

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 519

MAY 2022

MAY

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 May services:

5/1 - CC Shotsuki Service (streaming)

5/8 - Streaming Service

5/15 - Fresno Family Service
Parlier Gotane/Shotsuki Service

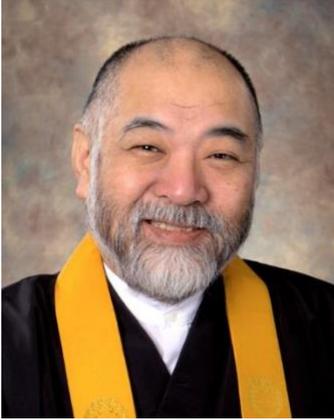
5/22 - Fresno Gotane/Shotsuki Service
Reedley Gotane/Shotsuki Service

5/30 - Selma Cemetery Service - 9:00 AM
Fowler Cemetery Service - 10:00 AM

We appreciate your patience and understanding.

We hope everyone remains safe and healthy.

Namo Amida Butsu



Our Nenbutsu Dojo

Hondo, the main hall of Jōdo Shinshū Temple, has been uniquely called "Dōjō" or "Nenbutsu Dōjō" in the worldwide Buddhist tradition. Dōjō" means an exercise hall, as in the case of the origin of "Dōjō" of all martial arts; such as, Jūdō, Karate or others are in the "Hondō" of Jōdo Shinshū. You must be surprised!

Our "Nenbutsu Dōjō" means **a hall for exercising the Nenbutsu.**

To exercise the Nenbutsu means to hear the Nembutsu and to be attentive to the Nenbutsu.

As Shinran Shonin taught in his “Kyō-Gyō-Shin-Shō” that follows: “‘Hearing’ is that all beings, hearing the origin and the history of the original prayer-for-the-world of Śākyamuni Buddha, cherish no doubting mind.”

What is most necessary for this process of hearing and being convinced?

That means asking questions.

We Buddhists are very fortunate. Buddhism is unique in that it does **not** reject any questions, whereas many so-called "religions" emphasize "Blind Faith.” You, as a Buddha-dharma follower, can ask until you understand. You can ask until your teacher gets in trouble.

You accept only when there is no more doubt. If you think it makes no sense at all, then don't accept it. Don't worry. There are 84,000 useful methods and clinical cases in Buddhism carried since 2,600 years ago, and there is sure to be a method that you can apply to your creative life.

To do so, first and foremost, start by hearing and asking questions here in this Hondo, the main hall.

In the Buddhist countries, there is a proverb that says: "Asking something you don't know is embarrassing only then, but if you don't ask, you will be embarrassed for the rest of your life".

Here is a story about two sisters, both over 85 years old.

One warm and bright Sunday, they decided to visit a friend who lived in a neighboring town about 20 miles away. They hadn't visited that town in the last seven years. They got in their old car and began to drive carefully to their friend's house.

As it happens to many of us, they became lost. Seven years were enough to change a whole roadmap around their neighboring towns. And so, they decided after a while to stop and ask for directions. They drove into a gas station and asked the attendant. The attendant gave them very good instructions. He even offered to draw a map, but being hard of hearing or being embarrassed and a little proud, it caused them to say, "We know that town," and they went on ahead.

Soon they got lost again. And they decided once more to ask. Again, they got very clear instructions but being hard of hearing, they couldn't quite make out what was being said. Instead of asking again until they understood, they went on ahead, as if they had understood.

Soon they got lost again. Now, it was getting really serious, for they had somehow wandered into the backcountry which was like a desert. And on top of that, it was getting hotter and hotter.

Some days later, a police car spotted their car, stalled on an out-of-the-way desert path. One sister was still in the car; the second sister was about 200 yards from the car. Sadly enough, both were dead.

Upon investigation, the police found out that these two sisters had wandered around lost for nearly 24 hours and had covered over 200 miles. They also discovered that over ten people had been asked directions and that they all tried to explain. But apparently, the two sisters were both too proud to say simply that they couldn't understand or

please say it again. For this, they become lost in the desert and met their sad end.

In life, being human, all of us get lost at one time or another. The important thing is to always be humble and ask for help and keep asking until we discover the way out of our lost-ness.

That is the importance of "Listening to the Dharma."

"Anyone whoever has been born into human form, attains Buddha-hood without exception. Moreover, one could attain Buddha-hood moment by moment without interruption and innumerable people would attain Buddha-hood unquestionably, you should never arouse the heart flinching from difficulties."

[“Mahāyāna Sūtra Lankāra”, Chapter ‘Adhimukti’ – 11]

If a person born as a human being could not become a Buddha even after living 100 years, then his/her life was ultimately in vain.

The first step to reaching the State of Buddhahood begins with “Keep Hearing/Listening.”

Gassho

Rinban Kakei Nakagawa



Jodo Shinshu is for Anyone that Wishes to Establish and Enjoy a Harmonious Sangha

Hello all Central California Nishi Hongwanji Sangha friends! I wrote “Spring has come” in the previous newsletter. It is so true. I attended and conducted three in- person Hanamatsuri services last month, including one at the Orange County Buddhist Church where I was the guest speaker. At each of the services, I saw many smiling faces while sweet tea was being poured over the statue of the Baby Buddha in the shrine, decorated by many beautiful flowers. Their smiles were like blooming flowers! At one church, I said “please pour tea over the Buddha like how you would like to celebrate your birth if you were able to be in the delivery room. Please imagine. Even before you were born, YOU had many helping hands for about 10 months and 10 days. Your life story of generosity by others had started before your birth. It is the Buddhist view... our life is filled with conceivable gratitude.”

I was assigned to the Central California District in summer of 2019, and after the adjustment of my life in CC, in 2020 I started both weekly and monthly Buddhist study classes. What started with a monthly class at Visalia Buddhist Church led to a weekly class. Our Dharma Friend, Calvin Doi of Parlier (one of the main persons who asked me to serve in CC), was one of the passionate students who drove to Visalia for the 2-hour class. He contributed many enlightening comments to the class. However, our class did not last long. The pandemic halted our gatherings at the Visalia BC and forced us to switch our class format from in-person to online Zoom. Not everyone has the internet capability, so some class students stopped attending the class, yet, because of the class being online, new attendees from different parts of the Central California and even from the different regions of California have been gradually joining.

One of the new attendees, David, found us online, and he joined the online monthly class last fall. He was a very quiet person and did not ask many questions in the beginning. I asked him to present his own questions to the class. In January, as he was becoming more familiar to the class, he how he can help our education.

Since Buddhism does not ask or obligate one to give back to the teaching, I told him just come and study. His generosity became eminent and he offered to run to fund raise. I did not understand his intention. At first, I thought he want to run or host a fundraiser, but he said he will run long distance which is an “ultramarathon” and hope to motivate people to donate. For those that are unfamiliar with an ultramarathon, in a regular marathon, the running distance is 42.195 km or 26-mile 385 yards. In an ultramarathon, the running distance is 50, 75 or even 100 miles.

Rinban and I established the Central California Ministerial Assistant education program for people who wish to learn a deeper understanding of Jodo Shinshu and to establish and enjoy a harmonious sangha. Rinban and I want to share everything we know as Kaikyoshi (full-fledged minister), with anyone who would like to support Central Cal Buddhist education for our future. Understanding the universal truth of impermanence, Rinban and I know that we cannot live forever. Thus, if many CC Sangha friends learn from us, they can continue sharing and enjoying the life of Jodo Shinshu, even after we are gone. A part of one of our main programs is that we send our students to Hiroshima, Japan to study and acquire an authentic Jodo Shinshu education, and to potentially receive ordination in our Jodo Shinshu order without spending too much of their own fortune.

David asked what program would most benefit from the Ultramarathon fundraiser. I explained that proceeds from the fundraiser can help reduce a student’s living expense while in Hiroshima. The program is our future. David did several test runs to make sure the fundraiser is feasible and in the end, ran from Visalia to Reedley, Reedley to Parlier, Parlier to Kingsburg, Kingsburg to Fowler, and Fowler to Fresno, a distance of 70-miles in total.

The ultramarathon fundraiser was held on April 2. I drove to Visalia at 2AM because the start time was 3AM! I really appreciate those Visalia board members that opened the church for David at 2:30AM! At Reedley, Parlier, Kingsburg, and Fowler, many people came out to support and cheer for David and his co-runners. I really appreciate their support and for the refreshments made available to the runners. Fowler to Fresno was the final section. David’s wife joined him and the other runners. At Fresno, over 25 people cheerfully welcomed him as he ran thru the goal tape. You can watch this video clip on our Twitter page (search for Central California Nishi Hongwanji Twitter).

David established a donation account on Instagram, but some of our sangha friends are not familiar with Instagram, so we received donations by checks for the fundraiser. So far, we received more than \$2000 for the 70-mile ultramarathon. What surprised me most were the many donors from local generous persons, many who have never been to our churches. David asked his running friends to promote his fundraiser and many of them supported his effort. During this fundraiser, I was able to meet and connect with many local new friends. I believe that people are the most important asset in our lives. I am so glad that I accepted his offer.

The pandemic handed us many challenges and difficulties. However, if we did not encounter the pandemic and did not start the online classes, my life and David's life may not have ever crossed. I do not thank the pandemic, but I deeply appreciate people such as Calvin Doi, who encouraged me to start the online course. Calvin really was a harmonious man. Gassho.

Gassho

Rev. Kaz Nakata

Fowler Buddhist Church Golf Club

Thank you for participating and supporting the Fowler Buddhist Church Golf Tournament. We appreciate all the players coming out to enjoy a day of Fun, Food and Golf. Other than the wind and rain, it turned out to be a pretty good day. I hope you were all able to see old friends and meet some new ones. We have secured next year's date of **Saturday April 15, 2023 at Ridge Creek for the 27th Annual Golf Tournament.** I hope to see you there.

Special thanks to the Fowler golf committee = Barton Ashida, Gerald Nakayama, Cherie Nakayama, Roger Takeda, Tina Kato and Ken Hashimoto. Also thanks to our volunteers that helped at the golf tournament and the banquet.

Special thanks to Steve Murata from Oxnard who donated all those delicious Hass Avocados in memory of his friend Craig Moriyama. Craig grew up in Del Rey and went to Sanger High School and Fresno State College. He worked for Naturipe Berry company in Anaheim, Oxnard and Watsonville. Steve and Craig were good friends. Craig passed away 2 years ago and Steve wanted to donate the avocados from his Oxnard farm in Craig's memory. Thank you very much Steve.

Thanks to all you players that come out every year to make this event so much fun. Keep playing and enjoying the game of golf. See you next year.

Ken Okajima
Tournament Chairman

Streaming Services

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

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

The Shotsuki names in the month of May are:

Tatsuji Hirasuna
Hitoshi Nakatsukasa
Katsuo Yoshimoto
Kai Yoshimoto
Yuki Miyaki
Tokuchi Mukai
Daigoro Shinkawa
Natsuye Sakai
Shizuyo Masui
Kumaichi Nakamura
Tojiro Komoto
Eichiro Matsuoka
Sayo Oba
Ito Shimamoto
Koichi Kamikawa
Kitaro Ideta
Kaichi Sakoda
Yukiye Hashimoto
Yoshitaro Tanaka
Yoshikazu Kataoka

Ayako Okamura
Hitoshi Yoshida
Douglas Nakamura
Mary Taketa
Fumiye Asakawa
Joan Kimura
Mariko Tokubo
Douglas Jun Iwamoto
Lillian Yuriko Nakashige
Takashi Higuchi
Seiichi Kageura
Hatsuso Uyemura
Joyce Shimizu-Stone
Hiteyo Ii
Don Kubose
Hitoshi Pete Nakayama
Yoshiko Kataoka

Church Toban for May

District IV

Rijis:

Sharon Asakawa
Craig Honda

Toban:

Sharon Asakawa
Tayoko Honda

April 2022 Donations

Year End

\$ 100.00 Gary & Arlene Keithley

Shotsuki

\$ 100.00 Rick & Marlene Miyasaki

\$ 100.00 Maryann Miyasaki

\$ 40.00 Ron & Maxine Yoshimoto

\$ 40.00 Gary & Arlene Keithley

\$ 30.00 Gary & Arlene Keithley

Special Donations

\$ 250.00 Gary & Karen Mukai
Lily Mukai's First Birthday

\$ 100.00 Tak & Amy Tsuda
Yuriko Yamada Funeral
in Reedley

Performed by
Rev. Karen Mukai

Fresno Buddhist Church invites you to our Twenty-sixth Annual

Hawaiian Plate Dinner

Saturday, May 21, 2022

2 pm to 6 pm

Plate Dinner

includes Chicken Katsu, rice, Hawaiian potato / macaroni
salad, tsukemono salad, dessert

Take-out Only

Fresno Betsuin Family Dharma Center • 2690 E. Alluvial

Donation: \$17.00

We have delayed this year's fundraiser from April to May, due to concerns over Covid-19. Also in the interest of safety, we are making a few adjustments. The Dinner will be essentially be the same, but we have taken steps to streamline the preparation. Also, only individuals who have been fully vaccinated will be allowed to volunteer. Safety First is uppermost in our minds.

This year, we will not do outside deliveries, so all meals must be picked up at the FDC. In the interest of caution, at this time, we are having **Take-out Only**.

Let's look forward to the return to normal.

Please write your check to the FRESNO BUDDHIST CHURCH.

Order Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Dinner Tickets: \$17 x _____ - _____

Raffle Tickets: \$5 x _____ - _____

Donation: _____ - _____

Total Enclosed - _____

Please write check to:

**Fresno Buddhist Church • 2690 E. Alluvial Ave. •
Fresno, CA 93720 and return form by Friday, May 13.**

Your dinner tickets will be mailed to you.

Any questions? Call Sherian or Glenn at 435-8050, or
email: glenntheham@sbcglobal.net

2022 CCBEC/MAP May Seminar
CC Archive project:
Recollection of the old time
church activities and their family

May 25, 7pm on zoom

presented by

Rev. Karen, Rev. Toshie, Mrs. Sharon



Free to attend: Please email CCDCBEC@Gmail.com for zoom link

HELPING FRESNO STATE STUDENTS



As part of an ongoing outreach project, The Fresno Buddhist Temple is participating in a PROFESSIONAL CLOTHING DRIVE, sponsored by Fresno State and we'd love your help!

Donations of professional or business clothing will be given to the "Fresno State Student Closet" which provides students of low-income backgrounds with wardrobes that can worn for job interviews or professional settings.

If you are looking for a worthy cause to donate your gently used wardrobe, this is it!

In addition to professional clothing, the Fresno Buddhist Temple is also accepting gently used **CHILDREN'S** clothing for donations to the various charitable organizations that Fresno State supports.

All donations will be accepted at the Fresno Buddhist Temple Dharma Center at **2690 E. Alluvial Ave., Fresno CA 93720**, on **Wednesdays from 9:30AM to 2:00PM**.

**Thank you for your generosity and support of our
Community Outreach Projects!**