



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN



Volume 68, Number 12  September 2012 (2556 B.E.)

September Calendar of Events

Call 773-334-4661

Also visit www.budtempchi.org

Regular Sunday Services

Dharma Sunday School – Classes on 2nd and 4th Sundays (Sept 9 & 23), 11am

Religious Service (in English) – Sundays, 11am, no service Sept 2

Shotsuki Hoyo Monthly Memorial Service – Sunday, Sept 9, 11am (English), 1pm (Japanese)

Special Services & Events

Eastern Buddhist League (EBL) Conference – Aug 31-Sept 3 in MN, **NO Sunday service Sept 2**

Fall O-Higan Service – Sunday, Sept 23 at 11am. A time to reflect on crossing over to the Other Shore.

Education & Meditation

Introduction to Buddhism – Call 773-334-4661 or visit www.budtempchi.org

Buddhism Study Class – Resumes Sept 12, open to all, Wednesdays, 7pm

Meditation Sessions – Thursday evenings 7:30pm, Sunday mornings 9am (no meditation Sept. 2).

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

Meetings

Asoka Society – 3rd Saturdays, 1pm

BTC Board – Sunday, Sept 30, 12:30pm

The Middle Way – 1st Sundays, noon

Culture

Calligraphy – Brush writing, 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7pm

Chinese Movement – Quigong, starting Sept 18, Tues, 11am to noon, call Dennis Chan 773-465-6422

Crafts Class – 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 10am to noon

Japanese Fencing – Intro to Kendo, Dojo sessions, Tuesdays, 8pm to 10pm at Bethany United Church, call Bob Kumaki, 847-853-1187 for information

Japanese Language (children or adults) – Starts Sept. 9, Saturdays, 10am, call temple to register

Japanese Swordsmanship – Iaido, Mondays 7 to 9pm

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

Few of Us Know How to Listen

By Rev. Yukei Ashikaga

There is an old Japanese story called “Sannin Genbei” (Three Genbeis). One day, a father and his son, both of them hard-of-hearing, were watching their store. Their next door neighbor, Genbei, walked by the store. The father loudly asked his son, “Was that man passing by the store Genbei from next door?” The son replied, “No, he was not. That was Genbei from next door.” Then the father said, “Is that so? I thought that was Genbei from next door.”

Recalling this story, I had to ask myself a question. I can hear people’s voices because I have healthy ears. But am I always listening?

Sydney Harris was a popular columnist and author about half a century ago. I used to enjoy reading his column entitled “Strictly Personal,” which appeared in the old Chicago Daily News newspaper (now defunct). In my scrapbook I kept one of his columns entitled “Few of Us Know How to Listen.” Here is an excerpt:

Some years ago, two psychologists at Cambridge University made a recording of the discussion that followed a meeting of the Cambridge Psychological Society. . . . Two weeks later, they wrote to all who had attended, asking them to write down everything they could recall about the discussion. The reports were then checked against the recorded version, and it was found that the average number of specific points recalled by any individual was less than 10 percent of the total recorded.

But the really remarkable thing, according to Prof. Ian Hunter, in his book, *Memory*, was that “Of these recorded points, on the average no less than 42 percent of them were substantially incorrect.” Hunter goes on to report: “A large variety of errors and confusions appeared. Happenings were recalled which had never taken place at all or which had taken place on some other occasion and were wrongly recorded . . . What was recalled was not only fragmentary but also distorted and much was recalled which, in fact, had never happened.”

Mr. Harris adds, “Many courses are offered on how to speak, but none that I know of on how to listen – an infinitely rarer and more precious trait.”

(Continued on page 5, left column at bottom)

Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of

Mr. Yutaka Bob Oshita

Mrs. Lillian Fusaye Morishita

Please see Temple News for details

THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF CHICAGO

1151 W Leland Ave
Chicago, IL
60640-5043

Tel: 773-334-4661
Fax: 773-334-4726
www.budtempchi.org
and

www.facebook.com/
budtempchi

Rev. Yukei Ashikaga
Head Minister

Rev. Patti Nakai
Associate Minister

Gary T. Nakai
President

Bulletin Team

Michele Mulcahy
Rev. Patti Nakai
Gary T. Nakai
Ruby Tsuji
Ann Yi, Editor

Feedback & Submissions

Comments,
corrections,
questions, and
suggestions are
encouraged.

Submitted material
will be reviewed for
suitability and space
availability.

Anonymous
submissions will not
be published, but
author's names may
be withheld from
publication upon
request.

E-mail Ann Yi at
btcbuledtr
@hotmail.com
for deadlines and
more information.

© **Copyright
2012**

*The Buddhist Temple
of Chicago Bulletin,*
except where
otherwise noted.

More Important Dates

- ☸ September 2: No Temple service due to Eastern Buddhist League Conference in Minneapolis.
- ☸ September 23: Special Fall O-Higan (Equinox) Service and luncheon. O-Higan is a time to reflect on crossing over to the Other Shore.
- ☸ October 26: Temple Flower Power fundraiser deadline, see page 3.

Also see *Calendar of September Events* on page 1

Temple News July 2012

- ☸ 7/01 Shotsuki Hoyo (Monthly Memorial Service) was observed. Rev Nakai delivered the Dharma Message. Glenn Fujiura was Service Chairman.
- ☸ 7/08 Regular Sunday Service was observed. Rev. Ashikaga delivered the Dharma Message. Elaine Siegel was Service Chairperson. Rev. Nakai conducted the Memorial Service for the late David Newlin in Columbus, Indiana.
- ☸ 7/14 The 49th day Memorial Service of the late Jeri Tsurusaki was conducted at the Temple.
- ☸ 7/15 Regular Sunday Service was observed. Peggy Waters was lay speaker. Bill Bohlman was Chairman.
- ☸ 7/18 Carol, Joyce and Arlene Morishita visited Temple for their mother's funeral arrangements.
- ☸ 7/20 August issue of the Temple Bulletin was mailed.
- ☸ 7/21 The Funeral & Memorial Service for the late Yutaka Bob Oshita was conducted at the Temple. The late Mr. Oshita, 95, passed away on July 3, 2012. He is survived by his sons Alan (Barbara), Brian, Cary, Don (Beatriz), and his daughters Judy (Philip) Oshita and Radine (Robert) Riffle.
- ☸ 7/22 Regular Sunday Service was observed. Rev. Patti Nakai delivered the Dharma Message. The Temple's Board of Directors met.
- ☸ 7/24 The Funeral/Memorial Service for the late Lillian Fusaye Morishita was conducted at the Lakeview Funeral Home. The late Mrs. Morishita passed away on July 17, 2012 at the age of 100. She is survived by her daughters Carol, Joyce, and Arlene Morishita Ponto. She is also survived by her sister Lucille Shinsako.
- ☸ 7/27 – 7/29 Rev. Nakai attended and lectured at the Maida Center retreat in Berkeley. CA.
- ☸ 7/29 The Temple Picnic was held after a short service with Rev. Ashikaga's message. Everyone enjoyed potluck lunch, games door prizes. John Sagami and Mike Kudo, Jr. were the Co-Chairs for the picnic.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

**Understanding the Nembutsu
through recognizing the
Paramitas in others.
Send in your recognitions!**

- ☸ Sunday Service
Participants: Sue Balsam, Mia Blixt-Shehan, Bill Bohlman, Glenn Fujiura, Mieko Fujiura, Anna Idol, Justin Lack, Kiyo Omachi, William Shehan, Elaine Siegel, Peggy Waters, Leroy Wiley, Amy Williams, Justin Woodward, and Mrs. Hisayo Ashikaga, our pianist
- ☸ Sunday Service
Refreshments: Rodel de Ocampo, Jacqueline Denofrio, Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Wendy Lua, Anna Nagata, and many others who helped
- ☸ Organizing and executing the Temple picnic: John Sagami and Michael Kudo, Jr.
- ☸ Bulletin mailing: Rev. Ashikaga, Antoinette d'Vencets, Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Joe Korner, Michele Mulcahy, Rev. Patti Nakai, Masa Nakata, Mary Shimomura, Tak Tomiyama
- ☸ Picking up and delivering BTC's new and very heavy Mochi-tsuki Usu: Rick Kawamoto
- ☸ Taking care of the Temple inside and out: Tomio Tademoto
- ☸ Cleaning the entire Temple every week: Justin & Alison Woodward
- ☸ Manning the Temple office every Thursday: Tak Tomiyama
- ☸ Maintaining and updating the temple website and computer: Shawn Lyte
- ☸ Emptying the trash bins, filling them with new bags and putting them out for disposal: Adam Kellman, April Kellman, Rev. Patti Nakai

Fall Quarter Japanese Language Class

The BTC Japanese Language School will begin its 46th year of Japanese language classes on September 8, 2012. Classes meet every Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon and are offered at several levels, including beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, as well as for children ages six and older.

The temple is close to the Wilson stop of the CTA Red Line and the Ravenswood stop of the Metra Union Pacific North line. Classes are taught by native speakers. The school has produced several famous graduates, including David Spector, who began Japanese language studies while a student at Lane Tech High School and now hosts a popular talk show on Japanese television.

Prospective students can register on the first day of classes at 9:30 a.m. For additional information, please contact Rev. Yukei Ashikaga at (773) 334-4661.

Congratulations 2012 BTC Scholarship Winners!

On June 17, three high school graduates were awarded the 2012 scholarships. The scholarship awards come from three accounts: the Kono, Murakishi, and Kajiwara memorial funds. The winners are Jason Izui, Robin Kanemoto, and Jordan Yamagiwa.

Congratulations Jason, Robin, and Jordan! We wish you all the best in your academic careers and in your future.



From left to right: Rev. Patti Nakai, Neil Kanemoto, Karen Kanemoto, Robin Kanemoto, Lynn Maruyama, Jordan Yamagiwa, and Rev. Yukei Ashikaga. Jason Izui is not pictured; Pete Izui accepted the scholarship on his behalf. Photo by Jane Morishige

BTC Flower Power Fundraiser

Hello friends! The Middle Way is going to help you beautify neighborhoods and make money for the temple at the same time. We have partnered with Flower Power Fundraising for this season's fundraiser. All you do is place an order for top-quality flower bulbs. A full 50% of your order will go directly to BTC. The order comes with a 100% money-back guarantee and ships directly to your home.

There are several ways that you can purchase these wonderful bulbs or help us spread the word:

- 1) Ask one of our members for a catalog and place an order for yourself or as a gift for a garden-lover. Be sure to pass the catalog on to others to spread the word!
- 2) Visit our dedicated Flower Power page at <http://tinyurl.com/8ckuqy8> to place your order.
- 3) At our flower Power Page, use the Email Tool to automatically invite friends and family members to purchase bulbs. You can personalize your invitations and add email addresses to the fundraising drive. Flower Power will do all the rest.
- 4) Share your fundraising message with your Facebook friends. Set up your personal fundraising homepage within the campaign. Once complete, Flower Power will ask you if you want to "Share Now." Click yes and a small posting sharing our group's goals and results to date will appear on your Wall.



The fundraiser ends on October 26, 2012, but we suggest that you order as soon as possible to make sure that your favorite items don't run out!

Janet Lipner,
The Middle Way
The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

Reminder: New Qigong Class Starts Soon

By Dennis Chan

On September 18, weekly Tuesday Qigong classes at the Temple begin. Class starts at 11 a.m. and last an hour. The class is open to all ages, especially beginners and seniors. Similar to Tai chi, Qigong promotes good health and longevity. We will learn different movements to empty and calm our minds, improving our balance, breathing, circulation, and posture. Please call me at (773) 465-6422 if you have any questions. Leave your name and phone number to sign up for the class.

2012 Maida Center Retreat: No U-Turns in the Pure Land

By Rev. Patti Nakai

The theme for this year's Maida Center retreat in Berkeley was, "Shinran's View of the Tathagata's *Eko* (Directing of Virtues)" – a mouthful that is not easy to digest. What Dr. Nobuo Haneda kept stressing throughout the three-day retreat was how Shinran viewed the concept of *eko* (usually translated as "merit-transference") as the activity of the Power Beyond Self, that is, of Amida, the Tathagata ("one who comes as truth").

One point which Dr. Haneda made which struck me and probably a lot of other people is that in Shinran's view there is no "u-turn" for us in the path of awakening. It was and still is a pervasive presentation of Jodo Shinshu to say that we mortals die and are re-born in the Pure Land, attain enlightenment there, then we turn around and go back into the ordinary world as bodhisattvas. Dr. Haneda blasted the translators of *The Collected Works of Shinran* (Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha, 1997) for portraying the two directions of *eko* ("directing of virtue") as "our going forth to the Pure Land" and "our return to this world" (p. 7, the beginning of the "Teaching" *Kyo* chapter in the *Kyogyoshinsho*). As students of Japanese texts know, there is hardly any use of pronouns (he, she, it, etc.) so it is up to the translator whether to insert them or not. Dr. Haneda noted that translations done by D.T. Suzuki and Hisao Inagaki do not have the possessive "our" for the outgoing and returning aspects of *eko*.

Dr. Haneda said that for each of us *eko* means we are on the receiving end of the directing of virtues. From the moment of our true entrusting (*shinjin*), we live our life to its fulfillment, the "full stop" of parinirvana. In Dr. Haneda's analysis of Shinran's writings, there is no after-death "birth in the Pure Land." (He said that when Shinran in his letters says someone has "gone to the Pure Land," he is just using a colloquial phrase not to be taken literally, such as "kick the bucket.") As recipients of the virtues directed to us, we should not be harboring ambitions of becoming so filled up with virtues that we can graduate to the bodhisattva level and make our u-turn back to our earthly stomping grounds to "save" the deluded masses.

In Dr. Haneda's reading of Shinran, the directing

(Continued on page 7, left column)

2012 Bon Odori

On August 11, after five practice sessions open to the temple and to the general public, BTC observed Obon, joyous remembrance of loved ones ("O" is the honorific prefix and "bon" is an abbreviation of the Ullambana Sutra) with the dances of Bon Odori.

Temple members and members of the public were invited to learn both the traditional and modern folk dances, using fans and noisemakers. Many dressed in traditional Japanese attire.





*concentric circles
ripples of the past -
Obon festival*



- William Shehan, fiercebuddhist.org



Photos by William Shehan

... Few of Us Know How to Listen

(Continued from page 1)

Fall O-Higan will be here with us again. How often have I heard the teaching of O-Higan? Many times – I have heard the Six Paramitas of the O-Higan teaching over and over throughout my life. But perhaps I interpret the O-Higan teaching through my own preconceptions and understand them in a way that is most convenient to me. Rereading the article by Hr. Harris, I am reminded that knowing how to listen is as important as knowing how to speak. I am reminded again that a good speaker is a good listener. As we welcome Fall O-Higan, I hope that we all learn more about how to listen.

Namu Amidabutsu.

Ti-Sarana Essay

By Dennis Chan

Reminder: Dennis will conduct a new Qigong class starting Sept. 18. See page 3.

When I spoke to Rev. Ashikaga about my request for a Ti-Sarana ceremony, he thought that I had been raised Buddhist. Actually, my grandmother was raised in the Presbyterian Missionary Home for Girls and raised my mother and uncles as Presbyterians. My brother and I were baptized as Presbyterians and attended church services and Sunday school.

My formal and independent study of Eastern philosophies and religion began in 1994 when I took classes in Taoism and started reading writings about Buddhism written by the Dalai Lama. In 2007, I sought more development of my spirituality and discovered that monthly sutra classes and weekly study group were being offered at The Buddhist Temple of Chicago.

This was a time when I was struggling. My business was declining, and my daughter just married and moved with her husband to his home state of New Jersey. I was selfish and suffering from self-pity. I could not let go and let each day take its own course. Through Buddhist teachings I learned that my mind had created my suffering.

Looking back over the past five years, I am happy and very satisfied that I found BTC. I decided to join the temple as a member, a very important commitment to nurturing my spirituality. Buddhism has transformed my life.

I would like to thank Rev. Ashikaga, Rev. Nakai, and Dr. Haneda. Our temple is fortunate to have three living teachers help us study and understand Buddhism in the monthly sutra classes, the weekly study classes, and the special seminars that I've been attending for five years. In addition to teachers, the Sangha is important to help us learn the Buddhist teachings. BTC's Sangha is especially rich in cultural diversity, and many members, like myself, come from non-Buddhist religious backgrounds. Our Sangha's input, questions, and exchanges about the topics we study support my learning. It would be impossible to study Buddhism on my own.

Buddhism has helped me to nurture and develop my inner peace. The teachings have helped me to examine myself, reflect, and transform my daily lifestyle. A few examples

(Continued on page 7, right column)

Help Wanted Meeting, Part 4

The first meeting was held July 18. Many thanks to the following attendees for their patience, forthright discussion, and exploration of ideas: Ruth Abbinanti, Rev. Ashikaga, Tim & Megan Baldermann, Dennis Chan, Lori Kajikawa, Joe Korner, Tracy Ito, Michio Iwao, Zachary Jones, Lynn Maruyama, Michele Mulcahy, Rev. Patti Nakai, Kiyo Omachi, Peggy Waters, Ann Yi.

The meeting convened at 6:40 p.m. with Opening Gassho led by Tracy Ito. Opening remarks by Gary Nakai included some history and a review of the current sources of revenue for BTC. These include occasion-specific donations, general donations, bequeaths, and an earlier Foundation Fund. Fundraising was discussed in terms of one specific event such as Natsu Matsuri and, as an alternative, other events which would be spread throughout the year.

To form a basis of understanding, graphics and handouts illustrating the inter-relationships between fundraising strategy, BTC's rich cultural heritage and community standing, and the annual operating budget were presented. In particular, a copy of the approved 2012 BTC Annual Operating Budget was provided and line items were briefly reviewed. Gary noted the annual fundraiser now (Natsu Matsuri) and possible future strategies that could include events based on seasonal themes such as Aki (Fall), Fuyu (Winter) and Haru (Spring) to the question: Should we keep to the one main fundraiser event or have a few small ones? Also discussed were additional ways to promote the fund-raiser(s). Methods used in the past and some new ones were offered, along with discussion on whether present formats should be changed or modified, such as by adding programs, posters, and ads for Natsu Matsuri as we did in the past.

Discussions took many paths, initiated by attendees who expressed ideas to increase revenues, membership, and social activities. The pitfalls of BTC becoming a popular cultural temple to attract members at the expense of maintaining BTC's reputation as an open Dharma center was a viewpoint that was put forth by Gary to be considered in the discussion. But it was nevertheless obvious that the focus of this meeting was not clear to many attending. The meeting's outcome was to have informed people step forward and volunteer to head planning/projects in the aforementioned areas. Upon further discussion, it was agreed that everyone should re-think/re-evaluate this meeting and reconvene. In a display of leadership, Tim Baldermann and Lynn Maruyama did step up and volunteer to lead planning efforts. And on another high note, several attendees have expressed looking forward to the next meeting.

The closing Gassho was led by Lynn Maruyama, with everyone helping with the clean-up.

The next meeting is being scheduled by the attendees of the first meeting and will be announced after Sunday services. You too can join in and receive the next meeting's date and time by contacting any of the above named persons. As before, all are most welcome.

Gassho,
Gary T. Nakai
President

BTC Wood Carvings Installation 60th Anniversary Retrospective

In 1952 during O-Higan, BTC installed and dedicated six wood carvings depicting the life of the historical Buddha. These panels currently grace the walls of the hondo as they always have. You may have seen them many times without knowing the story behind these works carved by Harry Koizumi. An article from June of 1952 detailing their creation is reproduced below.

To celebrate the anniversary of this gift, for the next several issues we will feature photographs of these hand-crafted panels along with the text from their descriptive plates.

We encourage you to take a closer look at the carvings during your next visit to the temple.

HARRY KOIZUMI EXECUTES CARVINGS OF BUDDHA'S LIFE

Harry Koizumi, well known artist in wood carving, has executed the life story of Gautama Buddha, in six panels in relief work, which he is presenting to the Chicago Buddhist Church. The panels are of wood 3 ft. 6 1/2 in. long, 22 in. wide, and 2 in. thick.

These beautifully carved depictions of the life of the Lord Buddha will become treasures of the Church, and should take their place among the noted art works to be seen in Chicago.

It had long been Mr. Koizumi's ambition to carve something that he could leave to epitomize his life work. He discussed his idea with Rev. Kubose, and decided to tell the story of Buddha with his chisel.

Pictures by Dr. Kosetsu Nosu, a noted Buddhist artist, were taken as the basis for the carvings. The work was started six months ago, and Mr. Koizumi completed the panels just recently.

The panels present these six stages in the life of the Enlightened One: his birth as Prince Siddharta, with the visit of the hermit Asita; his departure from the royal palace, Kapilabastu, on his white horse, Kantaka, attended by his groom, Channa; his attainment to Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree; his first sermon in the Deer Park; the preaching Buddha, seated; his last day, entering the Mahapari Nirvana, in the Kusinagara Grove. The carving is in high relief.

The panels will be hung in the main hall of the Chicago Buddhist Church during the autumn O Higan season, in September, this year, and the important occasion will be marked by appropriate dedication ceremonies.

... No U-Turns in the Pure Land

(Continued from page 4)

of virtues is done by not just any old tathagata (awakened one) but only by *the* Tathagata, Buddha Amitabha (“unbounded light”) described in the Larger Sutra. Dr. Haneda kept interjecting that the story of the Bodhisattva Dharmakara, who becomes the Buddha named “Namu Amida Butsu” is only a story, a way of guiding us to the indescribable reality, the proverbial “finger pointing to the moon.”

The main analogy that Dr. Haneda used is that any serious seeker, such as Shinran, is like a person with a disease looking for the cure. The Buddhist tradition offers many prescriptions for overcoming our disease of ego-attachment, but most of those ask the patient to follow a strict regimen that requires a high level of intelligence and physical agility, not to mention strong impulse control. Shinran found that the only medicine that was most effective and available to all was the nembutsu, hearing the call of truth in the form of Namu Amida Butsu (a command of “Come to Buddha’s wisdom!” according to Dr. Haneda).

Our own “wisdom” is based on our ego-attached thinking, so to move towards the Buddha’s wisdom the only thing we have to do is passively receive the teachings. For me, putting this concept of *eko* “directing of virtues” into concrete terms is very difficult. One clue I got from Dr. Haneda’s lectures is to point to Shinran’s identification with all people, even the most despised. Shinran expresses gratitude for having his mind of “snakes and scorpions” shown to him. This receiving of Buddha’s wisdom frees him from having to keep pumping himself up and allows him to be more open-minded towards others.

The retreat covered some very involved material in Shinran’s reading of Vasubandhu (4th century India) and T’an-luan (476-542, China), which I won’t attempt to summarize here since it will take me some time to sort out much of it. From Dr. Haneda’s further elaboration at the retreat, one can conclude it is easy to misconvey the “directing of virtues” as not only coming from the power beyond ourselves but fostered by ego-attached misunderstanding that virtues are ours to direct (such as taking credit for becoming more tolerant and thinking I can help others to be less judgmental). This most recent retreat has forced me to rethink my understanding of the Larger Sutra story of Amida Buddha, so I hope to have future opportunities to learn more on the topic of *eko*, to figure out the “who” of directing “what” virtues.

... Ti-Sarana Essay

(Continued from page 5)

of the things I’ve done to keep a calm, clear mind: 1) I’ve stopped reading newspapers and watching the evening news, which is usually negative and focused on crimes, accidents, and corruption. If there is something important, I will hear about it on the radio or the Internet. 2) Inner peace is a result of living in the moment – I am learning to “let go” of the past and not project into the future. 3) It’s a big waste of energy to judge yourself and others. We cannot control desires and behaviors. It is better for me to watch my ego, let things come to me, and be humble. 4) I do just enough each day. I focus on the task at hand and not try to multitask. Except for natural carryover, my mind is clear and calm for the next day.

Last year I joined our Asoka group. Yes, these are aging members of temple and they tend to complain over doing tobans and other activities. However, when it comes to getting things done, we all pitch in together and rise to the occasion. I love our members; they share their lives, culture, and experiences. Their bright, shining faces bring joy and motivation to me.

Last year, at the last minute, we needed a Keiro-Kai gift. In August my lotus plant bloomed. I knew that its life cycle was short and I spent each day taking pictures of the transformations. I was grateful and filled with joy when I was able to create the Keiro-Kai picture album with photographs of this lotus. From the blooming lotus flower I learned lessons such as: 1) Life is short; from the first bloom the flower only lives five days. 2) Every day brings changes; each day the flower showed me new colors and internal beauty.

We as humans try hard to understand the Dharma. It is so powerful that we must be patient and let the words come to us over time. In the beginning, we listen in the sutra and study classes. We learn to examine ourselves and this retrospection begins the transformation of opening the path to awareness.

It is our human nature to fall into attachment to our words and ideas, but gradually I’ve learned to let go of this (we can’t keep all this material in our heads) and let the Dharma work on my heart and spirit. This is where the truth resides. I now realize there is vast spiritual wealth in all of us. We can only live and experience each moment, each day. The past and future become less important for daily living. Being fulfilled every day is healthy and may contribute to our longevity. In compassion and oneness the Dharma is guiding us. Namu Amida Butsu.



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

1151 W. LELAND AVENUE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60640-5043 USA
www.budtempchi.org
phone: 773-334-4661
fax: 773-334-4726

Rev. Yukei Ashikaga, Head Minister
Rev. Patti Nakai, Associate Minister
Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose (1905–2000), Founding Minister

NOT FOR PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
PERMIT NO. 7329