

## HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

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# The Way

Vol. 75 | No. 7  
October/November 2023

HIGASHI HONGANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE | LOS ANGELES BETSUIN

## TEMPLE SCHEDULE

### NOVEMBER

- 4 12:00 pm HOOKO Gathering  
5 Daylight Savings  
5 10:00 am HOONKO Service  
12 10:00 am Kaikyo-ki/Shotsuki Service  
19 10:00 am Sunday Service  
26 9:00 am Coffee & Dharma  
10:00 am Sunday Service

### DECEMBER

- 3 10:00 am Shotsuki Service  
10 10:00 am Bodhi Day/Year-end Family Service  
17 9:00 am Temple Clean-up  
24 No Service  
29 9:00 am Mochitsuki (Friday  
31 10:00 am Year-end Service (Joya-e)

### JANUARY

- 1 10:00 am New Year's Day Service (Shusho-e)

## HŌONKŌ

### Hōonkō Gathering

Saturday, November 4, 2023 | 12:00 pm

### Hōonkō Service

Sunday, November 5th, 2023 | 10:00 am

\*DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS

## Kaikyo-ki/Shotsuki Memorial Service

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12 | 10:00 AM

### 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](https://www.facebook.com/HHBT.LA)

SUNDAYS | 10 AM



# The Way



Volume 75 | Number 7 | October/November 2023

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## Repaying Our Debt of Gratitude (Hōon)

Rev. Kensho Goto

What should we do to experience happiness? For example, should we get the things we desire, have everything go as we wish, or resolve unpleasant problems we are facing? In any case, we think of happiness as attaining what best suits ourselves and having things go as we wish. That is, we believe that we will be satisfied when our demands are met.

Accordingly, we try to get around whatever barriers are preventing our plans from proceeding as we wish. We demand that things go efficiently according to plan in both our work and private life, and we do not tolerate any obstacles. In other words, we are always concerned only with how conveniently we can satisfy ourselves and want to eliminate any impediments to that satisfaction.

However, if we consider carefully, can we find anything that we have accomplished just by ourselves? In fact, we have been helped by someone and supported by something in every aspect, allowing us to be born and live until today. Various factors beyond our imagination are interrelated in every single thing that we have done, and none of those factors are independent.

The nenbutsu, “Namu Amida Butsu,” is also called “the act of repaying the debt of gratitude” (Hōonkō). This is not simply repayment of a debt (on), but rather a Buddhist ritual in which we turn our thoughts to the fundamental things that support and establish our lives, and verify our wish to engage in the act of repaying the debt of gratitude. Shinran devoted his life to clarifying that the self is an existence that is owed to the Buddha, always and in every circumstance, and this functions to awaken us. For that reason, we reconfirm the teachings and

## Introducing Rev. Mayuki Nagamine



Hello everyone! My name is Mayuki Nagamine. I arrived in Los Angeles on August 29<sup>th</sup> and have been working as a minister here at Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple since then. Some of you might remember me from when I used to visit here as a student a couple of years ago.

Growing up, I’ve always been interested in learning English. My first visit to the States was when I was 13 years old. I joined a short homestay program in Seattle which made me want to study in America for a longer period of time. So, I spent my junior year of high school in a small town called Lodi up in Northern California and also went to a community college in Orange County for 2 years. After graduating college, I worked at a medical device company until my visa term ended.

I was raised in a temple in Oita prefecture, Japan. I first got ordained as a Buddhist priest when I was 11 years old. Even though I had opportunities to chant Shoshinge and join memorial services at home, I had never really studied the teachings of Jodo Shinshu. However, during my college years, I visited here multiple times and this experience left a considerable impression on me. I was genuinely impressed by how strong the bond is between the temple and the members. After returning to Japan, I went to a school in Aichi prefecture to study Buddhism and Shinran’s teaching. A lot of you have been listening to Dharma longer than I have so I am excited to learn so much more from all of you and other ministers or just life itself.

As the slogan of Ohtani-ha says, “religious community dedicated to humanity,” I am thrilled to share Dharma with this Sangha and keep bequeathing Shinran’s teachings.

Thank you.

.....  
carry out the Hōonkō (Gathering to Repay the Debt of Gratitude) on Shinran’s memorial day.

The “on” of hōon is a translation of the Pali word *kataññū*, meaning “acknowledging what has been done for me.” It is our realization that the Buddha (Amitābha Tathāgata; Amida Nyorai) brings the light “for me,” strives for me, and is concerned about me. Isn’t it crucial that we take this opportunity to give heartfelt thanks to the entirety of connections and relationships that support us who live here and now, confirming the significance of being born and the joy of living, enduring conscientiously without deception a life that does not proceed as we wish (adversity), relying on the teachings?

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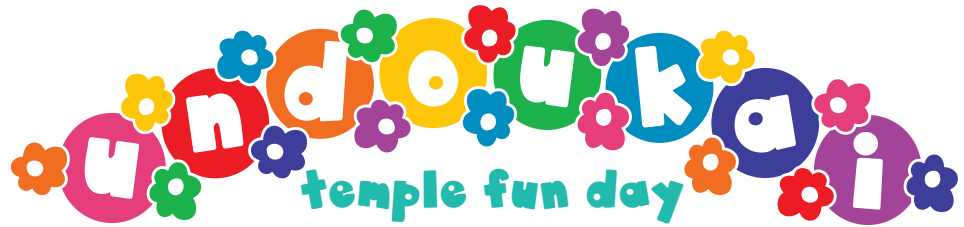
## Betsuin News

HŌONKŌ  
Observances

HŌONKŌ is the memorial service for Shinran Shōnin, the founder of our Jodo Shinshu denomination. The literal meaning of HŌONKŌ is “a gathering to repay a debt of gratitude.” It is, therefore, an occasion to express our appreciation for having been given this opportunity to encounter the Buddha’s teaching. According to Higashi Honganji tradition, the memorial date of Shinran Shōnin is November 28, 1262. This year, our HŌONKŌ Service will be held on Sunday, November 5th at 10 am. Speakers will be Rev. Mayuki Nagamine in English and Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi in Japanese. HŌONKŌ Gathering is an informal service and discussion held in English. Rinban Noriaki Ito will be our speaker at the Gathering. It will be held on Saturday, November 4th at 12 pm and include a light lunch. Please note that Daylight Savings ends on Sunday, November 5th, so you will need to move your clocks back one hour. HŌONKŌ Service will be in person at the temple and streamed online on Facebook live and HŌONKŌ Gathering will be held in person only. We hope that you can join us for this special annual observance.

Kaikyo-ki/Shotsuki  
Memorial Service

The Kaikyo-ki Memorial Service is a special service to honor the departed ministers of Higashi Honganji. It will take place in conjunction with the November Shotsuki Service held on November 12th at 10:00 am. This service will be held both in person at the temple and virtually on Facebook live. Please join us in expressing our gratitude to all the ministers who have served at our Betsuin over the years.



On Sunday, September 24th, we had our second Temple Fun Day Undoukai! It was our first Temple Fun Day since 2019 before our covid closures. This year, we invited West Covina’s sangha to join us. The social hall was decorated with international flags and an entrance arch to welcome attendees. Tables and chairs were set up around the perimeter of the room so we could eat lunch together.

The food tables were full of rice dishes, salads, veggies, fruits, and desserts provided by our members in attendance. Each guest received a bento

lunch including Kings Hawaiian island fried chicken, teriyaki wieners, and a scoop of rice. At the end of the room, there was a scoreboard for the red and white teams where we kept track of each team’s progress throughout the afternoon.

As members and guests arrived and checked in, they were each given a nametag and assigned to either the red or white team. Mr. Danny had various Undoukai and red and white crafts for  
(Please see **UNDOUKAI**, page 3)

## Our deepest condolences

to the family and relatives of ...

*Mrs. Kiyoko Kusagaya (82)*  
September 8, 2023

*Mrs. Joan Masayo Martinez (73)*  
September 16, 2023

*Mr. Michael Masato Shintani (33)*  
September 29, 2023

*Namu Amida Butsu*

visit our website at  
**hhbt-la.org**



facebook.com/hhbt.la



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member  
spotlight

## BABY ANNOUNCEMENTS



To Parents Kisa & Erik  
Grandparents Rinban Noriaki & Janet Ito  
a New Baby Girl  
Saia Miko Fujinami  
Born on September 12, 2023



To Parents Kamryn & Javey  
Grandparents David & Kathy Ikeda  
a New Baby Girl  
Emi Rei Tri  
Born on September 30, 2023

## CONGRATULATIONS!

## SUBMISSION DEADLINE!

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



(UNDOUKAI, cont. from page 2)

the kids in Red Room. They made flags and other fun creations. After lunch, our ministers led everyone in Rajio Taiso to kick off the competition portion of the event. We followed the music and their lead and all got our bodies loose, stretched, and ready to play games!

The first game didn't require much physical activity but helped get our brains warmed to both compete and work together. It was a word game where everyone had to list as many words as they could only using the letters in the words "WEST COVINA HIGASHI." Everyone came up with lots of words! Next, Haruko from West Covina led us in several games! The first game was a color number relay. Two groups from the white and red teams competed in the game. It was fast-paced and very exciting! The next game was called "Keep it up." Participants made two circles for the red team and the white

team. Each team had to hold hands and keep a balloon in the air while staying connected to their circle. There was lots of enthusiastic cheering and laughing and everyone had a lot of fun. Haruko's third game required participants to work together holding a large pipe cut in half and run in groups to funnel a tennis ball into a bucket at the end of the room. It required a lot of team coordination and is hard to describe without seeing it, but everyone had a great time!

The next game was called Katate Origami. Two red teams and two white teams of 4 people each were formed. Participants had to work as a team using only one hand each to fold a large paper tsuru, or crane. Teams were ranked in order of speed! Next, we played a clothes-hanging game with one red and one white team. Participants had to put on hats and run across the room with a basket full of laundry and hang the items on hangers on a clothing rack. They would then run back with the empty basket and the next pair of people would run over and take all of the clothes back down and run back

with their full basket. It was fun seeing everyone's different strategies!

Next we moved outside for Tamaire. The goal of the game was to get as many bean bags into your team's basket as possible. Large red and white baskets were attached to poles and held up by adult helpers from each team. This game proved to be a fun finale for the afternoon and got almost everyone involved. At the end of the day, the red team won with 380 points with the white team close behind with 300 points. Throughout the day, the scores stayed very close!

Special thanks to Haruko, Pat, and Rev. Miyoshi from West Covina for your help with bringing in supplies and games! Thanks to the members who made extra rice dishes to share, Janet for making the teriyaki wieners, and Laura for picking up the chicken main dish. Thank you to everyone who helped set up and clean up and to the Lumbini teachers for putting up the flags in advance. We couldn't have done it without all of you! We hope that everyone had a great time and look forward to seeing you all again soon!



**REGISTER NOW!**

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