

Let's celebrate Bodhi Day together!

BCSF Bodhi Eve

Friday, Dec 1 - 7 pm

In Person & via Zoom

Potluck 5:30 pm



BCSF Bodhi Day

Sunday, Dec 3 - 10 am

In Person & via Zoom

Bodhi Day is December 8, the day we commemorate the historical Buddha's Enlightenment.

Two thousand six hundred years ago in India, Siddhartha Gautama, at age 29, left the comforts of his palace home in search of the way to transcend suffering. After six years of futile searching, he finally gave up. He washed his body at the river and then sat under a big pipal tree to meditate. He realized he needed to reconsider his approach. According to the story, as the first faint light of day began to glow in the eastern sky, he came to the realization that the cause of human suffering is ignorance. He found such ignorance in himself. He shouted, "Oh darkness, Ignorance!" Thus he became known as The Awakened One and the tree became known as the Bodhi Tree. (Bodhi means enlightenment.)

By his example, he showed us that it was possible for human beings to become a Buddha, as we all are in possession of this potentiality called Buddha-nature, which when awakened and cultivated, will enable us to achieve supreme Wisdom and Compassion. Therefore this day signifies the dawn of humanity's universal emancipation from suffering and ignorance.

By Rev. Elaine Donlin, BCSF Minister's Assistant

12月8日は成道会、釈尊のお悟りを祝う日です。

2600年前のインドで、シッダールタ・ゴータマは29歳の時、苦を超越する方法を求め、宮殿での快適な暮らしを後にしました。6年間の甲斐のない求道の末にとうとう見切りをつけ、川

での沐浴後、大きなピパルの木の下に座り禅定に入られました。仏典には、東の空が白み始めたころ、釈尊は人間の苦しみの原因は愚痴（道理に暗くて適確な判断を下せず、迷い悩む心のはたらき）であることを理解されたと書かれています。釈尊は、そのような無知なる自分を見つけられ「ああ、なんとも暗く、愚かなることよ！」と述べられたそうです。こうして、釈尊は「目覚めた人」として、瞑想されていた木は菩提樹として知られるようになりました。(菩提とは「悟り」の意)。

釈尊の悟りによって、人間はみな仏になることができるということが明らかになったのです。内なる仏性に気づき育むことで、仏の智慧と慈悲に到ることが可能であるということです。このことから成道会の日とは、苦悩と無知蒙昧な闇から人類をあまねく解き放つ、その夜明けを示しています。

Translation by

Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyaki, BCSF Minister's Assistant

宮木 リー 啓輔

NEW YEAR SERVICES

Sun. Dec. 31 - 7pm ~ Mon. Jan. 1 - 10am



Message from Rev. Melissa Opel BCSF Supervising Minister

The Shared Paths of Shinran and Darth Vader

"Only when we are shone upon from the outside and view ourselves mirrored in that light—only then, for the first time, are we able to see a complete picture of ourselves. The light of the Buddha's higher wisdom alone reaches to the very base of our being; it allows us to see our delusions for what it is. This is because the Buddha's higher wisdom enters us fully and opens our heart."

—Jodo Shinshu: A Guide

One of the most interesting asides I have ever heard about Shinran Shonin is that he had the makings of a Super Villain. Comic books often depict supervillains as coming out of tragic events and life circumstances. If we think about the many tragedies Shinran endured, I can begin to see why Shinran had the makings to be a supervillain.

In his life, Shinran knew great loss. Whether it was the plagues and famine he lived through, war, loss of loved ones, spiritual despair, having to disown his son, even the simple difficulties of living during medieval Japan, Shinran encountered events that could have set his heart cold and seeking revenge. He could have become a supervillain without the dharma and the unyielding embrace of Amida Buddha.

Not all people, real or fictional, are able to keep their lives on a positive track. When I consider a villain, my first thought is the Star Wars character Darth Vader, also known as Anakin Skywalker before he turned away from the goodness of the Force. Through a series of events, or one might say karmic conditions, Skywalker-Vader experienced both great love and great loss. He fought with the realization that he could do horrible things, like annihilating the people who killed his mother, while having great love for his wife and their unborn child. (Spoiler alert...children!)

Vader and Shinran, like many of us, were shaped by the good of life and the bad. Both Vader and Shinran understood the duality in themselves to do good and evil. But what we do with these experiences is what truly matters. If we see the world through the lens of our delusions and not the lens of true reality, we begin to see the world in a negative light.

As a kid, I saw Vader as an embodiment of evil, but as an adult, I now see Vader as the embodiment of the human experience. Initially coaxed by evil powers to turn his pain into hate, Vader later encounters his son who desperately tries to save his life and sparks his long-buried love. In a way, Darth Vader was awakened to love in the last moments of his life because he was in touch with the truth of who he was.

Although it may be a stretch, the Force can be likened to Amida Buddha. The Force moves through the Star Wars world and people fortunate enough through causes and conditions can encounter this Force, just like those of us who have found the teachings of Amida.

Shinran was deeply reflective of who he was and where he stood in comparison to the Buddha. He changed his path to rely on the dharma and the teachings and care of Amida Buddha. Shinran knew how quickly he could fall back into self-powers practices, so he clung tightly to the Vow of Amida Buddha and relied solely on the Nembutsu path.

When we are not grounded in truth and move through the world crushed by waves of suffering, we respond by crashing into everything around us, causing pain for ourselves and others. We may not always realize we are suffering, but our bodies and minds respond as such.

The wisdom and compassion of the teachings can help us be in the moment, to see our ego and how it influences what we do and what we are capable of. We can view ourselves with deep self-awareness that will ease our suffering in this world. We can awaken to the truth of who we are and see life as it is.

Staying in contact with the teachings of the Buddha reaches the very base of our being and turns a mirror to our life. The teachings remind us that while some areas of our lives are relieved from unhappiness, we must continue to study and seek the truth so we can constantly adjust and bring light to the dark areas of our lives.

Namo Amida Butsu.

Adapted from a Sunday service dharma talk.

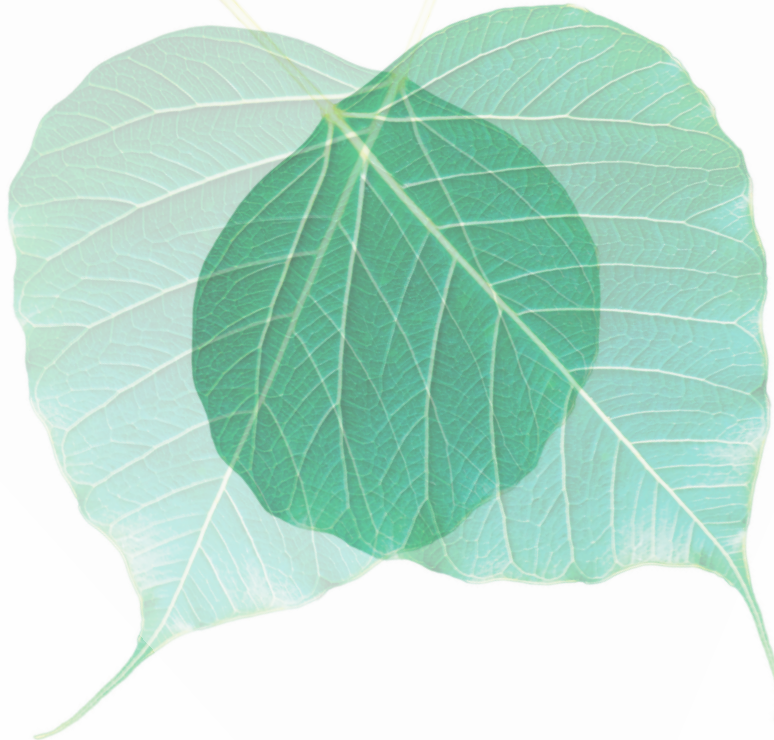
Message from Rev. Melissa Opel
BCSF Supervising Minister



Translation by Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyaki
BCSF Ministers Assistant

メリッサ先生のメッセージの要約:

「光に照らされ、映し出された自分自身を眺める。その時初めて、私たちはありのままの姿に気づかされるのです。智慧の光明だけが、私たちの根幹にまで届き、虚仮である存在を照らし出すのです。それは、仏の智慧が私たちの中に完全に入り込み、閉ざされた心を開いてくださるからなのです。」親鸞聖人はダークヒーローになる素質があったのではないか、という小話を耳にしたことがあります。アメコミで、よくダークヒーローは痛ましい事件や人生の不遇から生まれるように描かれます。親鸞が耐え忍んだ数々の苦難を考えれば、ダークヒーローになる可能性があると考えた人がいたのもわかるような気がします。親鸞は人生において辛酸をなめるような苦境というものを知っていましたが、復讐の道を選びませんでした。仏と照らし合わせ自分は何者であり、どのような立ち位置にあるのかを深く内観し、そのために、自分を支えている仏法、阿弥陀仏の教えとすくいに帰依する道を選んだのです。仏教に触れ続け実践することで、私たちは自分が何者であるかという真実に目覚め、人生をありのままに見ることができるようになるのでしょうか。



Sympathy

The Buddhist Church of San Francisco offers condolences
to the family and friends of the late

Dean Hedani November 7, 2023

December Shotsuki Hoyo Memorial Service

The memorial service for your loved ones who passed away in December is Sunday, December 10 at 10 a.m. Join us In Person or call the BCSF office for the Zoom link.

Isayo Abe 1986
Moto Abe 1950
Amy Emiko Adam 1999
Tome Amishima 1966
Frank Fumio Ando 1993
Sakae Antoku 1971
Kohei Asada 1951
Yoshio Ashizawa
Tsumako N. Binken 1983
Victor Lee Blackson 1967
Fusakichi Dairiki 1981
Fusao Taoda Dairiki 1918
Masato "Mike" Deguchi
Yoshiaki Deguchi 1968
Emiko Doi 2016
Tom Tamio Doami 2004
George Soichi Doi 2013
Naoe Ehara 1982
Douglas Roome Empringham
Hidezo Enomoto 1965
Kisa Fuji 1920
Mikio Fujimoto 1974
Yoshiko Fujimoto 1936
Kichijiro Fukui 1958
Tatsu Fukui 1977
Saikichi Fumoto 1924
Chikashi Furuya 1972
Emiko Furuya 2019
Kuniko Futakawa 1999
James Takeo Hamada 1991
Yoneo Hamada 1996
Ailene Hamamoto 1985
Calvin Kenichi Harada
Chiyoko Hashimoto 2013
Kisao Hashimoto
Shuichi Hashimoto
Hirokichi Hata 1926
Hatsue Hattori 1982
Mitsu Hattori 1957
Melainie Hedani 2013
Maki Hieda 1992
Mayumi Hirai 2005
Natsuko Hirakawa 2007
Tom Mikuni Hirayama 1977
Haruco Setoguchi Hirose
Yoshikazu Hirota 2015
Ryoko Arima Hong 1984
Sumi Horibe 1933
Tendoji Horibe 1924
Zeny Horibe 1956
Mitsu Horikoshi 1955
Ichi Ichinohe 1981
Naoshi Ijichi 1954
Gishin Ikeda 1965
Nobuko Ikeda 2016
Yoshinobu Ikeda 1965
Duncan Kazuma Ikezoe
Misao Mary Imai 1966
Joe Hatsuta Imamoto 1983

Tatsuji Imanaka 2007
Misao Inaba 2018
Joe Noburo Inouye 2010
Teruko Inouye 1997
Harry Takashi Ishii 2000
Eiko Nancy Ishisaki 2016
Russell Taro Ito 1982
Takeko Ito 2017
Tomiko Ito 1977
Will Ito 1976
Arline Fusae Iwafuchi 1998
Aki Iwamasa 1966
Kojiro "Mike" Iwasaki 2013
Paul Patrick Judge 1963
Shiro Kachu 1941
Junichi Kakebe 1951
Naka Kato
Tomekichi Kato 1922
Annie Masami Kawabata
Kumae Kawabata 1981
Joe Kawaguchi 1972
Toi Kawakami
Chizuko Kawasaki 2003
Marie Shinobu Kitagawa
Tsuyako "Sox" Kitashima
Iwataro Kitayama 1950
Rui Kiwata 1962
Rev. Seiji Kobara 2005
Fusao Kobayagawa 1980
Asa Kobayakawa 1972
Miyokichi Kodama
Toyo Kodama
Haru Koga 1945
Yukino Kozaki 1994
Violet Kroll 1973
Hideo Kubota 2010
Junpei Kubota
Teruko Kuwahara
Chosho Kyojima
Julie Yuri Lam 2015
Miyuki Masada 2020
Jerry Toshio Masuda 2001
Yukiko Masuoka 2001
Gerald Ataru Matoi 2011
Helen Matoi 2020
Fumiko Matsubara 1980
Kita Matsubara 1984
Kiyoko Matsuhara 1949
Tane Matsui
Bobby Minoru Matsumura
Takuzo Matsumura 1976
Isano Matsuo 1990
Shime Matsuzaki 1989
George McClendon 1967
Yoshitaro Mihara 1955
Shime Miho 1972
Kita Minamoto 1999
Masae Miura 1948
Shikanoshin Miura 1954

Masao Miyamoto 1961
Bunsho Miyazaki 1948
Mae Itsuko Mizono 2003
Matsuyo Mizono 1985
Makoto Mizuki 1944
Chiyoko Mizutani 2019
Kiku Morino 1963
Take Moriyama 1980
Aichi Mukai 1989
Yoshio Mukai 1936
Louise Kirie Murata 2000
Hampei Nagatomo 1950
Kishino Nakagiri 1987
Shimayo Nakahigashi 1986
Yoshio Nakai 2005
Katsumi Nakamoto 1943
Bonnie Nakamura 1979
Haruye Nakamura 1996
James Masaaki Nakamura
Saikichi Nakamura 1932
Kosei Nakashima 1969
Iwao Namekawa 1998
Kazuo Nii 1979
Masako Nii 1994
Kanjiro Nii 1963
Taka Nishimoto 1968
Frank Toyokichi Nishimura
Fuki Nishimura
Tetsuo Noda 1950
Moriaki Noguchi 1995
Yuriko Noma 1951
Fui Ogasawara 1989
Henry Ogawa 1997
Mari Ohura 1933
Howard Toshio Oka 1995
Kris Hideki Oka 2022
Kathleen Kazuko Okamoto
Grace Omi 1984
Mitsue Ono 2020
Stanley Kazumi Ono 2018
Mitsuko Onoda 1940
Hachiro Oshida 1966
Kame Oshima 1996
Eiichi Ota 1973
Mary Sachiye Ota 2004
Tadahisa Otani 1976
Misaku Ouye 1918
Jitsutaru Ouye 1940
Kanemi Hayasaka Roth
Matsuyo Sakita 1985
Ryoko Sakita 1947
Ito Sako 1916
Stanley Shouji Sakuda
Masao Sakumoto 1990
Hidetsugu Sasaki 1996
Kunihiko Sato 1980
Tsutako Sato 2007
Yonekazu Satoda 2017
Fukuji Segi 1955

Kikuyo Sekino 2016
Yoshio Serizawa 1955
Mary Hatsue Shimamoto
Miho Shimezo 1972
Asakichi Shimizu 1966
Ken Corby Shinomiya
Seisuke Shiozaki 1982
Kameyo Sone 1988
Haruno Suenaga
Kazuto Suenaga 1967
Kohachi Suenaga 1949
Michiyo Sumiyama 1936
Fusa Suyehiro 1946
Toshiko Suyeyasu 2003
Masako Suzuki 2013
Hiroyuki Takeoka 1995
Dennis Hiroshi Takeuchi
Irvin Shuichi Tamura
Mitsuyo Tanabe
Minotsuchi Tanaka
Yukino Tashiro 1987
Mayumi Tekawa 1976
Jason Tetsuo Terusaki 1988
Jean Shieko Toda 2005
Zendo Toki 1966
Akira Tokugawa 2012
Oine Tokunaga 1958
Art Hiroo Tomita 2009
Ruth Reiko Toriumi 2015
Hiro Toya 1931
Kimiko Toyooka 2005
Torakichi Tsuchida 1967
Arleen Honda Tsuchiya
Masamitsu Tsuda 1971
Masaji Tsujisaka 1974
Tome Tsunashima 1966
Hiroshi Tsuyumine 2022
Chuhei Udo
Shizuyo Uyeda 1981
Sachiye Uyemoto 2018
Kiwa Uyeno 1988
John Toshiyuki Wakisaka
Zentaro Washio 2021
Jun Watada 1953
Jean Yamada 2020
Helen Yaeko Yamaguchi
Fujino Yamamoto 1972
James Yamamoto 2003
Kijyu Yamamoto 1972
Nanaye "Hope" Yamamoto
Takeo Yamamoto 2016
Toru Henry Yamamoto
Yoshihiro Yamawaki 2014
Hisae Yanase 1986
Chitose Yasumoto 2021
Michiko Mitzi Yorichi 2019
Shizuyo Yoshida 2002
Kane Yoshikawa 1942
Eiji Yoshimura 1973
Eizo Zaitzu 1912

Acknowledgements

for donations processed between October 16 and November 13, 2023.
Thank you for your generous support of the BCSF.

DONATIONS

Anonymous
Christina M. Magee
Y. Mary Nakayama

MEMORIALS

Setsuko Handa IMO: Masao Sam Handa
Diana Tsoi & Paul Hamai IMO: Masao Sam Handa
Russell & Harumi Kishida IMO: Chiyo Matsui
Gary Kuruma IMO: Rachel Kuruma
Takumi Matsuba IMO: Keiko Matsuba
Jerry & Eleanor Osumi IMO: Kahn Yamada
Chihiro Otake IMO: Reiko Kobayashi
Gary Yamada IMO: Kahn Yamada

BCSF PLEDGE MEMBERSHIPS

Janet E & Atlas H Arakawa
Deborah (Leena) Lamm - New
Brian McWilliams
Carol Aiko Okay
David & Camille Pating
Sai Seigel & Cole Westbrook
Lynn H. Taniguchi
Michael S. Tong
Yoko Sumida
Elaine T. Yamamoto

EITAIKYO

Misaye Abiko IMO: Rev. Hiroshi Abiko

YAO SERVICE

Janet Low

LIGHT OF DHARMA

Dennis & Susie Sato

OSEIBO 2023 year-end gift for staff

Sumie Hayashi

JANUARY SHOTSUKI HOYO

Charles "Chuck" McClendon IMO: Taneko McClendon

JUNE SHOTSUKI HOYO

Jane Hamada Shinseki IMO: Gale Hamada

SEPTEMBER SHOTSUKI HOYO

Steven Omori IMO: Tsuru Nagai

OCTOBER SHOTSUKI HOYO

Jane Hamada Shinseki IMO: Michele Hamada
Patricia & Brynn Monteith IMO: Anthony Monteith
Nobuko Naganuma IMO: Isoka Naganuma
Steven Omori IMO: Shigecko Omori

NOVEMBER SHOTSUKI HOYO

Sylvia & William Corrigan IMO: Kazo Fukagai
Sylvia & William Corrigan IMO: Peggy Fukagai
Brenda H & Bert Ho IMO: Hiroko T. Okawachi
Vickie & Dr. Michael Ina IMO: Carey Covey
Jane Hamada Shinseki IMO: Casey Hamada
Jane Hamada Shinseki IMO: Mary Hamada
Janet Kashiwada IMO: Diane Nakano
Janet Kashiwada IMO: Sogoro Nakano
Lori Matoba IMO: Hank Matoba
Kathleen M. Mayeda IMO: Teruko Kanba
Hope Fumi McIrvin IMO: Yaeko Hanyu
Steven Mihara IMO: Etsumi Mihara & Shizue Mihara
Frank E. Morimoto IMO: Gunnosuke Morimoto
Florence Murata IMO: Yukio Murata
Nobuko Naganuma IMO: Kazumi June Naganuma
Bobby Nakata IMO: Kuraji Nakata
Hiroshi V. Sakamoto IMO: Keiko Sakamoto
Dennis & Susie Sato IMO: Eiichi Sato
Stacey L. Shimamoto IMO: Tsutako Hosoda
Marumi M. Suyeyasu IMO: Shizuo Sueyasu
Kyoko Takenaka IMO: Yoshinori Takenaka
Doris M. Tsuchitani IMO: Ryuji Tsuchitani
Richard Koichi Yamauchi IMO: Florence Masako Alling

DECEMBER SHOTSUKI HOYO

Jane Hamada Shinseki IMO: Yoneo Hamada



SAVE THE DATE ~ A Triple Event!

Sunday, January 21, 2024

"Past, Present & Future"

Hoonko (Shinran Shonin Memorial Service)

and

BCSF 125th Anniversary Commemoration

and

New Year Bento and Party in the Gym



Guest Speaker BCA Bishop Rev. Marvin Harada



BCSF Resident Minister Rev. Melissa Opel

New Year Bento for
Sunday, January 21, 2024
Pre-order Dec 27 - Jan 7

Created for BCSF by Mrs. Suruki and Suruki Supermarket. Join us in the gym for a New Year party following the HoOnko and BCSF 125th Anniversary service.

As a Thank You to BCSF members for your membership donations, we are pleased to offer One Complimentary Bento per BCSF member.

Complimentary delivery to home-bound sangha members.

Pick-up available at BCSF garage.

Pre-Order Bento from Dec. 27 to Jan. 7

Email BCSFBento@gmail.com
or Phone the office 415-776-3158

Bento 1 (\$27) The BCSF Special

- New Year's Ebi/shrimp
- Nishime/simmered vegetables
- Salmon with mayo
- Saba/mackerel
- Korean beef
- Kabocha/pumpkin
- Kimpira/slivered burdock
- Chikuwa/fishcake and bell pepper
- Inari/sushi rice in tofu pouch
- Futomaki/sushi rice in seaweed roll
- White rice
- Takuan/pickled radish
- One piece of melon and one piece of orange

Bento 2 (\$13) No Fish/ Dashi

- Two pieces of Chicken yakitori
- Green salad with miso dressing
- Tamagoyaki/omelet
- Kimpira/slivered burdock
- Wakame/seaweed salad
- White rice
- Takuan/pickled radish

Bento 3 (\$13) No Meat

- Nishime/simmered vegetables
- Green salad with miso dressing
- Kimpira/slivered burdock
- Kabocha/pumpkin
- Edamame/soybeans
- Vegetarian gyoza
- Inari/sushi rice in tofu pouch
- White rice
- Takuan/pickled radish

BCSF Board Highlights**Highlights of Nov. 12 Membership Meeting****Re: Major Spending Proposals for Technology Modernization**

Will Che and Michael Otani presented proposals totaling \$94,168 plus \$4,446 in annual recurring costs. Will and Mike are technology professionals volunteering their skills to advise BCSF on this important undertaking. They are not affiliated with the vendors under consideration.

Projects:

1. \$ 20,332: Install permanent internet cables throughout the building. Vendor: Spaghetti Cabling.
2. \$34,300 plus \$2,560 annual recurring fee: Video surveillance - replace 14 existing security cameras with high-resolution cameras that will record events based on motion. Vendor: AVS.
3. \$22,336 plus \$1,386 annual recurring fee: Access control - replace existing door opening system and sensors with Open Path that allows remote lock/unlock, mobile phone key, notification when doors are open. Vendor: AVS.
4. \$15,000: Strengthen doors to Garage and Austin entrance to prevent and discourage break-ins. Vendors: tbd.
5. \$2,200 plus \$500 annually: Replace two computers in the office that are too old to be updated. Vendor: Costco.

Two other improvements for the future: Hondo Sound System; Hondo Web Conference System.

Questions from members:

- * power outage: battery will sustain for 15-20 min. to allow people to exit. Residents of the building will have a physical key to access their apartments.
- * camera vandalism: can't prevent damage but cameras are strategically placed.
- * cabling will be installed so as to not expose asbestos in the building.

Next step: The BCSF Board will vote on the bids at the November 19 board meeting. The proposals were previously discussed at the Oct. 15 board meeting and the Nov. 12 membership meeting. All meetings are open to sangha members

Highlights for the Nov. 19 Board of Directors meeting

will be published in the Dec. Light of Dharma. Delay is due to the earlier mail date required for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Calling all BCSF leaders:

BWA, Choir, Dharma School, Girl Scouts, Jiten Daiko, Pack 29, Troop 29, Soko Gakuen, YAO, Ministerial Team, BCSF Board

*** Next PROGRAM BOARD monthly meeting is Tues., Dec. 12. *****Highlights from October 10, 2023**

Attended by BWA, Dharma School, Girl Scouts, Jiten Daiko, Pack 29, Troop 29, Soko Gakuen, Rev. Opel, Board

Bulletin Board in Social Hall: Every group has a spot. Please update frequently.

Query: Goals, Challenges, Resources Needed for 2023-24 programs. Responses from Jiten Daiko, Troop and Pack 29, Girl Scouts, Dharma School, Soko Gakuen, BWA.

Back-to-School meeting on Oct. 1: Five of eight youth groups, 2 adult groups were represented. Approx. 40 people attended. 2023-24 calendar of services was distributed.

Highlights from Nov. 14, 2023

Attended by Choir, Girl Scouts, Jiten Daiko, Jr. YBA, Pack 29, Troop 29, Soko Gakuen, YAO, Board

LiveScan background checks: are required for adult volunteers of youth groups. Contact AB506 Compliance Coordinator Tara Mochizuki at bcsf.compliance@gmail.com

Annual Reports from program groups will be required for the February 18, 2024 General Membership Meeting. Office Manager Sheryl Serafino will announce deadlines for your reports.

Query: Goals, Challenges, Resources Needed for 2023-24 programs. Choir gave their responses.

Saturday, Dec. 2: Troop 29 will organize a Dumpster and Recycling day for all groups to dispose of unwanted items.

Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024: Hoonko - BCSF 125th Anniversary - New Year Party

BCSF NEWS

Dear BCSF Members:

Annual BCSF Membership is changing from a set-amount of dues schedule to a Pledge system that allows you to choose the amount to donate for BCSF Membership.

If you have questions about the new Annual Membership Pledge, please contact the BCSF Office. We will be happy to assist you. With gratitude for your support of our temple, BCSF Board of Directors

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO

2023-2024 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PLEDGE

Information is for internal BCSF use. Exception: we may share your mailing address with BCA for national newsletter & mailings.



What is a Membership Pledge?

It is a commitment to be a Member of the BCSF. Your Pledge amount is open-ended for you to choose the donation amount that best fits your circumstances. Your Pledge is payable in one or more payments over 12 months. Your Pledge amount remains confidential.

How much is a Membership Pledge?

A Pledge of \$200 or more gives you membership in both BCSF and the national Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). BCSF forwards an annual per-member assessment to BCA (in 2023, \$177.21 per member). The remaining portion of your Pledge is used for the stewardship of BCSF operations and programs.

Membership Pledge Guidelines - suggested amounts

Please know that BCSF very much appreciates your Dana (gift), no matter the amount. As a guideline to determine your personal Membership Pledge amount, we suggest 1% of family gross income as a starting point.

Table with 3 columns: Family Income, Annual 1% Dana Pledge, Semi-Annually. Rows show income levels from \$20,000 to \$100,000 and corresponding pledge amounts.

Benefits of BCSF Membership

- * Flexible membership year. Your 12-month pledge period starts when you submit this pledge form.
* Monthly BCSF Light of Dharma newsletter.
* One vote per member (two votes for Couples) at membership meetings and Board of Directors elections.
* Complimentary Bento (one for single, two for couples) at the New Year Luncheon on Jan. 21, 2024.
* Annual Pledge of \$200 or more gives the donor an automatic membership with the national Buddhist Churches of America and a subscription to the Wheel of Dharma newsletter.

Main Contact

First Name Middle Name Last Name

Input field for name

Mailing Address:

Input field for mailing address

City: State: Zip:

Input field for city/state/zip

Preferred Phone Number: E-Mail:

Input fields for phone number and email

Spouse/Partner (if desired to be a member)

First Name Middle Name Last Name

Input field for name

Mailing Address: (If different)

Input field for mailing address

City: State: Zip:

Input field for city/state/zip

Preferred Phone Number: E-Mail:

Input fields for phone number and email

My Membership Pledge for 20__

I/we wish to contribute \$_____ as my/our Annual Membership Pledge.

Payment Frequency (circle one): One time Semi-annually in 2 equal payments.

Do you want a membership renewal reminder? Y / N
How do you want to receive the monthly newsletter "Light of Dharma"? By MAIL / By EMAIL / BOTH / NONE

If paying by check, please make payable to BCSF. Mail to BCSF, 1881 Pine St, San Francisco CA 94109.

If paying with credit card: I am the owner of this credit card and authorize the Buddhist Church of San Francisco to charge my account as stated on this form.

Cardholder name: _____ Billing Address: _____

Credit Card No. _____ Exp date ____ / ____ 3-digit Security Code _____

Cardholder signature _____ Date: _____

BCSF NEWS

FEDERAL GIFT TAX ANNUAL EXCLUSION – how gifts made now can minimize estate taxes after you pass

By Gary Kitahata

The federal estate tax is disparagingly called the death tax by its critics. But very few estates ever actually pay this tax. In 2023, you are exempt from federal estate tax if your estate is \$12.92 million or less (\$25.84 million total for a married couple). The federal limits are inflationadjusted each year and will automatically roll back significantly to pre-2018 levels at the end of 2025. Congress could theoretically reduce this number even more – the individual exemption was only \$2 million in 2007. In addition, each state has different estate tax provisions. But this article is about the federal gift tax annual exclusion and how it relates to your eventual estate tax.

Your estate plan allocates your assets to beneficiaries at the time of your death. But you don't have to wait for your demise to start allocating assets. **IF** you are fortunate enough to have the means, giving today both benefits your loved ones right away and can reduce your taxable estate so that it falls below whatever the estate taxable limit is in the future.

How much you give annually, however, is something important to consider.

Federal law sets an annual limit each year for how much you can gift to any person or institution (such as your church or other favorite charity) without having to report it as a taxable gift. For 2023, that limit is a total of \$17,000 in gifts (\$34,000 for total gifts coming from a married couple) to any one recipient. The limit is based on each recipient and there is no limit to the number of recipients. For gifts up to and including the limit, a recipient does not have to report this as taxable income. You can give more than the limit to a recipient in any year, but it must then be reported on IRS Form 709 and will be subtracted from your total lifetime limit.

Your gifts to individuals are not tax-exempt for your federal tax returns. Your gifts to tax-exempt organizations (like churches) can be tax-exempt to you as the donor only if the total amount exceeds your standard deduction. In 2023, the standard deduction for an individual is \$13,850; for a married couple it is \$27,700. For an individual 65 or older, this deduction increases by \$1,550 (\$3,100 for a married couple). These numbers will be higher in 2024.



So, the tax benefit of making regular gifts up to the federal gift limit is that it can reduce your assets for your estate to remain below the amount that triggers the federal estate tax at the time of your death. On the other hand, if your total estate is already at or projected to eventually exceed the overall limit, giving annually (and being mindful of the annual limits) will serve to reduce your total estate size, thus reducing any estate tax that is triggered.

In summary, until the end of 2023, you can make an unlimited number of gifts to individuals or organizations, tax-exempt or not, and it will not affect your eventual federal estate tax limit as long as your gifts do not exceed \$17,000 per recipient (\$34,000 total for a married couple filing a joint return). In calendar year 2024, this limit goes up to \$18,000 per recipient (\$36,000 total for a married couple filing jointly).

Assuming you can afford to make these gifts now instead of as bequests from your will after you have passed, the recipients can enjoy the gifts now and not have to wait for the many years that hopefully will pass before you do, and you can reduce the potential impact of the federal estate tax on your future estate.

Consult with your own accountant or financial advisor if you want to know more about the federal gift tax annual exclusion and the federal estate tax in general, because tax rules constantly change and can be difficult to understand. This discussion assumes that you are in the financial position to make sizable gifts now without compromising your overall financial situation, now and in the future.

Gary Kitahata is a BCSF member who enjoys managing his retirement portfolio. He has no formal training in personal finance and firmly cautions readers to check with their own professional advisors to determine the best course of action for their situation. Send questions for future topics or comments about this article to the BCSF office.

BCSF NEWS

BOOK REVIEW by Edythe Vassall**Coffinman: The Journal of a Buddhist Mortician**

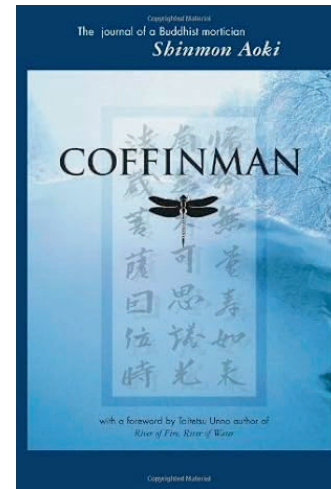
by Shinmon Aoki

After failing at business, the author gets a job as an undertaker, preparing bodies for burial. His wife, relatives, and friends disapprove of his livelihood and scorn him. In spite of rejection, he develops an affinity for this kind of work. Sound familiar? This book was the basis for the movie *Departures* (winner, Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, 2009).

As a Shin Buddhist, Mr. Aoki sees life in death, manifested in the luminous faces of the dying; it is the Inconceivable Light of Amida Buddha. "This Inconceivable Light is immeasurable, reaching everywhere without limit.... If we think of it as a light that comes to us from eternity, then it's constantly near us, constantly shining upon us."

In the third of three chapters, Aoki mainly focuses on Shinran Shonin and his writings. Finally, the "notes" section at the end of the book contains a lot of interesting information.

The Coffinman book and the Departures DVD are available at your local independent bookstore and online.



Edythe Vassall is happy to share the Buddhist book reviews she writes for the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin newsletter. Edythe is a familiar face to many in the SF Bay Area from her former role at the Center for Buddhist Education and member of the Berkeley Buddhist Temple. She retired in 2018, moved to Hilo, Hawaii, and is now a member of HHHB and a Betsuin library volunteer. Aloha!

Oseibo 2023

November 1, 2023

Dear Temple Members and Friends,

As 2023 comes to an end, we reflect with grateful appreciation for the hard work of our ministerial staff, the temple videographer, and the office and facility staff:

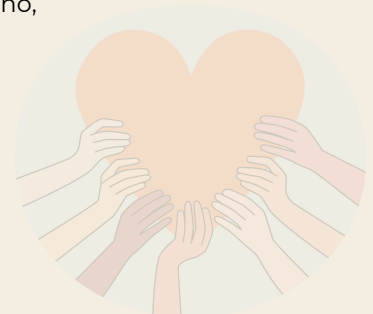
Rev. Melissa Opel, Resident Minister
 Minister's Assistants: Jack Dairiki,
 Rev. Elaine Donlin, Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyaki,
 Rev. David Pating & Camille Pating
 Mindful Meditation: Leo Joslin
 Videographer: Kevin Yoza
 Office Manager: Sheryl Serafino
 Custodian: Francisco Estrada

Thanks to this team, BCSF provides weekly services in-person and via zoom, and offers support to the sangha for memorials and at other times of need. In addition the temple's reach extends to youth, adults, and the larger community through special interest activities based on our Jodo Shinshu foundation.

It is customary to present a year-end monetary donation (Oseibo) collected from the members as a token of our appreciation. All funds collected go directly to the staff and team.

If you would like to participate in this tradition, please send your donation to the church by January 21, 2024, the day of our Hoonko service and New Year's lunch and program. Please write a separate check to "BCSF" with "Oseibo" on the memo line.

With Gratitude and In Gassho,
 BCSF Board of Directors



BCSF NEWS

YOUTH RISING - Jr. YBA

By Elle A., Publicity Chair

November was full of fun activities and busy schedules. We started with a bang by bringing back the Pancake Breakfast fundraiser on November 5. The BCSF kitchen bustled with Jr. Y. members and parent volunteers making batter, pancakes, eggs, & sausages. It smelled like maple and coffee throughout the morning till afternoon.

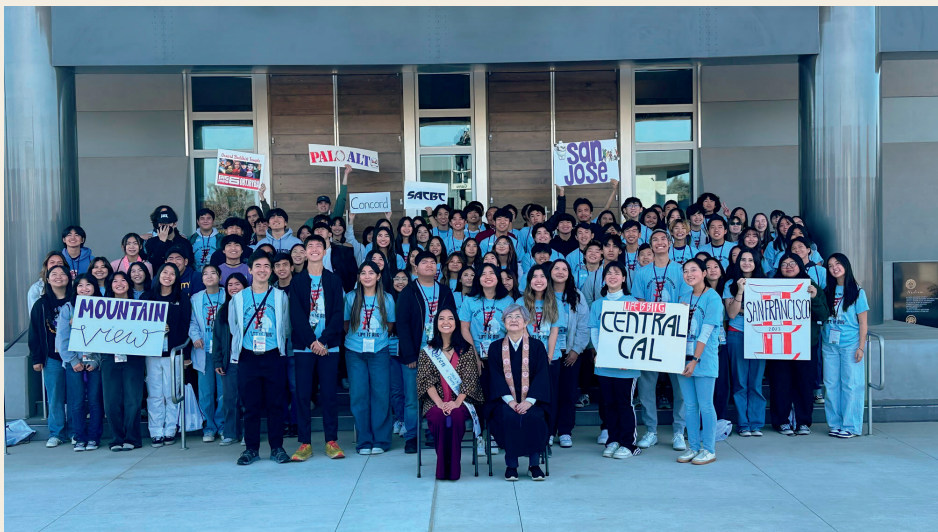
We were shocked by the amount of people in line (over 230 people!) coming through the doors but were prepared as we served everyone their meal. The eggs were the most popular and were the first to run out. Our co-chairs Mika, Yume and Kaia shared announcements throughout the day. We raffled off gift cards, Warriors tickets and gift bags, and more!

Our head advisor Emily Land said, "Even though at one point it felt a bit overwhelming with the number of people waiting to get in, it all worked out great, the flow was perfect, the wait was not too long, and we never ran out of food."

Thanks to everyone who came to supported our first Pancake Breakfast in 3 years!

**Save the date for next year:
Sunday, November 3, 2024.**

We had our Central Cal Conference on November 11 in Fresno and met with other chapters of Jr. YBA. The theme was "Life is BIIG" from the movie Big Hero Six. We did fun activities like workshops, discussions, cooking, and making nenju. We met new people and shared memories at the social while watching the slideshow and talent show.



Jr. YBA at the Fresno Conference



Yume, Emi, Elle, and Mika

The BCSF BWA Boutique started in 1992 by Kay Maeyama with the goal of fund-raising for BCSF by selling handmade items. In the spirit of “mottanai,” Harumi Kishida along with co-chairs Yasuko Fukuda, Yuri Ito, Miyako Kazama and Diane Nakano continued the boutique, adding white elephant items donated from our Sangha.

For over 30 years, many members and families contributed handmade quilts, aprons, chef hats, potholders, knitted caps, scarves, unique artwork and many household items “too good to discard.”

Sadly, the number of our handicraft contributors has gotten smaller, but our willingness to continue to serve the Sangha has not. While we hope we connect to new craftspeople, we also recognize the pressing need to be Green in the world today.

During his time at BCSF, Rev. Ronald Kobata encouraged green thinking and awareness. He spearheaded installation of solar panels, decreased the use of plastic water bottles and single-use eating utensils at Sangha activities. Our use of ceramic tea cups rather than paper continues today.

We launched our EcoSangha idea, “It Takes a Sangha to Go Green,” at the Jr YBA pancake breakfast with two samples of laundry sheets that eliminate toxic chemicals and plastic containers. Thank you to the interested people who stopped by to try them!

We will showcase other green ideas and products at future Boutiques. Please help us Go Green! Submit your ideas by mail or email to: bcsfecosangha@gmail.com, attention “Green In-Box” to be shared in the Light of Dharma. Gassho, Linda Ono



Green In-Box idea

Do-it-yourself Fruit Fly Trap

Fruit flies can be bad for your health. They can transfer germs from a dirty surface onto a clean one. Some of the bacteria they may carry include salmonella, E. Coli, and listeria. These germs cause food poisoning.

Fruit flies are most common in the late summer and early fall. An adult female can lay up to 2,000 eggs on the surface of anything moist. Within 30 hours, tiny maggots hatch, within 2 days, they mate too. They live 8-15 days. Info from WebMD K. Zelman, RD, LD, MPH Sep 9, 2023.

Items needed:

A see-through container such as a plastic bottle

1-teaspoon of honey, ½ teaspoon of vinegar, 2-3 drops of dish soap

To make the “trap” cut the top off a plastic bottle so that it can fit inside the bottom of the bottle, both should be about 2-1/2 inches.

Mix the “inviting” ingredients in the bottom of the bottle. Place on kitchen countertop or wherever fruit flies gather in your house. Add more honey as needed.

You may be surprised at the number of flies that take the bait!

Gassho, Kristee Ono



WELCOME!

The Buddhist Church of San Francisco welcomes all those who wish to learn about the boundless wisdom and compassion that is Amida Buddha without regard to race, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression.

**Buddhist Church of San Francisco
Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco (BCSF) is to maintain a temple and to establish a Buddhist community of the Jodo Shinshu faith in San Francisco, CA. Building on our profound legacy as a Jodo Shinshu spiritual center, we strive to awaken within us the compassion and wisdom of the Buddha Dharma. BCSF endeavors to share the teaching of the Buddha with all those who seek the knowledge and the truth of the Buddha Dharma, to promote our Sangha (community); and to provide for the general welfare and services to guide the activities which strengthen our faith in the Buddha and advance our learning in the Dharma.

Photos and Credits:

Page 1, Mural designed and sewn by Nanayo Silver
Page 5, Photo courtesy of Leena Lamm
Page 10, Photos courtesy of Elle A. and Sheryl Serafino

Corrections from November Issue:

Pg 4 Correct name is Kiyoko Yamasaki

Resident Minister

Rev. Melissa Opel

Minister's Assistants

Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyaki (Kyoshi)
Rev. David Pating (Kyoshi)
Rev Elaine Donlin (Tokudo)
Jack Dairiki (Honorary)
Camille Pating

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Doug Dorn

Light of Dharma Committee

Rev. Melissa Opel, Rev. Elaine Donlin, Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyaki, Arlene Kimata, Susan Sakuma, BJ Soriano

BCSF Office Manager

Sheryl Serafino
In Office: T,W,F
Remote: M,Th

The views expressed in this newsletter reflect the opinions of contributors and not necessarily of the Buddhist Church of San Francisco.

We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please notify us of any corrections.

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If you are a BCSF member, THANK YOU for your membership which covers the cost of printing and mailing the monthly newsletter. If you are not a BCSF member, please consider a voluntary donation for a 1-year subscription.

-----mail to BCSF 1881 Pine St, SF CA 94109-----

____ Suggested donation of \$15 for Non-Members to receive 1 year of printed/mailed Light of Dharma newsletters.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



December & January Dates

All Sunday services are in person and Livestream/Zoom.
 Check BCSF's YouTube channel for Sunday Service postings.

- Friday December 1:** 7pm Bodhi Eve service, preceded by 5:30pm. Pot luck in the Social Hall
- Sun Dec. 3:** 10am Bodhi Day Service
- Sun Dec. 10:** 10am Shotsuki Hoyo Monthly Memorial Service
- Sun Dec. 10:** 1pm Japanese Language Service
- Sun Dec. 17:** 10am Sangha Service
- Sun Dec. 24:** NO SERVICE
- Sun Dec. 31:** 7pm Joya-e/New Year's Eve Service

- Mon Jan. 1:** 10am New Year's Day Service
- Sun Jan. 7:** 10am Sangha Service
- Sun Jan. 14:** 10am Shotsuki Hoyo Monthly Memorial Service
- Sun Jan 14:** 1pm Japanese Language Service
- Sun Jan. 21:** 10am Sangha Service
- Sun Jan. 28:** 10am Sangha Service



Tues Dec. 12: 7pm Program Group monthly meeting for BCSF leaders: BWA, Choir, Dharma School, Girl Scouts, Jiten Daiko, Jr. YBA, Pack 29, Troop 29, Soko Gakuen, YAO, Ministerial team, BCSF Board. Join In Person in Social Hall or via Zoom.

BCSF Board of Directors
Sun Dec. 17: 1pm Regular board meeting

Mindful Meditation meets every Wednesday, 6:30pm (Zoom)
Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27



**The next BCSF
 Japanese language
 service is Sunday,
 December 10 at 1pm
 & January 14 at 1pm
 led by
 Rev. Keisuke Lee-Miyaki**



**Sunday, January 21, 2024
 "Past, Present & Future"**

Hoonko (Shinran Shonin Memorial Service)

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**BCSF 125th Anniversary Commemoration**

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New Year Bento and Party in the gym

Bento

Pre-Order Bento from

Dec. 27 to Jan. 7