gle/zQVG5ZEumMYCvw7</a>	<b>SHINJIN - Part 1 &amp; Part 2</b> <b>Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto</b> President, Institute of Buddhist Studies	
<b>OCTOBER 16</b> REGISTER ONLINE <a href="https://forms.gle/RiXbVsvGauJcnpH8">https://forms.gle/RiXbVsvGauJcnpH8</a>	<b>JODO SHINSHU MODERNITY</b> <b>Dr. Galen Amstutz</b> Adjunct Faculty, Institute of Buddhist Studies	
<b>OCTOBER 23</b> REGISTER ONLINE <a href="https://forms.gle/V7MunamGzRtmscl7">https://forms.gle/V7MunamGzRtmscl7</a>	<b>日本語セミナー</b> <b>本願のこころ</b> <b>ワンドラ 睦</b> オレンジ郡仏教会 開教使	Japanese Seminar: Hongan no Kokoro Rev. Dr. Mutsumi Wondra 
<b>OCTOBER 30</b> REGISTER ONLINE <a href="https://forms.gle/6PxLrRudlnuQQghz6">https://forms.gle/6PxLrRudlnuQQghz6</a>	<b>CBE Every Day Buddhism Committee presents</b> <b>THE THREE POISONS</b> <b>Rev. Marvin Harada</b> Bishop, Buddhist Churches of America (BCA)	
<b>NOVEMBER 13</b> REGISTER ONLINE <a href="https://forms.gle/8XXe4kRcTavNQh58A">https://forms.gle/8XXe4kRcTavNQh58A</a>	<b>日本語セミナー</b> <b>浄土真宗をたとえると?</b> <b>桑原 浄信</b> バークレー仏教会 開教使 * マリン仏教会 開教使	Japanese Seminar: Jodo Shinshu wo tatoeru to? Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara 
<b>NOVEMBER 20</b> REGISTER ONLINE <a href="https://forms.gle/RFASxvfArT4YZrAng">https://forms.gle/RFASxvfArT4YZrAng</a>	<b>KOICHI'S KITCHEN</b> <b>Koichi Mizushima</b> Guest Chef/ CBE Youth Program Coordinator	

QUESTIONS? EMAIL: [CBE@BCAHQ.ORG](mailto:CBE@BCAHQ.ORG) PHONE: (510) 809-1460

DONATIONS ARE WELCOME! PLEASE NOTE "CBE/SEMINAR DATE" IN DEDICATION BOX

REGISTER AT [WWW.BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG/BUDDHIST-EDUCATION](http://WWW.BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG/BUDDHIST-EDUCATION)  
OR, DOWNLOAD THIS FLYER IN PDF FORMAT TO ACTIVATE REG LINKS

V.8.20

# Japanese American Incarceration Memorial Legacy Project

## Flag Signing Event

To: ALL Japanese-American WWII Incarceration Camp Internees

Date: Sunday, December 19, 2021

Time: 11am – 2pm By Appointment

Location: Central California Nikkei Foundation dba Vintage Gardens Assisted

Living located at 540 S. Peach Ave., Fresno, CA 93727

Mansanar Tule Lake Poston Gila River Granada



Heart Mountain Minidoka Topas Rohwer Jerome

Inspired by Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Roberta Hayashi, Dr. Karen Korematsu, and Civil Rights Attorney Dale Minami, Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Johnny Cepeda Gogo obtained a WWII era, 48-star, American flag with the goal of inviting ALL Japanese American incarceration camp internees to sign the flag. The flag will be donated to the Japanese American Museum in San Jose on Fred Korematsu Day (January 30, 2022). For more information about the flag signing project, please see the following site:

<http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2021/5/27/flag-signing-project/>

Please contact Gale Nakai at [gale@ccnf.org](mailto:gale@ccnf.org) or (559)301-3322 to schedule an appointment to sign. COVID-19 safety guidelines will be followed. All visitors must show proof of vaccinations and please wear face coverings/masks; physical distancing; etc.

For questions about the flag signing project, please contact Judge Gogo at [JGogo@scscourt.org](mailto:JGogo@scscourt.org)

# BCA J.A.M.S.

Jodo Shinshu Artists & Musicians Showcase

-2ND ANNUAL  
BCA VIRTUAL CONCERT EVENT!

-Singers, Musicians, Comedians,  
Magicians, Etc...

-Submit your 3-5 min. video at the link  
below (due Dec 15th)

-It's all for **FUN**. So share your  
talent and help spread some joy!

-Questions? email "Koichi"  
bkmizushima@bcahq.org

**EVENT DATE:**  
**1:00PM PST**

**JAN.09**  
**2022**

VIDEO SUBMISSION: <https://tinyurl.com/34fmyrkx>