The movie “Dr. Strange” is about a very talented, gifted and dedicated surgeon, renowned for his extraordinary skills. The doctor was also known for his temper, arrogance and demanding ego which caused much stress to others; until an auto accident completely damages his gifted hands which completely alters his life and limits his abilities. Without his hands, he is nobody. Determined to get his identity back, he learns of an average person who regained complete control of his body after a devastating accident. He seeks out this individual, and after their brief encounter his journey takes him to Nepal, to seek the Ancient One who may help him regain his skills and former life.

Nepal is a country north of India and one of the centers of Mahayana Buddhism. The schools of Buddhism practiced there are influenced by Tibetan Buddhism which is perhaps the oldest existing form of Buddhism. Even in these modern times, there still exits some mystic elements of Buddhism which come from this area and also often the source of movies of some supernatural or mystical nature.

Dr. Strange finally meets the Ancient One but is refused receiving practice because of his overwhelming ego and arrogance. The Ancient One recognizes the spiritual potentials and abilities within Dr. Strange to reach great heights in attaining his goals but is afraid that if a high level of self-control is achieved, it could be devastating to the world because of the doctor’s overwhelming ego. Another student requests the Ancient One to reconsider the decision; stating that the Ancient One was able to identify, rid, and destroy his own personal demons. The Ancient One replies that the teachings did not rid the student of his demons but allowed the student to live with them! The Ancient One’s statement hit home for me because this is what our teachings, Jodo Shinshu, are about.

“Demons” is the English translation for “mara” in Sanskrit. In Buddhism, these “demons/mara” hinder us from becoming enlightened and traps us in this world of constant suffering, samsara. In Japanese these negative elements are referred to as bonno or faults stemming from our own self-centeredness, ego.

The goal of Buddhism is to rid ourselves of these demons so that we can achieve enlightenment or spiritual freedom, and work towards the unselfish goal of relieving suffering for all. The uniqueness of Jodo Shinshu, and the genius of our founder Shinran Shonin’s teaching, is in helping us to live with our demons by awakening us to a deeper understanding of our own faults and limitations. By awakening to realize our imperfect self we begin to appreciate the love and concern of Amida Buddha. By relying upon the vow of Amida Buddha, which promises to free us from this world of constant suffering, our salvation is assured by looking deep within our limited self and rediscovering and accepting the “real persons” that we actually are; persons drowning in a deep ocean of suffering caused by personal attachments of greed, anger, and stupidity or ignorance. In Jodo Shinshu, shinjin or true entrusting, the key to our freedom from this world of suffering, is simply to entrust in the vows of the Buddha and call the name of the Buddha, Namu Amida Butsu. As humans, due to our imperfections and though we may try very hard with a sincere and earnest mind, it may be impossible to be free from our demons.

Cont. on p. 2
Amida Buddha symbolizes transcending from this world of demons to the world of bliss in the here and now. Not here to sell a movie but I found it very fascinating how the world views Buddhism. It makes me wonder if we’re missing out on something very fascinating and wonderful. Please, let us think about this matter together.

Namu Amida Butsu

Internment of Ashes at Cypress Hills

Our annual opening and internment of ashes into our Bussharito at Cypress Hills will be in May. Please contact our office ASAP if you have a request, questions, or for the date. Two very important documents are necessary; (1) a death certificate and (2) the original certificate of cremation. These two documents are required by the State Of New York. There will also be a fee for each urn interred and a request for our Eitaikyo Fund for the upkeep of the site.

The New York Buddhist Church office number is (212) 678-0305.

Myra Ikeda to Speak at Our May Shotsuki-hoyo

Myra Sachiko Ikeda, wife of Rev. Ikeda, has been asked to speak at our Shotsuki-hoyo in May. She is also author a book entitled, A Harvest of Hawai‘i Plantation Pidgin. “Her book is preserving a special language that was created by a cross culture of workers working on Hawaiian sugarcane plantations”, from the American Buddhist Study Center announcement of her presentation.

Please attend our May Shotsuki-hoyo to hear her speak.

Cooking Classes by Rev. Ikeda to Begin in April

The first in a series of cooking classes by Rev. Ikeda will begin on Saturday, April 15, from 10 am til12 noon. The class will be on Shojin Ryori, Monastic Cooking. The cost is $20 for NYBC members and $30 for non-members. Due to space limitations, the class will be limited to 10 persons on a first-first-served basis. Please contact the office at 212 678-0305 ASAP to reserve your space. Lunch will be provided after the class.

Students Invited to Apply for Stanley T. Okada Scholarship

For application forms or further information, please contact Gertrude Kihara, Keiko Ohtaka, or Nancy Okada. The application deadline is at the end of May.
煩悩（ぼんのう）と悪魔（あくま）
ニューヨーク仏教会住職 池田アール

親鸞聖人のお正信偈の中に「不斷煩悩得涅槃、ふだんぼんのうとくねはん、煩悩をだんぜずして涅槃を得るなり」とあります。人間の苦しみは自分の煩悩（欲、怒り、無明）によっておこります。煩悩はインドや西欧では、悪魔という言葉であらわれることがあります。

さて、最近見た映画「ストレンジ博士」は悪魔がコンセプトでした。そのことから、浄土真宗、一般仏教、この映画の悪魔（煩悩）について考えてみたいと思います。

まず映画についてお話します。映画の主人公はストレンジ博士という有能な外科医で、ごうまん、短気、自己中心の人物です。

博士は自動車事故で両手が動かなくなります。彼は外科医ですから、手が動かないと仕事ができません。手の機能を取り戻す方法をさがしましたが見つかりませんでした。

ある日、ストレンジ博士は一人の超能力者が体の機能を失った人の治療に成功したと聞いたので、その超能力者エイシェントワンに自分の手の治療をたのむため、ネパール国のカトマンズへ旅立ちます。

ネパールはインドの北部にある大乗仏教の国で、古いチベット仏教の影響を受けた神秘的な国です。

ストレンジ博士は超能力者エイシェントワンに会いましたが、彼の自尊心とわがままのため、治療をとどめました。また、その超能力者は博士の治療を成功させることができると考えました。しかし、ストレンジ博士の治療が成功したら、彼は悪魔のような能力を使って世界を破滅するかもしれないと思い、治療を見合わせました。

超能力者の下で勉強している学生がいました。その学生は、エイシェントワンに、彼の悪魔を取り除く治療を頼みました。その結果、学生は自分の悪魔を取り除きたいと思い、ストレンジ博士の悪魔も取り除くようにたのみました。超能力者はそれを聞いて学生の悪魔を取り除かなかったと話した。

悪魔はサンスクリット語では“マーラ”です。この映画の悪魔と日常語の煩悩は、同じ意味でしょう。

さて、一般仏教の教えは悟りのさまたげとなる煩悩を消して、悟（さとる）をめざします。しかし、浄土真宗は煩悩とともに生きる、煩悩のまま生きることです。エイシェントワンの考えは、人間は悪魔（煩悩）とともに生きる方が人間らしくて良いと思ったのでしょう。では、浄土真宗とエイシェントワンの教えは、両方とも煩悩（悪魔）を無くすることなく、煩悩とともに生きることですから、この二つは同じでしょうか。

浄土真宗の教えとエイシェントワンの考えは、同じではないと思います。親鸞聖人は煩悩を断たなくても良いとか、煩悩のままで良いと言っておられません。人間はどうしても煩悩をたから切ることができない悲しい存在。煩悩とともに生きていくしかない存在と、悲しみ、悲嘆されているのです。（浄土真宗聖典739ページ）

お正信偈の「不断煩悩得涅槃」は、親鸞聖人が私への深い悲しみを含んだご教示いただいている。

南無阿弥陀仏

(Trans. akemi ishida)
Shotsuki Hoyo Memorial Services Schedule for 2017

Shotsuki hoyo is a traditional monthly service to remember your loved ones who died during that month, particularly in the intervals listed below. The Memorial Service provides a way to express your gratitude and recognize their continuing influence in your life. To arrange a shotsuki hoyo memorial service, please talk to Rev. Earl Ikeda or one of our minister’s assistants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016... 1st Year</th>
<th>2015 ... 3rd Year</th>
<th>2011 ... 7th Year</th>
<th>2005 ... 13th Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001... 17th Year</td>
<td>1993 ... 25th Year</td>
<td>1985 ... 33rd Year</td>
<td>1968 ... 50th Year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The names of the persons we will be remembering this month and next are listed below.

**April 2017**

**Shotsuki Hoyo Service: Sunday, April 2**

Briceland, Penelope Warren 1994
Chen, Po-Shen 2005
Horiuchi, Yoshitaka 1991
Iizuka, Reiko 2010
Ikoma, Chiyoko 2005
Ikoma, Fumiko 1948
Kaneko, Seijuro 1948
Kikuchi, Chiyoko 2004
Kubo, Matsuye 2010
Magome, Shizu 1995
Matsukawa, Nabe 1994
Matsushita, Ryomen 1922
McCarthy, Joseph 2008
Mine, Seki 1973
Mitani, Chiyo 1973
Nishida, Tomihiro 1997
Sakioaka, Tomio 1995
Shih, Michael 2015
Suzuki, Hanako 1991
Takaishi, Mokichi 1975
Takayama, Yukiko, NA
Tominaga, Riro 1969
Unno, Hanako 1999
Wakuya, Ted Tadao 1988

**May 2017**

**Shotsuki Hoyo Service Sunday, May 7**

Aunt, Esme, NA
Dauber, Edna 1968
Fujita, Atsuku 1999
Fujita, Isamu 1996
Hino, Rev. Yoshio 1984
Horishige, Kaichi 1933
Ikoma, Fukutarou 1934
Ikoma, Kame 1953
Kamada, Jason 2005
Kamita, Yoshio 1990
Kan, June 2013
Kato, Kimi Hiratsuka 2005
Krippenberg, Rolf - Kai 2013
Kuchiba, Kaizo 2002
Kume, Susao 2000
Matsukawa, Toru 2013
Matsushita, Bunya 1944
Matsushita, David 1995
Matsushita, Hama 1946
Matsushita, Shogo 1936
Mr., Archie, NA
Mitani, Yoshikazu 2000
Miura, Judy Ayako 2001
Moribe, Ben Seikou 2001
Okada, Magoichi 1952
Okada, Robert 2006
Sakow, Bruce Hidemi 2009
Shimoda, Yukio 1981
Soeda, Toshio 1992
Suemura, Tosh 2013
Takeda, Hisafumi 1936
Tominaga, Toshiro 2000
Tsutsui, Akinosuke 1990
Uncle, Lang, NA
Washio, Peggy Chieko 1998

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**Kaoru Watanabe Concert April 2nd**

On Sunday, April 2 at 2 pm, Kaoru Watanabe, a Grammy nominated, Brooklyn-based composer and practitioner of the Taiko drum and shino-bue bamboo flutes will be performing at the NYBC. He is known for artfully combining traditional Japanese ritual and theater music with complex compositional and improvisational elements of jazz and other global music.

Kaoru was a performing member and Artistic director of the iconic Japanese taiko performing arts group KODO for close to a decade. Watanabe has collaborated with such luminaries as Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, McArthur Fellow Jason Moran, Japanese living Treasure Bando Tamasaburo, So Percussion and has created music for Martin Scorsese.

Master shinobue maker Ranjo has called Watanabe’s sound on the fue the “greatest inn the world.” http://www.watanabekaoru.com

This will be a unique concert experience. Bring your family and friends and come out to support the performing arts and the NYBC.

**Donations: $20.00**
This past February for 25 performances at the Medicine Show Theatre, Richard Gross acted in "Bound To Rise", an original play first put on in the early 1980's by the Medicine Show Theatre founded 1971 by Ms. Barbara Vann (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbara_Vann). It is based on the writings of Horatio Alger and Jacob Riis, from the mid- to late 1800's, depicting life in New York City in the 1880's. It contrasts the lives of the very rich and the very poor.

This is a musical, with beautiful songs composed by Robert Dennis which many NYBC members enjoyed! Richard, like most of the actors, portrayed numerous characters: a Hasidic New Yorker who has decided to leave the city and go out West to become a cowboy; a train conductor; a shopkeeper; a con-man who deservedly gets thrown in jail; a tramp who finds a trumpet in the trash; a pawnshop owner; a gambler who appeared -ot of the conman; two tenement dwellers; a very old newsboy; and finally, an Irish cop, "The first honest policeman in the city of New York!" He, also, played the banjo a couple of times in the production. Wow!

Richard has been a musician all his life, but started acting about 5 or 6 years ago. He was in a band, Fist Of Kindness, (http://fistofkindness.com/), that included a few theater people who put him in some of their productions and introduced him to Barbara Vann. Barbara assigned the part of the beggar in their production of "The Beggar's Opera". He acted and performed music for about 9 or 10 plays with her. She died in 2015, but he has since been in 3 shows.

After a grueling month of rehearsals and exhausting participation in this musical, he has been making electronic and ambient music, which can be heard, under various pseudonyms, on his netlabel: Suspicious Sound (https://archive.org/details/suspicioussoundnetlabel).

He has become the coordinator for the NYBC's Ukulele Strumming Circle, having taken the reins from Matthew Wise. We will now see him at the board meetings, too. It is so good to see Richard at church again.

In February, Myra Ikeda and Gertrude Kihara visited Epcot, Animal Kingdom, and the Magical Kingdom at Disney World in Florida. They stayed at a Disney resort hotel that had a ferry to take them to Disney Springs, a place for shopping, eating and entertainment. On a rainy day riding on a bumpy safari road in the Animal Kingdom, they saw live wild animals in their natural habitat. Gertrude appreciated the conservation objectives of that park. They ate at a restaurant that had Mickey Mouse characters and took photos with them. The day ended with dinner at the Rainforest Cafe, an apropos restaurant for the soggy weather.

Myra and Gertrude spent a day at the Universal Harry Potter Wizarding World which is divided into two parts: Diagon Alley/King's Cross station and Hogsmeade/Hogwart Castle. They went "through" the wall at King's Cross Station to arrive at platform 9 3/4 and rode the Hogwart Express to Hogsmeade. They drank both hot and cold butter beers as well as pumpkin juice. They saw children with interactive wands which were used to activate water fountains, lights, skeletons and other fun objects. Gertrude went on the Hogwart Castle ride which was exciting but got her so sick that it took her an hour to recover. The day ended with a Universal Studio Mardi Gras parade with them bringing home many beads thrown at them by the revelers.

Cont. on p. 6

Hanamatsuri and the Golden Chain: Note from the Editor

I have always thought of Hanamatsuri as one of the special services that children particularly enjoy. As a child, I looked forward to Hanamatsuri because of the fairytale-like story of the Buddha’s birth, the pouring of sweet tea over the baby Buddha in the Hanamido, and the Fujinkai’s (BWA) Hanamatsuri baskets made of crepe paper covered milk cartons, filled with candy that were given to the Sunday (Dharma) School children. This Hanamatsuri, the words of the Golden Chain, a frequent Dharma School Meditation reading seem especially relevant.

I am a link in Amida’s golden chain of love that stretches around the WORLD. I will keep my link bright and strong.

I will be kind and gentle to every living thing and protect all who are weaker than myself.

I will think pure and beautiful thoughts, say pure and beautiful words, and do pure and beautiful deeds.

May every link in Amida’s golden chain of love be bright and strong, and may we all attain perfect peace.

Hanamatsuri Service is on Sunday, April 9. Please bring your families and join the Sangha in celebrating the birthday of the Buddha. GMI
Soh Daiko was happy to be a part of the East Coast Taiko Conference hosted by Gendo Taiko, located at Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design. It was a fantastic gathering for taiko players coming from all over the East Coast, as well as special guests from LA, Hawaii, Brazil, and Japan (among other locations). Soh Daiko hosted workshops in stage presence and transitions, sharing our backstage knowledge with taiko players from groups young and old. We also performed Yudachi in the final concert, alongside so many other talented taiko musicians.

We utilized the opportunity to be around such talent by inviting two big taiko soloists to come give Soh Daiko workshops. Hase Mikita gave us drills and direction in improving our Odaiko technique, and Kenny Endo provided workshops on Edo Bayashi rhythms and his piece Symmetrical Soundscapes. It was an honor to be able to learn from both of these taiko masters, and we hope to see them again in the future!

After ECTC we have been preparing for our first full performance of the year, the Carnegie Neighborhood Series performance at Laguardia Performing Arts Center. Tickets are free, with details on our website, and they will go fast as the show approaches on March 25th. We hope to see you all there!

After Carnegie the Cherry Blossoms will start to bloom, and we will be performing all over New York for Sakura Matsuri. You can find us performing at Flushing Meadows Park (April 15th), Branch Brook Park (April 23rd), Roosevelt Island (April 29th) and Brooklyn Botanical Gardens (April 30th). Come find us! All performance details will be available on our website as they get closer.

www.sohdaiko.org
www.facebook.com/sohdaiko

The Magical Kingdom was their last full day. They enjoyed the many "no reservation" rides: Riverboat cruise, Tom Sawyer's raft to his island, the Tomorrowland's rail ride, and atop horses on the large merry-go-round. They also climbed the Swiss Family tree house, went to the Crystal Palace for lunch with the Winnie the Pooh characters and ended the day watching the fireworks display.

They found the food at the parks to be diverse, good and satisfying. Gertrude, the “Potterhead”, had never been to a Disney park or to Florida, but wants to go back to Orlando for another round of Harry Potter and Animal Kingdom. Myra is hoping to take the trip with her grandson, Elias, in the future.

Congratulations, Gail Inaba, on your recent retirement! Despite her busy schedule at work, Gail had been editor of the Kokoro and serving on the Board of Trustees. Now she will be able to enjoy more leisure time and hopefully, we will see her involved in more church events and activities, right Gail? (Editor’s note: We’ll see...)
Message from the BCA National Headquarters
March 15, 2017

Celebrating the Inauguration of Our New Gomonshu

Dear Sangha Member,

On June 6, 2014, Sokunyo Monshu Koshin Ohtani, 24th generation Monshu of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha retired. The Jodo Shinshu Tradition was transmitted to his eldest son, Sennyo Monshu Kojun Ohtani, who succeeded to the position of Jushoku, resident head priest of the Hongwanji, and 25th Monshu of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha institution. Sennyo Monshu follows in the footsteps of his predecessors to share the nembutsu teaching with all people.

Services to mark the Commemoration on the Accession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition began at the Hongwanji in Kyoto on October 1, 2016 and will conclude in May 2017. As part of this wonderful event, the Buddhist Churches of America would like present a celebratory gift to our new Monshu, Kojun Ohtani, as an expression of our joy and gratitude for the transfer of the Dharma torch and Shinran Shonin’s legacy to the next generation.

To support this celebratory gift, we are requesting a minimum individual contribution of $25, or $50 per family that will be personally presented to Gomonshu-sama by Bishop Umezu during the upcoming trip in late May 2017. Of course, any amount without limitation will be graciously accepted and presented to Gomonshu-sama.

We request that your celebratory gift be submitted and made payable to your local temple/church by May 1, 2017.

Thank you very much for your support and participation in celebrating this momentous occasion of our new Gomonshu.

Gassho,
/s/
Rev. Kodo Umezu, Bishop
Buddhist Churches of America
Ken Tanimoto, President
BCA National Board

February Board Highlights
By Cheryl Ikemiya

Isabelle Bernard and Nancy Okada were voted as NYBC representatives to the Eastern District Council meeting on April 21-23; Rev. Ikeda will attend as well.

Fundraising event: Saturday, October 14 was proposed as the date for a Fund for the Future fundraising lunch or dinner. The Committee will be Isabelle Bernard, Mariko Kato, Tony DiTomasso, Nancy Okada, Tony Armstrong and Yoriko Fujita Armstrong; Rev. Earl Ikeda as advisor. In addition they will ask Richard Gross, Mac Evans and Shintaro Higashi (KBI). The event will be at NYBC and not at an outside venue. (On 2/26 the Special Events Committee met and recommended that this be a luncheon and proposed a Hawaiian luau theme.)

Intro to Buddhism class – Tuesday March 7, 7:30-9:30 pm led by Gary Jaskula
Open to the Public Dharma Gathering – first Saturdays 10-11:30 am led by Rev. Earl Ikeda
Adult Buddhist Education – Saturday April 15, 11:00 am-12:30 pm focusing on Dr. Kenneth Tanaka’s book “Ocean” (3rd Saturday each month).

Monastic/vegetarian cooking – second Saturdays, beginning April 8th, from 10:00 am-12:00 noon led by Rev. Earl Ikeda; Suggested fee: $20 for members; $30 nonmembers
Kaoru Watanabe confirmed for performance on Sunday, April 2 at 2:00 pm; $20 donation will be suggested.

Gallery show of artist Kim Do is planned beginning June 9 (on 2nd floor, 331 front room); guidelines for usage of rooms to be set by Special Events Committee. https://thekimdo.jimdo.com/about-me/

Ukulele strumming circle’s new leader is Richard Gross. The group will continue meeting twice monthly and will play at Sunday Services, monthly.

Sonam Wangdi Bhutia from Nepal will visit on July 24-30. The Center for Buddhist Education will pay for travel, publicity, and his stay at NYBC. He will conduct Wednesday night meditation, an all-day seminar hosted by NYBC with lunch ($40 for members and $50 for nonmembers), and will deliver the Dharma message in both Japanese and English.
KOKORO
www.NewYorkBuddhistChurch.org
212-678-0305
Resident Minister: Rev. Earl Ikeda

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Articles and especially photographs are welcome and will be published subject to suitability of content and availability of space.

Send contributions to Kokoro Editors: Gail Inaba, ginaba@optonline.net and Mariko Kato at mkatony@hotmail.com.

Support the New York Buddhist Church. Please join as a pledged member.
Membership Forms are in the entrance to the Temple.

Deadline for submitting articles, information and photos for the May Issue of Kokoro is Saturday, April 15