



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

March 2021



Setting up for the monthly memorial service

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Still in the Pandemic by Rev. Patti Nakai

It was last year in mid-March that we closed the temple to all activities due to the Coronavirus pandemic. I remember the board saying they heard that things should get back to normal by the end of summer, so it was agreed to postpone our summer fundraiser Natsu Matsuri to the fall. But as the months passed, more and more scheduled activities for the year were cancelled not just locally but around the world. We saw the death toll for the U.S. reach 100,000 and soon it was 200,000, then 300,000 and now over 500,000. Eventually small gatherings were allowed in some places including our temple, but for the most part people stayed home and only went out for essential trips, masked up and keeping their distance from others. I don’t have to tell any of you about what a toll these past months have taken on our emotional lives.

In the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, our suffering comes from wanting things not to change, but now we realize things can change suddenly and not necessarily “for the better.” Yet having an understanding of impermanence means we can make plans, collaborate with others, direct our energies to causes we care about etc. without the heavy expectation of “it has to be THIS way.” In a metaphorical way, we’ve become “light on our feet,” anticipating changes in direction and rhythm as we move through life, instead of planting ourselves in a closed-minded position.

Even as more people receive the vaccine, we may be in this pandemic for all of this year and into the next. All we can do is muddle through as best we can and try to have patience for others who are also dealing with this disorienting time. Please take advantage of the activities our temple is able to offer – not just for keeping in touch with the Dharma but for the social interaction that we all need. Our temple has been fortunate to receive donations “beyond the usual” amounts from members and friends, so we are able to continue to bring spiritual support to those who seek it. Thank you to everyone for your continued support.



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Eastern Buddhist League “Virtual” Conference - Save the Date

This year instead of a gathering over the Labor Day weekend, the EBL conference will be online using Zoom over the Memorial Day weekend – May 29 and 30.

There will be services and discussions around the theme “Expressions of Gratitude” and instead of a banquet there will be a series of cooking lessons.

More information to come soon!



The 2021 BTC Scholarship

ELIGIBILITY – Applicant must be a high school senior or an undergraduate senior who has attended The Buddhist Temple of Chicago’s Dharma School and/or participated in one of the activities of BTC and is a paid member or listed on a family membership two years prior to the scholarship year according to BTC membership records.

CONTACT THE TEMPLE FOR THE APPLICATION FORM

Applications must be submitted by May 30.

Scholarships will be awarded during the Sunday Service on June 13th at 11 AM. Recipients will be notified by e-mail or telephone during the first week in June.



Scheduled activities – subject to change (TBD = to be determined later)

Note that in-person activities are subject to COVID-19 restrictions (mask required)

Weekly services – Sundays 11am - in-person, online Facebook Live.

Second Sunday is Children’s Dharma School service (no in-person classes Sept. 2020-June 2021)

Mindful midday (meditation and stretching) – Mondays 11am - in-person, online Zoom

Qigong (Chinese exercise) – Tuesdays 11am, online Zoom open to all, in-person limit 10 people

laido (martial art) –Mondays 6:30pm – in-person restricted to current members

Thursday Meditation - 7:15pm online Facebook Live

Sunday Meditation 9:30am – In-person only

Aikido – Sundays 5-7pm – in-person restricted to current members

Taiko TBD

For Zoom sign-in information see Event announcements on Facebook or contact Rev. Patti.

Deepest Sympathy

To the family and friends of

Sayoko Oshiro December 28, 2020

Jean Okumura February 1, 2021



By Bill Bohlman, BTC President

Contact Bill at budtempchi@aol.com

Our lives are filled with extremes. Joy and sorrow, love and hate, all these emotions, when taken to the extreme bring us suffering. The Buddhadharmā encourages living in the middle way.

Twice a year, at the Spring and Fall equinoxes, we hold a special service called O-Higan. During these times of year, the days and nights are of equal length. The temperature is moderate, between the heat of Summer and the cold of Winter. This balance represents the middle way. O-Higan means “the other shore.” A river is often a symbol used to explain our lives. Our ego driven desires trap us on the “shore of illusion.” Our ignorance causes us to see things as we want, not as they are. We run aimlessly up and down this shore trying to find a way to cross over to the shore of enlightenment. Only when we cross over will we be liberated from our suffering.

The middle way is not a life of compromise. The middle way is a life of awareness of the extremes, and by being aware, avoiding these extremes. When we think of hate and sorrow, seeing them as a cause of suffering seems obvious. Taken to the extreme, and allowed to linger, they almost certainly guarantee suffering. Sorrow, as a natural response to loss, can bring a sense of closure. Attachment to sorrow leads to misery. What about love and joy? How can such positive emotions be the cause of suffering?

When one lives in the middle way, there is an understanding that everything is impermanent. The past is gone. The future is yet to come. Only the eternal now exists. A joyful experience must be recognized as fleeting. Relish this joy while it lasts, but do not become attached to it. Attachment to joy only leads to suffering once the joy has passed.

Love of another person can be the source of great happiness. However, obsessive love results in jealousy, possessiveness and despair. Love of country or religion can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience. Fanatical love, leaving no room for the beliefs of others, has been the cause of countless wars all the way to the present.

To live in the middle way is to realize our interconnectedness with all of life. The events in our life, whether good or bad, are the result of all that has come before. How we react to these events influences the future. The choice is always ours. An awareness of the present moment, distinct from the past and future, helps us avoid extremes.

In our ignorance, we think life is about us. The Buddhadharmā shows us that this is not the case. We are a part of the universal oneness, the infinite light and life, wisdom and compassion. This is the “shore of enlightenment.” The middle way is our bridge to this other shore.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



March 2021 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 11am Mindful Midday 6:30pm laido	2 11am Qi-Gong	3	4 7:15pm Facebook Live meditation	5	6
7 9:30am Meditation 11am Monthly Memorial 5pm Aikido	8 11am Mindful Midday 6:30pm laido	9 11am Qi-Gong	10	11 7:15pm Facebook Live meditation	12	13
14 9:30am Meditation 11am Children's Dharma School Service 5pm Aikido	15 11am Mindful Midday 6:30pm laido	16 11am Qi-Gong	17	18 7:15pm Facebook Live meditation	19	20
21 9:30am Meditation 11am Spring Ohigan 5pm Aikido	22 11am Mindful Midday 6:30pm laido	23 11am Qi-Gong	24	25 7:15pm Facebook Live meditation	26	27
28 9:30am Meditation 11am Founders Day 5pm Aikido	29 11am Mindful Midday 6:30pm laido	30 11am Qi-Gong	31			