Impermanence Springs Eternal  

BY REV. HARRY GYOKYO BRIDGE

(I found this article that I wrote for Spring Ohigan and thought it was worth reprinting - it speaks to our current situation despite having been written ten years ago.)

SPRING OHIGAN REMINDS US THAT another year has passed, another winter has ended, and another opportunity has come for us to listen to the Dharma and try and put the teachings into practice. One of these teachings is “impermanence” – not only does nothing last forever, but everything is constantly changing. This is illustrated in the following poem:

“The flowing water never stops, and yet the water never stays the same.”

These are the famous opening lines from the “Hojoki,” by Kamo no Chomei, who lived from 1155-1216 in medieval Japan (the translation is by Yasuhiko Moriguchi and David Jenkins). This is a powerful image, a wonderful illustration of impermanence in action. We normally think of a river as a self-contained object, whether we are looking at it on a map or driving over it in a car or actually sitting on its banks. Every time we look, it appears to be the same river. And yet,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR everyone. 2021 is the Year of the Ox and I am beginning this year as your new BCO President. It is an honor to have an opportunity to serve and lead our Sangha.

I grew up around the BCO in the 60’s and 70’s. Like many of our youth, I had very little involvement with Church once I left high school. Beside a short participation in Senior YBA activities in Southern California after college, my only link to Church as an adult has been to run the bingo game at the BCO Nikkoland Bazaar/Festival. A three-day ritual that I have performed for 40 years.

In 2004, my wife Kathy and I adopted the first of our two boys from Japan. I felt it was important to give my family a community that I remember growing up with. Although many of the faces that I remember at Church over the years have changed, the welcoming feeling of the Sangha was still as I remembered. Yet, I was surprised

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that things had not seemed to change much from the 60’s and 70’s at Church; Family Dharma Service, Adult Service, Dharma School, Bazaar, Obon, Hanamatsuri, Mochitsuki, Halloween, Birthday Sundays, etc. These activities seemed locked away in time.

As the years have passed and my boys have grown into teenagers, I find that they have lost interest in Church. Like many other Sangha youth and young adults, Church events and activities seem old and stale to them. They found other places to play and socialize. Church failed to offer relevance to their world. Church was a tradition they participated as youth only because of their parents.

The challenges that I see are: how do we continue our cherished traditions while making changes that will strengthen our Sangha for the future? How do we retain our membership, attract new members, and reengage our children and the lost children of our founders? What do we need to do to ensure the financial stability for the future of the Church? Who will guide and lead the Sangha in the future?

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdowns, the Church has been forced to make major changes in almost every aspect of its routine this past year. No onsite Dharma Services, no Bazaar, no Obon, no gatherings, and the list goes on. Yet, the Church has survived and showed it can make changes while maintaining its traditions. Zoom Dharma services, digital Busshin, digital meetings and events, etc. are examples of how we were able to adapt, but real change will take much more.

The big question is how can we sustain this ability to adapt and change into the future?

Our first step is at the 2021 Church Annual Meeting, we are presenting changes in the Bylaws of the Church. These changes will setup a new “committee” structure that will help the leadership of the Church work on these challenges we will face in the coming years. One important aspect of these “committees” is that committee members do not have to be on the Board of Directors to participate. We will be looking for “Church Members” to be part of these new committees. It is not just up to the “Board” to do it. We will need everyone. Please consider getting involved and joining a committee. Encourage others. With digital meetings, you do not need to live locally to participate. We need your ideas, participation, and help. Committees will not be the magic answer to the revitalization of the Church, only a start.

Also, we are always looking for new board members. I would like to welcome our new board members for 2021: John Eastly, Donald Endo, Karla Lee, and Carrie Oto. I would also like to thank the following retiring board members for their years of dedicated service: Harry Bergland, Donna Castro, Eric Ikeda and June Masayama.

Again, thank you for your trust by allowing me to serve as your President. I will work to make Church a better place by honoring our traditions while leading and encouraging new ideas. I believe trying to coax “change” into the Church will be the key for its survival. Please contact me or any Board Member with your ideas, opinions, and thoughts. Also, please consider joining a committee and/or becoming a board member.

normyoshida@gmail.com

DEADLINE FOR APRIL 2021 BUSSHIN ARTICLES: FEBRUARY 26TH
Articles submitted after this date may not be printed.

SEND ARTICLES TO: Joyce Yokomizo
e-mail: joyce@yokomizo.com
You can also send articles to the church office.

BUSSHIN COLLATION:
No Busshin collation due to Stay at Home Order.
HELLO TO ALL THE MOMIJI KAI members! Hope everyone is following the rules and doing well. Many members have told me they have had their first shots and they all sound like everything is okay. Being able to get our shots will be a relief in a way, as we will feel somewhat protected from the deadly virus. I try to keep up with the latest news regarding the Pandemic so each morning, I check through the computer news for any new words regarding the virus. Of course, it is not complete, but it gives updated information regarding the present situation. I do not take the local paper, so I am dependent on the computer for any updated news regarding the present situation which we are experiencing.

We have received several generous monetary donations from members and families. I will relist some names to make certain every donation is accounted for. Jeff Suda, in memory of his mother Kay, Karen Hashimoto, Norma Hoshide, whom we welcome as a new member, and Gloria Fujimoto for her generosity. Momiji kai members express our grateful “thank you” for your kind thoughts.

Renie Yoshida Grohl gave us an update regarding her move from Ohio to California, which must have been quite hectic in that she was travelling between the two States during this pandemic. Moving is a time of many decisions, and lots of work. We understand many of her paintings are now settled in Museums. As they say in Japanese, Ogoku-ro sama, Renie, especially having to travel back and forth in this uncertain and scary climate with the raging virus. Please take care, Renie.

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE HOST 7 FAMILIES. HOPE YOU are all doing well. We miss otoki and seeing you all and we miss the coffee hours! Here are Jordan K. and Mason K. working to keep the church clean. Stay safe and see you soon, we hope.

Impermanence Springs Eternal

the water that comprises this river is not the same, it is constantly moving, constantly being replenished.

I should point out that the rest of the poem has a bit of a melancholy, if not pessimistic, cast:

“Foam floats upon the pools, scattering, reforming, never lingering long.

So it is with man and all his dwelling places here on earth.”

This is certainly one aspect of impermanence. In Japan this is often illustrated with the image of the cherry blossoms – in spring they bloom so beautifully, and yet they fall so soon. This melancholy atmosphere can be found in much Japanese art.

But I think that impermanence can also be positive and empowering. Good times and bad times come and go, ebbing and flowing like the tides. Rather than get stuck in attachment, we can try and see things from another perspective, trying as best we can to be the best we can be in this moment under the circumstances. Rather than feel trapped, we can try to see things as they are, remembering that all things are impermanent, and at the same time that all things are grasped in the compassion of the Buddha.

So, at Ohigan let’s renew our dedication to the principles of the Buddha Path – compassion & kindness, impermanence & interdependence – and live our lives to the fullest!
EACH YEAR, AT THE END OF FEBRUARY, THE BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA (BCA) CONVENES the BCA Ministers’ Association and National Council Meetings (NCM). The Bay District Council temples, of which BCO is a member, are hosting the 2021 meetings.

At the NCM portion of the meetings, three delegates from each of the BCA temples, typically gather “in person” to hear updates from the BCA national organizations, discuss and approve key business issues, and interact and exchange ideas with BCA leadership and other delegates. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings (spanning four different time zones) will be held online and spread over a period of two weekends. BCO delegates are Rev. Bridge, Norman Yoshida (President), and Keiju Terada (President-elect).

Following is the schedule for the sessions open to all BCA and BCO members. BCO is responsible for planning the Sunday, Feb. 28 closing program.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

10:30 AM PST | BCA TOWN HALL MEETING
Rev. Marvin Harada, Bishop & Dr. Kent Matsuda, BCA President, and members of the BCA Exec. Comm. will continue the discussion on increasing temple membership from the Nov. BCA webinar. Ideas from the town hall attendees are welcome during the session and temple reps. will talk about their new member initiatives. BCO members interested in hearing about lessons-learned from other temples on growing temple membership are encouraged to attend.

2:45 PM – 3:45 PM PST | PROVIDING A NEEDED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY: PRE-SCHOOL & ADULT SENIOR DAY CARE PROGRAMS
Clare Tamamoto, Aiea Hongwanji Mission, Oahu, HI, will talk about how the temple was able to provide a pre-school, kindergarten, adult senior day care program, and meeting place for the community.

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM PST | BCA ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION
Koichi Sayano, Endowment Foundation Board & Anna McGibbons, Angeles Investments will present current investment and market conditions, management approach, and governance processes for the investment portfolios that many temples, including BCO, have with the Endowment. BCO members interested in learning more about how BCO monies are invested are encouraged to attend.

5:15 PM – 6:15 PM PST | YOUNG BUDDHIST EDITORIAL (YBE)
Devon Matsumoto and YBE members will discuss their motivation for creating a platform and space for young Buddhists, including topics such as young adult retention, importance of understanding cultural Buddhism, Shin Buddhist perspectives on social issues, and what it means to be the next generation leading young people today. YBE is seeking Affiliate Group status within BCA, similar to FDSTL and FBWA, and will replace YABA as the youth and young Buddhists affiliate group. BCO members interested in this youth movement of relevancy to our temples are encouraged to attend.
3:00 PM PST | EXPERIENCE THE NEMBUTSU: DHARMATHON AND RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MINISTERS
Reverends Ronald Kobata, Fumiaki Usuki, Yukiko Motoyoshi, and Patricia Usuki, all retiring BCA ministers, will offer Dharma messages reflecting their perspective on Jodo Shinshu Buddhism as their farewell message to BCA members.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

10:00 AM PST | EITAIKYO PERPETUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE
This very special service is held in appreciation and respect for all those departed members who supported and assisted our temples and who wished to ensure we could continue to hear the teachings of Shinran Shonin. The guest speaker will be Rev. Kodo Umezu.

1:30 PM PST
BCA NCM CLOSING PROGRAM
This program is the culmination of the 2021 NCM. The career of Rev. Kodo Umezu, recently retired minister and past BCA Bishop, will be honored. Regina Boone, a photojournalist from Virginia, will talk about her journey to learn about her grandfather, a Japanese immigrant who was incarcerated and who never returned home after WWII. There will be musical performances by the Cherry Blossomz. The program will conclude with a message focused on the future from our BCA Bishop, Rev. Marvin Harada, and BCA will share a vision to build the future of Buddhism in America through the Dharma Forward campaign.

Please mark your calendars and we hope you will participate in all these informative and interesting events.
If you have questions, please contact the church office at officebco@gmail.com or call and leave a message on the church phone number, 510-832-5988.

BCO NCM Planning Committee Members
Rev. Harry Bridge
Bill Dougherty
Ron Nomura
Jon Takagaki
Steve Terusaki
March 2021 March Shotsuki Memorial Service

March 7, 2021 on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/c/BuddhistChurchofOakland)

Family and friends are invited to view this monthly memorial service online for those listed below. If any errors appear, please direct them to the church office at (510) 832-5988 or officebco@gmail.com at your earliest convenience.

Mr. Genmatsu Aikawa
Mrs. Shizuko Aikawa
Mr. Larry Choi
Mr. Sadajiro Fujii
Mr. Motojiro Fukuda
Garet Gluck
Mr. Kiichi Richard Goto – 33rd year
Mr. Masato Hashimoto
Rev. Akira Hata
Mrs. Catherine Fumiko Hata
Mr. Ryokichi Hayashida
Mrs. Shizue Hirabayashi
Mrs. Ayako Hirai
Mrs. Asano Hirota
Mr. Tom Honda – 17th year
Mr. Edward Tatsuo Hori
Mr. Jitsuo Horimoto
Mr. David Hoshide
Mr. Juntaro Ichikawa
Mrs. Agnes Ide
Mrs. Shigeko Ide – 13th year
Mrs. Unoe Inouchi
Mrs. Kotoku Inouye
Mr. Ryoei Inouye
Miss Debra Ishida
Mrs. Beverly Ishizu
Mr. Yoshio Isono
Mr. Sukejiro Kamano
Mrs. Masame Kanagaki
Mr. Heiji Kano
Mr. Tsutomu Kasai
Mrs. Umeyo Kasai
Mrs. Fujioy Kataoka
Mr. Yohei Kataoka
Mrs. Su’e Kawabata
Mrs. Tsuru Kawabata
Mrs. Hideko Kida
Miss Martha Kido
Mr. Jutaro Kubota
Mr. James Kurata
Mr. Umekiyo Kuritsubo
Mrs. Kiyoko Kuwahara
Miss Nancy Kuwahara
Mr. Shigeki Kuwahara
Mr. Osami Sam Maruyama
Rev. Kenyu Masuyama
Mr. Kojiro Matsu
Mrs. Tayo Matsu
Mr. Henry Matsutani Jr.
Mrs. Hagino Matsuoka
Mr. Minoru Matsumoto
Mr. Tarobei Minamidani
Mrs. Kame Mitsuda
Mr. Kohei Miyamoto
Mr. Masato Miyamoto
Miss Kiyoko Mizuki
Mr. Masao Mori
Mr. Yoshimatsu Mori
Mr. Zeichiro Morimoto
Mrs. Matsuye Morishita
Mrs. Tayo Morishita
Mrs. Misao Murakawa
Mr. Toshio Murakawa
Mr. Zenkichi Murakawa
Rev. Gyosei Nagafuji
Miss Yoko Nagafuji
Mrs. Hatsu Nakai – 50th year
Mr. Junji Nakashima
Mr. George Nakatani
Mrs. Tsuneo Nakatani
Mr. Yasutaro Nakatani
Mr. Henry Natsuhara
Mr. Alexander Negoro
Mrs. Michiko Nehira
Mr. Hiroshi Neishi
Dr. Mitsugi Neishi – 17th year
Mr. Kyoichi Nobori
Mr. Masami Nobori
Mrs. Joan Nomura
Mr. Terashi Nomura – 25th year
Mrs. Sueko Norimoto
Ohata Family
Mr. Sadao Okai
Misao Okano
Mr. Fujio Okawa
Mr. Shigenobu Okawachi
Mr. Joe Okumura
Mrs. Masae Onizuka
Mrs. Kay Ota – 3rd year
Mr. Ryuichi Otaguro
Mr. Baiseki Otsuka
Mr. Asataro Otsuka
Mrs. Shigeru Sakaki
Mr. Kichimatsu Satake
Mr. Minoru Satake
Mrs. Misao Satake
Mr. Shokichi Satake
Mr. Tetsuo Shigaya
Mr. Frank Shimamoto
Mr. Zenichi Shimamoto
Mrs. Shizuko Shiroyama
Mr. Bennosuke Sugiyama
Mrs. Shin Takahashi
Mr. Jeffrey Takagaki
Mrs. Ishi Takata
Mrs. Masue Tanaka
Mr. Suekiyo Tanisawa
Mrs. Matsuyo Toji
Mr. Unkichi Toyofuku
Mrs. Isoko Umeki
Mr. Sadato Ushijima – 33rd year
Mr. Jintaro Yamamoto
Mr. Saikichi Yamamoto – 50th year
Mr. Shigeru Yamamoto
Mr. Yoshizo Yamamoto
Mrs. Yukie Yamamoto
Mrs. Sono Yamashita
Mr. William Yamazaki-LaRue – 3rd year
Mr. Motoichi Yanagi
Mr. Totaro Yokoi
Mrs. Tane Yokoi – 50th year
Mr. Eisaku Yoshida
Mrs. Haruno Yoshioka
Mrs. Tsuru Yoshisato
Miss Fusako Yuto
Mrs. Jitsuyo Yuto
Mrs. Kayoko Yuto
Need Help Getting Online?

Don’t Know How to Use Zoom or YouTube?

Need Help Accessing the Church Services?

For 2021, we foresee having to keep the Church closed for onsite gatherings. We will be presenting Dharma Services and Shotsuki Services on line via Zoom Video and YouTube.

Accessing these events are simple and easy with a little help and support. Please contact the Church Office if you need assistance on accessing Church Services.

Email Address OfficeBCO@gmail.com
Phone (510) 832-5988

COMING SOON...
BCO 200+ Club - details to come!
HELLO EVERYONE! IN FEBRUARY we participated in the Bay District Winter Activity Virtual Game Night. Earlier we contributed to the Bay District Jr. YBA’s “In a Spirit of Universal Oneness Campaign”. A few members from our chapter helped out the people at Eden with food distribution. All of us contributed cards to J-Sei. They were New Year’s cards for them to give to the senior meal clients. This month, some of our members will be attending the 2021 Coast District Young Buddhist League (CDYBL) Conference via Zoom. 

Happy Saint Patrick’s Day! 🍀

OBWA WANTED TO HAVE A community outreach project for 2020 and asked me to come up with an idea. The plan was to knit hats to give to various community groups in the fall. We decided to expand the project beyond OBWA and to include all church members, young and old. I planned to have get-togethers before and after church services to make hats and to teach knitting to church members. However before we could get going, the Corona virus ended our in-person church services. However, my mom, Fuzy Yoshida, needed something to keep her busy as we sheltered in place and she knitted over 130 hats!

Jun Hamamoto used her contacts to identify groups to donate the hats to. Sakhone Lasaphangthong delivered hats to the residents at Oak Street cabins where he works (a couple of blocks from BCO) and the Oakland Chinatown Senior Living Center for low-income people. Folks from the encampment at Madison Park across the street from BCO were offered spots at the cabins.

Kelly Curry who works for Code Pink Women for Peace and is on the board of Planting Justice, delivered hats to projects in the Tenderloin in SF and a houseless group in Oakland.

Note from Jun Hamamoto: Here are some photos of the first distribution of OBWA hand knitted hats. More photos to come.

Note from Jun Hamamoto’s friend, Kelly Curry, who works for Code Pink and for Planting for Justice. (She is the woman with the mask and no hat): “Thank you OBWA knitters for caring and for your beautiful work 🙏💖”

https://www.codepink.org/
https://plantingjustice.org/
# 2021 CBE Virtual Programs

**January ~ April**

**SAVE THESE DATES!**

**Shin Buddhism and Science Fiction**
- **January 9**
  - **11 am - 1 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **Speakers:**
    - Rev. Harry Bridge, Buddhist Church of Oakland
    - Rev. Jon Turner, Orange County Buddhist Church
    - Rev. Landon Yamaoka, Palo Alto Buddhist Temple
  - **Venture into dharma explorations inspired by science fiction films.**

**BCA Youth Concert!**
- **January 10**
  - **1 pm**
  - **Jodo Shinshu Artists & Musicians Showcase (JAMS)**
  - **Enjoy a variety of performances by BCA youth.**

**Relevant American Buddhists (RAB)**
- **January 30**
  - **5 pm - 6:30 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **Speaker:** Rev. Dr. Ken Tanaka, Musashino University
  - **Who and what were the RAB? Stories from BCA’s 1970s program for young adults.**

**Every Day Buddhism Book Talk**
- **February 6**
  - **10 am - 11:30 am**
  - **Register online**
  - **"Discovering Buddhism in Everyday Life"**
  - **Speaker/author:** Rev. Marvin Harada, BCA Bishop
  - **Listen to the stories behind this collection of heartwarming essays.**

**"Honen as Religious Revolutionary: The Person Who Defined the Buddhism We Identify as Japanese Today."**
- **February 13**
  - **11 am - 1 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **Speaker:** Dr. Mark Blum, University of California at Berkeley

**Zen & Shin Buddhism - Part 1**
- **March 6**
  - **11 am - 1 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **"Letting Go: A Zen & Shin Approach to Liberation"**
  - **Rev. Dr. Duncan Ryuken Williams, Author, American Sutra**

**Zen & Shin Buddhism - Part 2** (Please note change of date)
- **March 13**
  - **11 am - 1 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **"Zen Practice"**
  - **Speaker:** Rev. Anton Tenkei Coppens Roshi, Zen River Temple, Netherlands

**Socially Engaged Buddhism**
- **April 10**
  - **5 pm - 6:30 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **Speakers:**
    - Prof. Mitsuya Dake, Ryukoku University
    - Rev. Kiyo Kuwahara, Berkeley Buddhist Temple

**3 Bishops: “What is the Future of Buddhism in the West?”**
- **April 17**
  - **11 am - 1 pm**
  - **Register online**
  - **Speakers:**
    - 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

Visit BCA website for updates: flyer, free registration links & to donate (optional)
[BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG](http://BUDDHISTCHURCHESOFAMERICA.ORG)  EMAIL: CBE@BCAHQ.ORG  TEL: 510.809.1460
Our pets are very important members of our families. In remembrance of our beloved family pets, we will have a Pets Memorial Service on April 18 at 10:00am as part of the Dharma Family Service. We also want to show appreciation to the animals who give their lives for our sustenance. Please complete the form below and we will have a card made in your pet’s memory. If you wish to have your pet’s photo appear during the service, please send it digitally to officebco@gmail.com.

Please submit your name, address, your pet’s name, to the office by March 26, 2021 to have a memorial card made.

________________________________________________________
Your Name:

________________________________________________________
Your Address:

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Your Pet(s)’s Name & Year She/He Passed Away:

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Additional Pet(s)’s Name & Year She/He Passed Away:

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**Shop Amazon? Designate BCO as Your Charity!**

AMAZON WILL DONATE 0.5% OF YOUR PURCHASES IF YOU DESIGNATE BUDDHIST CHURCH OF OAKLAND on your AmazonSmile account. Go to www.Smile.Amazon.com and follow the directions to designate the Buddhist Church of Oakland as your charity. Always start your purchase on https://amazon.com/smile and contributions will go the BCO. Thank you! Questions? Email Maya Lawrence.