



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN



Volume 70, Number 5  February 2014 (2558 B.E.)

Ho-on-ko Seminar with Dr. Galen Amstutz: Gassho to Messiness

By Rev. Patti Nakai

On November 23, over thirty people (including a few friends from the Midwest Buddhist Temple) attended the Ho-on-ko seminar to hear Dr. Galen Amstutz on "Opening the Gift of Awareness." Dr. Amstutz covered a wide range of topics starting with the economic development in medieval Japan that was in part facilitated by the spread of the Jodo Shinshu teachings.



Rev. Patti Nakai
Resident Minister

When giving historical background on Shinran, Dr. Amstutz remarked, that Shinran did not do any "thing" significant, except "a different way of thinking of

Buddhism: saying that awakening is not under your ego's control." But this one thing is very much in line with neurological science that shows the great portion of our mental processes are below our level of consciousness. It is the monastic forms of Buddhism up to Shinran's time that were mistaken in thinking the mind can be brought entirely under control.

(Continued on page 6 at top)

What's Past is Prologue?

By Glenn T. Fujiura

In the documentary, *Becoming the Buddha in LA*, the Rev. Masao Kodani of the Senshin Buddhist Temple reflected on identity: "If you come from a Buddhist tradition, someone who says he knows who he is rather suspect. A mature person is someone who says that he doesn't know who he is."¹



Glenn T. Fujiura
Temple President

Well, who are *we*? That is, what is The Buddhist Temple of Chicago? The temple is in its 70th year and if the metric for maturity were just time, we would be very mature by anyone's standards. But Kodani's cautionary note suggests that some healthy doubt and self examination is in order.

I hope that I have communicated my optimism about the Temple in previous articles. For those of you at our annual membership meeting last month, the message was upbeat. Our finances are strong, the Dharma school and other BTC related groups are active, and interest in temple continues to grow as evidenced by the steady stream of visitors curious about us, the many new regulars we see each Sunday, and the overflowing classes.

(Continued on page 6 at bottom)

In the December issue of the Bulletin, the Board of Directors elicited from readers and the BTC Sangha a concise mission statement that expresses BTC's approach to the Dharma. The Board wanted a statement that would reflect the temple's lineage, our history, our outreach, and our acceptance of all Dharma seekers. The new mission statement was adopted. It is presented here..



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago: Mission Statement

Founded in 1944 as an administratively independent temple, The Buddhist Temple of Chicago aspires to the following:

- ☸ To present and explore the Three Treasures of Buddhism – the Buddha (teacher), the Dharma (teachings), and the Sangha (community).
- ☸ To be guided and inspired by the historical Buddha, Gautama Shakyamuni, and the teachers who have followed – Shinran Shonin, Manshi Kiyozawa, and Haya Akegarasu.
- ☸ To present the Buddha-Dharma in a language and manner relevant and understandable in contemporary America.
- ☸ To welcome all who seek the Dharma without any exceptions.
- ☸ To be a positive presence in our local community working to enhance the vitality of our neighborhood.
- ☸ To honor and continue the traditions of our founding members.
- ☸ To always live the Nembutsu – Namu Amida Butsu.

Temple News  **December 2013**

- ❁ 12/1 Monthly memorial service was conducted by Rev. Nakai in English. Rev. Ashikaga conducted the Japanese monthly memorial service and the Shoshinge class (lay leaders and Ti-Sarana candidates) participated in chanting then attended class in the ministers' residence
- ❁ 12/6 Visit by two monks from Longquan Temple in Beijing, China (see photo below).
- ❁ 12/7 Rev. Nakai conducted cremation service for the late Mr. Ken Yoshida at Lakeview Funeral Home. Public memorial at Temple, to be scheduled later.
- ❁ 12/8 Bodhi Day Service was led by the Dharma School students (see photo). Guest Speaker was Hillary Johnson of the Little Village Buddhist Meditation Center (see photo below).
- ❁ 12/14 Rev. Nakai conducted 25th year memorial for James Hirai at the home of Mrs. May Hirai.
- ❁ 12/15 Regular Sunday Service was held. The lay speaker was Ann Yi.
- ❁ 12/20 Rev. Nakai conducted one-year memorial for Dorothy Kuse at the home of Janice Hamilton.
- ❁ 12/21 Asoka Society meeting and temple clean-up. Rev. Nakai conducted installation of new officers.
- ❁ 12/22 Regular Sunday Service was held, followed by Mochi-tsuki.
- ❁ 12/27 January bulletin prepared for mailing
- ❁ 12/28 Rev. Nakai conducted 100th day service for the late Mr. John Terada at the home of Mrs. Masako Terada.
- ❁ 12/29 Regular Sunday Service was held. *** Board of Directors met.
- ❁ 12/31 Calendar mailed with January bulletin.

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

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

- ❁ Sunday Service Participants: Jackie Denofrio, Juan Angeles, Bill Bohlman, Tracy Ito, John Kelly, Lynnell Long, George Mizuki, Peter Mizuki, Patsy McEnroe, Leroy Wiley, Ann Yi, and the Dharma School students. Accompanists Mrs. Ashikaga, Mia Blixt-Shehan. Audio Controls: Jacob and Wendy Fawcett.
- ❁ Sunday Service Refreshments: Karen Baier, Bill Bohlman, Buddhist Educational Center, Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Gwen Kato, Susan Balsam, Rodel DeOcampo, Mary Shimomura, Harky Tademoto, Yone Tsurusaki, Ruby Tsuji, Jane Watanabe, Joey and Lauren Woodel, Ann Yi.
- ❁ Temple Bulletin and Calendar Mailing: Ruth Abbinanti, Karen Baier, Sue Balsam, Mia Blixt-Shehan, Dennis Chan, Antoinette D'Vencets, Nancey Epperson, Haru Ito, Chuck Izui, Alice Murata, Gary Nakai, Masa Nakata, Arlene Nozawa, Mary Shimomura, Janice Tsuji, Ruby Tsuji and the Qi Gong group.
- ❁ Taking care of the Temple inside and out: Tomio Tademoto.
- ❁ 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: Sue Balsam, Adam Kellman, Glenn T. Fujiura.



Visit by two monks from Longquan Temple in Beijing, China
 Photo taken by the guide



Hillary Johnson of the Little Village Buddhist Meditation Center speaks on Bodhi Day
 Photo by William Shehan



Bodhi Day Service led by the Dharma School students
 Photo by William Shehan

Asoka Group Helps Victims of Typhoon Taiyan

By Alice Murata

Instead of exchanging Holiday grab bags last December, the Asoka Society decided to help children of the Philippines' Typhoon Taiyan disaster. Our heartfelt wishes are extended to the Philippines to recover from their deep losses. Among the generous donors are Ruth Abbinanti, Dennis Chan, Dorothy Chvatal, Noreen Enkoji, Edward Horiuchi, Mandy Kapsalis, Sadie Kasamoto, Amy and Morris Kawamoto, Janet Lipner, Jane and Jerry Morishige, Alice Murata, and Anna Nagata. Many items of new children's clothing as well as puppets, small stuffed animals, and hair ornaments were collected. Monetary donations will be sent to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in Makati City, Philippines.

The photos depict some of the toys donated (left) and the handmade children's clothing by Ruth Abbinati and Janet Lipner.



Photos by Alice Murata

BTC Young Adults Game Night

By Wendy Fawcett

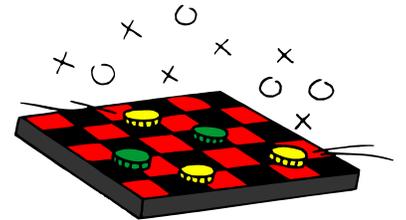
The BTC Young Adults volunteer and social group will be hosting "Game Night, Game Night, Take Two!" on Saturday March 1, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. Board games will be provided and refreshments will be served. Bring a friend and join us for a fun night!

The group is open to all ages. For more information, follow our Twitter account at:

twitter.com/BTCYoungAdults

and our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/BTC-Young-Adult-Group/>



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THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF CHICAGO

1151 West Leland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640-5043

Tel: 773-334-4661
Fax: 773-334-4726

budtempchi.org
facebook.com/budtempchi

Resident Minister
Rev. Patti Nakai

Minister Emeritus
Rev. Yukei Ashikaga

President
Glenn T. Fujiura

BTC BULLETIN

Team

Ruth Abbinanti, Michele Mulcahy, Rev. Patti Nakai, Gary T. Nakai, Ruby Tsuji, Ann Yi (Editor)

Feedback & Submissions

Comments, corrections, questions, & suggestions welcome. Submissions of articles, essays, book reviews, photos, poetry, news items, announcements, drawings, etc., strongly encouraged. Submissions 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.

Contact

E-mail BTCbuledtr@hotmail.com or speak with anyone on the BTC Team

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MOCHITSUKI 2013

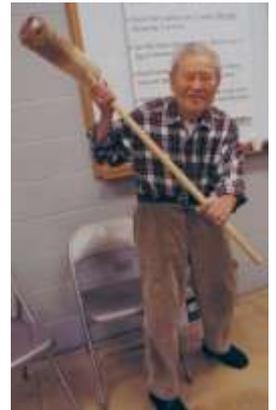


Mochi Thanks

I wish to thank the Izui family, the Kanemoto family, and D. Fujii for their assistance on December 21, 2014 washing the rice and setting up for mochitsuki. I also wish to thank the many people who helped clean up and put away the tables after the festivities. It was a successful event with about eighty visitors. For next year, let us have even more participants pounding the rice.

Thank you all for your involvement.

Tomio Tademoto, Chairman



Photos by Jane Morishige and Alice Murata

World Dobo Conference 2013 Report: The Chicago Frontier, Part I

By Ann Yi

I was privileged to be one of nine delegates from BTC to attend the 11th Annual World Dobo Conference in Kyoto, Japan in May of 2013. Many thanks to BTC for sponsoring part of my trip. On December 15, I presented the fourth and final talk of the four delegates who agreed to present lay talks about the conference. This is the first of a two-part article summarizing and supplementing that talk.

Introduction

Higashi Honganji (HH) periodically hosts the World Dobo Conference at different locations around the world. “Dobo,” according to Rev. Patti Nakai, translates as “Fellow Traveler on the Path.” Shinran insisted on viewing himself as a fellow student of the Dharma, not as a teacher or leader. Dobo therefore points to the shared experience of learning.



BTC has a strong relationship with HH, a large Buddhist Jodo Shinshu sect with a membership that numbers in the millions (and this is just one of

the various Shin sects). BTC’s ministers have all been ordained by HH. We are not technically an HH temple in an administrative sense; BTC is an independent temple, but our teachings are grounded firmly in Shin and HH scholarship. That means that HH, for me, had an allure similar to what Catholics might feel for the Vatican. In a spiritual sense, visiting HH felt like a pilgrimage.

Physically, HH is a large gated temple complex with several buildings, some religious, some administrative (see map pictured above). All of our services were held

in the Founder’s Hall, which is the largest building. The Founders Hall is about the size of a basketball court and completely lined with tatami mats. The central image is of Shinran Shonin, not Amida Buddha. (The Amida Buddha is the central image in the Amida Hall, which is currently undergoing renovation.)



Shinran’s statue is dark (see photo). I had expected Shinran’s image to be glowing with blazing lights and gold, but it’s not. It’s almost...dreary. Perhaps they feel that light would damage the old wood carving. But there might be another explanation.

Conference keynote speaker, Rev. Yūtai Ikeda, wrote an essay entitled “Liberation Through the Nembutsu” (translated into English by Michael Conway). He says on pages 9-10:

The Japanese word for Shinran Shonin’s image literally means “true shadow,” and shadows appear through light. The image of Shinran Shonin here in the Founder’s Hall is a projection of the phrase Namu Amida Butsu, the “Buddha of Light” that forms Shinran’s backdrop.

Perhaps that’s why the image of Shinran is so dark and shadowy against the gold backdrop. You see light better when it is dark. You notice the dark more after you’ve seen light. It’s harder to perceive one without the experience of the other. It is in observing the contrast that you can see how different they are.

Rev. Ikeda’s Keynote Talk & The Wilderness

Rev. Ikeda’s main point was that we often try to live by reason alone. Reason can and does solve many problems, but the danger is when we come to believe that all problems are, in fact, solvable. We have, in essence, replaced TRUTH with MAN. Once you replace TRUTH with MAN, man lives solely to satisfy himself and not TRUTH.

Shakyamuni did not find awakening in logic. Every guru and teacher he met ultimately failed him. Every practice ultimately failed him. What succeeded was an illogical, non-common sense strategy: He ran away, he wandered off, he sat under a tree. We know how that story ends.

Rev. Ikeda then said something that managed to cut through my foggy, jet-lagged mind: **“The Buddha, in order to become awakened, had to go into the wilderness.”**

The Buddha’s story is never quite presented in that light. That interpretation had never occurred to me before. Yet it makes sense. The historical Buddha grew up surrounded by family and servants. Even when he started sneaking out of the palace, he had a guide with him. When he first set out on his own, he may have been alone, but he went with the intent of finding teachers to mold him. He went to teacher after teacher, joined group after group, and nothing worked. The moment when he decided to leave it all, when he finally sat down with no goals and no direction – that was probably the very first time he ever wanted, tried, and succeeded in being completely alone with no plans not to be alone. He cast himself out of all civilization and into the wilderness, both the wilderness of his mind and the wilderness of the country.

The wilderness is the opposite of civilization. The Buddha had to leave civilization with its traditions, prejudices, organized groups, and so-called gurus in order to attain awakening. To see light clearly, he ventured into the shadow.

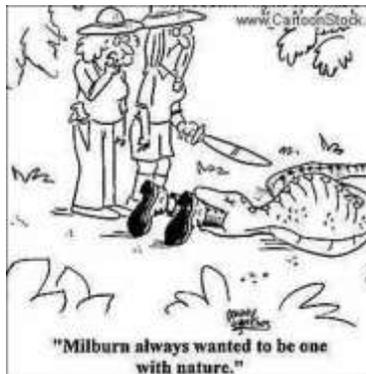
This second half of this article will be published in a future issue of the BTC Bulletin.

... Gassho to Messiness

(Continued from Page 1)

Shinran found that instead of an awakening brought about by one's own efforts, he experienced what Dr. Amstutz called "the turning point of 'seeing the path' – the trans-volitional transformation." Rather than enlightenment as an acquisition, Shinran spoke of *shinjin* as the gift of awareness. The metaphor of ice turning into water applies here if we think of ourselves as hardened chunks of ego-attachment being dissolved by the warm ocean that embraces us.

Where other Buddhist schools and some early interpretations of the Pure Land teachings speak of awakening as something to happen eventually in our future, Shinran experienced it as the gift that is being opened in each thought-moment (*nembutsu*) of here and now. With the recognition of our continually arising *bonno* (defilements of greed, anger and stupidity), the teachings of Jodo Shinshu "embrace the messiness, the complexity of life," as Dr. Amstutz said. He showed many PowerPoint slides of cartoons which parody the oversimplistic concept of oneness (see example). The jokes revealed the bitter fact that in the West we tend to present Buddhism as a facile rejection of dualism, glossing over the complex multi-faceted realities of day-to-day life.



... What's Past is Prologue?

(Continued from page 1)

But who are we? Our foundation emerges from the Japanese American community of Chicago. This cultural history shapes our current character. And this community remains at the core of our paid membership (if not attendance). But it is increasingly difficult to ignore the fact this membership core – the Nisei and Sansei generation – is in transformation (my gentle euphemism for "aging").

It is not just us of course. The question of identity is being asked in Jodo Shinshu communities across the United States. The reasons are familiar: acculturation, loss of ethnic identity, dispersal of communities, and of course, the aging of the 2nd and 3rd generations. So looking ahead, who will we be? BTC's old friend Dr. Haneda challenged the emphasis on ethnicity and

For me, the seminar made me see *tariki*, the "Power Beyond Self" in a different way – to recognize that the Life which is living us (as in the Higashi Honganji slogan) includes and works through our vast unconscious. The formless, inexpressible Amida is not only everything outside of and around me, but Amida's five kalpas ("long eons of time") of contemplation and ten kalpas of fulfilling Its innermost aspiration is a symbolic description of my own unconscious, filled with the thoughts, words, and actions of the many lives that influenced my life. Even though we don't remember anything about the first few years of our life, we know those years were shaped by the interaction with our parents and others. How much more so is our life a product of all the history that occurred even before our birth.

I am grateful to Dr. Amstutz for bringing me a new appreciation of Shinran's significance. Although we want to show Jodo Shinshu's connection to "general" Buddhism, Dr. Amstutz reminded us that in North America, the Shin temples haven't done enough to emphasize the unique advances of Shinran's teachings. Just as the *nembutsu* teachings inspired the common people in medieval Japan with its encouragement of equality and resilience, Shin Buddhism could help modern Westerners deal with our own and others' unconscious minds in a way that other forms of Buddhism don't address. By freeing us from the anxiety of "staying in control," opening us up to a creativity beyond our petty calculation and demonstrating how we are actively involved with each other, the teachings of Jodo Shinshu may prove to be for many of us the most effective presentation of Buddhism for living in our messily complex world.

culture in our temples, arguing that the future of Buddhist temples in the US was as learning communities.² Not to abandon the old traditions and cultural emphasis, but rather to acknowledge them as secondary priorities. Our primary priority according to Haneda, is the living tradition of Buddhism.

For this we are well positioned. In an earlier article I described the selection of Rev. Patti Nakai as our resident minister as a "slam dunk" for BTC. This is because of her capacity for making the Dharma relevant and her passion for teaching. For those of you who are members but have not recently connected with the BTC, please come and visit. Sit in on a class, if there's room. And to our members and regulars, let's start discussing the future. What will we be?

¹ Becoming the Buddha in L.A. (WGBH, Boston)

² <http://shindharmanet.com/course/reading/future5/>

Buddha 'Bout Town: Buddhist & Cultural Happenings

❁ **February 16: Annual Day of Remembrance Examines Heart Mountain Resistance.** Location: Chicago History Museum. This annual event commemorates the 1942 executive order that led to the incarceration of some 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II. This year's presentation will be "Heart Mountain: Conscience, Loyalty, and the Constitution." This work, assembled from historical sources, tells the story the Wyoming concentration camp where 63 young men who refused induction fared in World War II-era federal court. Local actors led by director Keith Uchima with Pearl Paramadilok will perform. The free program will start at 2 p.m. and is open to the public. For more information, visit www.cjahs.org, call 773.275.0097 ext. 222 or email legacy@jasc-chicago.org.

❁ **February 22: 31st Annual Asian American Coalition (AAAC) of Chicago's Lunar New Year Celebration, "Beyond the Bamboo Ceiling."** Location: Hyatt Regency O'Hare. Political officeholders are expected to be in attendance, as are the consuls general representing many Asian nations.

The evening will commence with a reception and exhibits at 5 pm, banquet and award presentations follow, with performances by Tsukasa Taiko and members of the Fujima Ryu of Chicago. For more information, visit www.aacchicago.org, or e-mail info@aacchicago.org or call 773.728.7171.

ONGOING

❁ **The Field Museum** features Buddhist art and artifacts in its permanent sections devoted to China and Tibet.

❁ **The Art Institute** features large collections of Buddhist statuary and art in its Alsdorf Galleries and in its collections of Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Korean art. Additional Buddhist art in other galleries can be found using the search tool available at the Art Institute site: www.artic.edu/aic/collections/

❁ **The Smart Museum of Art** at the University of Chicago features rotating works of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean art, often with Buddhist themes. Visit smartmuseum.uchicago.edu/exhibitions/asian-art/ for current highlights.

❁ **Please send information** on other Buddhist and/or Japanese cultural events in the Chicago area to: BTCbuledtr@hotmail.com



February Temple Events & Activities Guide

- ❁ See Calendar on page 8 for specific dates.
- ❁ Up-to-date details and last-minute changes are available on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/budtempchi.
- ❁ All events are free, held at the Temple (unless otherwise noted), and open to the public.

➤➤➤➤ Special Services & Events ◀◀◀◀

- ❁ Feb. 9 – Nirvana Day
- ❁ Feb. 16, 11 am – Lay Speaker, annual Pet Memorial
- ❁ Feb. 23, 11 am, Brotherhood Sunday – A chaplain from Jesse Brown VA Medical Center will be the guest speaker.

🔔 Regular Sunday Services 🔔

- ❁ Religious Service (in English) – Sundays, 11 am.
- ❁ Dharma Sunday School (for children) – Second and fourth Sundays, 11 am.
- ❁ Shotsuki Hoyo (Monthly Memorial Service) – The first Sunday of the month at 11 am (in English) and 1 pm (in Japanese).
- ❁ Lay Speaker Sunday – Third Sunday of month, 11 am.

🏠 Meetings, Socials, Volunteering 🏠

- ❁ Asoka Society – Third Saturday, 1 pm. Social includes refreshments.
- ❁ Board Meeting – Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: February 23.
- ❁ Bulletin mailing & submissions – Mailing is conducted the 2nd-to-last Friday of every month, at 10 am. Submissions are due eight days prior to the mailing on Thursday, 6 pm. See page 3 for details on submissions.

*no regrets
come as you are
nirvana day*

- William Shehan, fiercebuddhist.org

📖 Education & Meditation 📖

- ❁ Introduction to Buddhism – This 4-week course is held periodically throughout the year. visit budtempchi.org for the schedule or e-mail Rev. Nakai at rev.eshin.patti23@gmail.com.
- ❁ Buddhism Study Class – Wednesdays, 7 to 8:30 pm. No previous Buddhism study required.
- ❁ Meditation – Thursdays, 7:30 pm and Sundays, 9 am.
- ❁ Sutra Study Class – Second or third Sunday of the month (tentative), 12:30 to 2 pm. No previous Buddhism study required. This month: February 16.

☀ Cultural Activities ☀

- ❁ Calligraphy (Japanese brush writing) – First and third Tuesdays, 7:30 pm. Currently on hiatus. Contact temple if interested.
- ❁ Chinese Movement (Qigong) – Every Tuesday morning, 11 am to noon. Call Dennis Chan 312-771-6087 for information & to register.
- ❁ Crafts Group – First & third Saturdays, 10 am to noon.
- ❁ Japanese Fencing (Kendo) – Dojo sessions held every Tuesday from 8 to 10 pm at Bethany United Church. Call Bob Kumaki, 847-853-1187 for info.
- ❁ Japanese Language School (children or adults) – Every Saturday, 10 am. Call Temple to register.
- ❁ Japanese Swordsmanship (Iaido) – Mondays, 7 to 9 pm.
- ❁ Taiko (BTC Kokyo Taiko Drum Troupe) – Fridays, 7 to 9pm.



BTC CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2014

日本語の 祥月法要
2月2日 午後1:00 時

See Temple Events & Activities Guide on page 7 for more details.
Events may be cancelled or moved after press time due to unforeseen circumstances.
Check www.facebook.com/budtempchi for the most up-to-date changes.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 10am Japanese 10am Crafts
2 9am Meditation 11am Shotsuki Hoyo (English) 1pm Shotsuki Hoyo (Japanese)	3 7pm Iaido	4 11am Qigong	5 7pm Buddhism Study Class	6 7:30pm Meditation	7 7pm Kokyo Taiko	8 10am Japanese
9 9am Meditation 11am Dharma School 11am Service – Nirvana Day	10 7pm Iaido	11 11am Qigong	12 7pm Buddhism Study Class	13 6pm Bulletin submissions due 7:30pm Meditation	14 7pm Kokyo Taiko	15 10am Japanese 10am Crafts 1pm Asoka Society
16 9am Meditation 11am Service – Lay Speaker & Pet Memorial 12:30pm Sutra Study	17 7pm Iaido	18 11am Qigong	19 7pm Buddhism Study Class	20 7:30pm Meditation	21 10am Bulletin mailing 7pm Kokyo Taiko	22 10am Japanese
23 9am Meditation 11am Service – Brotherhood Sunday, guest speaker 11am Dharma School 12:30pm Board Meeting	24 7pm Iaido	25 11am Qigong	26 7pm Buddhism Study Class	27 7:30pm Meditation	28 7pm Kokyo Taiko	

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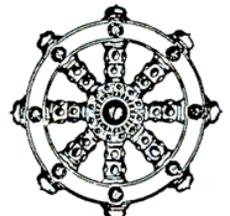
Flip it over for details on the specific events.

Never miss a Temple event again!



Rev. Patti Nakai, Resident Minister
Rev. Yukei Ashikaga, Minister Emeritus
Rev. Gyomay M. Kubose (1905-2000), Founding Minister

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



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