With the continued establishment of temples, adapting to the new environment, one could argue, was achieved. However, with the advent of the Second World War circumstances surrounding Jodo Shinshu temples would yet again change with the signing of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942 by President Franklin Roosevelt. On April 6, 1944, while in the Topaz Relocation Center in Arizona, Jodo Shinshu temples reorganized themselves as the “Buddhist Churches of America,” and the articles of incorporation were filed with the State of California on May 2, 1944. Throughout this time, the importance of community was highlighted. Although these events could easily have isolated Jodo Shinshu from American culture and society, Jodo Shinshu temples as the Buddhist Churches of America is now nationally recognized through its involvement with institutions such as the Boy Scouts of America in the administration of its Buddhist religious award (Sangha Award) and, ironically enough, the U.S. Department of Defense as a certified Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agent for Military Chaplaincy.

This model of propagation with the temple as a center for a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist community will hopefully also help to highlight the activity of the Vow or how the Buddha has vowed to save all sentient beings as equals. The temple becomes a place of refuge for all to meet with and participate in the immeasurable and inconceivable causes and conditions that can bring people and cultures together.

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Southern District Temples
- Arizona Buddhist Temple
- Buddhist Church of Santa Barbara
- Buddhist Temple of San Diego
- Gardena Buddhist Church
- Guadalupe Buddhist Church
- Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
- Orange County Buddhist Church
- Oxnard Buddhist Temple
- Pasadena Buddhist Temple
- San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
- San Luis Obispo Buddhist Church
- Senshin Buddhist Temple
- Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
- Vista Buddhist Temple
- West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple

Buddhist Churches of America
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Rev. John Iwohara, Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
Some key words used by Jodo Shinshu include terms like *immeasurable,* and *inconceivable.* In particular, these terms are used to describe the Buddha and the Pure Land of the Buddha. Although these terms help us to understand the enormity of what it is that we can be a part of in living our lives as Jodo Shinshu Buddhists, how does one come to understand that which is immeasurable and inconceivable? In other words, if Amida Buddha were to simply remain in the realm of being immeasurable and inconceivable, then we could never come to know of Amida Buddha or of the Pure Land.

Followers of Jodo Shinshu, or those who have experienced that which is immeasurable and inconceivable, in trying to share this experience and preserve the teachings that made the experience possible, have over the centuries developed and provided us a powerful resource to help us not only understand but to experience the truth of both the immeasurable and the inconceivable: they have given us the temple.

As the Jodo Shinshu temple developed in Japan, it began first as a mausoleum for the Founder of Jodo Shinshu or Shinran Shonin. In trying to emphasize the fact that Jodo Shinshu has at its core the realization of the fulfilled life in the present, and not just the simple yearning for a reward in the afterlife for having endured a lifetime, Kakunyo Shonin, the great-grandson of Shinran Shonin, also worked to transform the mausoleum into a temple. In order to accomplish this, Kakunyo Shonin had to leave the mausoleum in order to talk to and try to convince the various Jodo Shinshu followers throughout the countryside to support the conversion of the mausoleum into a temple. Ultimately, this would result in the establishment of the Hongwanji or the Temple of the Primal Vow. He would also establish himself as the third spiritual leader of the tradition now known with the title of Gomonsbu. Kakunyo Shonin in leaving his “home base” and going to the people, worked to show how Jodo Shinshu Buddhists are all part of the same activity of the Primal Vow of Amida Buddha. This activity helped to demonstrate how one was *embraced and not forsaken,* and how it is the activity of the Buddha, as expressed through the *Power of the Vow,* that brings us to realize immeasurable and inconceivable life. This model of propagation would also serve as a template for the local temple where the resident priest would leave the temple to make his or her rounds to the families that were affiliated with the temple. It is a model of propagation that can remind us why the statue of Amida Buddha is standing and not seated in meditation at Jodo Shinshu temples.

In America, a completely different view of religious life existed. Under the headline “They Teach The Buddhist Faith” the September 12, 1899 issue of the San Francisco Chronicle reported on the establishment of the first Jodo Shinshu mission in the continental United States. The article begins as follows:

...Jodo Shinshu has at its core the realization of the fulfilled life in the present, and not just the simple yearning for a reward in the afterlife for having endured a lifetime...