



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

MARCH 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

“Bum” by Rev. Gyoko T. Saito..2

A Starting Point.....4

Rev. & Mrs. Kubose.....5

Mission Statement.....5

Thank you Board Members...6

Temple News.....7

Thank you.....7

Calendar.....8



HONORING OUR TEACHERS

Compassion means to be one in feeling, to really become one with all beings. Compassion does not mean to pity or have mercy upon. I use the word compassion instead of mercy or pity because mercy and pity convey dualism, the strong and the weak. ... To “enlighten all” means to enlighten oneself about all others, to see things as they are. To see things without the distortions of our own egos is to see reality as it is.

-- Rev. Gyomay Kubose, *Tan Butsu Ge: Song of the Life of No Regret*



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Introduction to Rev. Saito’s article:

By Rev. Patti Nakai, Resident Minister

In the following piece (next page) Rev. Saito is able to identify with a man he encountered near the temple. It shows that when we can see ourselves as beggars and scammers, we cannot claim the luxury of making moral judgments of others.



“Bum” by Rev. Gyoko T. Saito

(from *Meditations on Death and Birth*, privately published by Joan Sweany, 1983)

From Shinran’s *Gutoku-sho*: “The heart of Gutoku is such that I am inwardly foolish, outwardly wise.”

Who is the clever fellow?
I am.
Why?
Because I suffer.

And I think you readers are clever fellows, too.

Once Mr. S was waiting for a bus under the hot summer sun. He noticed a man of about thirty, barefooted, wearing a dirty T-shirt and jeans, coming toward him carrying a newspaper. By the way the fellow was walking, he seemed exhausted. It looked as though he might fall down any minute. Suddenly he stopped in front of Mr. S, pointed to the want-ad section of the paper, and said, “I’m looking for a job. How many blocks do I have to walk to get to this place?” Mr. S looked at the paper. The place was really far.

“It’s about fifty blocks.” When the man heard that, he looked at him without any life, with hopeless eyes. And starting to take a couple steps, he looked as though he was going to collapse.

Human nature is originally good, according to an ancient saying. Mr. S felt such pity that he stopped the man and gave him bus fare, saying, “It’s too far to walk. Take the bus.” As soon as the fellow received the money, he suddenly came to life again and started to walk away happily. Then Mr. S saw him droop into his previous manner and approach someone else, pointing to the same newspaper in the same way.

It was quite a sophisticated game for getting money out of people. This bum was the clever fellow. Yet, though our approach may be even more sophisticated than his, don’t we do exactly the same kind of thing?

Higan means to “go across to the other shore.” How do we go across from this shore of the clever fellow to the other shore, the world of foolishness and ordinariness? According to the Buddhist parable, there is only a pale narrow bridge, a few inches wide, stretching across that river, and the bridge is drenched in flames and lashed by huge waves. How do we cross this bridge which is covered with the fires of anger and washed by the waters of greed? To this, the parable says something quite interesting – that only when a person honestly starts to seek the truth and takes a step forward does he suddenly come to this bridge covered with angry flames and greedy waves. When Mr. S gave money to the bum, he became the truth seeker. He took one step toward enlightenment. He was the person who did good, who sought the truth. But where this mind of *dana* [Sanskrit for “generosity”] appeared in his mind, he suddenly saw the huge river of greedy water and angry flames. [continued on next page]

[continued from previous page]

In other words, when he saw the bum trying to trick other people, he saw the anger and greed which were in his own mind. When he felt he was tricked by the bum, he felt he was up against the huge river of fire and water. Thus, even though he had done good, he was digging his own grave.

More positively, I say: So long as we seek, we will definitely be confused.

How did Shinran transcend this contradiction? He said that it was by meeting his teacher Honen, who appeared to be utterly foolish but whose inner life was deeply wise. That is, Honen had no illusions about his being, its capacity and his own stupidity. His insight was deeper than anyone else's. By meeting such a person as Honen, Shinran came to realize how foolish the clever fellow's way of life really is.

After I met that bum, after I felt I was tricked, I then realized that the essence of my being was no different from his essence. So this bum is the Bodhisattva who reflects the bottomless ignorance of my own being.



Rev. Gyoko T. Saito - Photo by Jim Payne

INTRODUCTION of Rev. Kubose

By **Bill Bohlman, BTC President**

“Every journey has a starting point; for me it was the writings of Rev. Kubose that truly started me on the Dharma path. For this I am eternally grateful.”



Bill Bohlman, BTC President
Contact Bill at budtempchi@aol.com



A Starting Point

“It seems that the little things are important in our life. In fact our lives are made up of little things. They make life spark just as a pinch of salt makes the food taste better, or a drop of oil makes a machine run smoothly. If through this book joy and serenity are found and a meaning to life is discovered, the purpose of this book will be fulfilled.”

This paragraph from the preface to Rev. Kubose’s book *Everyday Suchness* rings especially true for me as it was through this book, and his other book *The Center Within*, that my journey on the path of the Buddhadharma truly began. Since the late 1960’s, I had been aware of Buddhism but had never found anything that seemed to fit my life. I often joke that most of the books at that time were written by old dead Englishmen. The Buddhism presented was one of austerity and a rejection all worldly pleasures. Although the basic concepts appealed to me, I could not see how they could be incorporated into my life. This changed when I discovered the works of Rev. Kubose.

My introduction to Rev. Kubose’s books was through the audio version of *The Center Within* given to me by a friend. The teachings presented had a depth to them yet were understandable. Gone were the obscure terminology and the demands of the rejection of everyday life. Rather, there was an easily understood presentation of the application of the teachings to everyday life. My journey on the path of the Buddhadharma had now truly begun.

Through the years, I have had the opportunity to share the works of Rev. Kubose with many others with the hope that these books will have the same impact on their lives as they have had on mine. At times I have sent copies of *Everyday Suchness* to friends going through family tragedies. One friend’s son had been killed by a hit and run driver. When I spoke to him after having sent him a copy he thanked me. He said that although the pain was still there, he had finally been able to overcome his anger. Here was a case of the serenity that Rev. Kubose hoped his book would bring.

Unfortunately, by the time I came to BTC Rev. Kubose only spoke occasionally at special services. However, when he did, one could sense his deep appreciation for his teacher Rev. Haya Akegarasu and Rev. Kubose’s desire to fulfill his teacher’s charge to bring the Dharma to America in an accessible form. By using a straightforward manner, free of terminology, with a relatable application to common themes, Rev. Kubose created a desire to learn more about the essence of the teachings. Every journey has a starting point; for me it was the writings of Rev. Kubose that truly started me on the Dharma path. For this I am eternally grateful. Namu Amida Butsu.



Rev. Gyomay and Mrs. Minnie Kubose - From the photo archives on the BTC website



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.

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:

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: bulletin.btc@gmail.com

Thank you to our Board officers!



(L-R) Treasurer - Glenn Fujiura, Auditor - Stan Oda, President - Bill Bohlman, Corporate Secretary - Diana Schoendorff, VP-Religious Affairs - Wendy Fawcett

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES:

- Aikido** - djaikibudo@gmail.com
- Asoka Society** - 3rd Saturday: 1pm
- laido** – chicagoiaido@gmail.com
- Qi-Gong** - Dennis Chan 312-771-6087
- Taiko** - kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org

BLOOD DRIVE

Be a Beacon of Hope

**Saturday, March 21, 2020
8:15am-3:00pm**

The Gregg And Robyn Oshita Foundation
Japanese American Service Committee
4427 N. Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60640

Schedule your appointment:
Visit versiti.org/ll or call 1-800-7-TO-GIVE

Photo ID Required-Drink plenty of water prior to donating.
Appointments are encouraged

2020 Census

Every 10 years, the U.S. government counts every person living in the U.S., through the census. The census is a short questionnaire that asks basic information about your household and the people who live in it. Your personal responses are confidential.

The next census will start in **March 2020**. Make sure that you are counted to get your **fair** share of resources and representation!

Responding to the census is quick and simple.

- **You can respond online.** The Census Bureau will send you instructions in **mid-March 2020**. Go to the official census website, enter your household ID, and then answer the questions.
- **You can respond by phone.** Call the Census Bureau to answer the census by phone and ask questions about the census.
- If you do not respond to the census online or by phone, the Census Bureau will mail you a **paper questionnaire**.

If you do not respond, starting in May 2020, a census employee might come to your home to ask for the information in person. You can still respond online or respond by phone through June 2020.

You can find more information about the census at www.countusin2020.org/resources



TEMPLE NEWS MARCH 2020

- 1/01** New Year's Day service.
1/05 Monthly memorial service. *** Rev. Nakai conducted 49th day service for B. Dianne Adams at BTC.
1/09 Rev. Nakai participated in groundbreaking ceremony for the Brooklyn, NY project of the Buddhist-Catholic partnership for Green Affordable Housing
1/11 Kokyo Taiko performed at Kagami Biraki (New Year's celebration) at the Japanese American Service Committee.
1/12 Dharma School service. Lay speaker for Dharma School and main talk was Nancey Epperson. *** Rev. Nakai spoke at Ho-on-ko service at Midwest Buddhist Temple.
1/14 Movie matinee.
1/19 Regular Sunday service. *** Board of directors met.
1/22 Rev. Nakai attended ONE Northside's clergy breakfast at Unity Lutheran Church. *** Rev. Nakai attended the Chicago Japanese American Council meeting at the Lincolnwood Library.
1/23 Bon Odori exercise class.
1/24 February bulletin mailed.
1/26 Eitaikyo and Dharma School service. *** General membership meeting.



THANK YOU!

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

Sunday Service Participants: Sue Balsam, Bill Bohlman, Greg Burkhardt, Nancey Epperson, Glenn Fujiura, Joseph Hermes, Anna Idol, Stan Oda, Francine Rattenbury, April Sakaeda, Diana Schoendorff, Miriam Solon, Esther, Kestrel
Lay Leaders: Sue Balsam, Bill Bohlman, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Gary Nakai, Miriam Solon
Musicians: Drea Gallaga
Audio Controls: Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
Bulletin Mailing: Dennis Chan, Antoinette D'Vencets, Noreen Enkoji, Arron Guiles, Sadae Kasamoto, April Kellman, Masa Nakata, Alice Murata
Sunday Service Refreshments: Bill Bohlman, Antoinette D'Vencets, Noreen Enkoji, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Anna Idol, Haru Ito, Chuck Izui, Ellen Johnson, Karen Kanemoto, Laura Muraoka, Alice Murata, Jan Saiki, Kimi Sugano, Tademoto Family.



TEMPLE KEEPERS

- Maintaining Temple inside and out:** Tomio Tademoto
Cleaning Hondo & Nokotsudo: Michael Yasukawa
Extensive landscape maintenance: Tomio Tademoto
Cleaning washrooms: DJ and family
Emptying trash, putting it out for disposal: Adam Kellman, Glenn Fujiura
Sweeping, mopping, vacuuming: Mary Harvey, Michael Yasukawa
Restocking paper towels and toilet paper: Miriam Solon
Watering plants, laundering kitchen towels and aprons: Ruth Abbinanti, Alice Murata
Clearing trash and weeds from Temple exterior: Jacob Fawcett, Mary Harvey, Gary Nakai, Miriam Solon
Cleaning minister's residence: Miriam Solon, Dharma School
Administrative Office Volunteers: April Kellman
Maintaining and updating Temple website: Wendy Fawcett, Glenn Fujiura
Maintaining and updating Temple computer: Gary T. Nakai
Setting up and taking down chairs & tables: Too many to thank—thanks to all!



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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March 2020 Calendar Events may be canceled or moved:
Check www.facebook.com/budtempchi
for the most up-to-date changes.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9am Meditation 11am Monthly Memorial Rev. Saito Memorial	2 7pm laido	3 11am Qi-Gong	4	5 7:30pm Meditation	6 7pm Taiko	7
8 9am Meditation 11am Service/Dharma School 5pm Aikido *Daylight Savings Time	9 7pm laido Bulletin Submission deadline	10 11am Qi-Gong	11	12 7:30pm Meditation	13 7pm Taiko	14
15 9am Meditation 11am Regular Service 5pm Aikido	16 7pm laido	17 11am Qi-Gong	18	19 7:30pm Meditation	20 7pm Taiko	21
22 9am Meditation 11am Spring Ohigan Service/Dharma School 5pm Aikido	23 7pm laido	24 11am Qi-Gong	25	26 7:30pm Meditation	27 7pm Taiko	28
29 9am Meditation 11am Service Rev. Gyomay Kubose Memorial /Founder's Day 12:30 Board Meeting 5pm Aikido	30 7pm laido	31 11am Qi-Gong				