Many times people ask, “What is the practice of Shin Buddhists?” “You emphasize listening? That’s it? Our religion emphasizes that too! That’s all you guys do”? There are many ways to answer these questions but one straightforward answer is simply that we live in gratitude. In the busy lives that we lead, we find ways to live in gratitude and appreciation. While we listen to the nembutsu teaching, we then go about our lives finding things to be grateful about. This is the practice of the nembutsu path.

To explain this a little bit more, in Buddhism there are the three marks. These three are: 1. life is impermanent, 2. there is no static or substantial self, 3. nirvana is tranquility, the final step. When we as Shin Buddhists live in gratitude, I believe we come to understand these three points intimately. Concerning the first point, when we truly become grateful of our lives, we start to see and appreciate that what we are grateful for does not last forever.

Next, when we become grateful we then see that our lives, the bodies that we have, the things that we think, say, and do, are inextricably linked to those around us and the outside world. We affect and are affected by the people and world around us. In addition, we are not guaranteed life, nor should we expect and feel entitled to the things we have in this life. We become grateful and humble in our acceptance to be with the people around us, to have the things that we do, and to live this precious opportunity.

Finally, when we become grateful in our lives, we eventually start to see that this life was in fact, worth living. When we think about it, what is nirvana? What is Pure Land? Is it a place? Or is it a process? Is it a working, a development, a transformation? One possible way we can interpret nirvana is that it is the transformation of
this life of suffering to one of happiness; the changing of our state from one of egocentricity to that of humble gratitude; the development of our ability to see that our life is embedded in the Pure Land. This understanding culminates in completion at the close of our physical lives. What was once our young and immature eyes that could not stand to see the shining brilliance of everything in this world, finally become strong enough to see that the Pure Land and this world are, in fact, one. Gratitude then, along with listening to the guidance of the Buddha’s teachings, develops our eyes to become strong enough to stand the shining brilliance of all life.

Is this not a teaching that is deep, profound, and worth being a part of because it teaches us to see the world in this way? It is a teaching in which we gratefully understand that those who lost their lives in World War I, the people who tragically lost their lives at the Tree of Life synagogue and recently at the bar in the city of Thousand Oaks, are all shining and embraced in Amida’s Great Compassion. The nembutsu path is grounded in absolute reality and provides profound meaning for our lives. We come to this understanding by living in gratitude. This is our Shin Buddhist path of practice.
たは「お浄土」とは苦悩の世界から慶びの世界への変化、自己中心的な考え方から謙虚で感謝の気持ちとなる変化、あるいはこの苦しみの世界がお浄土そのものに包まれていることが分かるようになってくるという変化のことであります。人生すべてのものが輝いていることを見ることのできなかった今までの弱い未熟の目が、やっとお浄土と娑婆の世界が実に一つであったことが見えるようになるのであります。仏法を聞く中で、感謝で生きていく中で、この世の全てが輝いていることが分かるのであります。

このような世界の見方が、お念仏という深い教えであります。これより勝れた人生の見方はあるのでしょうか？この教えによってこそ最近のニュースで言われているように100周年を迎えた第一次世界大戦で命を失った方々、またピッツバーグ市にあるシナゴーグで無念に命を落とした方々やサーザンド・オークス市にある飲食店などで起きた乱射事件で命を奪われた方々を通じて、皆が阿弥陀仏の大慈悲に抱かれていかなければならないということが分かるのであります。念仏の道は真実の世界に基づき、私たちに深い意義を与えるのであります。このことにむすびつけてくださるのは、感謝に生きることであります。これが真宗における行であります。

Future Schedule

(Sun) December 2
Bodhi Day Service with Potluck, Service at 3 PM
General Meeting @ 1PM

(Sun) December 16
Family Service @ 10 AM, Coffee Hour to follow

(Sun) December 23
Family Service & Temple Clean-up @ 10 AM

(Sun) December 30
Family Service @ 10 AM

(Mon) December 31
Year End Service @ 7 PM, soba (buckwheat noodles) after service

(Tues) January 1
New Year’s Day Service @ 10 AM

(Sun) January 6
Temple New Year’s Installation Service and Party @ 10 AM

President’s Message

My Last President’s message……Final Thoughts

I knew Fall was going to whiz by quickly……and here we are, almost December, and only four weeks left as your president 😊 and a lot of work still to get done 😞.

I recently visited one of our elders, Toyo Nakagawara who was a very active member of the
temple for many years and regularly attended Sunday services for as long as she could. Mobility problems caused her to stop coming to temple for the past couple of years. We see this happen so often as our elder members slowly disappear from the usual life of the temple. Like other elderly temple members I’ve visited, she always expresses happiness and gratitude for being remembered.

I have such great respect and gratitude to Toyo and other elder members who worked so hard in order for us to have what we get to enjoy and experience today.

We all want to see a future that includes a thriving temple. For a long time now, I’ve asked “How do we honor and respect our temple’s important history and the generations of people who built and sustained it, and at the same time grow and develop into the future?”

An example of honoring the past has been our involvement with other community groups and activities involving the history of this area and temple – Day of Remembrance events, Walking Tours of Tacoma’s Nihonmachi (Japan town), working with local writers to support their research and work on an essay on TBT history, and supporting historical organizations that work on archiving and preserving history.

**Answering how we move into the future is more difficult.** Change is always challenging and difficult despite our core belief in impermanence. We are a community whose way of doing and looking at things has been rooted in our culture, religion and community history. We know that life is a balance of holding on and letting go. What do we hold on to and what do we let go? In a community that values harmony, how do we lessen the disharmony that inevitably comes with change?

I’ve raised some hard questions over the past two years that have been on the back burner for a while. These questions ask us to look at what we do, how we do it, and what we expect of our members. Is how we currently do things sustainable? I think not.

I should clarify at this point that what I’m expressing is not reflective of Board opinion but rather my own personal beliefs after being a member for over 15 years, taking a leadership role in some of fundraising events, being an event worker bee, doing special projects around the temple, and lastly, serving as your president for the past two years during a period of many changes. I know that some members disagree with me. But I also know that while we have different opinions on how to move forward, we all have the future of the temple at heart.

Over the past two years, I’ve had to talk out of both sides of my mouth. On one hand, I’ve written President’s messages about members being the caretakers of the temple; about volunteering to serve on the Board; and asked countless individual members to take on specific tasks and responsibilities. I’ve made the argument for members to volunteer more.

There’s always the belief that “some people just need to step up more,” and volunteering is a matter of just making the time to do so. Yes, there are always some members who could do more but for the most part, I believe that most members truly understand that our involvement and work are needed to keep our temple operating.

Earlier this year, I did an informal assessment of member engagement and level of volunteerism at the temple. The information below was shared at a Board meeting. It does not take into account what we expect most members to do- volunteer to help prep and day of our major fundraising events and does not include the responsibilities and tasks some of our women members do for the BWA.

**Level of involvement for members 80 years old and younger:**

- 20% have multiple, major responsibilities (serving on the Board, other ongoing major temple job)
- 20% have major responsibility and also carry out multiple other tasks/jobs
- 7% carry out multiple tasks and jobs
- 18% will volunteer to do specific one-time tasks, etc.
Overall, 65% of members are involved beyond just showing up to help at fundraisers. The common wisdom for most volunteer non-profit organizations is that a very small group does most of the work. We benefit from a very high rate of member involvement.

We also have an aging membership. Here’s age data for our current membership of 137.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>80 &amp; older</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>40-59</td>
<td>39%</td>
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<td>20-39</td>
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Total members 60 and older = 68%

Temple membership numbers:
- 2000: 171 members
- 2005: 161 members
- 2015: 143 members
- Current: 137 members

With an aging membership and a pretty high level of general member involvement, I don’t believe that it is reasonable to expect our members to continue carrying the work load of running the temple as we currently do things. While we have deep gratitude to our Issei (first generation) and Nisei (second generation) founders, we (including younger generation members and newer members) don’t necessarily see ourselves devoting the same amount of time, energy and sacrifice that our parents and grandparents modeled for us in their work for the temple. Up until just recently, many of our temple jobs were done by members who assumed them as a lifetime responsibility. There used to be a half-serious joke about “be careful what you volunteer for because it might be for the rest of your life!” That was great for continuity and getting the job done. However, as older members step down from long term responsibilities, these jobs are now filled with the understanding that “it won’t be forever.”

So, on the other side of my mouth, I’ve repeatedly asked that we take a serious look at what and how much we ask our members to do. I’ve asked this regarding our work as a Board and of how we do our major events. We need to take care of our members. We’ve done this in small ways: for example, with the re-evaluation of Board work and redistributing some of the work. There has also been discussion of a plan to create a new position of temple Administrative/Office Assistant. This position could help a great deal with supporting some of the work of the Board. It would also provide for continuity and consistency for some temple operations, which is always a problem with an all-volunteer organization. We should continue to look for other sources of revenue so that we are not so dependent on our fundraising events which tend to drive the work of the temple all year round. Members need to be freed up from some of the usual work so that we can have the time and energy to work on programs and initiatives more focused on raising membership and meeting the needs of a more diverse membership.

It’s a challenging time. All religious organizations are faced with similar issues. And my hope is that we continue to ask these questions which I think are important in moving forward to assure our future.

Lastly, and most importantly…..THANK YOU, to all of you and what you do to help keep this temple going. And, thank you to my husband, Henry Stoll, who put off our retirement plans for two years so I could do this job and who should have heard more frequently, “Thanks for putting up with me!”

Wendy Hamai

I love Thanksgiving – the family time, the smell of turkey, and a time to reflect upon everyone who I appreciate and am grateful. Makes me stop and think…..and smile.
Still consider your attendance to the 16th World Buddhist Women’s Conference “Live the Nembutsu” August 30 – September 1, 2019 in San Francisco. See me for more information. Our Food and Clothing Drive ends December 2nd. Thank you to everyone’s generous donations.

It was a fun time working with Kaila and Kenzo, Kate and Emma, and Rio and Kalea making the Kuri Manju for Bazaar. It is very important to keep Grandma Rose Kishi’s contribution to the Bazaar Bake Sale alive and ongoing. Many BWA ladies and non-BWA ladies helped teach how to make the manju. We are considering other cooking ideas next year. Suggestions are always welcome.

The Northwest Buddhist Convention will be on February 15-17, 2019. If you intend to attend, please contact Donna Sasaki who will be registering our BWA ladies. BWA will supplement each BWA member $50 towards their registration.

It is final!!! Dean Allen’s Catering will provide our lunch on January 27th, 2019 for our annual New Year’s Celebration. January-February-March 2018 Toban is in charge.

Donna Sasaki, Martha Tamaki, Yasuko Morita, Kazuko Inoue, Rev. Miyaji, Keisai, Shizuka Farai and I attended the luncheon at the Emerald Queen Buffet in Fife. It was a chatty group of over twenty ladies and Rev. and Mrs. Warrick – lots of laughter and lots of good food. It’s nice to converse with other BWA gals from other temples outside the ‘Convention’ atmosphere. It was fun and filling!

BWA sends our condolences to the families of Herb Saito and Toshie Fujita. Toshie was a long time BWA member and past president. Both Herb and Toshie will be missed by the Temple and friends.

I am still open to any suggestions for a Bus Trip for next year. Please share your thoughts with me when you can.

Thank you BWA members and non-BWA members who help with food, time and support in all of our BWA activities. You are so appreciated!

**Save these dates:**
Jan. 27, 2019  BWA New Year’s Party  
Feb. 15-17, 2019  NW Buddhist Convention at the Doubletree, Tukwila  
Aug. 30-Sept. 1, 2019  World BWA Conference in San Francisco

Gassho,  
June Akita
Dharma School students and families did a great job volunteering at the annual Fall Bazaar, thank you everyone! Part of the funds raised goes toward Dharma School.

Mark your calendars for June Akita's annual gingerbread house making. Families, please bring a bag of candy to decorate the houses. Jan 6th is the Temple New Year's party. As usual we will have a talent show, and we encourage students to participate! In previous years, talent has mostly focused on music, and this year we want to expand to other talents as well. There will be a sign-up sheet in the foyer.

In gassho,
Merilee Tanbara

Happy December, hope everyone had an amazing Thanksgiving and as the weather gets colder, winter and the holiday season approaches. Thank you everyone for helping out at this year's Bazaar. It was so nice to see everyone working hard or eating the delicious food.

Upcoming we have the Bodhi Day service conducted by the Lotus Class. We hope everyone can make it as we have worked hard to learn to conduct a service and display it on the onaijin.

Thank you and gassho,
Ryan Ling

This has been another busy year for the Buddhist Education Committee! In January, we said goodbye to Rev. Kakihara and his family and welcomed Rev. Takashi Miyaji and his wife, Kaori and son Keisai.

Here are some of our highlights of 2018:

- In June, we had our Interfaith Lecture with Marit Trelstand, Chair of Lutheran Studies at PLU and Rev. Miyaji who had a joint talk comparing Shinran Shonen & Martin Luther.
- Temple members helped man the booth at the Chinese Moon Festival in September, handing out information about our temple.
- We had our Spring & Fall Seminars with speakers Rev. Candice Shibata & Rev. Yuki Sugahara, respectively.
Kenzo Yoshitomi join our group!
We brought back Movie Night this fall, watching the movie “Coco” in October.
We continue to have our Buddhist Book Club at King’s Books once a month, which has grown to having regular attendees, with a mixture of temple members and non-members.

With 2018 coming to an end, we have begun planning for next year’s Sunday services as well as guest speakers for our seminars. We will also be tweaking or overhauling our Sunday service format – stay tuned! Thank you everyone for supporting our seminars and lectures. If you have any suggestions of speakers or topics, please let us know. Anyone is welcome to sit in on our monthly meetings and we look forward to 2019!

BEC Committee Members are: Rev. Miyaji, Fred Pelger (Chairperson), Donna Sasaki, Patti Wong, Lynrae Hubbell, Erik Hammerstrom & Kenzo Yoshitomi.

Lynrae

December Toban News

Please note that the toban groups will be switching months in 2019 and new toban chairs will be named. A complete list will be available soon.

General Clean Up: ALL MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO HELP December 23rd

All toban Chairs:
Initiate e-mail/phone tree for our Bodhi Day potluck on December 2nd. (1-salad, 1-dessert, rest-main dish per toban group).
Please e-mail/call your group and remind them of the following dates:

- Bodhi Day Potluck/General Meeting, December 2nd
  - General meeting 1 p.m.
  - Service (Lead by YBA) 3 p.m.
  - DS program 4 p.m.
  - Potluck dinner after DS program

- General Temple Clean Up, December 23rd

- New Year’s Eve Service, December 31 at 7 PM
- New Year’s service and party, January 6, 2019
  - Service/installation 10 a.m.
  - New Year Program 11 a.m.
  - Lunch 12 noon
We will be utilizing the online sign-up system for bento/KFC orders.
Cost: $15 bento for members
      $20 bento for non-members
      $20 additional bento
      $5 KFC for members or members’ children
      $8 KFC for non-members

December and November 2018 Toban Groups:
Toban chairs are responsible to call group members for set up and clean up for certain Temple events held during the two month period. The chairs for each two month period will coordinate with each other to set up the dates of the monthly clean-up for those able in their group. Please let Merlaine Cook know the clean-up dates to check for other activity conflicts and to add to Temple calendar.

December Toban Group: June and Jerry Akita (chairs)
Aimee Hamilton & Erik Hammerstrom
Phone tree members:
- Miyo Kanda
- Erin Shen
- Sam Shimizu
- Tom Shimizu
- Tets and Martha Tamaki

**November Toban Group:**

**November Group Responsibilities:**
- Monthly clean-up for December

**December Group Responsibilities:**
- Monthly clean-up for December (December chair to coordinate)
- Dust and vacuum pews in Hondo

**January Toban Group:**
Henry Stoll and Wendy Hamai (chairs)
Kenji Stoll
Bob and Anita Nakayama
John and Emiko Kurata
Riu Pittman
Victoria Evert
Michiko Saito

Phone tree members:
- Leroy and Penny Kawaguchi
- Sam Uchiyama

**January Group Responsibilities:**
- Monthly clean-up for January and February (January chair to coordinate)
- New Year Service & Party: Help set up and serve; order and pick up Kentucky Fried Chicken meals

Dharma School recognized Ted Tamaki for his many years of service.

**Phone tree members:**
- Bob and Vicki Yoshioka
- Carrie Mori
- Bob Potasky
- Todd and Marsha Nakamura
- Danny Otsuka

- Patti Wong
- Phone tree members:
  - Kim and Cindy Nakamura
  - Tom Osaka

- Ho-onko Service: Make Ozenzai (with BWA assistance). Set up and clean up. Provide tea and snacks for Saturday lecture if requested
• Sukiyaki: Make lunch on Sunday prior to Sukiyaki

Coffee Hour

Dec. 16 after service

Any help with refreshments would be greatly appreciated.

Please email Diane at dtaniguchi@pedsnw.net
Even though the future of dirty fossil fuels looks dicey, coal companies don’t have
to worry about going out of business. Mrs. Clause, the North Pole’s prime arbiter of culinary
policy, seems to be mighty prolific in producing lumps of coal for her hubby. Concerned about
Santa’s hefty girth cookies are officially verboten for the rotund man in red. Since Christmas
cookies are a longstanding tradition the Clauses deemed it wouldn’t be too practical to expect
people to leave plates of rice crackers. Therefore, the Cookie Monster has been hired to
consume all those delicious cookies. Unfortunately, the Cookie Monster, far from being a dainty
eater, spews crumbs a radius of 20 feet. A couple of elves, who are expected to be sloshed on eggnog, will be
riding along to clean up after that cookie chompin’ buzzsaw. So, leaving hangover cures with the cookies will
be much appreciated.

In hopes of saving time the facilities committee inquired into a rejected Sesame Street puppet to trim a
Wisteria tree. -The Thrasher. Armed with a sickle and chainsaw the Thrasher was purported to make good
work of any gardening job. But, the “humble” Sesame Street wannabe left something off his resume. It seems
that vast stretches of deforestation have his fingerprints all over them. Instead, Tom Hubbell’s employed his
deft hand to trim the Wisteria Tree. Thanks Tom.

By the time you have read this article I should have received the new privacy door lever for the social
hall bathroom. Since there is no guarantee that yours truly won’t muck up the installation Plan B has been
developed. In the event you find a gaping hole where the door lever is supposed to be execute the following.
There will be a sign hanging on a string. If the bathroom is unoccupied the sign will state, “Your Ceramic
Fiefdom Awaits” You may enter but must flip the sign around prior to opening the door. Conversely, if the
restroom is in use the sign will be flipped around and will direct, “Don’t Even Think About It” A cinder block will
be available to block the door from the inside while you partake of the facilities.

Jeff Hiroo and Fred Pelger continue their weekly efforts to evict those pesky pieces dirt and debris.
Mike Shiogi, David Yotsuuye, Gary Ichinaga, Tom Hubbell, Tony Gregg, Rick Tanabe, and Del Sasaki provide
their resourcefulness and drive to Facilities. Additionally, Bob Yoshioka and Tad Kajimura are invaluable team
members. Also, Kurt Osaka and Osaka Gardens continue to maintain the beauty of the temple landscape.

NY Party & Keiro Recognition
Sunday, January 6 after Installation Service at 10am

On-line registration at http://www.tacomabt.org
Or send check and order number (with names) to 1717 South Fawcett, Tacoma 98402
Member: Bento $15 Non-member: Bento $20.00
KFC $ 5 KFC $ 8.00

****IMPORTANT****
Members with email will need to register on-line or send check and order to temple office.
You will not be called for registration
Yearly Memorial Services

General Memorial Service Years for 2018

1st Year - 2017
3rd Year - 2016
7th Year - 2012
13th Year – 2006
17th Year - 2002
25th Year - 1994
33rd Year - 1986
50th Year - 1969

General Memorial Service Years for 2019

1st Year - 2018
3rd Year - 2017
7th Year - 2013
13th Year - 2007
17th Year - 2003
25th Year - 1995
33rd Year - 1987
50th Year - 1970

December 2018:

17th Year Kono, Shizuko Shakuni Myo-Jo December 30, 2002
33rd Year Kubo, Torao Shaku An-Ju December 12, 1986

January 2019:

7th Year Sasaki, Shigeru John Shaku Ji-Kai January 21, 2013
7th Year Murakami, George Shaku Myo-Butsu January 29, 2013
13th Year Sugimoto, Sarah Shakuni Tei-Ryo January 18, 2007
33rd Year Takehara, Yutaro Shaku Chi-Ken January 4, 1987

February 2019:

3rd Year Sugiyama, Yoshiko Shakuni Jun-Ki February 16, 2017
13th Year Masumoto, Mary Yoneko Shakuni Myo-ko February 9, 2007
Yoshida, Ben Shaku Ben-Nen February 26, 2007

Tacoma Buddhist Temple expresses its condolences to the families of

Mr. Herbert Isamu Saito

and

Mrs. Toshie Fujita

A private funeral/memorial service will be held for both individuals.

Their long-time commitment will not be forgotten. Thank you and we look forward to our continued relationship with you as you lovingly guide us from the Pure Land.

Namo Amida Butsu
Greeters Schedule

Note: Please have new visitors sign in their name and give them the following booklets;

- Temple Information Booklet
- Messages from the Buddha (mini booklet with pale pink cover)
- 1/2 page list of Temple activities
- "Want More Info." (1/2 sheet form)

If you are not available on the day you are assigned, please find your replacement.

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<td>Jane Burster &amp; David Campbell</td>
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<td>Denise Cline &amp; Merlaine Cook</td>
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<td>Wendy Hamai &amp; John Inge</td>
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<td>Del Sasaki &amp; Rick Tanabe</td>
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<td>Kevin &amp; Mayumi Ikeda</td>
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<td>Tracy &amp; Richard Ling</td>
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<td>Jill Case &amp; Jeff Hiroo</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jim Doyle &amp; Tony Gregg</td>
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Rev. Kojo’s succession service and ceremony becoming the resident minister of his home temple.

Fall Bazaar Bake Sale
### December 2018

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| GEN MTG 1 PM  
Bodhi Day Srv.  
at 3 PM, Potluck | | | | | | |
| 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  |
| Family Service  
D. Exchange 10am | | | | | | |
| 16 Board MTG  
Family Service  
D. Exchange 10am  
Coffee Hour | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| | MYOKYO DEADLINE | | | | | |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| Temple Clean-Up  
Family Service  
10:00 AM | | | | | | BWA Mochi Making |
| 30 | 31 | 1 | | | | |
| Family Service  
10:00 AM | Year End Srv at 7 PM | NYD Service at 10 AM |

### January 2019

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</tbody>
</table>
| NYD Service  
10:00 AM | | | | | | |
| 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  |
| Installation-Fam. Service 10 AM  
NY party/Keiro recognition | | | | Book Club  
King’s Books  
7:00 PM | | | |
| 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  |
| Hoonko Svc  
10:00 AM | | | | | | |
| 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  |
| Family Service  
Adult Service 10am | MYOKYO DEADLINE | | | | | |
| 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 31  | | |
| Family Service  
Adult Service  
BWA NY Lunch | | | | | | |
Rev. Kusunoki, Seattle, guest speaker at Eitaikyo service