

# The White Path

## Living the Life of the Nembutsu

WHITE RIVER BUDDHIST TEMPLE

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### Minister's Greetings

Greetings,

Well, here we are in May hoping desperately that this coronavirus pandemic will soon be over and we can get back to some sort of normalcy.

In June of the year 1492, about four months before Columbus landed in the Americas, Rennyō Shōnin wrote the following letter:

#### On an Epidemic

Recently, people have been dying in great numbers, reportedly from an epidemic. It is not that they die primarily because of the epidemic. It is [because of] determinate karma that has been settled from the first moment of our births. We should not be so deeply surprised by this. And yet when people die at this time, everyone thinks it strange. It is really quite reasonable.

Amida Tathagata has declared that he will unfailingly save those sentient beings who singleheartedly rely on him—ordinary beings in the last [Dharma] age and people like ourselves, burdened with evil karma, however deep the evil may be. At such a time as this, we should entrust ourselves to Amida Buddha all the more deeply and, realizing that we will be born in the Land of Utmost Bliss, relinquish every bit of doubt, steadfastly and singleheartedly acknowledging how gracious Amida is. Once we have understood this, our saying “Namu-amida-butsu, Namu-amida-butsu”—sleeping or waking—is an expression of gratitude conveying our joy and thankfulness [that Amida] really saves us in this way. This, in other words, is the nenbutsu of gratitude for the Buddha's benevolence.

Respectfully. Entoku 4 (1492), 6

In this letter Rennyō tells us that it is not that people are dying primarily because of the epidemic. It is [because of] determinate karma that has been settled from the first moment of our births.

This karma he speaks of is for the most part all actions mental, verbal and physical—that create life.

Karma action shows us that through interconnection everything in life is due to causes, conditions and effects from beginningless time.

We are doing our best to combat this virus hoping that we or our loved ones will not get sick. This action is called karma. However, no matter what action we take we might get infected and die. We are mortal.

Our mortality means that because we were born, we will die someday. Our birth and death are inseparable. There can't be one without the other, which means my death was “determined” as soon as I was born.

To me every moment of my life is karma. What this means to me is that all causes and conditions both past and present make up my life as my path and determine which direction it will go.

Pandemics, plagues, and epidemics have assailed us throughout our human existence. Entire civilizations had been wiped out, starting from pre-historic times. I realize that these words might give little comfort. Whether I live or die I believe as it is with all things that this pandemic too will pass.

Namo Amida Butsu

Rev. James Hozen Warrick

### Gotane-E Service

For Gotane service this year, the northwest ministers are working on putting together something that you will be able to view online. Watch your email for more information.

Gotane-E service is to commemorate the birth of Shinran Shōnin, the founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. He dedicated his life to propagate the teaching of the Nembutsu for ordinary people.



**Greetings from the Chairman!**

As I look out my window and observe the large pink flowers falling from the magnolia tree in my front yard, it reminds me that April is the month of Hanamatsuri, where we celebrate the birth of Shakymuni Buddha. The thought of Hanamatsuri brings back memories of flowered covered temples, plays put on by children, and tea ceremonies. This year, however, because of the coronavirus, we couldn't hold our normal Hanamatsuri service. Instead, we were able to view a live internet streaming of Seattle Betsuin Hanamatsuri service. Such is life during a pandemic.

It has now been over a month since we held our last in-person Sunday service. Our current suspension of services and activities runs through Sunday May 24<sup>th</sup>. The Temple Board will meet on May 13<sup>th</sup> and decide whether the suspension should be extended. The Board will consider the status of Governor Inslee's "stay at home" order, recent guidelines issued by the BCA, and input from members when making its decision. So, please let us know what you think. [reokimoto@comcast.net](mailto:reokimoto@comcast.net)

Although, we are hopeful, that the Temple will be able to re-open soon, safety comes first so it cannot be rushed. Even after re-opening, services will likely be held on a more restricted basis. BCA guidelines suggest smaller gatherings at first with gradual increases. Social distancing policies, disinfections of chairs and tables before and after service, and the use of face masks are also likely.

In the meantime, stay safe and stay home!

In gassho,  
Randy Okimoto

**May Shotsuki Hoyo Monthly Memorial Service  
CANCELLED**

According to our Temple records, the following people passed away in the month of May. If any names have inadvertently been omitted or if you have any questions about Shotsuki services, please contact [office@wrbt.org](mailto:office@wrbt.org).

|                     |      |                        |      |
|---------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| Frank Takishima     | 1971 | Masao Mikami           | 2001 |
| Hanako Yanagawa     | 1974 | Frank Fujimura         | 2003 |
| Sachiko Hirose      | 1978 | George Mitsuo Hiranaka | 2003 |
| Tokuyo Komoto       | 1985 | Masaru Kato            | 2008 |
| Takeyoshi Jack Koga | 1993 | Bill Yaguchi           | 2011 |
| Gladys Gisi         | 1999 | George Shoji Terada    | 2014 |
| Risako Kawasaki     | 2000 |                        |      |

|                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1 year ~ 2019</b>  | <b>3 year ~ 2018</b>  | <b>7 year ~ 2014</b>  | <b>13 year ~ 2008</b> |
| <b>17 year ~ 2004</b> | <b>25 year ~ 1996</b> | <b>33 year ~ 1988</b> | <b>50 year ~ 1971</b> |

DESIGNATED MEMORIAL SERVICE YEARS To schedule a family memorial service, please contact [office@wrbt.org](mailto:office@wrbt.org)

**Bon Odori  
July 25, 2020**

Kendall Kosai has volunteered to co-chair this year's Bon Odori. We expect to hold our first planning meeting sometime in May. However, because of coronavirus concerns and social distancing requirements, there is a real possibility that we may have to cancel this year's Bon Odori Festival. Some temples in northern California have already cancelled their Bon Odoris and others are waiting for more information.

**Meditation Sessions**

ALL MEDITATION SESSIONS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Questions? [meditation@wrbt.org](mailto:meditation@wrbt.org)

**Newsletter Reminder**

June newsletter articles are due **Sunday, May 17th**. Please send articles to [newsletter@wrbt.org](mailto:newsletter@wrbt.org).

Receive your newsletter via email!

Contact [newsletter@wrbt.org](mailto:newsletter@wrbt.org)

**Facilities Committee**

The Washington Tree Service completed its spring spraying of the flowering cherry tree near the back entrance last week.

**Rev. Warrick Starts New Internet Video Series**

In response to the COVID-19, White River is working to stay connected with its sangha. A new video series called “Dharma Time w/ Rev. Jim” was established and is now available on the website and Facebook. Each message is 1-3 minutes long and new episodes are to be released every couple of days.

To access the short videos on our website, visit: [www.wrbt.org/dharmatime](http://www.wrbt.org/dharmatime) or visit our Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/whiteriverbt](http://www.facebook.com/whiteriverbt)

We are actively seeking feedback and ideas for new episodes! Email us at [office@wrbt.org](mailto:office@wrbt.org) to tell us what you think!

**BCA Establishes Phone Number for Dharma Messages**

The Office of the Bishop has created a “Dial the Dharma” phone messaging service members who might not be able to use the computer or don’t have internet access.

Simply call: 415-528-7220 and a voice will say, “please wait while I connect you,” followed by a short 5-minute message by Bishop Harada. This message will be changed periodically.

**Online Services**

Seattle Betsuin continues to provide videos of their services with different ministers joining in to give Dharma messages. The northwest ministers have been coordinating in this effort. We thank Seattle Betsuin for their work in getting this put together for all of us! <https://www.youtube.com/seattlebuddhisttemple>

**Donations**

The Temple gratefully acknowledges the following donations received and recorded from March 17th through April 14th. Thank you to the many people whose financial donations, as well as their donations of goods, energy, and time help us to conduct services, programs and maintain the temple.

Please contact Charles Natsuhara, Treasurer, regarding omissions or corrections by phone (253) 833-0789, or by email to [finance@wrbt.org](mailto:finance@wrbt.org)

Donations can be sent directly to the temple. You can also make a donation by credit card at the temple website <https://www.wrbt.org/donate>

**Total Donations Received - \$675.00**

**Hanamatsuri**

M/M Bob & Mitzie Akiyama  
 Mrs. Lilly Kato  
 Mrs. Rosie Kato  
 Mrs. Haruko Mamiya  
 M/M Ron & Karen Murakami  
 Mr. Charles Natsuhara

Mrs. Joan Rodgers  
 M/M Itsuo & Yuri Shiotani  
 Mrs. Kathleen Taketa-Ozanich  
 M/M Alvin & Mitsuko Terada  
 Ms. Darlene Yamada  
 Mrs. Yoshiko Yamada

**General Donations**

Ms. Melanie Ito In appreciation for “Lost Years” movie sponsorship

**2020 Pledge Totals  
 March 1 – 31, 2020**

**Thank you for your support in 2020!**

| Date          | PLEDGES DECLARED |          | Contributors | DOLLARS COLLECTED |          |
|---------------|------------------|----------|--------------|-------------------|----------|
|               | Additional       | Total    |              | Additional        | Total    |
| April 1, 2020 | \$7,550          | \$31,350 | 41           | \$7,585           | \$20,325 |

**Name and Amount Not Specified for Publishing:**

**Amount Not Specified for Publishing:** Amy Kato Robert Akiyama Mitzie Akiyama

**Under \$500:** Yukiko Iwai Carolyn Yamada

**\$500- \$999:** Bill Komoto Kim Komoto Anonymous #13

**\$1,000- \$4,999:** Anonymous #11 Anonymous #12

**For Comparison**

|               |         |          |    |         |          |
|---------------|---------|----------|----|---------|----------|
| April 1, 2019 | \$8,035 | \$20,765 | 32 | \$8,325 | \$15,285 |
|---------------|---------|----------|----|---------|----------|

**Buddhist Women's Association**

BWA@wrbt.org



Photo from BWA Spring Tea in February. Keep the idea of sharing and compassion alive. We will have many opportunities in the future for coming together.

**BWA Connections** - Karen Murakami started a weekly e-mail on March 10 to provide a forum for news, ideas and suggestions to use our talents during this stay at home situation. Submissions for the BWA Connections and requests to be included on the distribution are welcome from all: temple members, supporters, everyone. Karen's e-mail: [wrlink4goldenchain@comcast.net](mailto:wrlink4goldenchain@comcast.net)

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No BWA activities since early March 2020 because of the suspension of temple operations. Currently the suspension lasts until May 24, 2020.

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**Future Dates** - All are welcome to participate in BWA activities. You do not need to be a BWA member. Because of the stay at home situation, please check for updates.

**On hold.** April - June: non-perishable foods & toiletries -- canned & dried foods, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, etc. – YEAR-ROUND Green Box COLLECTIONS in temple lobby. Thank you for your donations.

**To be rescheduled. Fun Fellowship.** Green River College Theater. 'Beehive: The 60's musical'. Contact Karen Murakami, [wrlink4goldenchain@comcast.net](mailto:wrlink4goldenchain@comcast.net)

**To be rescheduled. BWA General Meeting.** Elect Connie as secretary. Present Fun Fellowship trips and discuss activities for the rest of 2020.

**To be rescheduled from April 3. Visit the Seattle Asian Art Museum.** ABA is hosting this trip and has invited BWA to join.

**TBD BWA Card Making session.** This was so successful at the Northwest District Convention that the organizers planned another session at White River. BWA members from Seattle and Tacoma are invited. Details and signup pending.

**TBD Scarf-making** - Vivian chairing.

**Cancelled--May 21, Thursday, 10:00am. Fun Fellowship.** Visit the Federal Way rhododendron garden. Gayle may check for dates in Spring 2021.

**June 28, Sunday. Fun Fellowship.** Yakima temple visit. This will be a 2 day event. Details TBD.

**Aug 2, Sunday. Fun Fellowship.** Emerald Downs Corgi Races. Horses, too. Details TBD.

**Newspapers** - Thank you for your donations of newspapers that are delivered to Inca's Secret. Unspecified amount delivered in March.

**Diaper/Change Jar** on the lobby table during service days. We collect your loose change to purchase diapers and wipes, etc. for those in need. Thank you very much for your generous donations. We count it after we resume temple operations.

**Oct 11, Sun 10:30am Eshinni-Kakushinni Service with Guest Speaker Rev. Candice Shibata**

**TBD-Fall Gift Card Fundraiser.** Date and details pending.

**ABA**

The ABA cooking class scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup> was cancelled and the meeting turned into a 12 pm teleconference. The class scheduled for May 11 has been cancelled and the meeting rescheduled as a teleconference on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Because of coronavirus concerns, the ABA also cancelled its June picnic and postponed its previously scheduled field trip to the Seattle Asian Art Museum until next year.

**May Calendar**

Due to the fluid situation related to COVID-19, a May calendar is not included in this month's newsletter. You can find the latest up-to-date information on our online calendar. [bit.ly/WRBTcal](http://bit.ly/WRBTcal) (case sensitive).

\*\*Views expressed in articles by individuals do not necessarily represent the views of, and should not be attributed to the Temple or Sangha members\*\*

### **Reverend Warrick's Formal Temple Office Hours (SUSPENDED)**

~~Wednesday & Thursday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm~~

~~Sunday 8:30 am – 1:00 pm~~

For religious or other consultations and home visitations, we advise that an appointment be made directly with Rev. Warrick. Reverend Warrick is on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for emergencies.

For ALL ministerial needs (including emergencies), please call the Temple phone (253) 833-1442. If your call is not answered immediately, please leave a message and Rev Warrick will return your call as soon as possible. Note that calls will be forwarded to Rev. Warrick when he is not at the Temple.

Temple office

[office@wrbt.org](mailto:office@wrbt.org)

(253) 833-1442

Rev Warrick

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