

HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

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The Way

Vol. 78 | No. 1
January 2026

HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE | LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

TEMPLE SCHEDULE

JANUARY

- 1 10:00 am Shusho-e New Year Service
- 4 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 6 7:00 pm Tuesday Discussion
- 11 10:00 am Sunday Service Discussion Group
- 18 10:00 am Family Service
- 20 7:00 pm Tuesday Discussion
- 25 10:00 am Eitaikyo Service New Year Luncheon & General Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 1 10:00 am Shotsuki Service
- 3 7:00 pm Tuesday Discussion
- 8 10:00 am Sunday Service Discussion Group
- 15 10:00 am Family Service
- 17 7:00 pm Tuesday Discussion
- 22 10:00 am Sunday Service

VISITING THE TEMPLE

The temple is currently open for private services and visitations by appointment. Please call us to schedule an appointment. 213-626-4200

Though we are open for Sunday Services in person, we will continue to

STREAM LIVE ON FACEBOOK

FACEBOOK.COM/HHBT.LA

SUNDAYS | 10 AM

*Best wishes for a
happy & healthy 2026!*



SUNDAY, JANUARY 25, 2026

Eitaikyo Service

10:00AM | HHBT

**New Year Luncheon
& General Meeting**

12:00PM | LITTLE TOKYO TOWERS | RSVP REQUIRED



The Way



Volume 78 | Number 1 | January 2026

HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE • LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

New Year Greetings

Yul Ōtani

Overseas District Abbot,
Shinshū Ōtani-ha
(Higashi Honganji)



To our fellow seekers in our overseas districts, I wish to offer my warmest greetings for the New Year. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for your continued commitment to learning the

Dharma, as well as to maintaining our Shinshū teaching tradition and Sangha over the years.

At the very beginning of January 2025, extremely destructive wildfires

broke out in some regions of Southern California in the North America District. Some areas in Japan and the South America District were also struck by massive wildfires. Not only that, other natural disasters such as floods, tornadoes, and earthquakes happened so many times last year throughout the world. I am still devastated by the reports of those disasters. First, I would like to express my deepest sympathy to those who have been affected by the tragedies and wish for a swift recovery and restoration of all disaster-stricken areas.

In addition, Rev. Noriaki Ito announced his retirement last year. He dedicated himself for a long period of time to sharing the Dharma with the people in the district as the Bishop of the North America District and the Rinban of the Higashi Honganji Los Angeles

(Please see **ŌTANI**, page 6)

Bishop Wataru Kigoshi

Chief Administrator,
Shinshū Ōtani-ha
(Higashi Honganji)



To everyone in our overseas districts, I wish to extend my warmest New Year's greetings for the year 2026. I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for the continued support you have

given to our District activities over the years.

At a recent session of the Denomination Diet (*Shūkai*) held at our mother temple in Kyoto in September 2025, I was reappointed as the Chief Administrator

(*Shūmu Sōchō*), and so I am bracing myself for the great responsibility placed upon me. At the same time, I wish to once again renew my own commitment to propagating the teaching of the nenbutsu all over the world. I would like to ask all of you in the North America District for your further generous support in these propagation efforts.

In September last year, I had a chance to visit Los Angeles to attend the grand succession ceremony of the Betsuin Rinban, where I was fortunate to have met so many of you. At the retirement celebration for Rev. Noriaki Ito held after the ceremony, as many as over six hundred people gathered to express their personal appreciation to him. That made me realize how great his long-term contribution to our Dharma propagation efforts has been. At the same time, I was deeply impressed that the significant teaching of Shinran Shōnin, which had

(Please see **KIGOSHI**, page 6)

Rinban Kenjun Kawawata

Happy New Year to Everyone!

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who gave tremendous support to this Betsuin. With your support and cooperation, the Betsuin had a fruitful 2025.

Last September, I took over the important responsibility of Rinban following the retirement of the previous Rinban, Rev. Noriaki Ito. I would like to express my sincere respect and gratitude to Rinban Ito for his hard work and efforts in spreading the Nenbutsu teaching in America over the past 50 years.

I began serving as a resident minister at this Betsuin in 1984, and then from 1998, I served at West Covina Higashi Honganji for 14 years. In October 2012, I was transferred to the Higashi Honganji Hawaii Betsuin as the Rinban and Bishop of the Higashi Honganji Hawaii District. Then I came back to this Betsuin in September of last year. Los Angeles has changed in the 13 years I've been in Hawaii. However, I am truly grateful to the Betsuin and North America District members for their warm welcome.

Although I am still unfamiliar with many things in LA, I look forward to continuing to listen to Buddha Dharma together with members of the Betsuin and the North America District.

In August of this year, the 14th World Dobo Conference will be held in Brazil, where Nenbutsu followers from around the world will gather under the theme of "Namu Amida Butsu – To Discover the Meaning of Being Born as Human Beings," and the subtheme, "Bon Amigo – Sharing our Lives in Diversity." We will have the opportunity to listen to Nenbutsu teachings and discuss together, respecting our differences, such as different languages and cultures, under the theme of "Dobo Dharma Friends,"

(Please see **RINBAN**, page 6)



Betsuin News



New Year Greetings

Rev. Mayuki Nagamine

Happy New Year! I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support throughout the past year. 2025 was a truly meaningful and memorable year for our temple community. We celebrated Rev. Noriaki Ito's retirement and welcomed Rev. Kenjun Kawawata as our new Rinban, and it was wonderful to see nearly 700 people come together in September to honor Rev. Ito's 50 years of service.

The year also brought challenges. We began with wildfires here in Los Angeles, and we continue to see families around the world affected by conflict and difficult political situations. In times like these, I sincerely hope the Buddhaharma reaches more people and offers them spiritual comfort.

I feel very grateful to be part of this Sangha and to continue listening to and sharing the Dharma with all of you. This summer, the 14th World Dōbō Gathering will be held in Brazil, and I hope many of you will be able to join and share in the joy of receiving the teachings together. I wish you all a happy, peaceful, and healthy year ahead.

Our deepest condolences

to the family and relatives of ...

Tomoko Waki (83)
September 30, 2025

Kenji Yujiri (65)
October 28, 2025

Jeanette Fusako Sugimoto (96)
November 4, 2025

Namu Amida Butsu

Ron Sato, President
Board of Directors

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I would like to wish everyone a very healthy and prosperous New Year, and I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful holiday season. I would like to thank all of you for your continued support of the Betsuin throughout the year. Thanks to the many volunteers who came out to help at our fundraisers and events. Many thanks as well to the property committee and gardeners for helping the temple maintain its beauty and function. Thank you to former Rinban Ito, Rinban Kawawata, Rev. Nagamine, and our NAD ministers for your Dharma messages, assistance, and guidance during the past year. To our Board of Directors, thank you for your dedication, advice, and support. And thank you, Susan, Mika, and Nancy, for your help and steady guidance in the temple's many functions.

In 2026, we look forward to another meaningful year together as a sangha.

This year, the World Dobo Gathering is being held in Brazil in August. I hope many of you will consider attending.

Again, thank you for all your support to both me and the Betsuin.

Gassho,
Ron Sato, President
Board of Directors



Eitaikyo Service & New Year Luncheon/General Meeting

The Eitaikyo Service will be held on Sunday, January 25th at 10:00 am at the temple. This service is held in memory of all temple members who have passed away. It is also held to remember those who have been placed into the Eitaikyo register. We hope you will join us for this important annual service.

The 122nd Annual General Meeting and New Year Luncheon is planned to be held after the service at Little Tokyo Towers. Further information will be mailed to you in January.

SAVE THE DATE



**14th World Dōbō Gathering
TOUR TO BRAZIL**
8/26/2026 - 9/5/2026

NAMU AMIDA BUTSU

To Discover the Meaning of Being
Born as Human Beings

*Reminder to apply now for this
once in a lifetime opportunity!*

Applications due in February 15, 2026.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Rev. Kensho Goto | 213-621-4064
hokubeikantokubu@gmail.com

New Year Greetings

Rev. Kensho Goto
Higashi Honganji USA Headquarters

Happy New Year, everyone. Thank you very much for all your support throughout the past year.

This year marks my fifth year since being assigned to Los Angeles, and it will also be the final year of my term. I am sincerely grateful for the guidance you have given me and for always treating me with such warmth.

When I first arrived, it was during the COVID-19 pandemic, and I often found myself struggling to adapt to the unfamiliar environment. However, the experiences I have gained here have been tremendously valuable to me.

As I enter this final year, I will do my utmost to ensure that I leave no unfinished business and continue to improve myself.

I would greatly appreciate your continued guidance and support in the year ahead.

Rev. Tomoyuki Hasegawa
Higashi Honganji USA Headquarters

Happy New Year! I wish to express my deepest gratitude for the wholehearted support you have extended to our temples and district activities throughout the past year. There are still mounting problems throughout the world, such as armed conflicts, natural disasters, and uncertain economic situations that are influencing our lives in many ways. Those difficulties have made us reflect on what is most important in our lives and think about what the innermost wish deep within our existence is. That is the focus of the essence of the Buddhist teachings, which Shinran Shōnin called Jōdo Shinshū with deep respect. Let's continue to walk the broad path of awakening guided by the everlasting truth in the teaching as well as by our innermost wish.

Rev. Frederick Brenion
Ever Hoping in 2026

"Hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies," is a powerful line from the movie *The Shawshank Redemption*. It is a reminder that even the possibility of a possibility to have hope is a good thing to be treasured. The Greek myth of Pandora's Box illustrates that when she opened a box, releasing all manner of woes into the world, she closed it to keep hope from escaping. A reminder that it is very human to hold on to hope in spite of it all.

I hope this coming year will be a better one in all respects. I dearly hope so. I've been feeling rather hopeless of late at the state of our world and country.

I found this quote from Rev. Blayne Higa, who wrote that "Shinran saw himself as an *icchantika*, a hopeless one who is bound by their blind passions and unable to follow the Buddha's path. It was only through becoming aware of his true nature that Shinran realized he was already within Amida's compassionate embrace. The Nenbutsu path of entrusting in the Vow of Amida Buddha offers hope for the hopeless, enabling us to awaken to our endowed buddhanature." This is so true, so true.

Shinran still speaks this to me in the *Tannisho*: "In this fleeting world – this burning house – all matters without exception are empty and false, totally without truth and sincerity. The Nenbutsu alone is true and real." If I want my hope to be solid, it must be based on the importance of the Nenbutsu. That I take refuge, relying only on the name of an Infinite Compassion and Wisdom that embraces me and all without condition except that of calling in hope.



DHARMA SCHOOL & JR. YBA UPDATE

Happy New Year from Jr. YBA and Dharma School!

We've had a good first few months of the school year. Jr. YBA has attended various Southern District events and Dharma School has been meeting monthly. We are all looking forward to learning more new things in 2026 and welcome you to join us for a special story time and activities every month! Please email hhtkids@gmail.com for a schedule of Dharma School weeks or info@hht-la.org for information about Jr. YBA!

In gassho,
HHBT Youth Groups

Fujinkai

Fujinkai extends Happy New Year 2026 greetings to all! We thank you, temple members and friends, for supporting our activities through your participation and generous donations. 2025 marked the historic occasion of Rinban Noriaki Ito's retirement after his 50 years of dedicated service as minister and the celebration of his legacy. We also gratefully welcomed the return of Rinban Kenjun Kawawata from the Higashi Honganji Betsuin in Hawaii, as he succeeds Rinban Ito.

(Please see *FUJINKAI*, page 7)

Otani Gakuen

With the kind leadership and beautiful piano accompaniment of Mrs. Kazue Funai, the Otani Gakuen Choir of the Higashi Honganji Los Angeles Betsuin is happy to sing at our temple services. In 2025, we were delighted to welcome Jeanne Kawawata to the choir.

Thank you for your continuing encouragement and support. The choir wishes all of you a most HAPPY NEW YEAR.





FOR CHILDREN AGES

2 TO 5 YEARS

OPEN YEAR ROUND:

MONDAY through FRIDAY

7:30am to 6:00pm

closed national holidays



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* INTRO TO JAPANESE

with Rev. Mayuki

* EXPRESSION THROUGH

MOBILITY with Mr. John

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lumbini.missleslie@gmail.com

LCDC NEWS

Happy 2026! We cannot believe how fast the year came to an end and another one has begun! We hope everyone enjoyed the winter holidays with family and friends. 2025 has come to an end, and we have made every effort to continue encouraging our students to learn to their fullest abilities. With the support of a caring staff and caring families, the students succeed each year and grow into the next. We are continuing our Japanese class with Rev. Mayuki and Movement class with Mr. John. Mr.

Danny continues to offer wonderful classroom activities for his students in Red Room. Mr. Jack moved on to a new opportunity this year, and we miss him dearly. With the help of our volunteers, Ms. Elaine B, Ms. Elaine H, and Ms. Irene, we continue to offer the same weekly care as we always have. Ms. Janet and Ms. Elaine B provide lunch 3 days per week. Thank you so much to all of our staff for supporting us daily.

Last month, we ended the year with our Holiday Program! The students did a wonderful job performing two holiday songs and one Japanese song! After the program, students had a chance to see Santa and received a special gift for a job well done. On behalf of the Lumbini Child Development Center Staff and Commissioners, we would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and healthy new year. Thank you to everyone for your generous support and donations. We are looking forward to another successful year.

In Gassho,
Leslie Nicho, LCDC Director



LUMBINI
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SAVE THE DATE!

**DANCE ★
BENEFIT &
REUNION
PARTY**

FOR LUMBINI'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY
SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2026



SCAN FOR UPDATES!

ABA

Wishing you a wonderful "New Year" from the Adult Buddhist Association!

We opened 2025 with our annual Eitai Service and New Year luncheon!

During 2025, our ABA property group continued to be responsible for temple maintenance issues. This year, our members and community service volunteers periodically participated in weeding and cleaning our beautiful garden and the streets surrounding the temple. Graffiti on the fence was painted over, and larger "tags" were cleaned by LA City's graffiti removal team.

We are continuing to ensure that our Board of Directors is fully informed about Little Tokyo area crime issues. The safety of our daycare children, staff, members, and visitors is paramount.

In March, ABA was a Tee Sponsor for a very successful golf tournament. In May, our Higashi Team joined community volunteers to clean up the sidewalks and streets of Little Tokyo for the 7th Annual Little Tokyo Sparkle. Thanks to Frank Edwards for providing security!

Later in May, we honored our temple mothers with a special "Mother's Day" breakfast. Thanks to all who made pancakes, eggs, potatoes, sausages, ham,
(Please see ABA, page 7)

Community Outreach Committee

New Year's greetings from the Community Outreach Group! We will be continuing to make Snack Packs for the women at the Downtown Women's Center this coming year. Anyone is invited to help us whenever they can during the year. Contact Trish Nicholson or Steve Nakasone, for more information. Those who volunteer feel that this is a way of helping others as well as connecting with our neighborhood. And as we work to put these lunches together, it is so much fun that it hardly seems like work. Please consider joining us in this project of giving to others. Again, Happy New Year!

Trish Nicholson & Steven Nakasone
Community Outreach Coordinators

Hoonko Observances

We had our annual Hoonko Observances the weekend of Saturday, November 15th and 16th. Hoonko is the memorial service of Shinran Shonin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu denomination and it is considered the most important service for us. Hoonko Gathering was held on Saturday. This included a service and informal roundtable discussion in English led by Rinban Kenjun Kawawata. Pizzas and salad were served. Hoonko Service is a formal service featuring special chanting and reading of Ofumi (Rennyō Shonin's letter). Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi was the guest speaker in both English and Japanese. After the

service, attendees enjoyed Otoki in the social hall. This year, the toban volunteers made delicious vegetarian oden and desserts. Everyone enjoyed eating together while chatting. Special thanks to those who volunteered to prepare our otoki and clean up afterwards. In the afternoon, a Kikyōshiki Confirmation Ceremony was held. This year, two Betsuin members received their Buddhist names. Participants' families and friends watched them receive their new names and start a new life as Buddhists. Congratulations to Yoko Imamura and Yasuko Imamura from the Betsuin!

Autumn Seminar

Our Autumn Seminar took place on Sunday, November 23rd, at 12:30 PM, following a Sunday Service. The guest speaker for both the service and the seminar was Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji, Dean of the Institute of Buddhist Studies and resident minister at Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church. The theme was "The Buddha's Aspiration for Us All." Rev. Dr. Miyaji spoke in terms that were easy to digest and broke down various Buddhist terms to make them easier to understand in the context of today's world. We hope to invite Rev. Dr. Miyaji to join us again in the future. Thank you to everyone who attended our Autumn Seminar.



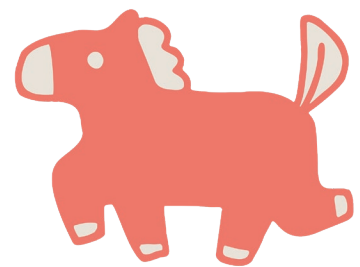
2025 - THE YEAR OF THE HORSE

According to the Asian zodiac, the year 2014 is the year of the horse. Although some say that the origins of the zodiac can be found in Buddhism, we don't really regard it as reflecting Buddhist teachings. If at all, it comes from the culture. Still, it is fun to learn about such traditions.

Since it is a twelve-year cycle, everyone turning ages 12, 24, 36, 48, 60, 72, and 84 this year are horse year people, in addition to those who are born in 2026. Those born in the year of the horse, it is said, are very skillful in paying compliments and are quite popular; they are very cheerful people, but have a tendency to talk too much. They are skillful with money, they are quick in everything they do, and can understand what another is thinking or trying to say even before he has a chance to explain.

They are wise and talented, and

good with their hands. They like to be decorative, to wear fancy clothes to impress (what we call *oshare* in Japanese). The above characteristics are the positive ones. Now for the unflattering ones. Although they look confident all the time, inside, they are rather weak. They often fail at any project they are working on. They are not very patient. They get angry quickly, they're very independent, and don't like to listen to advice. In general, it is said that horse year people will face much adversity during the first two phases of their lives, but will have a good life during the last third. From an American perspective, horses were an important part of the nation's development. They served as the main source of transportation before the automobile took over that role. They were the main source of energy in the farmlands. We say things like, "he's a workhorse," meaning that someone



is a hard worker. We use "horse" as in horsepower to measure strength. The image that comes to mind when we think of horses is strength, endurance, perseverance, and so forth.

Whether we are horse year people or not, it is interesting to learn about the tradition of the Asian zodiac. Some of the positive qualities may serve as goals to work toward, while the negative characteristics can serve as reminders of our own faults and shortcomings.

Best wishes for a most wonderful 2026.

The Way

(*ŌTANI, cont. from page 1*)

Betsuin. Although I was unable to attend the Rinban succession ceremony and Rev. Ito's retirement celebration held in September in person, I enjoyed watching those events through social media. The warm atmosphere of the events, which attracted so many people and were filled with laughter and smiles, shows what an amazing personality Rev. Ito has. I once again would like to express my sincerest gratitude to him for his remarkable, long-standing commitment to Dharma propagation for as long as half a century.

In August this year, the 14th World Dōbō Gathering will be held in the South America District, where I was born and grew up. The theme for the event is "Namu Amida Butsu: To Discover the Meaning of Being Born as Human Beings" with the subtheme, "Bon Amigo—Sharing Our Lives in Diversity." I sincerely look forward to sharing the precious opportunity with all fellow seekers in the overseas districts. I wish to ask you for your heartfelt participation in the event together with your family and friends.

In closing, I would like to express my dearest wish that each of us continue to listen to the Dharma and awaken to the profound preciousness of Life, and that we all strive to walk the path together in deep mutual respect.

Thank you very much and Happy New Year to you all!

(*KIGOSHI, cont. from page 1*)

been brought to this land from across the sea, has now taken root and come to bloom as a vast spiritual foundation for the people of the world.

Last year, Rev. Kenjun Kawawata was appointed as the Bishop of the North America District and Prof. Takami Inoue as the Bishop of the Hawaii District. Rev. Kawawata engaged in propagation efforts together with Rev. Ito for many years, and Prof. Inoue used to teach at Ōtani University in Kyoto. Since both of them have years of experience in nurturing human resources, I have great hopes that they will further promote the nurturing of new lay students and future ministers in our overseas districts in the years to come.

Right now, we have two new ministerial candidates, one of whom is living

in Berkeley, California, and the other who is from France, who are receiving training to become fully ordained ministers. They were originally from outside of our temple communities, and so I am pleased to see how the teaching of Shinran Shōnin has come to spread throughout the world beyond the boundaries of our existing communities.

In August this year, the 14th World Dōbō Gathering for fellow seekers will be held in the South America District. The main theme for the gathering will be "Namu Amida Butsu: To Discover the Meaning of Being Born as Human Beings," and the subtheme will be "Bon Amigo—Sharing Our Lives in Diversity."

The importance of diversity has been widely emphasized today, but as we all know, it is not always easy for us to accept the element of diversity as part of our own lives. At the same time, it is most important for us to understand the different standpoints, cultures, and values of others, and to live together with them in true mutual respect. Otherwise, we are unconsciously imposing our biased views on others, which goes to create the source of conflicts.

Amida Tathāgata has made the Vow to liberate all of us without exception, even if our minds are blinded by our own biased views. The state of enlightenment of the Tathāgata is described metaphorically as a Pure Land in a sutra titled the Amida Sutra. In this sutra, the Pure Land is depicted as a world where all kinds of different sounds and colors, as well as all kinds of sentient beings, vividly coexist in perfect harmony. And yet each life radiates its own unique light that shines on as it is, all of it existing in deep mutual respect beyond any differences.

As a wise teacher once told us, "Just say the nenbutsu and be saved by Amida."

Let us continue to entrust ourselves to the great Vow of Compassion that the Buddha has made for us and say the nenbutsu together as fellow seekers. I am looking forward to seeing all of you again in August.

In closing, may I ask for your continued support and guidance as we begin the New Year. *Yoroshiku onegai shimasu.*

(*RINBAN, cont. from page 1*)
or "Bon Amigo."

I hope many of our members will participate in this rare conference together, and deepen our friendships and understanding of the teachings with Dobo, fellow Buddhists from around the world. I hope you will join us at this World Dobo Conference.

At the Betsuin, weekly Sunday services, special services, various classes, and discussion meetings will continue as usual. I look forward to seeing you at temple services and other events. The Betsuin will also undertake new activities together with you, and I hope to make the Betsuin an even more lively place where you can listen to the Buddha's teachings with peace of mind. I would like to hear your opinions and requests for the future of the Betsuin.

I would like to ask for your continued cooperation and support this year as well.

Thank you in gassho,
Rinban Kenjun Kawawata



SUBMISSION DEADLINE!

Submissions for *The Way* are due the 10th of each month for the following month's issue. Articles and announcements for our April / May Issue are due March 10th. Submissions may be subject to printing restrictions and staff approval. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you!

(FUJINKAI, cont. from page 3)

You will see Fujinkai ladies volunteer in many ways throughout the year. As toban participants, we help greet attendees at the Shotsuki services, help serve, donate food, and clean up after refreshment hour in the social hall. For Tanjo-e, Fujinkai and toban members contributed a myriad of vegetarian dishes for a delicious potluck otoki. For Hoonko, Fujinkai prepared the nutritious and delicious oden otoki. For spring and autumn Ohigan, we prepared both the chicken and vegetarian curry rice otoki.

We supported the annual Little Tokyo Sparkle, volunteering to clean up the trash and graffiti in Little Tokyo, as well as helping pull out weeds and clean the grounds of our temple garden on one Saturday a month. Fujinkai ladies are also called upon to help polish the altar pieces several times a year. We helped support the Big Bargain Sale in August and a second sale off-site to raise funds for the temple. Our big event of the year was Obon, when we depend upon many members and friends to prepare the popular kurimanju and osushi, as well as take shifts to work the sales table during Obon weekend. As the year drew to a close, Fujinkai also helped to support the annual year-end temple clean-up and Mochitsuki. We welcome new members of all ages to help alongside current members to strengthen ties and honor the legacy of the Issei and Nisei Fujinkai ladies. Please contact the office if you are interested.

(ABA, cont. from page 4)

and a delicious fruit platter. Thank you to Lisa Shimamoto for her donation of beautiful flowers. In late June, at West Covina's request, ABA sponsored the ring toss booth at their annual Obon Festival.

This past July, our Sangha members and friends celebrated a very successful Obon. Thanks to all who worked tirelessly during the weekends before Obon to set up and take down the yagura, patio shade cloths, booths, stage, cho-chins, etc. The pre-set up ensures that booths, tables, chairs, refrigeration, and canopies are safe and in good working order. We appreciated the large here-and-now group who helped with the Friday morning setup and gave the "old-timers" added relief. This year's setup ran from 6:00 am until 9:00 pm. Thank you to all who worked so hard to prepare food and drink!

LAPD and Steel Security reported no significant incidents for a very safe Obon. We were fortunate to have 8 LAPD officers and Little Tokyo Public

Safety members in the area to ensure the safety of members and attendees. Later, in August, we provided support and security for the Big Bargain Sale and the subsequent sale at the Ota residence.

As summer turned to Fall, we had the opportunity to bid farewell to Rinban Ito and welcome Rinban Kenjun Kawawata. We were honored to attend the succession service and the Rinban Ito retirement, at which time we also had the opportunity to meet Kigoshi Socho and Honzan representatives.

In November, we gathered to honor Shinran Shonin at our special Hoonko services. In December, we closed out the year with temple clean-up and celebrated our annual Mochitsuki.

Our organization truly appreciates all volunteers, so if you have time to join us, please contact the temple office.

In gassho,
Adult Buddhist Association

Help The Way

The Way needs your help and welcomes your contributions. With the cost of printing and postage steadily increasing, we request your support in helping to make our newsletter available in the years to come. Please consider making a donation to *The Way* to offset some of the cost. Thank you for your continued support and readership.

Onegai-shimasu!

