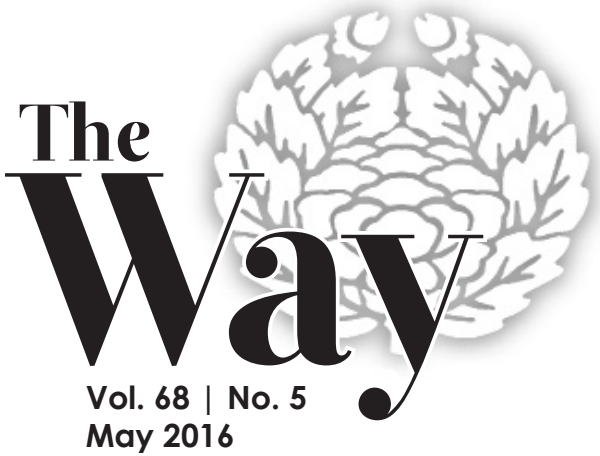


**HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE**

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Los Angeles, CA 90013  
(213) 626-4200 - FAX (213) 626-6850

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**HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE | LOS ANGELES BETSUIN**

**TEMPLE  
SCHEDULE**

**MAY**

- 22 10:00am Sunday Service
- 29 10:00am Sunday Service  
Discussion Group

**JUNE**

- 5 10:00am Shotsuki Service
- 12 10:00am Sunday Service
- 19 10:00am Father's Day &  
Graduation  
Family Service &  
Luncheon
- 26 10:00am Sunday Service  
Discussion Group

**JULY**

- 10 10:00am Shotsuki Service
- 17 10:00am Obon Family Service &  
Pet Memorial Service
- 24 10:00am Sunday Service  
Discussion Group

**Father's Day &  
Graduation  
Celebration**  
*Family Service  
& Luncheon*

Sunday, June 19th, 2016  
SERVICE | 10:00 am

**OBON  
Family Service  
&  
Pet Memorial**

Sunday, July 17, 2016  
10:00am

**OBON 2016**

WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT!  
**SAVE THE DATE**  
**saturday & sunday**  
**july 30th & 31st**



# The Way

Volume 68 | Number 5 | May 2016



HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE • LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

## Entrance into the City of Serenity

Rev. Ryoko Osa

After nearly a year since the last trip, I went to Japan in late March for just over a week to participate in a number of meetings in Kyoto and Tokyo. The timing was perfect since the cherry blossoms were in full bloom. It has been a long time since I saw the beautiful blossoms.

If you go to sightseeing places in Los Angeles, you can see people from all over the world. But it was so surprising to see so many foreigners visiting Japan. I think the reason for the increase in foreign visitors is because of the relaxation in visa policies and the depreciation of the yen.

For me as well as for Japanese in general, it is puzzling to see this change. One example is regarding the custom of viewing "Cherry trees." For foreigners it is so strange and crazy to see Japanese people have picnics under the trees. They gather to eat and drink while sitting on small vinyl sheets even after it gets dark or even if it drizzles. Foreigners look and take photos of these strange Japanese people.

However, the Japanese see tourists break off branches to take photos of each other putting the blossoms in their hair or holding the branch. They are puzzled by that and even get angry. I remember hearing stories of cherry trees in my youth. These stories talked about how there are spirits in the trees. They also regard the fragile blossoms as a symbol of the transiency of life. This is not only regarding cherry trees. We grew up learning that there are spirits in all plants, in the

earth, in even a grain of rice. They are, therefore, not things to be simply enjoyed by us humans. Since I was raised in this way, I feel as though I can hear them crying out loud if a tree is hurt.

There is a phrase in Japanese that goes ICHIGO-ICHIE, one encounter, one opportunity. There is a difference between the beauty of the cherry blossoms – at the beginning when they bloom, when they are in full bloom, and when the petals begin to fall. The change happens quietly and so it is so beautiful.

Our family has been in the United States for ten years now. During that time, I have never been homesick. But suddenly I felt a nostalgia for Japan, when I was able to enjoy the cherry blossoms. It might be because I lost some family members and teachers who raised me over the past few years. I realized how transient life is. I don't have my home in Japan anymore, but I haven't really put down roots to become a part of the community here. Feeling a bit alone and floating, lifting my head, I saw the cherry blossoms as if like a dream. The blossoms express their lives fully in most beautiful ways just in that moment. And I thought to myself, this is what Pure Land and Nirvana means. It reminded me of a passage in the Shoshinge.

SOKUNYŪJAKUJŌMUIRAKU  
HITCHI SHIN JIN I NŌ NYŪ  
Receiving swift entrance into the city of serenity, the world not subject to impermanence  
Assuredly comes from the en-

trusting mind, of shinjin (which serves as our guide)

Also there is the old and popular poem we used as children to learn Japanese hiragana.

"The colors of the flowers are so beautiful, so fragrant. Our life is like that. Who can long last forever without changing? Be liberated from being a slave of the ever-changing conditions in our daily lives today. No more shallow dreams; no more aimless wandering."

We sometimes lose our way and suffer. But we are taught that there is a world beyond our calculation, a world where we can be awakened and freed from anxiety. The Shōshinge guides us so we can enter such a world.

By now, the sakura, which I saw in Japan have probably lost their petals completely and the young leaves may be starting to appear. The fresh young green leaves are a different kind of beauty in comparison to the pink and white blossoms. They embrace us with a new hope to begin a new life. In the midst of the constant impermanence of everyday life, I feel that this hope is a manifestation of an unchanging eternal "life."





# Betsuin News



## FATHER'S DAY & GRADUATION FAMILY SERVICE & LUNCHEON

Please join us for our Father's Day and Graduation Family Service on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am. This service will celebrate and honor both our Dads and 2016 Graduates. We welcome all graduates to attend and families to bring their fathers for this special service! Following service, there will be a light lunch served to honor our grads and dads. We hope that you and your family will be able to join us!

MEMBER

spotlight

BEABY

### ANNOUNCEMENT

To Parents Mika & Byron  
Grandparents  
Rinban Noriaki & Janet Ito  
a New Baby Girl  
Mie Jane Yamada  
Born on April 28, 2016

CONGRATULATIONS!

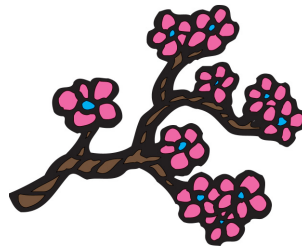
## Spring Ohigan Service

The Spring Ohigan Service was held on March 20<sup>th</sup>, with Dharma Talks by Rev. Peter Hata in English and Rev. Paul Imahara in Japanese. Toban 1 served curry rice and salad for otoki lunch. Following otoki, we set up for the Spring Seminar. Rev. Peter Hata was the speaker for our Spring Seminar and spoke on the theme "Introduction to Buddhism." Thank you to all of our members who attended our Spring Ohigan events.

## Dharma School & Sangha Teens News

Dharma School and Sangha Teens participated in the LABTF Hanamatsuri Art Contest again this year with several individual entries. We decorated our classroom with kirigami flowers to celebrate spring. In April, we had our Hanamatsuri Family service at the Betsuin where we will have a chance to offer our sweet tea over the Buddha and celebrate Hanamatsuri with our members here. At the end of the month, we worked with our older siblings in Jr. YBA to host a Bake Sale during the Hanamatsuri Craft Fair.

Our ministers give talks to the Dharma School children at every Shotsuki and Family Service. Please join us on Sundays for Dharma School lessons! Both new and active members and friends are always welcome!



visit our website at  
[www.hhbt-la.org](http://www.hhbt-la.org)

and "like" us on facebook at  
<http://www.facebook.com/hhbt.la>

### SUBMISSION DEADLINE!

Submissions for *The Way* are due the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for the following month's issue. Articles and announcements for our June Issue are due May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Submissions may be subject to printing restrictions and staff approval. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you!

## In Appreciation

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the Betsuin Board of Directors and the Higashi Honganji Los Angeles Betsuin Sangha for the wonderful luncheon held in my honor on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my service as a resident minister.

Upon reflection, the fact that I have been able to serve as long as I have is truly because of the support, friendship, and most of all, the guidance I have received from all of you. I look forward to at least a few more years of listening to the teaching of the Nenbutsu with all of you. I hope to continue to work together with all of you to ensure a bright future for the Betsuin and for all of the temples of our district.

Gassho,  
Noriaki Ito



## Our deepest condolences to the family and relatives of ...

Mrs. Kazue Mimura (75)  
March 1, 2016

Mrs. Chitose Shimokawa (93)  
March 7, 2016

Mrs. Shigeko Imori (91)  
March 27, 2016

Rev. Dr. Mokusen Miyuki (87)  
April 7, 2016

Namu Amida Butsu

## TAIKO NEWS

Members of both TAIKOPROJECT and Bombu Taiko performed at Rinban Noriaki Ito's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate their support of the event and their festive addition to the celebration! Members of Bombu Taiko worked hard upstairs preparing for our Hanamatsuri Family Service. Under the floral expertise of Lisa Shimamoto, Bombu members decorated the temple's hanamido with an abundance of beautiful flowers. The temple is extremely grateful to Lisa and Bombu for their donation of many of the flowers along with the many hours of time and effort put into making our Hanamatsuri beautiful. Thank you,

## LUMBINI GORNER

In April, we observed Hanamatsuri by participating in the Hanamatsuri Art Contest and learning about the Buddha's birthday and going upstairs to the Hondo to pour sweet tea over the baby Buddha. We got to see the beautiful hanamido and elephant from the Buddha's birth story. Earlier in the month, we celebrated Spring with parties and lots of colorful crafts!

If you are interested in enrolling a child between the ages of 2½ to 5 years of age in Lumbini's program, please contact the temple office at 213-680-2976 or visit the temple website for a brochure.

## LUMBINI CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Applications available  
contact us for a visit!

FOR CHILDREN AGES 2 1/2 TO 5 YEARS

TEL: 213-680-2976

FAX: 213-626-6850

EMAIL: [missleslie\\_lumbini@yahoo.com](mailto:missleslie_lumbini@yahoo.com)

WEBPAGE: <http://LumbiniCDC.org>

**open year round:**

MONDAY through FRIDAY

7:30am to 6:00pm

closed national holidays

