



The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

July 2021



Congratulations to BTC Scholarship winner Marcus Lortie (pictured in center, his parents DJ and Yukie to the left, Rev. Patti Nakai and Jerry Morishige on the right)

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Not Completely Opening Up by Rev. Patti Nakai

Although the Chicago area has dropped most COVID-19 restrictions, our temple is not quite ready to “go back to normal.” For the groups who meet at our temple with a limited number of people (less than ten), most decided that mask wearing is not required for those who are fully vaccinated. However, for Sunday morning service and memorial gatherings, we are still asking attendees to wear a mask and wash their hands upon entering.

The month of June has come and gone without our big summer festival, Natsu Matsuri. The board is discussing the possibility of having a drive-up food fair in the fall but it depends on whether we have enough volunteers to do the prep work or if we might consider an outside vendor as other Chicago-area churches and temples are using for their fundraisers.

We will not be having the large indoor Bon Odori this year, but will have a small outdoor circle dancing activity as part of the Obon service on Sunday August 15. We will only do a few well-known dances and people can come in their casual clothes with or without hapi coats. If you are interested in online Bon Odori dance practice, please contact me.

I hope eventually we will transition to more in-person gatherings and less online meetings. For the time being we will try doing “hybrid” like the board of directors meetings where we expect most members to attend in person but Zoom participation will be an option for the few who don't yet feel comfortable going out due to health concerns.

This fall I will be offering the 4-week “Brief Introduction to Buddhism” class as mainly an in-person class and Zoom participation will be available for only a limited number. I also hope to get a sutra study class going as an in-person class on a weeknight. Of course, this will depend on the level of interest and the possibility of another lockdown if there's a surge in virus infections.

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As I said in a previous article, we are learning in real time the truth of impermanence – having to shift our moves with sudden changes. It is an important lesson to learn, to not get too attached to our plans for the near and far future. In Buddhism, flexibility is a virtue because it means acting appropriately in the reality at hand, not rigidly following “has to be” rules created for past or imagined situations. In looking after our own well-being, we also do our best for the well-being of others, knowing their lives are intricately interwoven with ours. If there was a “good side” to the pandemic, it was demonstrating to us how much we affect each other and how much we are indebted to others for being able to live our lives. ☸

Congratulations to 2021 BTC Scholarship Winner – Marcus Lortie

After a long drought of no applicants, this year the Scholarship Committee headed by Jerry Morishige is happy to announce that Marcus Lortie has been awarded a BTC scholarship from the Kono Fund and the Murakishi Fund. Since moving to the U.S. from Japan, Marcus has been attending Sunday service with his parents, DJ and Yukie, and his brothers, Jared and Bryce. Marcus has been assisting his father who teaches the Aikido class and every week Marcus has been doing a thorough job of cleaning the temple restrooms. Marcus has graduated from Evanston Township High School and will be attending DePaul University in the fall. We wish Marcus great success in his college studies and express our appreciation for the continuing service he gives to our temple.



Scheduled activities – subject to change

Weekly services – Sundays 11am - in-person, some online Facebook Live
Second Sunday Children’s Dharma School service – on break for July and August
Qigong (Chinese exercise) – Tuesdays 11am - online Zoom and in-person
Iaido (martial art) – Mondays 6:30pm – in-person only
Thursday Meditation 7:15pm – on break until September (some pop-up events to be announced)
Sunday Meditation 9:30am – on break for July and August
Aikido (martial art) – Sundays 3-5pm – in-person only
Asoka Society (social gathering) – Saturday July 24 at 1pm
Kokyo Taiko (drums) – Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons
For more information, see our website or contact BTC

Deepest Sympathy

To the family and friends of

Terri Yamaguchi	January 4, 2021
Marion Ishii	April 18, 2021
Lillian Morimoto	May 23, 2021
Yoneo Fukuda	June 8, 2021



Books for Prisoners **By Bill Bohlman, BTC President**

Contact Bill at budtempchi@aol.com



A few years ago, we started to receive letters from prisoners on a fairly regular basis requesting books about Buddhism. To meet these requests we asked our temple members to bring in any books they were no longer going to read. Soon we had a supply of books to send to the prisoners. The challenge now was to comply with the various restrictions of the different jails and prisons; at times this has been difficult. However, a workable program developed.

Many times, we send books to a prisoner and we never hear from them again. Perhaps they were released, maybe they decided they had no further interest; we never know. Sometimes an ongoing exchange lasts for a little while before fading away; again the reason is unknown. However, at least one of the exchanges has lasted over three years and is still ongoing.

In 2018, a prisoner in Arizona reached out to us for books. She had been exposed to Buddhism previously and felt the teachings could help her in her current situation. At first, we sent her books by Rev. Gyomay Kubose and books by the Dalai Lama and Thich Nhat Hanh. These books explain Buddhist concepts in an understandable way and also give some instruction on meditation. Meditation is important for those confined as it allows them to calm their minds and find a place of peace in their world of chaos. As the months progressed, this prisoner found an answer to some of her suffering. She told us that through her practice she had been able to wean herself off the three drugs the jail had been giving her. She said that many of the other women wanted to be drugged up to endure their confinement, but she now preferred to be clear. In one letter she mentioned that she might face 20 years confinement but then said, "But on my way to my arraignment, handcuffed and shackled, I had this overwhelming feeling that I was OK and I felt this love surround me and I knew with the Buddha, Dharma and everything I have felt and learned, that I will be OK and get through this even being all alone."

This statement has resonated with me since I first read it. I could not help but think that this was an expression of the Power Beyond Self of which we speak. Here was a person who could feel lost in ongoing misery, yet she had found an inner peace knowing that she was not abandoned.

If you would like to help in this outreach, please bring your books to the temple. If you cannot come, contact me at budtempchi@aol.com for shipping instructions. Together we can help alleviate the suffering of those less fortunate. Namu Amida Butsu.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



July 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	2 Taiko 7pm	3
4 11am Monthly Memorial 3pm Aikido	5 Iaido 6:30pm	6 11am Qi-Gong	7	8	9 Taiko 7pm	10
11 11am Chanting Service (on Zoom, not FB Live) 3pm Aikido	12 Iaido 6:30pm	13 11am Qi-Gong	14	15	16 Taiko 7pm	17
18 11am Regular Service 3pm Aikido	19 Iaido 6:30pm	20 11am Qi-Gong	21	22	23 Taiko 7pm	24 1:00pm Asoka meeting
25 11am Regular Service 12:30 Board Meeting 3pm Aikido	26 Iaido 6:30pm	27 11am Qi-Gong	28	29	30 Taiko 7pm	31