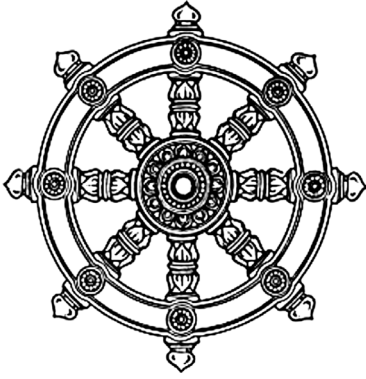


**Resident
Minister**
Rev. Matt Hamasaki



It's November and that means that near the end of the month, just about everyone will be participating in some sort of tradition that revolves around what we call "Thanksgiving." More often than not, this includes consuming, in some shape or form, some turkey — the bird most heavily associated with the holiday. There is plenty to talk about when it comes to turkey: how you cook it, what you put in it, what part of it do you like, etc. And occasionally the topic will come up that eating turkey will make you sleepy, which is why most people end up taking a nap following the Thanksgiving meal.

This is because turkey contains the amino acid called L-tryptophan. Amino acids are the "building blocks" for proteins and so they make up our own muscles as well as other vital parts of the body. When we eat turkey meat, it is the muscle of the bird and so it is also made up of amino acids. Why L-tryptophan has taken the blame for people being sleepy is that when this particular amino acid gets absorbed in the digestive system and makes its way to the brain, it turns into a different chemical called serotonin, which aids in calming us down and helping us sleep.

However! Scientists now know that L-tryptophan can make a person tired immediately only if it is taken by itself — without any other amino acids. Turkey, of course, is made up of other amino acids and so it could not possibly be the cause for why people fall asleep after their meals. What most scientists now believe is the reason for the sleepiness following the Thanksgiving feast is that people eat so much that the stomach needs

(Continued on page 2)

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SANGHA

Sacramento Buddhist Church Volume 58 Number 11 – November 2021

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Resident Minister

(Continued)



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President's Message

Gordon Nitta

Office Manager
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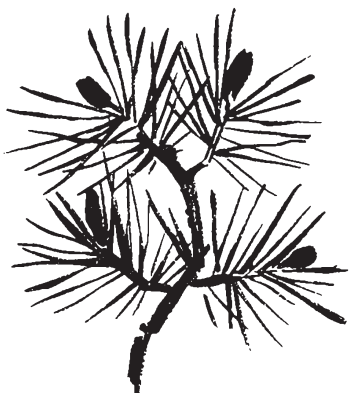
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more blood flow to handle the extra load. This means less blood in other places, like the brain, which causes us to get drowsy.

The way we have scapegoated L-tryptophan as the reason for our drowsiness when the true culprit is our own eating habits is just like how we search for an external source to blame for our troubles in life when truly, we are causing our own suffering. It is human nature for us to absolve ourselves of any responsibility, but the Buddha is like these scientists trying to teach us that it is our own habits that cause our unhappiness.

When we take a hard look at our behaviors and how we think, we can recognize that we cling to any form of thinking that will protect our image of ourselves. It can be quite frightening to shatter that false mirror, though if we can, with the encouragement of the Buddha, we can see how to let go of that perception and realize our true selves. Taking control of our lives, we can begin creating the habits that keep ourselves accountable and thus, while not always giving us the most hoped for scenario, always giving us the most satisfaction. Even if it is accepting the fact that the reason we will be sprawled out snoring on the couch at 3 o'clock in the afternoon began with our very own decision to eat the extra plate when we were already full.

I hope everything is going well with all of you as we have quickly moved into the holiday season. No matter your religion, it is the time of year for family. I wish you the best in taking time out to enjoy family and friends.

When it comes to COVID, I have great appreciation for so many of you who have taken precautions and vaccinations seriously. By doing so, you have been part of the reopening solution at the Betsuin. You have given us the opportunity to advance our original timeline of having Dharma Services, funerals and perpetual memorial services in our Main Hondo.

Please continue to safeguard yourself and your family. By doing so, you are helping the temple leadership move closer to implementing plans for limited use of the indoor facilities for all of our sponsored and affiliated organizations. The reality is that we may always have COVID around and that there will continue to be those who jeopardize their own health and ours because they don't believe in vaccines. I want you to know that the Board of Trustees will continue to monitor the information for Sacramento County and will plan for restrictions and protocols accordingly. Our focus will continue to be on doing our best to ensure the temple is a safe environment for the sangha, ministers and staff to gather.

Since the 2021 Bazaar at Home event in August, our Bazaar Steering Committee has already started preliminary discussions regarding our 2022 Annual Bazaar. Critical topics in our discussions include, but are not limited to:

- Possibility of an in-person Bazaar;
- Our continually shrinking PeoplePower resources;
- Ways to downsize Bazaar effectively;
- Possibly bringing back the Spring Food Festival with proceeds going to the General Fund.

As all of you know, it takes many months of planning for Bazaar to be a successful event! These topics will be the framework for us as discussions and planning move forward for 2022.

Greetings Sangha members.

As we enter November, we have the opportunity to reflect on the year — the progress we made personally and professionally, the changes that have occurred, what we learned, how we grew, what we were able to share and what we are able to look forward to. And we can become steeped in gratitude that all goodness is possible. For me, personally, although the losses brought grief, they nevertheless brought opportunity for more reflection, more gratitude and perspective for growth. May we all be grateful for our individual journey.

The only activity SBWA had for this year was to see the movie called "The Free Guy." The following members were available to see the movie about a man transforming his life: Jane Komure, Karen Adachi, Amy Ishimoto, Jean Kashiwada, Carol Nishimoto, Lori Itow, Martha Kushida, Carolyn Murata, Joanne Chew, Cynthia Dimand, Stacy Matsunami, Shirley Kato, Katsuko Hirota and Gerry Tsukiji.

The story line was about a man making only positive choices in his "game of life" to become the hero of his own story. And it was a very entertaining and enjoyable movie.

That situation of making positive choices probably could have come out of Shinran's teachings hundreds of years ago. Lots of things change over the millennia, but it seems the teachings of the Buddha are still appropriate for how we choose to live as Buddhists today. We always need reminders to keep greed, anger and ignorance at bay. May we all strive to "hear" the Dharma through the increasing activity and media noise in our world to make the positive choices to improve our lives.

Namo Amida Butsu.

Legacy Endowment Fund

Ted Yoshimura

おかげさま

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ABA Keiko Jean Kashiwada

Articles for the SANGHA are due on the 15th of each month. Late articles will be published in the following month's issue. When sending articles by email, please send email to: Sangha@buddhistchurch.org with a cc to: betsuinoffice@buddhistchurch.org and inform the church office at (916) 446-0121. Please include the author's name. Thank you.

2021 Bazaar at Home Edition

Karen Adachi



Some Perspectives:

Are churches and religions declining in membership?

According to a recent newspaper article, a March 2021 Gallup Poll indicated only about 47% of Americans say they are members of churches, mosques, or synagogues as compared to about 70% of Americans in 1999. In addition, 21% of Americans don't identify with any religion at all compared to 8%. This time comparison spans over 20 years. Although Jodo Shinshu Buddhism is not the mainstream religion in the United States, we are experiencing the same general membership decline as with other religions.

The article asked why is this trend occurring? Is it because there is a failure to keep up with the times and being stuck on old principles and rituals rather than on people's spiritual needs? Or, is it that basic human values have been normalized by our current social/political intolerance and beliefs? Some have said that religions are being replaced by political fanaticism with the assistance of social media groups.

Is this a concern for all religions? More specifically, do we need to reinvent Jodo Shinshu Buddhism as any business or civic group would do when they are losing clients and followers? Do we have to adapt to modern times and focus more on values than on dogmatic principles or rituals? I was told many years ago that we do not need to advertise or promote Jodo Shinshu Buddhism at our temples. The theory or understanding was that we would draw only those individuals who really truly wanted to join our temple.

Initially, the Issei immigrants gathered at the temples for social and spiritual guidance. When I attended UC Berkeley, there were signs of Buddhist awareness during the late 1960s with Zen Buddhism. This was the Mario Salvio, Free Speech Movement, Vietnam War, Hippie Era... sigh... I'm showing my age here! In later years, the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhism became popular. Other forms of Buddhism, such as Vietnamese Buddhism, have also surfaced in America.

Unfortunately, the trend has been that we are experiencing decreasing membership at our temples. Some smaller temples are barely surviving. We are dealing with a ministerial shortage, which has been a topic of discussion for over 20 years at Buddhist Churches of America (BCA) National Council Buddhist Conference meetings. In my opinion only, the real question is, "What will the future hold for Jodo Shinshu Buddhism with our younger generations — my grandkids and their future generations?"

Some random thoughts:

- Do BCA and Kyoto Japan Honganji have a solution or plan to mitigate this situation?
- Do we need to become an independent regional temple and/or combine with other temples to survive?
- Will we be morphed into or need to join the other Buddhist religious sects to survive?
- I have heard that there is a general interest in our religion among some of the younger generation. Do we need more outreach programs to capture their interest?

I do not have an answer. Our Legacy Endowment Fund will hopefully be able to provide monetary assistance for any viable future projects.

Our Buddhist tradition teaches us about awareness, change, and understanding the limitations both in ourselves and others. More specifically in this discussion, the issue of change or impermanence comes into consideration. I hope that we can sustain Jodo Shinshu Buddhism for our future generations.

Thursday Night Medical Series

Reverend Patti Oshita started this program with initial funding from the Legacy Endowment Fund Board, as part of her work as program development director at the Sacramento Buddhist Church. Please note the upcoming events, shown on the next page.

Appreciation and Gratitude

We would like to thank all of our sangha members and families for their great support of the Legacy Endowment Fund throughout the years and especially during the pandemic. Please be safe.

Thank you to all who ordered our Commemorative 75th Annual Bazaar merchandise.

A drive-through pickup of orders was held on Saturday, October 16, and for those who requested shipment of their orders, the packages were mailed on Wednesday, October 13.

If you have not yet received your merchandise order, please contact Karen Adachi (karenadachi@aol.com) or call the church office at (916) 446-0121 as soon as possible.

We have a limited supply of merchandise available for purchase. If you are interested in purchasing merchandise, please contact Karen Adachi at the email address noted above.

**Thursday Night
Medical Series:
'Living Each
Day Well'**



**Weekly Yoga
Via Zoom**

Join us for these friendly, informative sessions. Ask questions and learn about steps you can take to ensure a healthy and happy life for yourself and those around you!

Please sign up at BetsuinPrograms@buddhistchurch.org
Buddhist Church of Sacramento, 2401 Riverside Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95818-2233

**Crimes against Seniors:
How to Stay Safe During the Holidays
Thursday, November 18, 2021 - 6:30 p.m.**



Aaron Lee
Criminal Investigator, Sacramento County DA
Retired Sergeant, Elk Grove Police Department

Sing In the Holidays with Merv

Merv Maruyama is back again with some Japanese and American songs for the Holidays! Sing along through Zoom if you know any of them. We will finish with a Holiday sing/strum along. Ukulele players, have your ukes ready!

Thursday, December 16, 2021 - 6:30 p.m.



Merv Maruyama
Actor/Singer

Interested in learning something new?

The Yoga for Health class is designed for any age and physical condition.

Join us for weekly yoga classes with Bob Matsueda via Zoom every Wednesday evening at 7 p.m.

For more information and Zoom link, contact betsuinprograms@buddhistchurch.org.



Adult Buddhist Association
Keiko Jean Kashiwada
ABA President

ABA had its first in-person board meeting in the courtyard at the Sacramento Betsuin on Thursday, October 7. All attendees wore masks and we sat socially distanced. It was so nice to see each other and discuss the items on the agenda in person versus the Zoom meetings. Thank you to the ABA officers and committee chairs who were able to make it out for the morning weekday meeting.

ABA, along with the SBWA, will be contributing toward the cleaning expenses of the drapes in the Hondo and Kaikan. The church is currently looking for someone who can provide material and sew the lighter-weight drapes that hang directly in front of the Dharmacakra Wheel of Dharma on the Kaikan stage. As ABA president, I contacted a couple of resources provided to me by an ABA member, but have not been successful. If you know of a company that has light-weight material that will complement the current color of the drapes on the stage and a seamstress to sew these drapes, please contact me at ksjkash@aol.com.

John Yoshikawa and I continue to attend ACC Senior Services meetings and our crew of “walkers” continues to volunteer to meet seniors who need an escort while walking in the neighborhood, doing shopping, or going to doctor appointments. If you have any questions, our email addresses are: John Yoshikawa at spyron@aol.com or Jean Kashiwada at ksjkash@aol.com.

Please continue to check in on your family and friends who are unable to drive and offer to do shopping or other errands for them or just call to say hello. Stay healthy and be safe. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Introduction to Buddhism

**Introduction to Buddhism
With Reverend Matt Hamasaki**



**Third Monday of Each Month
7 p.m. via Zoom
October 18, November 15, December 20,
January 17, February 21, March 21**

Please RSVP to BetsuinPrograms@buddhistchurch.org

2021 Family Memorial Service Schedule

Traditionally, family memorial services are held for loved ones on designated anniversaries. These are precious occasions to honor the treasured memories of our beloved ones and to realize how fortunate we are to be embraced by Amida Buddha’s light of wisdom and life of compassion.

Year of Death	2021 Memorial	Year of Death	2021 Memorial
2020	1 year	1997	25 year
2019	3 year	1989	33 year
2015	7 year	1972	50 year
2009	13 year	1922	100 year
2005	17 year		



サンガ



～11月の予定～

11月 7日 10時 祥月法要
11月 14日 9時 報恩講

お問い合わせは別院事務所【916】446-0121

理事長のメッセージ

新田ゴードン



ホリデーシーズンが駆け足でやって来る時期となりましたが、皆様お元気でしょうか。どの宗教に限らず、1年のうちで特にこれからは家族と過ごす時です。皆様が家族や友人達と楽しく過ごされることを願っています。

Covid-19に関しましては、多くの皆様が予防対策やワクチン接種を真面目に受け止めておられることに感謝いたします。そうすることは別院再開を促進する手助けとなります。そして日曜サービスやお葬式、法事などを出来るだけ早く本堂で行えるようにすることが出来ます。

どうぞ感染予防を今まで通り続けて下さい。そうすることによって、お寺の指導者達は別院傘下の種々団体が屋内での活動再開を早めることが出来ます。現実的にはCovid-19は常に気を付けていなければなりません、特にワクチン接種に反対している人達がいることを忘れてはなりません。別院理事一同は引き続き sacrament カウンティからの情報をモニターしながら感染予防の規定を作っていくようにしています。私達の一番の目標は別院が皆様や開教使他にとって最も安全な環境を作ることです。

今年8月に開催された「At-Home バザー」が終わってから、バザー計画委員会は既に来年2022年のバザーの計画を進めています。最も重要な討議の焦点は

- In-Person のバザーは可能か
- 継続しているボランティア人数の減退
- バザーを小規模にするには・・・
- 春のバザーの収益を元のように General Fund に戻す

皆様もご存じのようにバザーを成功させるためには何か月もの準備が必要です。以上のような課題がこれから2022年へかけて検討されることとなります。

会長のメッセージ

中富バーバラ



11月に入り、この一年間を振り返ってみる良い機会でしょう。この一年の間に私的にも仕事の上でも進歩したこと：大きな変化が起こり、学び、成長し、分かち

合いそして希望を持って将来に向かうことが出来るようになりました。そしてすべてが善良であることが可能なのだと感謝の気持ちに浸ることが出来ます。私個人としては悲しいこともありました。もっと考え、もっと感謝し、成長していく機会を与えてくれました。私達は個々の行路に感謝すべきではないでしょうか。

婦人会の今年唯一のイベントは映画「The Free Guy」鑑賞でした。以下の会員が参加しました。小牟礼ジェーン、足立カレン、石本エイミー、柏田ジーン、西本キャロル、伊藤ロリ、串田マーサ、村田キャロリン、ジョアン・チュ、シンシア・ダイヤモンド、松波ステイシー、加藤シャリー、廣田勝子、築地ジェリー。(敬称略)

映画の筋は、主役の男性が漫画のゲームで的確な選択をして自分がヒーローになるというものでとても面白い映画でした。

的確な選択をするという状況は何百年も前の親鸞聖人の教えから出て来たとも言えます。ここ千年の間に色々な変化がありましたが、仏の教えは今日でも仏教徒として生きる道を示してくれるのに適しているように思います。私達は常に欲望、怒り、煩惱から追い詰められないように注意しなければいけません。徐々に活動を増やしながら、そして仏法を熱心に聞きつつ、私達の人生を向上させるために的確な選択をするように努めましょう。

南無阿弥陀仏

Translation by Katsuko Hirota

