



GOD OF LOSERS

John 20:24-29.

Professor Takuwa complained that we should take down the Cross of Christ from the wall of the university chapel in Fukuoka. You Christians have been looking at the Cross from the day you were born, so you have lost all your sensitivity to the brutality, the death convulsions, and the flies attracted by the smell of blood. Why should we Buddhists have to look at this ugly cross, just because you Christians have lost your sensibilities? Take that Cross down!

Protestants say Jesus rose from the dead. He is not on the Cross anymore. So Protestants have Crosses without Jesus on it. But the Catholic Cross has Jesus still on it. I love the Catholic Cross with Jesus still on it. For me the Cross has lost all its meaning if Jesus is not on it.

In our Bible passage, the resurrected Jesus shows his nail wounds in his hands and feet, and the spear wound in his side. That is, even after the resurrection, his injuries have not disappeared. The wounds and sufferings of Jesus are forever. They define who he is. They define our salvation.

God chose the Jewish slaves instead of their Egyptian slave masters. Have you noticed that our God is weird? Our God is the God of losers, not winners.

Sports Day at an elementary school in Japan. On your marks, get set, go! The students ran as fast as they could around the track. Then one student stumbled and fell. Guess what! Everybody stopped. They waited until the student stood up, brushed himself off and started running again. Why would everybody stop just because one student fell? Because it was a special school for students with disabilities. All students have been shamed, humiliated, and jeered all their lives because of their disabilities. When one student fell, they all forgot about winning. They automatically focused on the suffering of that one student. The world of losers is different from our world of winners.

Losers know that a God of winners cannot be trusted. A God of winners can take pity on a loser only temporarily. The compelling attention is on the champion winners. Losers know that dependable long term compassion comes only from a God of losers. Losers can only be a temporary distraction for a God of winners. Losers need a God who chooses Jewish slaves instead of their Egyptian slave masters. Jesus on the Cross means that our God is a God of Losers.

The Cross is Defeat. The Resurrection is Victory. But not the Victory of Victory. The Resurrection is the **Victory of Defeat!** Japanese say "***Makeru ga kachi***", winning by losing. The Cross as the symbol of our faith is a permanent reminder that our God is a God of Losers.

What an unbelievable symbol! A tortured man hanging on a Cross in his final death convulsions! God did not side with Jews because God likes Jews! God sided with Jews because they were oppressed. God did not oppose Egyptians because God hates Egyptians. God opposed Egyptians because at that time they were the oppressors. In the 21st century the roles may be reversed! Some 20 year ago a famous Jewish singer refused to sing the Israeli national anthem at a national celebration. She said, "**We have become Nazi!**" Some will not agree with her. But if God is not a **racist God**, and the Bible is not a **racist book** for Jewish supremacy, then we must agree that God protects **abused Losers**. What do you think?

1922 - 2017



Rev. Lloyd Keigo Wake

The Reverend Lloyd Keigo Wake died peacefully in San Francisco on December 27, 2017.

He is survived by his caring wife of 68 years, Marion Natsue Wake; devoted children Cathy Quides, Wesley Wake, Sandra Wake, and Steven Wake; eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, all of whom were touched by his love of fishing, camping, the San Francisco Giants, the Golden State Warriors and his patient and humble guidance. He is also survived by three sisters, Florence Nagano, Lillian Koda, Betty Machida, many in-laws, other relatives and family members.

Rev. Wake was born on January 12, 1922 in a four-room farmhouse in Reedley, California to Japanese immigrants Yempei and Hisayo Wake, the fifth of their eight children. While incarcerated in 1942-43 at Poston Camp II he was drawn to leadership roles among the Christian youth. Eventually he answered the call to the ministry, finishing two years at Asbury Seminary in Kentucky before returning to California to finish his studies at Berkeley Baptist Divinity school, marry Marion Yamabe and serve as student pastor at Berkeley Methodist United Church.

In 1950 he was appointed to be pastor of Pine United Methodist Church of San Francisco, known as the mother church of Japanese Methodism in the United States, where he served for 17 years. He and Marion devoted much time and energy to programs for children and youth.

In 1967 he was appointed Minister of Community Life at Glide Memorial Methodist Church. He immersed himself in the issues of the day: supporting and supervising the alternate service of 30 Conscientious Objectors; performing "Covenant Services" for gay, lesbian and transgender partners; supporting students and faculty during the Third World Strike at SF State.

During his 23 years at Glide he mentored and supported hundreds of community activists - always with kindness, humility and optimism. He helped establish the Asian Law Caucus, serving on its Board for 21 years and as chairperson from 1993-1997; chaired the Wendy Yoshimura Fair Trial Committee; was arrested for a sit-in protest against martial law in the Philippines; participated in human rights support trips to South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Okinawa; taught at the Pacific School of Religion; supported Redress and Reparations for Japanese and Japanese Americans incarcerated during WWII. Lloyd served as treasurer of CPAT (Council for Pacific Asian Theology) continually until his health declined.

His theological reflections explain his motivation:

"The only criterion for action is love. I hesitate to use that word because love has become so distorted. The opposite of love is not hate; it is aloofness, apathy, indifference. The love I am talking about is not a romantic love; it is a love that very often takes sides, that takes the side of the oppressed. It is a love that tears down evil systems so that it can build up people who have been dominated by and dehumanized by those systems."

"There are three ways in which men and women deal with their wounds. One is to cry, one is to be silent, another is to turn the pain into joy and healing. Blessed are the wounded who respond with the totality of their lives to bring health and healing and joy to all people."

A Celebration of Life was held at 4pm March 10, 2018 at Jones Memorial United Methodist Church, 1975 Post St, San Francisco, CA. All those whose lives were touched by Rev. Wake during his 70 years of community service and leadership in the San Francisco Bay Area were invited. [Mainly from the online Obituary SFGATE. Editor Yagi sincerely apologizes for the many months delay of this memorial notice]



A DEVOTIONAL AT HSI LAI TEMPLE REV. FREDERICK BRENIION, HIGASHI HONGANJI

Namu Amida Buddha, Namu Amida Buddha, Namu Amida Buddha.

Entrusting in the Primal Vow of the Buddha,
Calling out the Buddha-name that embraces you and me,
We shall pass together through this journey of life with joy and strength.

Revering the Light of the Buddha,
Reflecting upon our imperfect selves,
We shall proceed to live a life of gratitude.

Following the Teachings of the Buddha,
Listening to the Right Path,
We shall share the True Dharma with all.

Rejoicing in the Compassion of the Buddha,
Respecting and aiding all sentient beings,
We shall work towards the welfare of society and the world.

Therefore,

May all beings dwell in our hearts.
May all beings be free from suffering.
May all beings be healed.
May all beings be at peace.

May we become at all times, both now and forever,
A protector for those without protection,
A guide for those who have lost their way,
A ship for those who have oceans to cross,
A bridge for those with rivers to cross,
A sanctuary for those in danger,
A lamp for those without light,

A place of refuge for those without shelter,
And a servant to all in need.

For we who have received much, have much to give.
For it is in this, that we are grateful.

Namu Amida Buddha, Namu Amida Buddha,
Namu Amida Buddha.

I take refuge in the infinite compassion and wisdom of
awakening.

We know that Infinite compassion has and always will be
with us

We discover through this, the infinite levels of our
interconnectedness with all, and all with us.

This light of the Buddha's love cannot be hindered.
It reaches us into the depths of our own darkness,
transforming it into healing light.

Light that we can now then reflect to others.

I have come to know that I am not alone.
And I affirm to you that you are not alone.
We are in this together.

Let us be the light to brighten up this world together.

Namu Amida Buddha, Namu Amida Buddha,
Namu Amida Buddha.

Rev. Frederick Brenion was born in Santa Monica, CA. He graduated with a 2 year AA degree in philosophy from Los Angeles City College. He graduated also from Cal. State Northridge in Religious Studies, learning much about Paul Tillich. Fred got his Library Science Degree at USC. He ended his secular career of 34 years as the Patients' Librarian at a Patton State Hospital dealing with the criminally insane. Rev. Brenion was ordained as a Shin Buddhist minister, East Branch, April, 26, 2012. He is on the CPAT Board of Trustees.

Rev. Dr. Ken Fong



PRESS RELEASE

BIBLE AND CHURCH AS PHOTO OPP**Rev. Dr. Ken Fong**

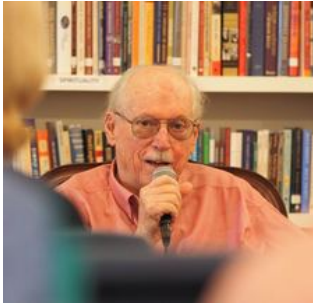
The rector of the DC church that Trump used on Monday, June 1st, to stage a photo opp is mystified that some Christians are outraged at his co-opting the sacred symbols of the Bible and the Church, yet most seem to be oblivious to the much greater historic and ongoing offense of The Church surrendering the life-giving power and hope of Christ's Good News so that governmental authorities and systems would bless The Church with the oppressive elements of power and influence that Jesus condemned.

My hope is that the upwelling of outrage that we are seeing today in support of **#BlackLivesMatter** is a sign that a majority of Americans—including Christians—are finally waking up to the inequalities and injustices that infect our culture, and demanding more from our elected leaders, our police forces, our religious leaders, ourselves, and so much more.

The Rev. Dr. Ken Uyeda Fong
 Senior Pastor of Evergreen Baptist Church of LA (Rosemead, CA) from 1996-2017.
 Founding Executive Director of the Asian American Center and Affiliate Associate
 Professor of Asian American Church Studies (2015-2019) at Fuller Theological
 Seminary. M.Div (Theology) and D.Min. (Church Growth) from Fuller Theological
 Seminary. Director, Host, and Co-producer of Asian America: The Ken Fong Podcast
www.aapodcast.com

**Rev. Gini Gerbasi (Rector),
 St. John's Episcopal Church, D.C.**

"If American Christianity is to embrace God's earthly reign and not empire, the church must be committed foremost to structural change. The power we must build is to exert unrelenting pressure such that all human beings — especially those whom Jesus referred to as 'the least of these' — have full access to quality health care and education, and can earn a living wage and afford safe housing. The reign of God is incomplete unless the prison industrial complex is abolished, fair tax structures are enacted, universal job training and employment opportunities are available equitably to all humans, our economy is one based on the value of what we produce with our labor rather than what we simply extract from others, retirement benefits are available to all seniors that allow a good quality of life and the earth is revered as God's creation. Are we bold enough to do that? That remains the question."



TRANSITION

BY REV. DR. WILLIAM MALCOMSON

I have seven things to say about life after death.

Number One: I think that in general that there is more that we don't know than what we do know. Thus, when people talk about life after death, I'm willing to entertain almost any possibility. After all, I don't know.

Number Two: As I wrote in a previous blog, Jesus visited me in my room when I was 19 or 20, so I'm not ruling out the possibility of meeting Jesus after I die. Since I believe that he asked me to follow him at that time, and I agreed to do so, it would be wonderful to hear some version of "well done, good and faithful servant."

Number Three: I don't think that we should rule out the importance of the New Testament version of the risen Christ. I believe that Jesus was felt to be present to his disciples after his death. I don't think that he was a reconstituted corpse, but a presence among them.

Number Four: I have read a lot of "near death" experiences, and I have some friends that have experienced this. These folks are called "flat-liners". They universally feel that after death or near death is a positive experience, usually involving light or heat and the appearance of dead relatives. I find their experience to be affirming and positive.

Number Five: I have experienced, in dream form, a visitation by my late first wife. By that I mean that I sensed in this dream that she was present and I could see her as if I saw a real person. I also know of a close relative, who when he experienced a life threatening surgery was visited in a dream by his mother who told him "not yet", meaning his time to die was not yet.

Number Six: As a Christian Buddhist, I should say something about Karma. I have also had trouble believing in Karma for a number of reasons. One is that Karma is based on strict cause and effect. That is something that I don't believe in. I also think that since good Karma is supposedly created by totally unselfish acts, that such acts are virtually impossible for us self-centered persons.

Number Seven: I do tend to believe that when we die, we enter into some kind of alternative existence. A transition, if you will. I feel the biggest hurdle with the idea of life after death is the body has died, whether buried in a vault or burned in cremation. Our bodies differentiate us from other people. Thus, in alternative existence, we might have a different kind of body, but still there would be a way of differentiating us from other beings.

I have no idea what this alternative existence will be like. It could be in a different place. With all different rules for living. Marcus Borg, used to write of the thin curtain that exists between us and another life. I think that he was probably right. But I'm not sure what that means. As I said in the beginning, I essentially don't know. But I don't rule out anything.

Please let me know what thinking you have done on this subject. (wmalcomson18@gmail.com)

Dr. William Malcomson is retired in Washington State. He was Dean of the American Baptist Seminary of the West, a founder of the School of Theology and Ministry of Seattle University, former President of the Council for Pacific Asian Theology, and former Theologian-in-Residence at Seattle First Baptist Church. He is blessed with two sons, one of whom is a Christian Buddhist, one daughter, and 5 grandchildren. Bill has a Ph.D. from Princeton in World Religions. **He recently suffered a stroke, 2/05/20.** We rejoice in his survival. We pray for his full recovery and his further ministry among us. The source of his wisdom is not religious logic, but experience—the joys and tears of the briar patch of life that is our real life journey. Many of us are his secret disciples. *DRYagi*

BEING HAPPY

Some say that “happiness is not **luck** in the gambles of life, but a **lifetime decision** you make.” Three of my closest friends have made such lifetime decisions, influenced by Zorba the Greek. They have decided to be happy every day for the rest of their lives, **no matter what!**

I have a problem beyond my control that brings on panic attacks some nights. I am condemned by my three retired friends—a pastor, a theologian, and a nun. Even a Buddhist priest argued that I should be happy (no matter what) by trusting faith, whether Christian or Buddhist. I have been struggling with this for the past eight years!!! No light matter for me.

Then I read something. A missionary lady in Turkey suffered through a major earthquake, a political revolution, a military coup, car bombs, and violent protest riots. She suffered PTSD [post traumatic stress disorder]. Try as she might, she could not throw off her depression and panic attacks. So she **embraced them** instead as her new path, as part of whom she had now become. She worked to control them so they would not control her.

That was so helpful to me. Instead of trying to escape my panic attacks, I can gradually work to control them. I know Psalm 23 and John 14:27 as spiritual resource that sometimes don't work. But **embracing the panic** is something I can learn to do with much prayer.

The Apostle Paul had a “**thorn in his flesh**” (2 Corinthians. 12:7) that he could not remove. He had to **embrace** it instead. So our pains sometimes will not disappear by spiritual magic. Rather, we have to live with them instead. “No pain, no gain.” With a new path of pain, there is also overflowing grace to cope. What do you think? I don't think Jesus was too happy dying on the Cross!!!

Dickson Kazuo Yagi

THE RIDDLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH

We don't know where we came from in birth.
And we don't know where we are going in death.
Everything we learned in becoming adults
gave us confidence and poise.

But these two mysteries of birth and death keeps everybody
humble when they come to the very end.

If we don't know our birth and we don't know our death,
we may question whether we know anything at all.

I am left with a fundamental conviction that is the anchor of my soul—

that I am a temple of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 6:19),
that every cell of my body is saturated with the Spirit of God.

That is, I am a part of God and God is a part of me.

Quakers say, “That of God in you; That of God in me.”

Theologians say, “Christ Within, Cosmic Christ.”

Buddhists say “Buddha Nature, Primordial Buddha (*Dharma-kaya*),
and Eternal Buddha (Kuon Butsu 久遠仏-Lotus Sutra).”

In the end, that is all I need to know. That is all I want to know.

When we finally awaken beyond death—surprise, surprise!

We will know the greatest riddle of the universe—

We will see who we really are!

What do you think?

DKYagi

RISSHŌ KŌSEIKAI, Boyle Heights
March 2019, Nikkei Interfaith Fellowship
Lotus Sutra (Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō)
A Simple Altar in contrast to Shin Buddhism
Central is the image of Gautama Buddha



On the far left is Head Pastor Rev. Hiroyasu Hosoyama, Rishshō Kōsei Kai.
At the center speaking is former interim pastor, Rev. Ken Nagata.
To his right is Rev. Kuni Ito, Tenrikyō; then Dickson Yagi
Further right is Rev. George Martzen, Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church, Alhambra.
Next right is Dr. Donald Braue, retired Prof. World Religions, Pilgrim Place.
Next is Ikuko Yuge, retired teacher of ancient Japanese music, UCLA., Tenrikyō.
Photo by Rev. Robert Yuge, Tenrikyō.

KONKŌ CHURCH, BOYLE HEIGHTS

Nikkei Interfaith Fellowship, January 30, 2020



Standing in the back: Rev. Alfred Tsuyuki, (Konkō Church, Boyle Heights; Head Minister of Konkō Church Denomination, Los Angeles.)

Left to Right: Doris Hasegawa, (Risshō Kōsei Kai). Carol Fujita, (Montebello UCC). Rev. Mitchell Young, (Pastor, Montebello UCC). Ikuko Yuge, (retired Japanese Music teacher at UCLA, Tenrikyō). Dickson Yagi. Dr. Don Braue, (retired Prof. of Religions, Pilgrim Place). Rev. Robert Yuge, (Tenrikyō).

Rev. Tsuyuki served us Otoso sweet sake for Japanese traditional blessing for the New Year.

A Mexican Christian Church also worships in these Shinto based facilities. When asked why they don't rent from a Christian Church, they said they like Alfred better. Model of interfaith brotherhood, magnetism of Alfred's faith.

WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE
San Luis Obispo Retreat
February 2020



Rev. Ken Yamada, the main speaker,
is in the 3rd or 4th row with an orange stole.

In the front row, extreme right with light trousers is our Pastor, Rev. Nobuko Miyoshi.
Two rows behind her with a white beard is Johnnie Martinez, President of W. Covina Temple.

D. Yagi is the 4th man from the extreme right.

Behind is Lee Ezaki, my motel roommate.

Every year he drives 3 of us and a pile of supplies in his wonderful van.



John Robert Lewis (February 21, 1940 – July 17, 2020)

We mourn the passing of a brave warrior in his lifelong battles for Black justice and equality. That is, Blacks rising from 400 years of slavery into a multiracial society that only now seems to awaken as their allies. John Lewis was recruited as a fearless young crusader by Martin Luther King, Jr., in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. He led the 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, leading a determined multitude of protestors crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The armed Alabama police waiting for them on the other side with batons, guns, and dogs unleashed all their rage, anger, and frustration. The resulting carnage became known as Bloody Sunday. John Lewis suffered a cracked skull. Of course, even before they started marching, they all knew that something ominous was about to happen. But they marched anyway.

During commemorative events in February 2013 in Montgomery, Congressman John Lewis accepted the apologies of Chief Kevin Murphy of the Montgomery Police Department. Murphy then gave Lewis his own badge, off his uniform, moving Lewis to tears. In a lifetime of standing for Black victims of prejudice and brutality, John Lewis was jailed at least 40 times, once for using a Whites Only restroom. We honor him today and all crusading warriors for human equality and justice. Fighting for justice anywhere is fighting for justice everywhere. *DRMagi*



Colin Kaepernick, Crusader of Blacks Against Police Brutality

Some Core Values of CPAT

#Black Lives Matter

Reform Police Brutality. (No choke holds, forbid no knock entries, no quasi police immunity, nat'l data base so convicted police cannot be hired in the next city, no shootings without body cameras, no rubber bullets, no political donations by police unions, no private prisons, social worker specialists replace police dealing with homeless and mentally ill.

Protecting Mother Earth, our only Space Ship

Keep the oil in the ground.
Stop the Keystone XL Pipeline.
Protect the Arctic Sanctuary from oil drilling.
Protect National Parks and Monuments (Trump Administration opened Bear Ears and Grand Staircase-Excalante to oil drilling, fracking, and mining, 2/10/20).

Gender Equality

Equality for LGBTQ. (Supreme Court ruled LGBTQ cannot be fired from work for being gay 6/20.)

Equal pay for equal work (US women's soccer?)

Citizenship for DACA.

(Supreme Court temporarily stopped DACA deportation 6/20).

America's Original Sins:

Stealing land from Native Americans by betraying treaties and genocide.

National economy built on 400 years of Black slave labor.

No Separation of Children from Refugee Parents on Southern Border.

Numerous large detention centers are being built to warehouse these children. These replicate WW2 concentration camps for Japanese Americans.

Racial Equality: No White Supremacy

No racial profiling by police stop-and-search (vs. Afro-Americans).
No infiltration of mosques by FBI, CIA, Homeland Security.
Equal pay for Blacks for equal work with Whites.
No mass incarceration of Afro-Americans through unfair drug laws.
(Rehabilitation instead of incarceration, fix drug laws.)

Freedom of Religion

Freedom for Uyghur Muslims in Xinjian Province.
Freedom for Tibetans in religion and politics.
Freedom for Rohingyas in Rakhine Province in Myanmar.
Equality for minority Muslims in oppressive Hindu dominant India.

Religions waging peace, instead of war.

Preemptive strikes as crimes against humanity. (Iraq invasion)
Nuclear Weapons, Biological Weapons, Chemical Weapons,
Neutron Bombs as Crimes Against Humanity.
Disarmament of Nuclear Weapons (No More Hiroshima-Nagasaki)
Religions networking for social justice in major cities (Jews, Muslims, Christians. Buddhists, Hindus).

Power to the People, democracy.

Priority of the Poor.

(Safety nets for the poor and vulnerable, Social Security, Medicare, food stamps, food banks)

No US Visa Bans against Muslim majority nations.

(Sudan, Tanzania, Eritrea, Myanmar, Kyrgyzstan, and Nigeria were added to the visa ban, in addition to the 7 previous Muslim nations. 2/05/20).

Anyone wishing to donate may use this address:

Council for Pacific Asian Theology
P. O. Box 7270, Alhambra, CA 91802

(Donations sent to Florence Nagano
or Dickson Yagi may get lost in the shuffle)

Anyone wishing to receive mailings of
Pacific Asian Vision
may send your e-address
to dkyagi@icloud.com
Subscriptions are free.

Dickson's e-address dyagi7@earthlink.net is terminated.
Continue using dkyagi@icloud.com
His phone number has changed. Use 909-788-7080 cell.

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