

BUDDHIST CHURCH OF FOWLER



THE WHITE PATH

MONTHLY BULLETIN VOL. 515

JANUARY 2022

JANUARY

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 January services:

1/2- Streaming “Reflection on 2021” & CC January Shotsuki Service
(recorded)

1/9- Streaming service from Fresno (recorded)

1/16- Streaming CC Ho-onko Service from Fresno (recorded)

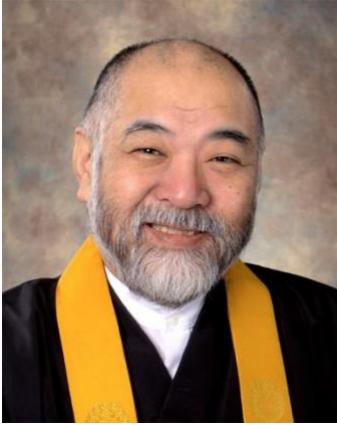
1/23- Streaming from Kingsburg (recorded)

1/30- Streaming from Reedley Ho-onko Service/Dharma Service
(recorded)

2/6- Streaming from Parlier CC February Shotsuki Service (recorded)

We appreciate your patience and understanding.
We hope everyone remains safe and healthy.

Namo Amida Butsu



A Happy New Year

With the New Year's celebration, the season of the Ho-on-ko has come around again. As I saw the schedule of the Ho-on-ko services on the new calendar, there is a voice that comes from the depths of my memory and that voice of one Sensei echoes in my ears.

“How old are you, Dotoku, in this year? Dotoku, please recite the Nenbutsu.”

Those were the words from Rennyo Shonin to his disciple named "Dotoku" when Dotoku visited the temple for the New Year's celebration. Dotoku lived in the village of Kashuji, near the Yamashina Hongwanji temple, where Rennyo Shonin lived.

I felt that Rennyo was talking to me.

“How old are you, Kakei? Kakei, please recite the Nenbutsu.”

This is what I heard. I feel as if I am being scolded directly by Rennyo Shonin after a gap of five hundred years. Especially in my recent days of old age.

I remember when I was a child in Hiroshima, after the festive mood of the New Year's holidays had subsided, the Hoonko service was held at my family temple. Reverend Tatsudo Takeda of Kojakuji temple, the Elder minister of Hiroshima District, gave a Dharma message on the same theme, “How old are you, Dotoku?” every year.

The scene of hundreds of gray-haired heads, all hanging deeply bowed while listening to this beginning quotation (Go-Sandai), has become the original scenery of a Jodo Shinshu temple in my mind. There were many gray-haired heads that remained downcast and did not return to their original state even after the praise was finished. The older they got, or those who followed the teachings of Shinshu, the more the words resonated with them.

In the next chapter of the same book, Rennyo gently explains the difference between self-powered and other-powered Nenbutsu and recommends that we carefully practice other-powered Nenbutsu. Why do we insist on living our lives based only on our unstable, ambiguous, ad hoc, selfish, instinctive, small, and calculating minds? How long do I have to doubt the words of Sakyamuni and his true heart? And who knows, tomorrow may really not be coming to me.

Once upon a time, a famous samurai named Shusaku Chiba and his disciples borrowed a boat from a fisherman and went out to the sea to fish at night. In the dark of night, they lit a torch and fished for fish that would gather under the torch. They were so amused by their fishing and greedy with their harvest that they forgot where they were fishing and lost track of where they were in the water. There was not even a star in the sky that night, neither a moon. It was really pitch black. If they left it like this, they would be swept out to sea and would never be able to return to land.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation, the samurais held several torches high and searched for land, but all they could see was the dark surface of the sea. At last, the torches were burned out. There was nothing left on the ship that could be burned for light. All was lost! If they were swept away by the tide of the open sea, it was over. There was nothing to do but die. Everyone, including Shusaku Chiba, made up their minds. However, when the torchlight was lost, everyone gradually grew accustomed to seeing at night, and naturally, they were able to catch the shadow of the edge of the mountain on land and return to the beach where the fishing village was located.

The fisherman said, "You foolish guys! If only you had put out the torch sooner, we would have had a good breakfast with fresh fish hours ago."

The End

Please savor this story. I hope you participate in the most important service of Jodo Shinshu, the Goshoki Ho-on-ko service at the new Betsuin Hondo in 2022.

By the way, how old are you going to be this year?

Gassho

Rinban Kakei Nakagawa

お正月を迎え、今年も報恩講の季節がやってきました。

新しいカレンダーで報恩講のスケジュールを見ていると、記憶の奥底から、ある先生の声が耳に響いてくる。

"今年で何歳になるんだ、独楽は？ 道德、念仏を唱えてください。"

これは、蓮如上人がお住まいの山科本願寺の近くにある加州路という村に住んでいた「道德」という

弟子に、道德が新年のお祝いにお寺を訪れたときに言われた言葉です。

そこで感じたのは、蓮如が私に語りかけているような気がしたことです。

"算、おまえは何歳だ？ 道德、念仏を唱えなさい"。

これが私の耳に入ってきたのである。五百年ぶりに蓮如上人から直接お叱りを受けたような気がしま

す。特に最近の老境に入った私の場合。

私が広島に住んでいた子供の頃、正月のお祭り騒ぎが一段落した頃、菩提寺で報恩講が行われたこと

を思い出します。広島地区の長老である高岳寺の武田辰男師が、毎年同じテーマで法話をされるので

すが、「何歳までドトク？

この冒頭の言葉(五三代)を聞きながら、何百人もの白髪の頭が深く頭を垂れている光景は、私の中

で浄土真宗のお寺の原風景となっています。賛美が終わっても、うつむいたまま元に戻らない白髪の

頭もたくさんありました。年齢を重ねるほど、あるいは真宗の教えを守る人ほど、この言葉は心に響

くのではないだろうか。

同書の次の章では、蓮如は自力念仏と他力念仏の違いを優しく説き、他力念仏を丁寧に行うことを勧

めている。なぜ私たちは、不安定で曖昧でその場しのぎの利己的で本能的で小心で打算的な心だけで

生きていくことにこだわるのだろうか。いつまで釈迦の言葉や本心を疑わなければならないのだろうか

か。そして誰にもわからないが、明日は本当に来ないのかもしれない。

昔々、千葉周作という有名な武士とその弟子が、漁師から船を借りて、夜の海に漁に出たという。夜

の闇の中で松明を灯し、松明の下に集まってくる魚を釣ったのである。漁に興じ、収穫に貪欲な彼ら

は、自分がどこで漁をしているのか忘れ、舟の行方を見失った。その夜、空には星もなく、月もな

い。本当に真っ暗だった。このままでは海に流され、陸には戻れない。

事態を重く見た侍たちは、松明を何本も高く掲げて陸を探したが、見えるのは暗い海面ばかりであ

る。ついに松明は燃え尽きた。船には燃やせるものが何も残っていない。すべてが失われたのだ。大

海原の潮に流されたらおしまいだ。死ぬしかないのだ。千葉周作をはじめ、誰もがそう心に決めてい

た。しかし、松明の明かりがなくなると、みんな次第に夜目にも慣れてきて、自然に陸の山の端の影

をとらえ、漁村のある浜辺に帰ってくることができるようになった。

漁師が言った。

"愚かなやつらだ！ もっと早く松明を消していれば、何時間も前に新鮮な魚で美味しい朝食を食べられ

たのに" と。

おしまい。

この物語をぜひ味わってください。そして、2022 年の新別院本堂での浄土真宗の最も重要なおつと

めである御正忌報恩講に参加できるように願っています。

ところで、あなたは今年何歳になるのでしょうか？



**The Eight Essentials of our Jodo Shinshu No. 6.
We will reach enlightenment when we give up our
self-righteousness, by hearing the primal vow of
Amida Tathagata. (Ta Riki Hon Gwan)**

Hello, all Central California Sangha friends! Have you received the booster shot? The Spanish Flu (medically known as subtype H1N1 virus) lasted 3 years as a pandemic warning until it was renamed as a seasonal Flu. The H1N1 virus is still active in 2021, as you see the Flu season coming closer. I will not be surprised if the current pandemic continues for another year. Even after the “pandemic” is over, we may see a banner “The Corona season is nearing, get your vaccine” at a pharmacy, soon. I personally see the pandemic as a test of endurance. The virus is smart enough to change its shape, very quietly sneaking into our nose, and persistently trying to reproduce humongous numbers of themselves. If people are impatient, short-tempered, or lazy enough to neglect proper self-sanitization, we may not make a best decision and practice required to overcome the pandemic sooner. I continue to do my part with the sense of endurance, so please continue your part as well!

Recently, I attended the BCA ministers’ Association meeting on Zoom. During the meeting, we had District Reports. Out of the 8 districts in the mainland, some have 7 – 10 fulltime ministers. Although CC has only 2 fulltime ministers, the volume of various activities on the report shows that CC is the most active district, as if we have 7 – 10 fulltime ministers!! We can do so because of supporters like you. I sincerely appreciate your generosity and understanding to our ministerial work, especially under this pandemic.

In this article, I would like to share one of eight essential teachings of Jodo Shinshu. It is *Ta Riki Hon Gwan*, the sixth of eight important teachings. It is a Japanese idiom and Hon Gwan is a very important word. It is used for our mother temple’s name as you know, Hongwan-ji (temple). Now you know how important the word Hon Gwan is. *Ta* means ‘others. *Riki* literally means ‘power’, but in Buddhism, we should understand it as ‘help and support of others. The word, Ta-Riki is often described as Other Power, then it sounds like a god or deity provides us physical or spiritual benefit, and as the result it may confuse people living in the Christian society. *Hon* means ‘main’ or ‘core’. *Gwan* literally means ‘Vow’, but more precisely it can be understood as a statement which leads others to be enlightened.

Our founder, Shinran Shonin describes what Ta-Riki, in his book, *Kyogyoshinsho*, *Kyo-Kan*. He states “Ta-Riki is also called the efficacy of Hon-Gwan by the Tathagata. 他力といふは如来の本願力なり” In this sentence, he treats Ta-Riki and Hon-Gwan almost equivalently. The efficacy of Hon-Gwan will appear as your deepest appreciative reaction with Nenbutsu (recitation of Namo Amida Butsu), to the 18th vow of the Amida Tathagata. It also means when we are touched by Ta-Riki, our heart will be filled with the sense of deepest appreciation to the 18th vow. The 18th vow embraces all sentient beings without any discrimination, distinction nor requirement. It means there is no discrimination, distinction nor requirement in the life of

interdependence. You might have heard “live as you are” or “come as you are” before. Providing the atmosphere of “as you are” is the essence of the 18th vow. “As you are” contains a unique Buddhist understanding.

You may question what is “YOU” in the Buddhist context of “as you are”? The historical Buddha explains there is no “YOU”. YOU are formed and maintained by numerous others. YOU do not exist by yourself. Just like... since YOU are born, how many grains of rice (gallons of water) have you consumed to maintain yourself? YOU (your existence) are the result of interdependence of life (help and support of others). The Buddhist teaching does not test you whether you KNOW it, instead, you LIVE with it. In the last 20 years, I have heard from people like, that it is hard to understand Buddhism. Yes, it is hard to intellectually understand Buddhism, but it is easy to live with it. When I was in Japan, Buddhism existed as a Living Dharma. I could feel or experience Buddha Dharma in my everyday life, because I was told that Buddhism is a teaching to live with. When I came to the U.S., I was surprised that many people were eager to study Buddhism, but not live with it. It was one of my culture shocks. Now I know such attitude (custom) is brought on by the idea of Bible study and Theology.

Once you start living in the life of interdependence or keep awaking that the result of interdependence is your existence, you will truly enjoy and appreciate your existence without thinking of your financial status, your position in your society or work, or other judgmental and discriminatory minds (in other words, self-righteous). In Buddhism, Self-righteous is a NO NO characteristics. Under the life of interdependence, when I point out someone and say he is wrong, my forefinger is also pointing to myself and tells me that I am wrong for him because I am a part of others and others are a part of me. Everything is connected to each other. “YOU” is a person who truly enjoys his/her life with gratitude and appreciation in the life of interdependence. The Buddhism understanding of YOU shows the uniqueness.

Shinran Shonin often conducted self-contemplation (Nai Sei or Nai Kan) to feel and recall the life of interdependence and impressed his gratitude and appreciation on his mind. To me, it can be understood as Jodo Shinshu meditation. I know we are living a busy life, but I would like you to pause and stop for conducting self-contemplation. You will be happy to live with it. Gassho.

Gassho.
Rev. Kaz Nakata

Streaming Services

Please view, join and participate in the January 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 January are:

Shitsu Yamamoto
Shika Sera
Sakuhei Nakayama
Yaichi Kikuta
Sadakichi Shimoda
Motoshiro Kurata
Tame Ii
Mitsuyo Sakohira
Shunsuke Uchiyama
Rika Okudo
Shizuye Morishige
Tane Hiyama
Hikoichi Hiyama
Otomatsu Ninomiya
Harue Nishina
Hatsuno Nishina
Becky Honda
Taka Taniguchi
Tamayo Nakamura

Yoshio Tokubo
Hideichi Yamane
Takeo Fujikawa
Otona Hagihara
Toyoso Kuramoto
Toshio Nakagawa
Frank Namito Masui
Hatuye Natori
Dick Iwamoto
Fred Akira Honda
George Miyake
Vernon Mayebo
Ichio Takeno
Dorothy Morita
Teri Uchiyama
Ayako Shimizu
Mikio Uchiyama
Dorothy Takeno

CHURCH TOBAN FOR JANUARY

District IV

Rijis:

Sharon Asakawa
Craig Honda

Toban:

Sharon Asakawa
Tayoko Honda

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 as soon as possible.

December 2021 Donations

Year End

\$ 150.00 Arthur & Alice Fujikawa

\$ 100.00 Revs. Bob & Patti Oshita

\$ 25.00 Rodney Kikuta

Shotsuki

\$ 50.00 Ron & Maxine
Yoshimoto

\$ 25.00 Shig & Aiko Kamine

In Memory of Hiroko J Meyer (li) & Gary M Meyer

\$ 900.00 Allan Meyer

年頭の辞

新しい年のはじめにあたり、ご挨拶申し上げます。

昨年も一昨年に引き続き、私たちの生活は新型コロナウイルス感染症(COVID-19)の流行に対応したものとなりました。ここに、新型コロナウイルス感染症によりお亡くなりになられた方々に謹んで哀悼の意を表しますとともに、罹患されている皆さまに心よりお見舞い申し上げます。また、治療・対策にあたられている医師、看護師をはじめとする医療従事者の方々、ライフラインの維持に努めておられる方々に深く敬意と感謝を表します。

この新型コロナウイルス感染症は、私たち一人一人の生活に大きな影響を与えました。それは、同時に社会の問題も浮き彫りにしています。仏教を説かれたお釈迦様は、自分自身の考えにとらわれ、真実をみることのできない私たちの姿を指摘されています。私たちが自分の思い通りに行動したら、社会の中に対立や分断を生むことになります。

親鸞聖人は、ご和讃に「浄土真宗に帰すれども 真実の心はありがたし 虚仮不実のわが身にて 清浄の心もさらになし」とうたわれました。阿弥陀さまのおはたらきによって知らされる私たちの本当の姿は、縁起や無常、無我というこの世界の真実をそのままに受け入れることができずに悩み苦しむ姿です。親鸞聖人は、そのような私たちに阿弥陀さまのおはたらきが届いていると明らかにされました。いまだに新型コロナウイルス感染症の収束が見通せない世界ですが、阿弥陀さまのおはたらきを聞き、それを依りどころとして日々の生活を過ごしてまいりましょう。

現在の厳しい状況の中でさまざまな試みを重ねながら、今までとは違った方法で浄土真宗のみ教を広く社会へ伝える取り組みもなされていると聞き、たいへん心強く思います。これからもお寺が皆さまの心の支えとなりますよう、お寺の活動にご理解とご協力を頂きますことをお願い申し上げ、年頭のご挨拶といたします。

2022年1月1日

浄土真宗本願

寺派

門主

大谷 光淳

New Year's Greeting

Happy New Year, everyone! At the beginning of this New Year, I would like to extend my best regards to you all.

Over these past couple of years, we have had to adjust our lives in accordance with the scale of the spread of COVID-19. I would like to offer my deepest condolences to those who fell victim to the disease and express my sympathies to those who are undergoing treatment. I would also like to express my respect and sincere gratitude to the doctors, nurses, and frontline medical professionals who have been engaging in the treatment of infected people, as well as all essential workers who have made it possible for us to continue with our lives.

This infectious disease has not only greatly affected the life of each one of us, but also revealed many issues that had been contained in our society. Sakyamuni Buddha, who passed on the Dharma to us, made clear of the fact that we cannot see the truth because we are too attached to our own thought. Therefore, it is only natural that conflicts and divisions come about in a society in which those who, like us, fundamentally self-centered beings, act in accordance based on one's own thought.

In the following *wasan* poem, Shinran Shonin deeply reflected on himself and described what we humans are like,

Although I take refuge in the true Pure Land way,
It is hard to have a true and sincere mind.
This self is false and insincere;
I completely lack a pure mind. (*Hymns of the Dharma-ages*)

As the *wasan* shows, we are basically incapable of accepting the reality of this world, such as, dependent origination, impermanence, and no-self. And because of this we constantly suffer. Only through being aware of and appreciating Amida Buddha's compassionate and salvific working, are we enabled to accept our true self. Shinran Shonin clarified that such ignorance is the very reason why Amida Buddha's salvific working has reached every one of us. Keeping in mind that we are always embraced in Amida's compassionate Light, let us live each day to the fullest, even though we have yet to see the end of the tunnel.

I feel truly assured hearing that many of you have been making efforts to share the Jodo Shinshu teaching within the greater society through various and innovative ways despite the current situation. It is my hope that your temples will continue serving as your spiritual home, and therefore, I humbly ask for your understanding and cooperation in support of your temples. I would like to conclude my new year's greeting with my heartfelt appreciation to you all.

January 1, 2022



OHTANI Kojun
Monshu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha



FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ~ REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK

CBE Seminars Online For All (SOFA) Series

Explore topics in Jodo Shinshu doctrine, practice, and culture

MAKING THE DHARMA CONNECTION: Buddhism & Children's Books

A Workshop for Parents/Guardians, Grandparents, Teachers & Ministers

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 8, 2022
11 AM - 1 PM (PST)**

GUEST SPEAKER:

KIYO MASUDA

EDUCATION RESOURCE SPECIALIST

Who doesn't love a good story? Experience the world of children's literature where they become the venue for understanding life through the wisdom and compassion of the Buddhist teachings. This seminar will explore how the dharma connection is relevant, meaningful, and applicable through children's books.

Topics will include:

- ♦ Introducing "The Essential Teachings" as a resource, lens, and reading compass
- ♦ Hear book talks that address problems encountered in everyday life and the dharma solution
- ♦ Explore ways to engage readers of all ages
- ♦ Share your favorite book titles

** Resource packet included **



Kiyo Masuda is a retired educator. Since her retirement, she has been working on this project, "Making the Dharma Connection through Children's Literature."

With the support and assistance of the Palo Alto Dharma School teachers, the "Essential Teachings" and children's literature resources were developed. Kiyo strongly believes that the dharma must be taught from an early age, while children are still toddlers, in order for them to naturally develop a Jodo Shinshu understanding of life. This is particularly important in today's troubled world.

V11-03

[Register online](#)

<https://forms.gle/xF1JePg7baoWm68u8>

[Donations](#) are gratefully accepted.

CONTACT: cbe@bcahq.org (510) 809-1460

Visit: <https://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/buddhist-education>

SAVE THE DATE!

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>



FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – REGISTER FOR ZOOM LINK

CBE Seminars Online For All (SOFA) Series

Explore topics in Jodo Shinshu doctrine, practice, and culture

REFLECTIONS on the life and work of REV. GYOMAY KUBOSE

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 22, 2022
11 AM - 1 PM (PST)**

GUEST SPEAKER:

REV. MARVIN HARADA

BISHOP, BUDDHIST CHURCHES OF AMERICA



Prior to appointment as the bishop of BCA in April, 2020, Rev. Harada served as resident minister of the Orange County Buddhist Church for over three decades. He is the author of [DISCOVERING BUDDHISM IN EVERYDAY LIFE](#). Rev. Harada studied with Rev. Kubose as he embarked on his ministerial path, deeply inspired by his example.

I have always dreamed of establishing an American Buddhism - different from Indian, Chinese, or Japanese Buddhism - a uniquely American Buddhism that could be easily understood and practiced by Americans and that would contribute to American life and culture...

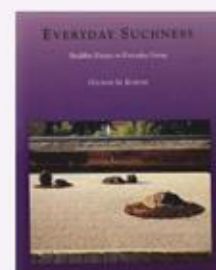
- Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose



Rev. Gyomay Kubose

(June 21, 1905–March 29, 2000)

Author of [EVERYDAY SUCHNESS: BUDDHIST ESSAYS ON EVERYDAY LIVING](#) (1967) and other works.



Born in the U.S., Rev. Kubose spent his early years in Japan. He attended University of California at Berkeley, earned a degree in Philosophy in 1935, then went to Japan to study under his teacher, Rev. Haya Akegarasu at his Dai-Nippon Bunkyo-kenkyu-in... He returned to the US in 1941 just prior to World War II and spent two years in the Heart Mountain Relocation Camp in Wyoming... In 1944, he founded the Buddhist Temple of Chicago..."

Photos and excerpted from [Bright Dawn](#)

V11-11

[Register online](#)

<https://forms.gle/CjoU2aA6gR7AXp198>

[Donations](#) are gratefully accepted.

CONTACT: cbe@bcahq.org (510) 809-1460

Visit: <https://www.buddhistchurchesofamerica.org/buddhist-education>



***Central California Nishi Hongwanji
Ministerial Assistant (MA) Program &
Central California Buddhist Education
2022 Seminars***

January 27th 7:00 - 8:30 pm: Discussion Seminar

**“History of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada,
its current situation and issues”**

General Registration \$20 Registered MA: Free

Presented by Bishop Tatsuya Aoki

Born and raised in: Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan

University of Lethbridge (in Alberta, Canada)

Bachelor Degree (BA) in Religious Studies

Ryukoku University Graduate School in Kyoto

Master’s Degree (MA) in Buddhist Studies

**The Bishop of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist
Temples of Canada [May 2013 – Current]**



Join the seminar and our Buddhist Education!

**For general seminar registration, please email your name to
ccdcbec@gmail.com and mail the registration fee (payable to “CCDC”) to
Fresno Betsuin Buddhist Temple - 2690 E Alluvial Ave, Fresno, CA 93720. We
will send a zoom link. If you are interested in becoming a registered MA,
please email: rev.kaznakata@gmail.com We provide 5 seminars per year.
When you become a MA (annual MA registration fee \$50), you can attend
any seminars and MA classes with free of charge!!**

Sponsored by CCBEC

Central California Buddhist Education Committee

Spring Semester Classes: January – May

Introduction to Buddhism

Monday, January 6, 2022

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Please email Rev. Kaz for Zoom link

rev.kaznakata@gmail.com

Tannisho

Spring Semester January - May

2nd and 4th Thursdays

First class: Thursday, January 20

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Please email Rinban Nakagawa for Zoom link

senkyo_bo3@gmail.com

Essence of Buddhism

2nd and 4th Wednesdays

First class: January 12

10:00 a.m.

Please email Rev. Kaz for Zoom link

rev.kaznakata@gmail.com

Japanese

Every other Wednesday

First class: January 19

7:00 p.m.

Please email Rev. Midori for Zoom link

midorijada@gmail.com

Seminar

Bishop Tatsuya Aoki of Canada

History of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada:

Its Current Situation and Issues

Thursday, January 27, 2022

7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

See flyer for more info