



It is Time to Reconstruct



For our Fall Higan program, we are going to depart from our traditional format to have a Zadankai or "sit and talk gathering". We have invited Rev. Patricia Usuki of the San Fernando Valley Buddhist Temple, Rev. Kojo Kakihara of the Los Angeles Hongwanji Betsuin, and myself to sit with other participants in a round to discuss and brainstorm two ideas. First, what is the whole point of Jodoshinshu Buddhism and why is there such wide differences of opinion about, especially among ministers? This inevitably comes to such questions as "Is the Pure Land a n actual place apart from this world or not? "If Amida Buddha is not an anthropomorphic creator-being, why is it referred to as if it were? Does Jodoshinshu believe in a soul that survives the physical body and goes upon death to be with other deceased souls? "If not, is birth in the Pure Land metaphorical. symbolic, poetic, or what?" Having spent the morning sessions in what Jodoshinshu is about, we would like to spend the afternoon sessions in "Based on what Jodoshinshu is all about, how do we create a temple atmosphere, programs, and ritual that will promote, teach, and enhance life of Nembutsu? Setting aside how we have done things in the past, we would like to begin with the idea that we have several hundred people interested n Jodoshinshu Buddhism and a ritual hall and classroom facilities. How should we set up an educational program? What should our ritual life be like? What should our social and cultural life be like? How are we like other religious traditions? How are we different from other religious traditions?

We would like to approach these topics in the most relaxed and participatory atmosphere we can. Please fill out the enclosed registration form which includes a bento lunch. At a time when the old formats for retreats, conferences, seminars, services, funerals, weddings, memorial services are becoming hard set, with fewer and fewer wanting to participate, it behooves us to sit down and openly discuss what we are, what we want to become, and where we want to go. Yoroshiku Onegaishimasu.

Gassho,

Rev. Mas