

Buddhism

Taylor Nishimoto (Dharma School Student)
(First presented at the Kauai Island Buddha Day Service, 2014)

The reason I first started going to church is because when I was in preschool, we would visit Reverend Kondo at the temple. I thought it would be fun to go one Sunday for a service, so I did. Ever since then, I've been going with my grandma, and I love it. Another thing that played a big role in me wanting to keep going to church is that the people were very welcoming and kind to me. They are like my second family. Even though I originally just wanted to see Reverend Kondo, it grew to something greater. I learned about the Buddha and much more. When Reverend Kondo said she was going to leave, I didn't know if I wanted to keep going to church, but she persuaded me to stay and meet Reverend Nozaki and his wife. I ended up loving them and I hoped that they would never leave. I would always go to church tired, but when I saw them, I immediately had a smile planted on my face. When they left, I never ever wanted to go back again. I started to cry because they were a part of me now. I never forgot how they looked and I write to the Nozakis every now and then. Now we have Reverend Nakamura. I am still going, so you can tell that he is a very good reverend.

I like the fact that everyone has an opportunity to do different things in the church like being the M.C. or ringing the kansho. We get to experience new things. For example, the Dharma School went to Honolulu for Peace Day and the Sadako Sasaki Dedication. We also went ice skating and shopping. I also like to go to Dharma School after the service and learn more about the Buddha as well as other projects we do in our computer class. Another thing that I love about going to the temple is hearing the dharma talks and meeting guest speakers.

Going to church has taught me to try my hardest to be kind and accepting of the world and its changes. Also, going to the temple has taught me that we are all one family. Everyone should try to be peaceful, and if everyone is peaceful, then life would be better because there would be no violence.

When I say I'm a Buddhist, I think of the way that I live my life.

Sometimes, when students tease others, I'll tell them that what they're saying isn't Buddhist-like. I try to follow the Golden Chain and be kind and gentle to every living thing. If I'm upset or angry, I try not to take it out on others. I make myself calm down by just sitting in my room and thinking.

Buddhism has played a huge role in my life. If I didn't meet Reverend Kondo, I wouldn't be here and I would have missed out on so many new experiences. I never would have learned about the Buddha or met so many new and kind people.

We celebrate Hanamatsuri on April 8 because it is Buddha's birthday, and it is his teachings that we follow. He is the reason we're here today.