



# The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN



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### Resident Minister

Rev. Patti Nakai

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## Summer is Dance Season

Summer is the season for Bon Odori, the Japanese folk dances done in a circle. We say we dance in honor of our loved ones who've "gone away," but actually they are very much with us, especially enjoying the fun we're having at the Bon Odori gathering.

You don't have to wait for our temple's Bon Odori on Saturday, August 11 (practices start July 31 Tuesday). The Midwest Buddhist Temple in Lincoln Park is starting their Bon Odori practices on June 25 in preparation for their Bon Odori on Saturday, July 7. And if you're able to travel, the Buddhist temples in Hawaii and on the west coast will be having their Bon Odori festivals all through the month of July and into early August. And don't forget our Eastern Buddhist League "neighbors": New York, Seabrook (New Jersey), Ekoji (Fairfax, Virginia) and Twin Cities (Minnesota). They are also celebrating Obon with dancing open to the public.

I won't go into the standard explanation of Obon (you can read my "anti-Obon" story on Facebook) but any explanation is good as an excuse to put on your dancing shoes and be a part of the crowd stepping along to songs connecting us to past generations

## Wash the Dishes

What is the essence of Buddhism? In his collection of essays, *The Center Within*, Rev. Gyomay Kubose (1905-2000) uses this story as an answer:

A novice monk approached the teacher and said, "Please teach me Buddhism." The teacher asked, "Have you eaten?" The novice replied, "Yes." The teacher said, "Then wash the dishes."

Rev. Kubose goes on to say that after eating it is only natural to wash the dishes. This way of naturalness is the Buddhist way. Clouds appear in the sky due to causes and conditions, water flows from high to low; this is natural. Yet we humans, although part of nature, do not always live in this natural way and this is a cause of our suffering. Our ability to know what is natural is inhibited by our ego-self, our calculating self. How can we overcome these false selves and find our natural self? The Buddhadharma provides a path to this awakening, yet even here we find self-imposed obstacles.

Ironically, for Buddhists, one of the biggest obstacles to finding this naturalness is the practice of Buddhism. Too often, people mistake the physical activities, chants, forms and rituals for the true Buddhadharma. The Zen practitioner, who thinks that being able to sit with perfect form, focused on the breath, clearing the



Rev. Patti Nakai  
Resident Minister

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Bill Bohlman  
BTC President

Contact Bill at [budtempchi@aol.com](mailto:budtempchi@aol.com) or find him most Sundays after service at the information desk & bookstore.

This article continues on page 5 at 1.

- See Calendar (page 8) for specific dates.
- Up-to-date details/last-minute changes are available on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/budtempchi](http://www.facebook.com/budtempchi)
- **ALL EVENTS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, and held at the Temple (unless otherwise noted).**

➤➤➤ Special Temple Services and Events ◀◀◀

- July 29—**Temple Picnic (tentative)**

Regular Temple Services

- **Religious Service** (in English)—Sundays, 11 am.
- **Lay Speaker Sunday**—Usually 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday every month, 11 am.

Temple Meetings & Community Service

- **Bulletin mailing**—2<sup>nd</sup> to last Friday every month, 10 am; volunteers welcome. This month: July 20.
- **Bulletin submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Thursday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: July 5.
- **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: July 22.
- **Upaya Helpers** (refreshment service, community outreach, ping pong, etc.)
- **Cook It Forward** (feeding unhoused persons)—Mary Harvey <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CookItForward/>

Meditation & Buddhist Education

- **Buddhism Study Class**—Wednesdays, 7 to 8:30 pm. Periodic during summertime. Resumes after Labor Day.
- **Dharma School**—2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month. No classes during summertime. Resumes after Labor Day.



- **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. Next session planned for August 2018. E-mail Nancey Epperson: [naepperson14@gmail.com](mailto:naepperson14@gmail.com)
- **Meditation**—Sundays, 9:00 am and Thursdays, 7:30 pm. First-timers: come 10 minutes early for instruction. No sessions during summertime. Resumes after Labor Day.
- **Sutra Study Class**—2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, 12:30 to 2 pm. No previous Buddhism study required.

Social & Cultural Activities

- **Aikido** (“cooperation, not competition”)—Sundays, 5-7 pm. Email DJ Lortie [djaikibudo@gmail.com](mailto:djaikibudo@gmail.com).
- **Asoka Society** (refreshment service, social club, outings, etc.)—3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday every month, 1 pm.
- **Iaido** (Japanese Swordsmanship)—Mondays, 7-9 pm.
- **Qigong** (Chinese Movement)—Tuesdays, 11-12:30pm. Call Dennis Chan 312-771-6087 for info.
- **Taiko** (BTC Kokyo Taiko Drum Troupe)—**Adults**, Fridays, 7-9 pm. Email [kokyotaiko@yahoo.com](mailto:kokyotaiko@yahoo.com) to confirm. **Children**, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays at 11. Email [kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org](mailto:kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org) for appointments.
- **Ukulele Group**—Tuesdays, 1 pm. Email Ruth Abbinanti: [fabbinanti@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fabbinanti@sbcglobal.net)



**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.

**BTC BULLETIN**

**Team** Rev. Patti Nakai, Darryl Shishido (Editor), Nancey Epperson, Ann Yi

**Feedback & Submissions** Questions, comments, corrections & suggestions are welcome. Submissions are encouraged—articles, essays, book reviews, photos, poetry, news items, announcements, drawings, etc. 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](mailto:BTCbuledtr@hotmail.com) or speak with anyone on the BTC Team

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- ❁ 5/02 Darryl Shishido led chanting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year memorial gathering for James Gillespie at BTC
- ❁ 5/06 May memorial service.
- ❁ 5/11 Rev. Nakai participated in the Buddhist-Catholic Dialogue panel's presentation for the Chicago Archdiocese at Cardinal Meyer Center.
- ❁ 5/12 Rev. Nakai conducted ashes burial service for the late Richard N. Tanaka at Montrose Cemetery. Mr. Tanaka is survived by wife Dorothy and sons Robert and John.
- ❁ 5/13 Regular service.
- ❁ 5/19 Asoka Society met.
- ❁ 5/20 Hatsu Mairi service.
- ❁ 5/25 June bulletin mailed.
- ❁ 5/26 Workshop on rituals presented by Bishop Noriaki Ito
- ❁ 5/27 Tanjo-e and Dharma School service with guest speaker Bishop Ito. \*\*\* Board of Directors met.
- ❁ 5/28 Bishop Ito, Rev. Nakai and Darryl Shishido participated with the Chicago Japanese Buddhist Federation chanting at the annual Memorial Day gathering at Montrose Cemetery sponsored by the Japanese Mutual Aid Society.
- ❁ 5/29 Bon Odori dance teachers met to plan 2018 program.
- ❁ BTC was informed of the recent passing away of former temple members, Dennis and Roberta Takata. Mrs. Takata had taught Dharma School in the 1990s. No details were received about the family.

### RAFFLE MIXUP

Due to an error, some tickets for this year's raffle—June 17, 2018—sent to BTC in the mail were *discarded*.

If you are concerned that your tickets were among these, please inform us so that we may check our records and issue a refund, if you so desire.

Please inform us by regular mail or email; NO PHONE CALLS, please.

## THANK YOU!

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

### Service & Hospitality

- **Sunday Service Participants:** Sandra Adams, Bill Bohlman, Glenn Fujiura, Anna Idol, Lynnell Long, Bob Moore, Darryl Shishido, Miriam Solon, Dharma School students
- **Lay Leaders:** Sue Balsam, Wendy Fawcett, Lynnell Long, Darryl Shishido
- **Musicians:** Drea Gallaga, Ukulele Group
- **Audio Controls:** Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- **Bulletin Mailing:** Noreen Enkoji, Nancey Epperson, Ed Horiuchi, Haru Ito, Sadae Kasamoto, Amy Kawamoto, Lane Kometani, Alice Murata, Masa Nakata, Mary Ozaki
- **Sunday Service Refreshments:** Carrie Breitbach, Troy Cam & Amanda Dowds, Noreen Enkoji, Jacob & Wendy Fawcett, Haru Ito, Ruby Izui, Karen Kanemoto, Lynnell Long, Jane Morishige, Alice Murata, Frances Patzwaladt, Peggy Waters

### Temple Keepers

- **Maintaining Temple inside and out:** Tomio Tademoto
- **Cleaning Hondo & Nokotsudo:** Michael Yasukawa
- **Cleaning washrooms:** DJ and family
- **Emptying trash, putting it out for disposal:** Sue Balsam, Nancey Epperson, Adam Kellman
- **Sweeping and mopping:** John Sagami
- **Restocking paper towels and toilet paper:** Miriam Solon
- **Watering plants, laundering kitchen towels and aprons:** Alice Murata
- **Clearing trash from temple exterior spaces:** Wendy, Jacob and William Fawcett
- **Cleaning minister's residence:** Dharma School
- **Administrative Office Volunteers:** Nancey Epperson, Darryl Shishido
- **Maintaining and updating Temple website:** Ann Yi
- **Maintaining and updating Temple computer:** John Kelly, Gary T. Nakai
- **Setting up and taking down chairs & tables:** Too many to thank—thanks to all!

## ROAD TRIP! JOURNEY IN A STEP

“When spring came with its misty skies ... the road gods beckoned”, wrote Bashō in the prologue to his travel memoir, *Oku no hosomichi* (The Narrow Road to the Deep North). “The passing days and months are eternal travelers in time...Life itself is a journey.” Heeding the call he embarked, in May of 1689, on an odyssey to far-distant provinces. He returned to Edo in December, 1691.

Conceiving the journey as a spiritual exercise, Bashō first ventured to the sacred Mount Nikkō, “wreathed in spring mists, but still white with snow.” He visited the “the most sacred of all shrines,” established by visionary +priest and poet Kūkai (Kōbō Daishi, 774-835). Bashō then ascended the mountain “to a waterfall, which came pouring out of a hollow in the ridge and tumbled down into the dark green pool below in a huge leap of several hundred feet.”

Bashō hid in a craggy cave behind the waterfall, immersed in meditation and purification.

for a while I sit  
meditating by the falls—  
start of a summer retreat.



Bashō proceeded to what might be thought of as a walking meditation of two-and-a-half years. Deeply engaged in each moment, each step a journey, he produced a cascade of magnificent haiku.

Dharma School students celebrate the end of the semester  
(photo: Diana Schoendorff)



How much can I fit  
into a haiku format  
Oh no I'm out of



Toothpaste For Dinner.com

## My Ti Sarana

by Anna Idol

If something is put aside, it often stays that way for awhile. Thus it is that I am just now writing a short piece regarding my Ti Sarana, which occurred in 2007. At that time, I wished to ensure that my commitment to Buddhism was formal in order to perhaps be more useful to the temple.

Well, that actually didn't increase my usefulness to BTC as I was fully engaged in my work and didn't have the strength to do much more than gratefully attend services. In January of this year, I retired from my work and am now addressing the many items on the to-do list.

A Ti Sarana is to publicly acknowledge that one has made the vow to attempt to become one with the Buddha, the Teachings, and the Sangha.

My Dharma name is [Ye-Nen] "Thinking of the Kindness of Others," which is certainly appropriate given how much unwarranted kindness I have received from so many people. Having had in my life fine teachers and examples of compassion, I can only think of the phrase "Does the spoon taste the soup?" No—and I am the proof, but at least I know this. Someone has to be the Sancho Panza in this path, seeking the most pragmatic, least spiritual way to plod forward.

I did not come to Buddhism: I was surrounded by it. Buddhism was part of my earliest memories at home, where my mother, Louise Lokensgard,

## My Ti Sarana

(continued from previous column)

taught me how to sit in the lotus position (it was easy when I was three, but impossible now). She also imparted many of the teachings, and the values in Buddhism were part of the fabric of everyday life.

By high school, I realized that Buddhism was quite different from the WASP culture of my classmates, and in order to preserve North Shore norms and ensure not losing out on prom and tennis dates, religion and philosophy were not part of my conversation with my friends. I was a "closet Buddhist" and remained thus through much of my time working in businesses in which the leaders were mainly Catholic.

However, before engaging in my work life, I did study at the temple in the 1960s. Later, during the 1980s, politicians were outdoing one another in proclaiming that prayer should be returned to the schools. At that point, I thought that while I may not be a good Buddhist, I was definitely a Buddhist, and it was time to step up and acknowledge it.

One weekday afternoon in 1984 or 1985, I stopped by the temple and knocked on the door. It turned out that the man who opened the door was Rev. Gyomay Kubose, and as I bowed, I said that I was the daughter of Louise Lokensgard. He looked at me intently, grabbed my arm, whacked me on the back and said: "You are, you are! Let's have tea." As we sat together, I asked Rev. Kubose what I needed to do to return to the temple. He said, "You're here now."

And so it has been ever since.

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## Wash the Dishes

(continued from page 1)

the mind of wandering thoughts is Buddhism, is mistaken. The monk, who thinks that controlling his desires and following all the other restrictions is Buddhism, is mistaken. The person, who thinks that chanting the teachings or repeating a certain phrase is Buddhism, is mistaken. Unless these are recognized as nothing more than tools to help achieve an awakening, the ego-self will never be overcome. To the contrary, this ego-self is reinforced by our self-congratulatory attitude of how well we do these practices. This is why Shinran Shonin (1173-1263), said that all practice is useless. When the ritual becomes the message, the message is lost. In Buddhism the message is to awaken to life as it truly is, not as we perceive it to be. The ritual is simply the tool to help us hear the message.

This human failing of confusing the ritual for the message is certainly not confined to Buddhism. All of the world's major religions consider themselves to be religions of peace. However, throughout history, and continuing until today, millions have been slaughtered in the name of religion. Why has this occurred? Simply, people have confused the rituals and practice with the true message. My father was once asked why he said he had no religion even though he believed in God. He replied, "Everybody says they believe in one God. It seems to me they are just arguing over what His name is." Buddhism does not have belief in a divine being; however, it does believe in the underlying truth: if we live a life of naturalness, we will fulfill the message of our beliefs. Go into the kitchen of your mind and wash the dishes

## Tanjo-e Chanting & Rituals Workshop

In May 2018, BTC was honored to host Bishop Noriaki Ito of the Higashi Honganji Betsuin in Los Angeles. For the Tanjo-e service on Sunday May 27, Bishop Ito delivered the Dharma Talk, and also the Children's Dharma message.



On Saturday May 26, he gave a workshop on chanting and ritual. A major portion of the workshop was devoted to Shinran's epic poem ShoShinGe. Bishop Ito helped us improve our phrasing on the main part of the chant. He helped us with the melodies for the Dobo Wasans – usually chanted after ShoShinGe in Los Angeles, but not yet at BTC. He gave pointers on striking the gong, including proper handling of the bachi and he also explained the significance of symbols on the altar. About 15 people attended the workshop.



(photos: Sandra Adams)

## Summer is Dancing

(continued from page 1)

(Japanese or not) with themes of family support, appreciating the natural world and cooperating with others in work and recreation. You don't have to come to the practice sessions but they provide the exercise we don't get enough of and a chance to mingle with longtime veteran and newbie dancers. In Bon Odori no one has to be in perfect sync with everyone else – instead of rigid conformity, the circle dances are about everyone doing the same simple steps in our own diverse ways (including “not that right foot, move your other right foot”).

However, some people take “do your own thing” to a dangerous extreme. One year at the Midwest Buddhist Temple's Bon Odori there was a middle-aged woman, tall and slender, dressed in a flowing garment who was intent on dancing like Isadora Duncan, waving her arms high, kicking up her feet and twirling around. She didn't move with the circles but danced pretty much in one spot amidst the crowd of dancers. As probably as everyone else felt, I hated to come near her because she didn't seem to care if she bumped into people or if people ran into her flailing arms and legs. Thank goodness she only appeared that one year. I can imagine some elderly MBT member half her size must've gone up to her and told her off.

In a way, the incident is a metaphor for what the Buddha's teaching points out to us. Each of us arrives in the world believing we are the only life form that matters and everything else is just scenery and props for our performance. We are “the star” and so we aren't aware that our artistic movements may be hurting others and preventing them from expressing themselves. Buddhism wakes us up from that delusion of being a “legend in our own mind.” In becoming aware of our interconnection with and the reality of sharing this world with a wide variety of beings, we take our steps more mindfully and help others to step ahead with confidence that their life equally matters in our universe.



## Summer is Dancing

(continued from previous column)

In our lives there are moments where things go so wrong, “I shouldn't have said that,” “Why are they so mean?” “How can I go on without her?” But during the precious couple hours of Bon Odori we can experience with body and mind the harmony and joy of Oneness – connecting not only with those present around us, but the unseen lives of past and future. I'm sure there are other activities that produce the same sensation of “going with the flow,” but as many of you know, I'm a hopeless Bon Odori addict. If you haven't yet experienced the high of Bon Odori, this may be the year you get hooked.



Photo courtesy Orange County Buddhist Church

### ***Bon Odori Practice Starts July 31!***

BTC's Bon Odori this year is on Saturday, August 11 at 7:30pm. There will be four practice sessions. Each session starts at 7:30pm:

Tuesday, July 31  
Thursday, August 2  
Tuesday, August 7  
Thursday, August 9

The dances in the program utilize the props pictured at left: sensu (folding fan, lower left), uchiwa (round flat fan, center), tenugui (towel, not pictured), kachi-kachi (castanets, upper left) and bo (sticks, right). The temple has a limited supply of each of these, so please bring your own, if you have them



# The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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## JULY 2018 CALENDAR



See page 2 for details on specific events. Events may be canceled or moved.  
.Check [www.facebook.com/budtempchi](http://www.facebook.com/budtempchi) for the most up-to-date changes.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 11 am Monthly Memorial Service 5:00 pm Aikido	<b>2</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>3</b> 11 am Tai Chi 1 pm Ukulele	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>10 am Bulletin Submissions due</b>	<b>6</b> Taiko 7PM By appointment	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 11 am Regular Service 5 pm Aikido	<b>9</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>10</b> 11 am Tai Chi 1 pm Ukulele	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Taiko 7PM By appointment	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 11 am Regular Service 5 pm Aikido	<b>16</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>17</b> 11 am Tai Chi 1 pm Ukulele	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> <b>10 am Bulletin Mailing</b> Taiko 7PM By appointment	<b>21</b> 1 pm Asoka Society
<b>22</b> 11 am Regular Service 12:30 pm Board Meeting 5 pm Aikido	<b>23</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>24</b> 11 am Tai Chi 1 pm Ukulele	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Taiko 7PM By appointment	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 11 am Regular Service and Temple Picnic 5 pm Aikido	<b>30</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>31</b> 11 am Tai Chi 1 pm Ukulele 7:30 pm Bon Odori Practice			Taiko 7PM By appointment	