



# BUDDHIST CHURCH OF MARYSVILLE

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## Hiking the Path, with Team Castle

### Message from home, Number 5.

June 19, 2020

In the last Hiking article, I wrote about our inability to gather for our annual observance of Shinran Shonin's birthday, Gotan-e. Since we were unable to gather, I thought it was important to touch upon the story of Shinran and how important his Nembutsu teaching continues to be today, especially during this time of unimaginable change.

The world has just recently been given a huge dose of the reality of change. Regardless of our religious background and path, regardless of our political outlooks, and regardless of where we live on this planet, change is truth in our lives...just as it has always been.

If he were alive today, I believe that Shinran would simply tell us this: No matter what our individual path may be, follow the teachings, follow the Dharma...live a Nembutsu life...a life of reciting Namu Amida Butsu.

As if one national and global crisis was not enough, we have recently found ourselves in another very impactful crisis. Not a pandemic of illness, but clearly a dis-ease of racial tension brought about by the senseless loss of young black lives. What is most disturbing is that these lives were lost due to the inhumane actions of others under the color of authority.

Since the date of George Floyd's death, there have been numerous messages of support from Jodo Shinshu temples across the U.S. I find that the words of Ministers throughout the Buddhist Churches of America are certainly more articulate than what I often write, but I still feel the need to say something.

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As Buddhists, we have a great deal of responsibility to act during this crisis. As our main practice, self-awareness is step one in how we act. Self-awareness is difficult because it places all the responsibility on each and everyone of us. For me to have self-awareness, I have to take the responsibility to look deep within myself and find out who I am. On our own, we must each look at ourselves and recognize our blind passions. If we find that bias and discrimination exists within us, we must first recognize this and then act outwardly to live our life with the words of the Golden Chain in mind...to be kind and gentle to EVERY living thing...every living person.

It sounds simple huh? No way, it is difficult. But this journey of self-awareness is the first step in living our lives so that we become the standard in our own house, our own neighborhood, our own community. We will then set the tone for others to want to hike with us.

I encourage all of us to take that first step and look within ourselves.

In Gratitude,

Namu Amida Butsu

Keep on Hiking!!

Team Castle



## TEMPLE UPDATE

As I mentioned in my last update, the Marysville Buddhist Church Board of Directors met on Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>, and since then we met again on June the 13<sup>th</sup>. We again started off our Board meeting with a short service before the meeting. How nice it is to gather in the Hondo and chant and be together to simply share something that we all believe to be important.

As I have repeated several times since early March, closing the temple during this COVID crisis was one of the most difficult decisions I think the MBC Board has ever made. Yet at the same time, it was an easy decision as we knew protecting the health and safety of our Sangha is our goal. It is that same goal that makes opening

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up the MBC again for services so very difficult and yet easy.

Since our last meeting in May, Governor Newsom and the State of California have released guidelines for the safe return to holding regular church gatherings.

Before I get into the nuts and bolts of what our immediate plans are, I think it is important to say that these guidelines are meant to outline HOW to re-open. WHEN to reopen is a decision the Board must consider. Even more important, is for each and every one of our Sangha members and "FOT's" (Friends of the Temple) to personally decide WHEN it is right for them to decide when to comeback to services.

How to reopen is clear. We must develop procedures to make sure that every effort is made to provide a safe and clean temple. We must all play a role in only coming to service and events when we are healthy and free from symptoms, we must practice appropriate social distancing, and then we must clean up after ourselves to make sure the MBC is ready for the next gathering. We must also develop practices to follow that will allow our volunteers to come into the MBC with peace of mind that the office, equipment, common areas, and Hondo are all clean and ready to be used.

During this next month, we will be purchasing the items and equipment that will allow us to properly clean and disinfect our MBC. We will be purchasing and setting up hand sanitizing stations for everyone to use prior to entering the MBC. And, we will be obtaining hand held touchless thermometers to check everyone's temperature before entering the MBC.

When the decision is made to re-open, we WILL be ready!!

The best advise I think that we can all take from the world right now is this:

Be patient, be safe, be healthy, and BE HOME!!!

Gassho,  
Rev. Tim

## SERVICE UPDATE

While Sunday services at the MBC are still on hold, I think that there cannot be a one size fits all approach to address the needs to our Sangha. If your family is in need of a Makura-gyo (Pillow Service), an annual memorial service, funeral/memorial service, or inurnment service, PLEASE contact the Marysville Buddhist Church Office. The office will pass along your contact information to Reverend Tim. There are many options to holding services, and it is important to discuss options on a case by case basis. Safety of our Sangha will still be the number one concern, but we have options that may meet your needs.

Please call if you would like to discuss further.