



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

BULLETIN

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Volume 68 Number 10 July 2012 (2556 B.E.)

July Calendar of Events

Call 773-334-4661

Also visit www.budtempchi.org

Regular Sunday Services

Dharma Sunday School

On break for July & August. Classes on 2nd and 4th Sundays will resume in September.

Religious Services

Sundays at 11am – Noon, in English.

Monthly Memorial Service

Shotsuki Hoyo, Sunday, July 1, 11am joint English & Japanese service

Special Observances & Events

Help Wanted Meeting – Wednesday, July 18 at 6pm.

Temple Picnic - Sunday, July 29 at 11am (tentative)

Bon Odori - Practices start Monday, July 30; continuing Wednesday August 1; Friday, August 3; Monday, August 6; and Wednesday, August 8 (Bon Odori - Saturday, August 11 at 7:30pm). Please note the Friday, July 27 practice has been cancelled.

Introduction to Buddhism – Call temple to confirm dates and time.

Meditation Sessions – On break for July and August. Will resume in September.

Sutra Study Class – Open to all, 3rd Sundays, 12:30pm to 2pm.

Study Class – On break June through August, starts back in September. Open to all, Wednesdays, 7pm.

Activities & Meetings

Asoka Society – 3rd Saturdays, 1pm.

Calligraphy – Japanese brush writing class, 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7pm.

Crafts Class – 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 10am to noon, open to all (call temple to confirm).

Fencing – Introduction to Kendo, Dojo sessions, Tuesdays, 8pm to 10pm at Bethany United Church (call Bob Kumaki, 847-853-1187).

Japanese Language Class – On break for summer until September. Saturdays, 10am to noon, children or adults, call 773-334-4661 to register.

Japanese Swordsmanship – Iaido, Mondays 7pm to 9pm.

Middle Way – 1st Sundays, noon.

Taiko Drums – BTC Kokyo Taiko Drum Troupe, Fridays, 7pm to 9pm.

The Seat of a Graduate

By Rev. Yukei Ashikaga

On the third Sunday of June, our Temple observed the joint special service of Father's Day and graduation. I happened to recall the words of my teacher, Prof. Hamoru Iwami of Otani University. Prof. Iwami was guest speaker for graduation at Otani High School, where I was teaching at the time. I still remember what Prof. Iwami told the graduates that year.

“What are you going to do after you receive your diploma today?” he asked. “You may have planned a good time at a party or scheduled a little trip with your friends. But today, before you do anything else, go home right away. When you get home, show your diploma to your parents and say words of gratitude. Say that you were able to receive this diploma because of their love and continuous support over the years. Until you express this gratitude, you are not able to take the seat of a graduate. You are not able to take the seat of a human being.”

Prof. Iwami continued his talk with a story from the *Vimalakirti Sutra*. Vimalakirti was one of the most outstanding scholars among the disciples of the Buddha Shakyamuni. When he had a cold one day and was resting at his home, many of his friends came to visit him. Sariputra, one of ten great disciples of the Buddha, was among the visitors. He noticed there was no seat at Vimalakirti's home and wondered why this was so. Vimalakirti was smart enough to read Sariputra's mind and immediately borrowed enough seats from the Buddha to fill the room. Vimalakirti then offered the seats to the guests.

However, Buddha's seats were very tall and wide. Sariputra tried to sit on one but could not. He noticed that everyone else was able to take their seats somehow. Sariputra became impatient because he was the only one who could not take his seat. Finally Vimalakirti asked him what was the matter and Sariputra answered, “The seat is so high that I can't reach it.”

“Don't you know how to reach the seat?”

With a blush, the honest Sariputra answered, “No, I don't.”

“Then I will teach you. It is not hard at all. Since I borrowed the seats from the Buddha, simply bow to respect. If you bow to respect you can take your seat.”

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THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF CHICAGO

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Feedback & Submissions

Comments, corrections, questions, and suggestions are encouraged. Submitted material will be reviewed for suitability and space availability and subject to editing. Anonymous submissions will not be published, but author's names may be withheld from publication upon request. The deadline is the first Friday of the month.
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*The Buddhist Temple
of Chicago Bulletin,*
except where
otherwise noted.

IMPORTANT DATES

- ☸ July 18: Help Wanted Meeting, 6 pm, see p. 3.
- ☸ July 29: Temple picnic (tentative), 11 am.
- ☸ Aug 1: Deadline to register for the EBL Conference in Minneapolis, see p. 5.
- ☸ Aug 31–Sept 2 (Labor Day weekend): EBL Conference in Minneapolis, see p. 5.

Also see the *Calendar of July Events* on page 1.

TEMPLE NEWS, MAY 2012

- ☸ 05/06 Shotsuki Hoyo (Monthly Memorial Service) was observed. Rev. Ashikaga delivered Dharma message in morning English service and afternoon Japanese Service.
- ☸ 05/08 Rev. Ashikaga was invited to attend a dinner at the residence of the Consul General of Japan in Evanston.
- ☸ 05/13 Mother's Day Special Service was observed. Elaine Siegel gave a talk to Dharma School and Rev. Patti Nakai delivered the Mother's Day message. The Middle Way Group and Dharma School students and their families planted flowers on the temple grounds.
- ☸ 05/15 The Ashes Burial Service for Masako Misawa was conducted at Windridge Memorial Park in Cary, Illinois. The late Mrs. Misawa, 77, passed away in New York on May 15, 2011. She is survived by husband Toshio Misawa of Inverness, Illinois.
- ☸ 05/18 June issue of the Temple Bulletin mailed.
- ☸ 05/19 Asoka Society met.
- ☸ 05/20 Regular Sunday Service was observed. Lay speaker was Tim Baldermann.
- ☸ 05/26 Special seminar was conducted by Dr. Nobuo Haneda at the Temple from 10:00 am until 4:30 pm. After that a welcome dinner for Dr. and Mrs. Haneda was held at Tokyo Marina Restaurant.
- ☸ 05/27 Shinran's Tanjo-e (Special Service for Shinran's Birthday) and Hatsu Mairi were observed. Rev. Patti Nakai delivered the Dharma School message, and Dr. Haneda delivered the Dharma message. For the Hatsu Mairi Service, Rev. Ashikaga conducted the celebration ceremony of children's first official Temple visit and presented certificates and o-juzu (meditation) beads.
- ☸ 05/28 Annual Joint Religious Memorial Service at Montrose Cemetery sponsored by the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago was attended by Revs. Ashikaga and Nakai.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

**Understanding the Nembutsu
through recognizing the
Paramitas in others.**

Send in your recognitions!

- ☸ Sunday Service Participants: Ray, Christina and Ausneste Atkins, Tim Baldermann, Mia Blixt, Bill Bohlman, Glenn Fujiura, Anna Idol, Tom Lane, Kiyoko Omachi, Elaine Siegel, Justin Woodward, and Mrs. Hisayo Ashikaga, our pianist.
- ☸ Sunday Service Refreshments: Rodel de Ocampo, Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Karen Kanemoto, Alice Murata, Misato Sato, Mary Shimomura, Harky Tademoto, Jane Watanabe, and Dharma School and Former Dharma School Parents. Also Hatsumairi Parents and past Hatsumairi Parents.
- ☸ Temple Bulletin Mailing: Rev. Ashikaga, Haru Ito, Chuck Izui, Joe Korner, Gary Nakai, Masa Nakata, Yoneo Shimomura, Tommi and Tak Tomiyama.
- ☸ Taking care of the Temple inside and out: Tomio Tademoto.
- ☸ Planting flowers on temple grounds: The Middle Way group and Dharma School students and their families.
- ☸ Cleaning the entire Temple every week: Justin Woodward.
- ☸ For manning the Temple office every Thursday: Tak Tomiyama.
- ☸ Maintaining and updating the temple website and computer: Shawn Lyte.
- ☸ For emptying the trash bins, filling them with new bags and putting them out for disposal: Adam Kellman, April Kellman, and Rev. Patti Nakai.

Help Wanted Meeting, Part 3

The anticipated meeting is just around the corner and will be here sooner rather than later. It is also anticipated that this will be the first meeting of others, although follow-up meetings will be smaller and more task-specific and action-oriented.

The specifics of this first meeting are as follows: The date is Wednesday, July 18th, at the temple, of course. For the convenience of those who are attending, a food buffet will be served starting at 6:00 pm and will remain available until it runs out. The meeting is scheduled to start at 6:30 pm while we finish up the eats. While the meeting content is important, it is important not to run out of food. So please contact the undersigned at budtempchi@hotmail.com or 847-676-9309 and be counted so the appropriate amount of food can be ordered.

The following is the proposed agenda for the meeting:

- I. Introduction
- II. Background/History
- III. Affected Areas & Their Inter-Relationships
 - A. Annual Operating Budget
 - B. Fund-Raising Strategy
 - C. Cultural/Community Considerations
- IV. Identifying Projects/Tasks
- V. Adjournment/Clean-up

The areas noted in the above agenda will be presented in the context of each of the others. The correlation between these areas is broad, and an attempt to focus on certain aspects to stay within the allotted time will be ambitious and challenging. Nevertheless, it is sincerely hoped that the presentation and the “give and take” will strike a chord with most of you in attendance. You represent a vital resource within the Sangha of BTC, possessing the “critical mass” blend of desire and talent. Your consideration and desire to help the temple by attending this important meeting is deeply appreciated.

Gassho,
Gary T. Nakai
President

... Seat of a Graduate

(Continued from page 1)

Sariputra was so wise that he understood Vimalakirti right away and said, “I am quite ashamed of myself, thank you.” And as soon as he put his palms together in gassho and bowed to respect, he found himself on the tall, wide seat.

Sariputra was able to take his seat when he bowed to respect. This is the lesson of bowing to respect, *ogamu*, in Japanese. If we become humble and bow to respect all beings surrounding us and express our gratitude, we are able to take the seat of a graduate, a father, a mother, a husband, or a wife. Then our minds become rich and deep with appreciation. We all obtain Buddha’s mind and become respectful persons.

Namu Amidabutsu.

The BTC 18-40 Group: Ideas Wanted

By Adam Seiichi Kellman

An institution like The Buddhist Temple of Chicago needs a steady group of young people involved with activities at the temple and in the community. We need an organization that lets them facilitate their activities.

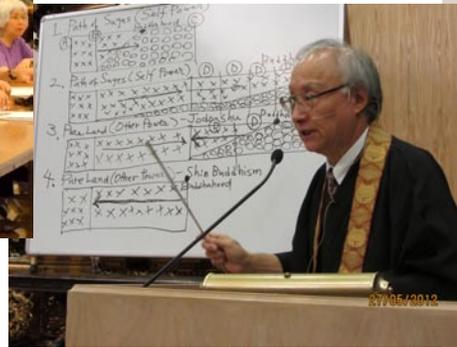
To help with those goals, BTC’s Board of Directors fully supports the group’s use of the temple. They have thrown open the temple doors, including the full prep kitchen, expansive hall, media systems, and ample parking lot. The temple encourages us to use the temple building as a social meeting and gathering place for the young adult Sangha as often as we’d like. No strings attached! We hope that a diverse young Sangha of former Dharma School students, members of Scout programs, current members, and new members will team together and take advantage of this great offer.

I would like to invite everyone to help plan more events through the BTC 18-40 Group. Though the name is self-explanatory and the focus is on the young Sangha (the name might also change in the future), we welcome *anyone* who wants to participate. As with The Middle Way Group and Asoka Society, the two other primary social groups at the temple, there is no age restriction.

I would also like to invite ideas for gatherings. Some ideas we’ve tossed around include games nights, movies nights, ping-pong games, cooking seminars, pot lucks, honoring Scout parents, and others. What do you think? How would you take advantage of a large space with so many great free amenities? Let us know!

Please e-mail me with any ideas suggestions at seiichi5@yahoo.com or post a message on our Facebook page located at <http://goo.gl/wOHTTr> (link shortened for easier typing). Hope to see you at the temple soon!

A Visit from Dr. Haneda



Dr. Nobuo Haneda visited BTC for Tanjo-e. Forty people attended the May 26 lecture. He also delivered the Dharma talk on May 27. See Rev. Patti Nakai's article summarizing both lectures on page 6. Photos by Dennis Chan and John Hite.

The 2012 International Buddhism Festival (Visakha)



BTC co-hosted the International Buddhism Festival (also known as Visakha) with nearby Thai temple Wat Phrasiratanamahadhatu (their shrine, Buddha, and bowing monks are pictured) on June 2. Rev. Patti Nakai (pictured) spoke at the opening ceremony, and delicious Thai lunch was served.

Activities included meditation, a class on calligraphy taught by Rev. Yukei Ashikaga (pictured with students), a bird-carving demonstration by BTC member Michio Iwao (pictured with Matthew Lavoie), a special dragon dance by Matthew Lavoie, and lectures on various Buddhism-related topics. Photos by Ann Yi.

May 27 Celebrations: Three Young Newcomers and a Special Birthday



Pictured left:

On May 27, the temple officially welcomed three new children to the temple at its annual Hatsu Mairi ceremony. Hatsu Mairi means "first visit" (though some of the children had already been visiting). Each child's family received a certificate and an o-juzu (meditation beads).

Pictured right:

Shinran, a monk at the tender age of eight. His statue was displayed on May 27 during the Tanjo-e service celebrating the birthday of the credited founder of Shin Buddhism.

Photos by John Sagami



2012 Eastern Buddhist League Conference & Bus Trip

As Labor Day weekend approaches, we hope you are submitting your registration for the conference, signing up for the chartered bus for the trip (or making your own transportation plans), and securing your hotel room. As we have mentioned in the last few bulletins, The Buddhist Temple of Chicago will be honored with the hosting duties of the conference next year in 2013, at which time we will be calling on all of you to help. So we strongly encourage temple members, friends, and anyone who is interested to attend the 2012 Eastern Buddhist League Conference in Minnesota.

As many of you know from previous years' EBL conferences and retreats, the annual gathering is a great time of fellowship with Buddhists from throughout the Midwest, east coast, and Canada. The Twin Cities Buddhist Association has put together an informative and fun program of events under the theme "Many Paths, One Path." In addition to the Friday evening interfaith panel discussion and Saturday workshops on Buddhism, optional trips are planned to places such as the Minneapolis Institute of Art and Mystic Lake Casino. There will be special activities for youth.

The conference will be held over Labor Day weekend, Friday, August 31 through Sunday, September 2 at the Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Mall of America in Bloomington (just outside the Twin Cities). A block of rooms has been reserved at the rate of \$105 per night for the Eastern Buddhist Conference. (Tip: As of this writing, if you are willing to pre-pay for a non-cancellable room, the hotel's site

offers a cheaper rate of \$95 per night.) Detailed information and registration forms are available at www.tcbuddhist.org, and we also have forms available at the temple bookstore on the glass bookcase.

Our sister temple, the Midwest Buddhist Temple, is chartering a bus to the conference. The cost per person is \$100. We will depart MBT (435 W. Menomonee) on Friday, August 31 at 8:00 am. Please arrive by 7:30 am. Cars may be parked in the MBT lot. The bus will also be used to travel to Mystic Lake Casino on Saturday evening. After the closing luncheon on Sunday, the bus will be used for sightseeing. That night, people will have a choice of returning to the casino on this bus or being dropped off at Mall of America. On Monday morning, the bus will leave the Hilton at 8:00 am for the drive back to Chicago, with sightseeing on the way. The bus should arrive back at MBT at around 4:30 pm.

To reserve your seat on the bus (note that this does not reserve a spot at the conference, as that is a separate registration), send your name, address, phone number (this information is required by the bus company), and a check for \$100 made out to Midwest Buddhist Temple to:

The Buddhist Temple of Chicago
ATTN: EBL BUS
1151 W Leland Ave
Chicago IL 60640-5043

Detailed information on registering for the conference itself and securing a hotel room are available at www.tcbuddhist.org or see the forms provided on the glass bookcase at BTC. The registration deadline is August 1.

See you there!

Nagarjuna and Shinran: Tanjo-e Seminar and Lecture

By Rev. Patti Nakai

As the commemoration of Shinran's birthday (called Tanjo-e or Gotan-e) on May 26, long-time BTC friend Dr. Nobudo Haneda of the Maida Center in Berkeley presented his annual seminar. Then on May 27, he gave a second talk at the Tanjo-e/Hatsu Mairi service, presenting a full-length lecture instead of a brief Dharma talk.

For the all-day Saturday seminar, we had an attendance of forty people, including a few of our friends from the Midwest Buddhist Temple. In the morning session, Dr. Haneda gave us background information on Nagarjuna (circa 200 CE), the first great teacher of the revivalist Buddhist movement known as "Mahayana."

He went on to say that a few hundred years after the Buddha's passing, Buddhist institutions became fossilized, idolizing Shakyamuni as an exceptional being and maintaining an exclusive hierarchy of clergy. The Mahayana movement arose to remind people that the path of awakening was open to all. They emphasized that instead of looking to the Buddha as our savior, we should see that he was directing our attention to the Dharma that awakened ("saved") him.

Conditional Arising

In Shinran's praise of Nagarjuna in *Shoshin-ge*, he says,

Shakyamuni Tathagata, on Mount Lanka,
Propheesied to the multitudes that in south India
The mahasattva Nagarjuna would appear in this world
To crush the views of being and nonbeing
(p. 71 *The Collected Works of Shinran*, translated by
Dennis Hirota et al, Jōdo Shinshū Hongwanji-ha, 1997)

What does "crush the views of being and nonbeing" mean? Dr. Haneda explained this by presenting the three expressions that are synonymous in Nagarjuna's philosophy: "conditional arising," "emptiness," and "middle."

Conditional arising (also known as "dependent origination" in some translations) says that all things are the result of causes as well as conditions. In Western thinking we tend to draw a straight line from one cause to one effect, but in Buddhism, one cause ("seed") produces a particular result ("fruit") depending on various conditions (for a seed to become a fruit-bearing tree, it needs rich soil, sunlight, water etc.). In this way, what we call our "self" is no different from a car – conditions have temporarily brought together an assemblage of physical and mental aspects, parts that are subject to wear and tear and frequent replacement.

Dr. Haneda said that to see oneself as a tentative collection of parts is "a humbling insight – to realize we are empty and that there is nothing in us for which we can take credit for." This knowing that there is no permanent independently existing self is to know oneself as zero, as emptiness. But as expressed by Shinran, this realization also

(Continued on next page)

A Primer for Offering Incense

BTC has enjoyed having many newcomers to our temple, but we notice there has been some hesitancy about participating in incense offering during Sunday service, so perhaps a review is appropriate. First of all, participation is voluntary, but many people find it meaningful to be a part of this physical expression of their inner spirituality. There is no absolute "right" way to do incense offering, but here are some suggestions applicable to our temple services.

At the incense burner

Take only a small pinch of the incense grains and place it directly into the burner. Then put your palms together ("gassho") at heart level and make a slight bow. You may see others who were raised at different temples doing more elaborate gestures – deep bowing, hands in gassho above their head, putting in two or three pinches of incense, raising the incense to their forehead – but you should not feel obligated to imitate them.

Lining up in the center aisle

Some years ago a couple of temple members who sat near the front felt self-conscious about going directly to the incense burner so they walked to the side aisles and to the back of the room and waited for others to line up in the center aisle. Unfortunately many of the newcomers started copying them and soon the long-time temple members who should know better would all go to the back of the hondo to line up for incense offering.

From where you are sitting – go directly into the center aisle (get in line, if there is one) and to the incense burner. Do NOT move to the back of the room. The persons sitting closest to the center aisle will be the first ones to offer incense for the row and they will be the first to return to their seats from the side aisles.

Offertory

Participation in incense offering does not require a monetary donation. However, the temple always appreciates any donation in any amount. If you wish to be acknowledged in the bulletin for a special donation, please place the check or cash in an envelope with your name and address and details of the occasion (e.g., "In memory of father" or "In appreciation of Sutra Study class"). If you have a large bill that needs to be changed, please make your donation at the temple office after the service.

... Nagarjuna and Shinran

(Continued from previous page)

awakens a deep gratitude in us for all the causes and conditions that contribute to our existence.

Meaning of the Middle

For me, it was a revelation to learn how the concept of “middle” equates with “conditional arising” and “emptiness.” Usually when we speak of “middle way” in Buddhism we say “all things in moderation” – e.g., don’t pig out or starve yourself but eat enough for sustenance. But in Nagarjuna’s philosophy of *Madhyamika*, the concept of “middle” means transcending the duality of “is” versus “is not.”

To illustrate this concept of “middle,” Dr. Haneda used the teaching of Soto Zen master Dogen (1200-1253), “The flatland is the precipice, the precipice is the flatland.” In Illinois our mostly flat terrain doesn’t seem so interesting, but when we go to a place like the Grand Canyon in Arizona, we are awed to look down at a great chasm showing many layers of rock formation. In reality the flatland we live on in the Midwest is the same as the precipices in the Southwest – beneath our feet are also layers of mineral aggregates formed during distinct eons of time.

In Dogen’s teaching, we start out in religion despising our finite mundane world and strive to attain the depths (or heights) of the unbounded spiritual world. We treat the two worlds as mutually exclusive – you can be in only one realm or the other. But Dogen’s teaching shows us that our “ordinary” life is the manifestation of the uncountable causes and conditions of the whole universe, of forces and events beyond our comprehension.

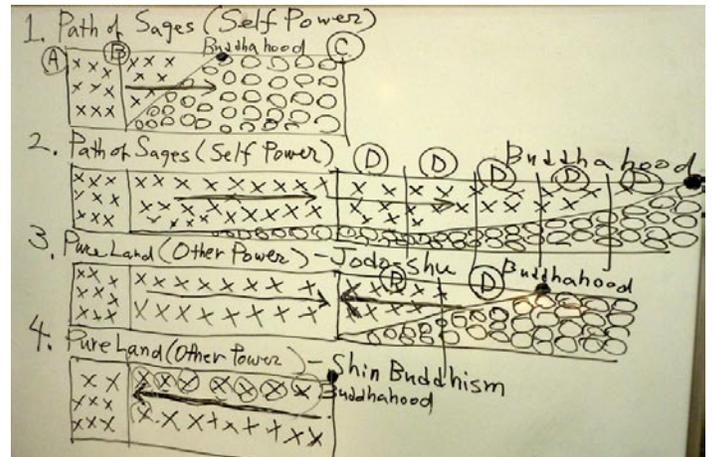
The person awakened to “The flatland is the precipice, the precipice is the flatland” is in what Nagarjuna would call the “middle,” the position where he appreciates life in each moment, not clinging to or rejecting events and objects according to his self-interest.

That brought us back to the basic Buddhist insight of “our ego is the problem,” that the “impure land is where we are attached to dualistic ideas” as contrasted with the Pure Land, the sphere of appreciating the wonder and profound meaning of all things.

Four Stages of Shinran’s Process

This point was elaborated in Sunday’s intense Dharma talk. Dr. Haneda drew an illustration of Shinran’s spiritual process on a whiteboard (see photo

of Dr. Haneda’s whiteboard below). In the first stage “Path of Sages – one lifetime,” Shinran started out as many of us have – thinking he could get rid of the negatives (defilements, sufferings) represented by the X’s. He thought he could attain buddhahood in his lifetime and have only positives, which are represented by the O’s. In the second stage “Path of Sages – multiple lifetimes,” Shinran began to realize that the awful X’s were too entrenched in his nature and that he needed more than one lifetime to replace them with nice O’s. However, he found that by his own power, the X’s weren’t budging and seemed instead to be increasing. So in the third stage “Pure Land – next lifetime,” he thought there was at least hope that a power beyond himself would help him get rid of the X’s and accumulate some O’s in his next lifetimes.



Dr. Haneda's illustration of Shinran's four stages.
Photo by Dennis Chan

But through his experience with his teacher Honen, Shinran awakened to the “middle” position, transcending the ego-based duality of branding all things as X’s and O’s. In the fourth stage “Pure Land – this lifetime,” he comes to see nothing is completely negative or positive over time. The power beyond the self is the wisdom that enables us to appreciate all things in life.

To some, Dr. Haneda may appear critical of other religions and Buddhist sects, but Dr. Haneda presented his drawing as a representation of Shinran’s own process, which can guide us in our self-examination. Rather than lead us to criticize other people, the illustration should help us to appreciate the spiritual seekers of any religion who overcome the duality of positive versus negative, such as the Christian who sees all beings as God’s children. What is called “buddhahood” is the completion of any life (regardless of religious label) lived in awakening to the interconnectedness of all life.



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Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose (1905–2000), Founding Minister

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