



## A Happy New Year

by Rimban Katsuya Kusunoki

I wish you a happy new year. I would like to walk the path of Namoamidabutsu each single day in 2019, as well.

It is my second time to welcome a new year in Seattle. I still feel cold in Seattle because I have lived in warm areas most of my life. Since I came here I've bought a winter coat, a pair of gloves, a hat, and a pair of feathered slippers to keep myself warm. Before, I used to think, "Who wears this kind of slippers?" But now, I wear them every day. I am getting used to living in Seattle. I am getting settled down to serve the Betsuin. In 2019, I will try my best to keep the Betsuin active and a comfortable place for the Sangha. I will also work hard on spreading Buddha Dharma in 2019!

Thirty-one of us traveled to Japan from November 19 to December 1 in 2018. We visited Tokyo, Nagasaki, Fukuoka, Onomichi, Uwajima, Dogo Onsen (Hot Spring), and Kyoto. We visited Tsukiji Hongwanji in Tokyo and our mother temple, Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto. We also visited Arita pottery and porcelain in Saga, Uwajima Fish cake factory in Ehime, and Gekkeikan Sake factory in Kyoto. We enjoyed tasting all food and drinks as well as visiting these places. In Onomichi; we visited Rev. Kakahara's home temple, Eishoji temple. Rev. Kakahara



had served as the resident minister of Tacoma Buddhist Temple until December 31, 2017. When we attended morning service at the Hongwanji in Kyoto, we met Rev. and Mrs. Ogui who reside in Kyoto now. We also met Rev. and Mrs. Yukawa from Tacoma who were visiting Rev and Mrs. Ogui. In my



hometown Nagasaki we went to the Nagasaki China Town for dinner with my family and my wife's family. My wife's parents took us to a Karaoke bar afterwards. We also attended my family's temple Kōgenji's Sunday Service. We chanted a Sutra together and greeted the Amida Buddha at the Kōgenji Temple. After that,

there was some entertainment programs. We showed a slideshow to introduce the Seattle Betsuin's activities, sang two English gathas (Nembutsu, Bodhi Tree), and danced one Obon dance, "electric slide". A lot of Kōgenji members also joined and danced together. The Kōgenji temple members also entertained us. My nieces danced a traditional Japanese dance. The Kōgenji BWA members introduced a Japanese folktale "UGUME NO YUREI" (The Motherly Ghost). The Dharma School Students performed the Dragon dance. Some of our



tour members also tried to perform the dragon dance. At the end, they served us *udon* noodles, curry rice, *oden*, etc for our lunch. We really enjoyed these fun times. The entire tour was very enjoyable and meaningful. Please ask the tour members how we enjoyed the tour. Now, I would like to introduce a Dharma message which my older brother gave both in English and Japanese on that day.

**Dharma Talk 11/25/2018 by Rev. Naoya Kusunoki:**  
*Welcome to Japan. Welcome to Nagasaki. And, Welcome to Kōgenji temple. I am Rev. Naoya Kusunoki. I am the 17<sup>th</sup> resident minister of Kōgenji temple. Our sangha and I are really happy to see all of you today. This temple is about 385 years old. During the past years, resident ministers have made an effort to keep the Nembutsu (Namoamidabutsu) here. In the history of 385 years, A Japanese folk tale "UGUME NO YUREI (The Motherly Ghost) has been told at this temple. Our temple members will tell you this story later using picture cards. Let me introduce to you a parable story.*

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A man lived in a village on a mountain. He went to visit a city and later, met his friend who lived near the ocean. They talked, and after a while, they started arguing.

The man who lived on a mountain said, "The sun rises from the mountain and sets into the mountain, right?"

His friend who lived near the ocean said, "No! You are wrong! The sun rises from the ocean and sets into the ocean doesn't it?"

They argued about where the sun rises from and where the sun sets to.

Another friend who lived in a city came and said, "No! You are both wrong. The sun rises from a high building and sets into a high building."

All three people had different ideas of where the sun rises from and sets to because they all lived in different locations. However, there is only one sun. They all talked about the same sun. Wherever the sun rises, the sun provides us warmth and brightness.

Japan and the U.S. are different countries. However, we all receive the same Nembutsu, (Namoamidabutsu). We together appreciate the Amida Buddha's great compassion.

Gassho,

Thank you, Mae, Joan, Kemi, Yukio, for sharing your various Japan journey photos posted in this newsletter.





# Dharma School News

submitted by Joyce Tsuji

A delicious Bodhi day potluck was chaired by Dharma School parents. We would like to express our gratitude to all who made contributions to this event.

## Classroom Reports

PreK/Kindergarten Class The Pre K/Kindergarten class heard the story "Bear Says Thanks". They talked about what they were thankful for and to remember the things that they are grateful for, they made a "Thankful Tree". The leaves indicated things that they were thankful for.

In observance of Bodhi Day – the day that the Buddha became enlightened, the children made a Bodhi Tree Ornament.

In continuation of understanding and learning about gratitude, the children listened to the book "Thanks, Learning to Appreciate Gratitude for Children". They talked about all the many things they are grateful for. They colored pictures of things they are thankful for, cut up the pictures, and put them in their own "Gratitude Can" to remember how fortunate they are.

The Pre-K/K class listened to the book Amida's ABCs by Rev. Diane Johnson. They talked about the Three Treasures and how they are interconnected. Following the discussion, the students colored pictures representing each of the Three Treasures and glued them to a diagram showing how they interconnect.

1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade We discussed being thankful for Thanksgiving, read the book "Thank you Thanksgiving", decorated a pumpkin with Thanksgiving stickers and wrote what we are thankful for in our thank you books. We also talked about interconnectedness from the Golden Chain and had the kids think of things they were connected to. This is a big word in Buddhism and not an easy concept to grasp. We will continue to define words to make sure the students understand them.

Then for Bodhi Day we read about the Enlightenment of Siddhartha. The class made a Bodhi tree from their handprint with him seated under it. You can see these in the upstairs hallway.

Finally, the kids also made a 2019 calendar with an origami pig face on it.

# SAVE THE DATE



Guest speaker - Gregg Krech of the Todo Institute, will present *Naikan - the process of inner reflection*.

For more information contact Jill at [2019fdstlconference@gmail.com](mailto:2019fdstlconference@gmail.com).

8-17-18

