

# Golden Chain



Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church  
32975 Alvarado-Niles Road, Union City, CA 94587

Office: 510-471-2581  
Email: sacbcoffice@gmail.com

Resident Minister: Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji  
Mobile: 253.640.4224 / Email: gishin.tmiyaji@gmail.com

[www.SACBC.org](http://www.SACBC.org)

March 2023

*I am a link in the Buddha's golden chain of love that stretches around the world. I must keep my link bright and strong. I will try to be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself. I will try to think pure and beautiful thoughts, to say pure and beautiful words, and to do pure and beautiful deeds, knowing that on what I do now depends not only my happiness or unhappiness, but also that of others. May every link in the Buddha's golden chain of love become bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.*

As we approach the spring season, there is a feeling of a new start to things. The pandemic feels like it is in the rear-view mirror now, although it is unclear what the long term effects of this illness will bring. It is speculated that not just Covid-19, but other illnesses that will be immune to the antibiotics that modern science provides us with will steadily increase in emergence in the future. This really shows our continued vulnerability in this ever-changing world. Political instability not just within this country, but in other parts of the world make us question the status quo and our way of life. The incessant and seemingly never-ending gun massacres, the opioid crisis with such dangerous drugs like fentanyl, the widening gap between the haves and the have nots, and the ever-looming presence of Artificial Intelligence make us wonder what the human identity is and what our purpose in life is.



On a more local level, as we come out of the pandemic, one thing seems pretty clear: people are pretty comfortable with Zoom meetings and remote learning now. Why go to a certain location when I can just click a button and be in a meeting? Why make myself dress up when I can just turn off my camera? Why refrain from eating and drinking during a zoom meeting, when I can turn off the camera and simply listen from the comfort of my home? Honestly, the travel time that I save alone makes it much more worth it to stay at home rather than to physically drag myself from my house to another location. But I do wonder, am I losing anything from the experience of these meetings, workshops, lectures, classes, or services, by not physically being there? I would argue that there is, and what is lost is subtly significant.

I read on a temple bulletin board somewhere in Japan that said the following: "The temple is where I go to meet myself." What this means is that when we encounter the Buddha Dharma, we awaken to the truth that helps us to see our unembellished selves: both the parts that we are okay with seeing, but more importantly, the parts of ourselves that we don't want to see. The Buddha's Wisdom and Compassion can be likened to a mirror that shows us our true hearts and minds as such.

Through this teaching, we are then given the strength to engage with this world in a much more confident, humble, and flexible way that is less inclined to be caught in the confusion that is stoked by false teachers and megalomaniacs who seek for power and control. Let's be reminded of the significance of the temple, because if it were not for this sacred place, where else can one hear the calling voice of the Buddha? Where else can we awaken to our true selves? Let us reflect on the importance of our temple's existence amidst this chaotic and precarious world.

When we focus on the fragrance of the burning incense, the voices of the sangha chanting together, the melodious sounds of the gatha that is sung together, and simply being with each other, we re-engage with a dynamic world that we are increasingly distancing ourselves from: human relationships. I look forward to seeing you in person and chatting about a whole lot of nothing—because that's where there is everything. Gassho.

## お寺の意味

いよいよ春の季節が始まりそうです。アメリカではパンデミックが大分落ち着いてきたようですが、これからの現状が不安に感じます。コービッド以外にこれからさまざまな病気が発生するでしょうと多くの研究者が推測されているみたいです。しかも、いまある抗生物質に負けないものが将来多くなると言うことです。国内外の政治関係の問題、ウクライナで起きている戦争等、そして銃の問題、アヘンの問題特にフェンタニル薬、経済格差、及びAIの発展といった様々な問題で人間のアイデンティティや人間そのものの生きる目的が揺れているようです。

少し話が変わりますが、パンデミックのきっかけでZoomや「remote learning」（オンライン）を通しての色々な会議、講義、講演会及びその他さまざまな集いが主流となりました。例えば、何かの会議があれば、わざわざ着替えて外見を整えなくても気楽にミーティングに参加できるようになりました。コーヒーや朝ご飯を食べながらパソコンのカメラを使って日曜礼拝に参加できるようになりました。私共もやはり会議にわざわざ足を運んで移動するよりも、家から参加する方がガソリンの無駄にもならないし、移動時間がだいぶ減らされて家族と一緒に過ごす時間が増えた気がします。とても楽です。しかし、これをやり続ける中で、何か生活から大事なものが失われているのではないかと言う気もします。

日本に滞在していた時あるお寺の看板にこのような文字がありました。「お寺は“私”に会いに行くところ」と。つまり、仏法と出逢うということは、この本当の自分の姿を見せていただく真実の世界と出逢うということなのです。この本当の自分とは、もちろん見たいところも含まれますが、それより大切なのは、自分の見苦しいところを見せていただくところです。仏様の智慧と慈悲は私たちの本当の姿をそのまま映してくださる鏡であります。

この教えを通して、仏陀のはたらきが自分の人生の拠り所となり、そして自信をつけながら謙虚であり、また物事に対して柔軟的に向き合う心があらわれてくるのです。そして、世の中の権力者やさまざまな邪見じゃけんきょうまん驕慢の見解で人々を惑わす考え方や人物に捉われないようになるのです。この「寺」という場所がなければ、阿弥陀如来様のお呼び声をどこで聴くことができるのでしょうか。「寺」がなかったら本当の自分とどこで出逢うことができるのでしょうか。寺院という聖地の存在というものを改めて見ていく必要があります。

お香の匂いに包まれている空間、お経を挙げている皆様の声、仏教讃歌を一緒に揃って歌っているあの雰囲気、皆さんと一緒に称える称名、そして「サンガ（信者の集まり）」と一緒に一つの場所に居ることの大切さをもう一度見ていかなければならないのではないのでしょうか。合掌。

### 1. My Personal Podcast Covering Jodo Shinshu Buddhism

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/no-doubt-a-shin-buddhist-approach/id1511351502>

### 2. Our Weekly Sunday Services Can Be Found Here:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/shin-buddhist-sangha-services/id1517181914>





## Services for March 2023

Alameda County is now **"Yellow - Medium"** for COVID. Cases are rising rapidly.  
Wearing a mask in the hondo or Sangha Hall is strongly recommended.

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**March 5, 2023 – Shotsuki Hoyo** 10 A.M.

Rev. Dr. Takashi. Miyaji will officiate this hybrid service.

At this monthly memorial service, we will honor those loved ones  
who passed away in the month of March.  
March birthdays will be celebrated.

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**March 12, 2023 – 850/800 Joint Celebration Service**

**10 A.M. – in-person at the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple for the Bay District and on Zoom**  
*DAYLIGHT SAVINGS begins*

This service celebrates and observes the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's birth and the  
800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Jodo Shinshu religious tradition.

Pre-ordered Bentos are due by Wednesday, February 22, 2023, for those going to Palo Alto.  
Car pools from SACBC at 8:30 am

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6508560123?pwd=NkF3enZiY1J2dDNpWWR1dEdscENCZz09>

Meeting ID: 650 856 0123

Passcode: 2751

**Dharma School and JR YBA activities planned, please come!**

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**March 19, 2023 – Family Service** 10 A.M.

Rev. Dr. Takashi. Miyaji will officiate this hybrid service.

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**March 26, 2023**

**Lady Takeko Kujo & Lady Yoshiko Ohtani Memorial Service**

**Spring Ohigan Service** 10 A.M.

Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji will officiate this service on Zoom.

Lady Takeko Kujo (1887-1928) founded the BWA to promote the status of Buddhist women.  
Lady Yoshiko Ohtani (1918-2000) revitalized the BWA and started the BWA World conferences.

Ohigan marks the Spring or Vernal Equinox. This is the time when the Earth and the Sun  
are situated such that the hours of Daylight are equal to the hours of Night.

Because the weather is fairest during these times of year, it is convenient to come  
to the temple and listen to the teachings of the Buddha Dharma.

**Dharma School will follow service.**

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### Happy Girls' Day (Hinamatsuri)

Hinamatsuri, also called "Girls' Day" or "Dolls' Day", is a special day in Japan. It is celebrated on March 3<sup>rd</sup> (the third day of the third month) of each year with platforms covered with a red material to display a set of ornamental dolls representing the Emperor, Empress, attendants, and musicians in traditional court dress of the Heian period.

*Dolls were a donation from  
Mrs. Takako Sloniker*



*Kauai Hongwanji Council Nembutsu Seminar*

# The Great Undercurrent of Life

Friday, March 17, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm (HST): Zoom

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji



What is the purpose of religion? Why do we need Buddhism in our lives? When we think about our society today, many people are moving away from religion. One reason for this might be that people think religion is an outdated worldview that tells people how they should live. However, is that the only way to define religion? In this discussion, we will look at how the true meaning of religion is to encounter the great undercurrent of life. By doing so, we come to understand our true selves.

Rev. Dr. Takashi Miyaji is currently a minister at Southern Alameda County Buddhist Church since August 1, 2020. In addition, he teaches at the Institute of Buddhist Studies located in Berkeley, California. His previous assignment as a minister was at Tacoma Buddhist Temple from December 2017 to July 31, 2020.

He graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy and Japanese language and literature, Institute of Buddhist Studies at Berkeley, California with a Master's Degree in Buddhist Studies, Ryukoku University in Kyoto, Japan with a Master's Degree in Shin Buddhist Studies, and completed the doctoral coursework at Ryukoku University. He specializes in the areas of Japanese Buddhism and religion, translation of Buddhist scripture, and Jodo Shinshu doctrine and ethics.

Rev. Miyaji received his Tokudo and Kyoshi qualifications at the Honpa Hongwanji school located in Kyoto, Japan. He also obtained the academic ranking of *Hokyō* recognized within Hongwanji. He most recently completed his doctoral dissertation entitled, "Shin Buddhist Ethics," through Ryukoku University.

**Registration Fee:** Free (Registration Required)

Donations can be made to the Kauai Hongwanji Council. Please make a check payable to Kauai Hongwanji Council and send it to Lihue Hongwanji Mission 3-3556 Kuhio Highway, Lihue, HI 96766.

**The maximum capacity is 100 people**, first come, first served. We will email you a Zoom link three days prior to the seminar.

**Click below to register!**

"Registration Deadline: March 11, 2023"

<https://forms.gle/gD7abvnQJQAENbtQ8>



When you complete the seminar registration, you will receive an automatic confirmation email from Google forms.

**For further information, please contact:**

Kapaa Hongwanji at 822-4667, West Kauai Hongwanji at 335-3195 or Lihue Hongwanji at 245-6262.

# **\*\*CORRECTIONS\*\***

## **2023 SACBC Board of Directors**

### **2023 Officers**

President	Kyle Yamasaki
VP Operations	John Arai
VP Religious Activities	Karen Fujii
Recording Secretary	Karen Suyama
Treasurer	Larry Gissible
Membership Treasurer	Yvette Hornig
Corresponding Secretary	Pat Takemoto
General Counsel	Garret Murai
Past President	John Arai

### **Honorary Advisor\*\***

Ken Suyama

### **2023 Elected Board Members**

Dave Abe	Kathy Murai
Nancy Dodd	Paul Nakao
Karen Fujii	Jamie Nagata
Reina Fujii	Hideo Okada
Paul Gan	Dr. Neil Okamura
Larry Gissible	Noreen Osaki
Yvette Hornig	JoAnn Rogers
Dr. Palitha Jayaweera	Mark Shimomura
Noel Lowe	Karen Suyama
Dr. Curtis Mark	Pat Takemoto
Ken Matsubayashi	Katherine Velasco
Royce Mori	

### **2023 Organization Representatives\*\***

BWA	Karen Suyama
Dharma School	Betty Yamasaki & Cathleen Yoshida
Jr YBA	Kyle Yamasaki
AA	Royce Mori
Cub/Boy Scout	Patrick Kogoma
O Nami Taiko	Bob Kitajima
Japanese Language School	Garret Murai
Kendo	Hideo Okada
Bingo	George Nakamura
Umenoki**	Royce Mori

## **2023 SACBC BAZAAR – July 15th-16th**

*Saturday, July 15, 11:00am-7:00pm*

*Sunday, July 16, 11:00am – 3:00pm*

Details are being worked out and we've kicked off the planning of our bazaar this year. Please don't be shy and come help and support our biggest fundraiser for SACBC. A short shift in a couple of areas could be the difference between success and disappointment for our bazaar. **WE NEED YOU.** Tell your family, tell your friends – come support SACBC's bazaar.

You can come help set up, work a shift or two during the weekend, and help clean up afterwards. Please come and help make this fundraiser the best we've had in a long while. You can let John Arai or Karen Suyama know you can help work at the bazaar. It won't take long with a lot of helpers. Next meeting will be March 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.

## **SACBC BWA**

Our first meeting was held in January to get started up again after the pandemic. We welcome new members to BWA, anyone can join us. We will be chairing the March 26<sup>th</sup> service for the Lady Takeko Kujo and Lady Yoshiko Ohtani Memorial Service. These two women were very important in the founding and revitalization of the BWA, with one living in our lifetime.

Next meeting will be 9:00am on Sunday March 19<sup>th</sup>. Feel free to come to the temple and join our meeting, then stay for service. Your ideas are welcome!

## **BOUTIQUE**

Hi Everyone!

It looks like we are having a Bazaar! That means the Boutique will have to start preparing. We are getting together on Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in the reception room to cut aprons, as well as, plan for other items that need to be sewn, stuffed, etc.... We can use your help!

If you would like to sew, for now, we plan on taking our projects home to work on. Please contact me if you are able to join us on Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. We stop working for lunch so be sure to bring a lunch. If you are unable to attend, but are interested in sewing or helping on miscellaneous projects, please let me know.

Gassho,

Jamie Nagata  
(925) 862-2512



# SILENT AUCTION



SOUTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY BUDDHIST CHURCH

## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Silent Auction - July 15-16, 2023

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Spring is here and the 58th Annual SACBC Bazaar is getting closer. We are calling upon the Sangha to help us reach out to local businesses they regularly frequent and ask for donations. We appreciate any donation from businesses and “friends” of SACBC.

For the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Silent Auction, we are asking SACBC organizations and affiliated organizations, as well as Sangha members for donations. We gladly accept donations of new items as well as gently used and precious older items. Items that attract interest and competitive bids are suggested below:

### TICKETS/GIFT CERTIFICATES

#### TICKETS to

- Sporting Events
- Amusement Parks
- Interesting places in the Bay Area
- Plays, musicals, movies

#### CERTIFICATES to

- Spas
- Restaurants
- Specialty Shops

### ELECTRONICS

- Tablets
- eReaders (eg. Kindle)
- Headphones
- Amazon Echo

- Bluetooth Speakers
- Video games
- Video game gift cards (eg. Roblox, Call of Duty)
- Gaming accessories (eg. controllers, mouse, headsets, carrying case, etc.)

### THEME BASKETS (examples)

SPORTS: Basketball, baseball, football, soccer, golf, tennis, fishing, etc. Include equipment, memorabilia, etc.

FOOD: Wine, Liquor, Samplers (Crackers, Pasta, Chocolates)

#### GIFT CARDS

#### ARTS & CRAFTS

CELEBRATIONS: Christmas, Valentine’s Day, Halloween, Birthday, Anniversary, etc.

PETS: Dog, Cat, Fish, Birds, etc.

“HIS”, “HERS”, “KIDS”

#### BOOKS

KIDS TOYS that are popular right now

### OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Art: Paintings, Sculptures
- Japanese art pieces
- Dolls
- Collectibles (vases, ceramics, etc.)
- Air Fryer

- Tools
- Travel aids
- Small appliances
- Handcrafted items (knitted, crocheted, embroidered, woven, sewn, etc.)

To participate in this year’s Silent Auction, donations must be received by **July 1, 2023**. Donations can be left in the office starting in May. Contact information for potential donors is also appreciated. Thank you! We look forward to seeing you at the Bazaar.

Questions? Please contact Karen Fujii. Email: [k.fujii02@comcast.net](mailto:k.fujii02@comcast.net) Church Telephone: (510) 471-2581



## What's Up Dharma School? March 2023

During the month of February, Dharma school students have been planning and working on projects for the upcoming BCA Eitaikyo and Hanamatsuri service.

For the BCA Eitaikyo Service (To be held at Palo Alto Temple. Be sure to order bento if you plan to stay.), the students designed Keha Flower petals that will be used during the ceremony. We will have 60 petals we will be contributing from our students.

In celebration of Valentine, we decorated cookies (We did see some of them snuck in a bite during the decorating!). At the same time, we also had a very good discussion about the Pet Memorial Dharma talk given by Rev.Miyaji. It was fun to hear about their pets (past and present).

Students also began brainstorming for our Hanamatsuri presentation...very interesting ideas and we can't wait to see what the end product will be!

Here are the remaining days of Dharma classes for the 2022-2023:

- \*March 12 (@Palo Alto Temple for BCA Eitaikyo Service)
- March 26
- April 2
- \*April 8 (Hanamido decorating)
- April 9 (Hanamatsuri Service)--Dharma School and BWA will host an otoki.
- May 21
- June 4
- June 11 - Last Day of Dharma Class

Stay safe and healthy,  
In Gassho,  
Cathleen and Betty



## Qigong Fundamentals Class (Hybrid)

Karen Fujii

At 8:30 AM on Monday mornings, members of the Qigong Fundamentals class meet. Jim Patton joins us on ZOOM and teaches us the qigong movements and exercises.

The class focuses on the simple and easy-to-learn exercises and movement patterns of Wuji Qigong. Through these movements stress begins to melt away, joints start to feel more open, and everyday movements start to feel less restricted leaving you feeling much better. There are endless variations to the exercises so that all students will have a chance to experience the gentle power of Wuji Qigong regardless of ability. These exercises are suitable for all abilities and ages.

Anyone is welcome to join this class. To sign up, there are two options: 1. Come to the Sangha Hall Reception room by 8:30 AM any Monday. 2. Go to [Real Works Movement \(studiobookingsonline.com\)](https://studiobookingsonline.com) Detailed instructions are in the January 2023 "Golden Chain".

The first class is FREE, so check it out. You may start the class at any time. You only pay for the classes you attend either on ZOOM and/or in-person. If you miss a class, you aren't charged. Classes are \$15 each or \$120 for 10 classes.

As of this publication, there are 7 in the class from SACBC. Here's what some have to say:

my blood pressure. Karen Suyama: I've enjoyed going to the qigong classes. Low impact, and it lets me focus on muscle and joint movements that have helped and increased my range of motion.

JoAnn Rogers: Enjoying the class and the benefits this provides. The instructor is easy to follow, movements are slow and you do them at your own pace.

Jerry Tahira: The exercises loosen me up.

Nancy Minamide: Qigong is good for improving my balance.

Judy Tokubo: Enjoying the class and the benefits this provides. The instructor is easy to follow, movements are slow and you do them at your own pace.

George Nakamura: I like the class. It's good exercise; just right!

Karen Fujii: After doing the qigong exercises, my muscles are relaxed, and I am less stressed. Doing qigong lowers

Come join us!



Many qigong exercises can be done sitting or standing. Some must be done standing. All are done in coordination with one's own rate of breathing.



## MARCH EVENTS

5th SUN	SHOTSUKI HOYO
12 <sup>TH</sup> SUN	<i>BCA 850/800 SERVICE AT PALO ALTO BUDDHIST TEMPLE; 10:00AM</i> DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS; SET CLOCKS ONE HOUR FORWARD
19 <sup>TH</sup> SUN	FAMILY SERVICE
20 <sup>th</sup> MON	SPRING EQUINOX
26 <sup>TH</sup> SUN	SPRING OHIGAN SERVICE; DHARMA SCHOOL
<b>ALL SUNDAY SERVICES START AT 10:00 AM</b> Meeting ID: 818 7869 6300 PASSCODE: 549504	