



# The Buddhist Temple of Chicago BULLETIN

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## Resident Minister

Rev. Patti Nakai

## President

Bill Bohlman

## Dharma Lessons from *Moby Dick*

All men live enveloped in whale-lines. All are born with halters round their necks; but it is only when caught in the swift, sudden turn of death, that mortals realize the silent, subtle, ever-present perils of life. And if you be a philosopher, though seated in the whaleboat, you would not at heart feel one whit more of terror, than though seated before your evening fire with a poker, and not a harpoon, by your side.

--- Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*

When I started chemotherapy for breast cancer in June of 2017, one thing I did to pass time during the five-hour infusions was read *Moby Dick*, a long story of 135 chapters (420 pages in the edition I had). The story itself (about the pursuit of a large white whale named Moby Dick) is dramatic but what kept me reading was the colorful, well crafted prose. On finishing the book I could reflect back on it and appreciate its philosophical explorations especially from a Buddhist point of view.

In an internet search I saw that there is a 2014 book called *Zen and the White Whale* so it's not so far-fetched to read *Moby Dick* for its Buddhist lessons. There doesn't seem to be much evidence that the American author Herman Melville (1819-1891) was

## Ring the Bell

New Year's Day service at BTC is an opportunity to literally ring in the New Year. After service and before we toast the New Year, members line up to ring the outside bell 108 times. Rev. Patti will usually begin by striking the bell eight times followed by ten others who each strike it ten times. These 108 strikes of the bell represent the 108 bonnos, the defilements that are the cause of our suffering. As the bell is rung, we are symbolically ringing them out from our past and starting the New Year with the hope that we will overcome these bonnos. A daunting task but with the help of the Dharma and the Sangha perhaps we will make some progress towards that goal.

As we begin 2018, we have much to be grateful for at BTC. With Rev. Patti's guidance, our lay leaders have become able to perform the various aspects of the Sunday service and some memorials. For much of its history, BTC always had at least two ministers; now there is only Rev. Patti. The importance of lay leaders became evident, and now service can continue even when Rev. Patti is unable to be there.

Our Dharma School has grown, as have many of the children, and we now have three classes based on the children's age. From



Rev. Patti Nakai  
Resident Minister

For more writings  
by Rev. Nakai,  
visit her blog,  
*Taste of Chicago  
Buddhism*, at:  
[tinyurl.com/chibud](http://tinyurl.com/chibud)

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Bill Bohlman  
BTC President

Contact Bill at  
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or find him most  
Sundays after  
service at the  
information desk  
& bookstore.

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# JANUARY 2018 Temple Events & Activities Guide

- 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* <<<

- **Eitaikyo Service** (in English)—Sunday, Jan. 28, 11 am.
- **Temple General Meeting**—Sunday, Jan. 28, 12:30 pm.

### 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: **Jan. 26**.
- **Bulletin Submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Thursday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: **January 11**.
- **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: Jan. 21.
- **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. Classes begin Jan. 3. Call Darryl: 847-208-0564.

- **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. Email 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.

- **Sutra Study Class**—2nd or 3rd Sunday of the month, 12:30 to 2 pm. No previous Buddhism study required.

### Social & Cultural Activities

- **Asoka Society** (refreshment service, social club, outings, etc.)—3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday every month, 1 pm. No meetings in Jan. and Feb. Call Jerry 847-758-0776.

- **Iaido** (Japanese Swordsmanship)—Mondays, 7-9 pm. Call Jerry 847-758-0776.

- **Kumihimo** (Japanese braiding). On break; begins again March 18. Email Nancey Epperson: [naepperson14@gmail.com](mailto:naepperson14@gmail.com).

- **Qigong** (Chinese Movement)—Tuesdays, 11-12:30pm. Call Dennis Chan 312-771-6087.

- **Taiko** (BTC Kokyo Taiko Drum Troupe)—**Adults**, Fridays, 7-9 pm. Email [kokyotaiko@yahoo.com](mailto:kokyotaiko@yahoo.com). **Children**, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays at 11. Email [sanghacomod@yahoo.com](mailto:sanghacomod@yahoo.com) for appointments.

- **Ukulele Group**—Tuesdays, 1 pm. Email Ruth: [fabbianti@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fabbianti@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.

## BULLETIN INFORMATION

**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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**11/05** November memorial service. \*\*\* Rev. Nakai participated in Buddhist-Catholic dialogue panel at "The Compassionate Heart" annual event at Our Lady of Pompeii in Chicago.

**11/06** Gravesite service for Joseph Korner at Mt. Carmel cemetery in Hillside. Darryl Shishido led the chanting with assistance from Miriam Solon.

**11/11** Asoka Society prepared chirashi for Holiday Delight fundraiser at the Japanese American Service Committee.

**11/12** Dharma School service. Elaine Siegel gave the Dharma School talk. \*\*\* Chanting class met.

**11/18** Asoka Society met.

**11/19** Ho-on-ko service. \*\*\* Sutra study class met.

**11/24** December bulletin mailed.

**11/26** Dharma School service. Bill Bohlman was the lay speaker. \*\*\* Board of directors met.

**11/29** Elaine Siegel gave a presentation on Buddhism to an assembly of 7th graders at Carleton Washburne Middle School in Wilmette.



### Understanding the Nembutsu through recognizing the Paramitas in others.

**Note:** This new list is in progress because so many people have done so much tremendous work—especially the cleaning—anonously. It's time for everyone to know who is keeping our temple so clean, especially as it becomes harder and harder to find people to do it. Thank these people profusely for helping out in November 2017, or even better, join in.

#### Temple Keepers

- Maintaining Temple inside and out: Tomio Tademoto
- Cleaning Hondo & Nokotsudo: Michael Yasukawa
- Cleaning washrooms: DJ and Family, Ann Yi, Emily C.
- Emptying trash, putting it out for disposal: Nancey Epperson, Adam Kellman, Upaya Group
- Sweeping and mopping: John Sagami
- Restocking paper towels and toilet paper: Miriam Solon
- Watering plants: Alice Murata, Ruth Abbinanti
- Cleaning up outdoor litter: Wendy Fawcett, William Fawcett
- Cleaning minister's residence: Diana Schoendorff, Miriam Solon

(continues in next column)

## FROM REVEREND PATTI NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS!

**I would like to thank all of you for your continuing help and support of BTC but especially for the extra efforts by everyone in 2017 to cover for me during the ups and downs of my cancer treatment. I wish all of you to be well in the new year as we listen to the Dharma together in 2018.**

### Rev. Patti Nakai

(continued from previous column)

- Setting up and taking down chairs & tables: Too many to thank—thanks to all of you

### Service & Hospitality

- Sunday Service Participants: Bill Bohlman, Glenn Fujiura, Isla Hague, Haru Ito, Eric Kato, Mitchell Kato, Dave Leshuk, Gary T. Nakai, Kiyo Omachi, Darryl Shishido, Elaine Siegel, Bea, Will
- Lay Leaders: Karen Baier, Sue Balsam, Bill Bohlman, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Lynnell Long, Helene Rom, Darryl Shishido, Elaine Siegel, Miriam Solon, Ann Yi
- Music/Accompanists: Drea Gallaga
- Audio Controls: Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- Sunday Service Refreshments: Noreen Enkoji, Haru Ito, Gwen Kato, Roy and Carol Koizumi, Alice Murata, Arlene Nozawa, Ruby Tsuji, BTC Iaido Dojo, Japanese Language Class, Upaya Group

### Special Projects

- Bulletin Mailing: Antoinette d'Vencets, Nancey Epperson, Haru Ito, Amy Kawamoto, Sadie Kasemoto, Masa Nakata, Helene Rom, Cynthia Shiraiwa, Seichi Shiraiwa, Ruby Tsuji.
- Administrative Office Volunteers: Ruth Abbinanti, Nancey Epperson, Helene Rom, Mary Samson, Darryl Shishido
- Maintaining and updating Temple website: Wendy Fawcett, Ann Yi
- Maintaining and updating Temple computer: John Kelly, Gary T. Nakai
- Vacuuming exhaust vents in restrooms: George Philosophos

**Our apologies to anyone we have failed to include on this list. Please send your recognition of hard-working temple volunteers to [BTCbuledtr@hotmail.com](mailto:BTCbuledtr@hotmail.com).**





## December 10: BODHI DAY CELEBRATION

The **Ukulele Group** provided the musical accompaniment to the Bodhi Day service. (photo: Rev. Patti Nakai)



Alivia leads the Sangha in reading the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path. (photo: Wendy Lua)



The **Upaya Helpers** continued the tradition of a hearty luncheon featuring a chili cook-off. (photo: Rev. Patti Nakai)



(photo: Ed Horiuchi)

Asoka Society theater outing November 17

## Beautiful Fruit



Professional Chef Yasuo Mizuuchi demonstrated the art of fruit carving to the Asoka Society meeting. He gave each society member a chance to participate, and taught a simple form. Together, they created a turkey shaped fruit bowl which was displayed and eaten at the November 19 Ho-on-ko luncheon.

## Selections from *Suiren*

by Miyoko Gyoren Nozawa

Barrier with others  
That is your selfishness.

When you talk, then understand,  
This is friendship.

When you are down  
People will step on you.  
Stand up.

Life is like a wave  
It rises and falls.

When ego is the center  
“ought” contaminates.

Life so called –  
It’s lonely.

In a hurry  
Take time.

The concern of a truly alive person  
Is with living his own life,  
not meddling in others.

I am what I am  
What more, what less  
Can I be?

### How to Help the Bulletin

We want your photos, and feedback, insights, comments, questions and suggestions (in digital format). Send to [btculedtr@hotmail.com](mailto:btculedtr@hotmail.com).



## How You Can Help Us

Keep the temple clean:

- Toss anything that attracts bugs/rats into covered trash cans
- Sweep up crumbs after refreshments & wipe up spills
- Report or clean-up messes immediately.

Sign up to be a **Temple Keeper**—see whiteboard calendar:

(**Note:** For indoor jobs, you must be a key holder OR coordinate with a key holder OR how about getting together with your temple group and do cleaning together?)

- Sweep floors (common area, kitchen, bathrooms)
- Take out garbage (1 office & shredder, 2 bathroom, 1 common area, 2 kitchen)
- Clean toilets, refill toilet paper, towels, soap dispenser(s)
- Clean kitchen surfaces, do/put away dishes, refill towels & soap dispensers near hand washing sink
- Clean up litter outside, rake leaves, sweep rocks back into place
- Weed flower beds & grounds
- Polish windows, especially fingerprints

**Supplies:** Paper towels are in the cabinet by the women's bathroom cleaning supplies are in the disabled access stalls, mopping supplies/keys/soap refills are in supply closet by the chest freezer (need key), brooms are in the bathroom hall & kitchen, garbage bags are under the kitchen coffee maker/tea counter

We are grateful to those *wonderful* Temple Keepers who already . . .

- Clean & mop the entire hondo area (the chapel)
- Clean & mop the nokotsudo (memorial room/urn area)
- Clean the minister's residence
- Beautify the garden
- Build improvements & make repairs
- Participate in quarterly & annual deep-cleanings of the altar & temple
- And consistently do everything else above!

**THANK YOU! THANK YOU!  
THANK YOU!**



### Ring the Bell

(continued from page 1)

the very youngest to the teenage the Dharma is presented in a way that is meaningful to them.

With no paid support staff, BTC relies entirely on volunteers to perform all the necessary functions required to maintain the temple. This has always been the case, but many of those who did the jobs for years are no longer able to do so. Recognizing this, new people have stepped up to fill the void. From office work, to cleaning, to preparing refreshments after Sunday service, our members and friends have answered the call. This is truly Sangha in action.

The Sangha has always been the strength of BTC. Thru the support of our members and friends we have been able to present the Dharma in an open and understandable way since 1944. We look forward to continuing to do so for many years to come. On behalf of myself and all the members of the board of directors, I want to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year. Namu Amida Butsu

## Dharma Lessons from Moby Dick

(continued from page 1)

influenced by Buddhism. However, his 1851 novel does demonstrate criticism of the popular Transcendentalism of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. In the sunny outlook of that philosophy, all would be peace and love in the world if we each communed with nature and followed our individual passions, and Transcendentalists believed much of life can be understood and regulated by human reason. Melville's novel seems to refute such notions by illustrating Shinran's teachings.



*Moby Dick*. lithograph by Rockwell Kent. 1930

There's much communing with nature on the high seas in *Moby Dick* and humans come out the worse for wear. The character of Ahab, the captain of the whaling ship, is a man maimed by his interaction with nature and his personal passion is to wreak revenge on that creature who caused his physical disability. But the narrator Ishmael suspects that Ahab's rage was set off by an injury to his inner being which occurred long before his encounter with the white whale. To Ahab himself, what drives him is also a mystery. As Shinran muses in the Tannisho (chapter 13) and in *Yuishinsho*-

(continued on next column)

## Dharma Lessons from Moby Dick

(continued from previous column)

*mon'i*, we are all "shackled" by karmic circumstances, much of it unknowable to us. We can't blame Ahab for who he is anymore than Shinran could blame the fishermen and hunters for killing living things instead of switching to more morally pure work. When so much is beyond our knowledge and control, what reliance can we have on reason? Shinran knew the trouble our *hakarai* ("measuring mind") gets us into and this is shown by how entrenched Ahab becomes in his obsession using his "categorizing mind" which blinds him to his endangering of his whole crew.

And what is called "reason" is often an expectation that the future will turn out like the past if we just manipulate some tangible factors to produce good outcomes. In all of Buddhism we are reminded that the "winds of impermanence" easily overturn such careful planning. Yet Shinran brought out the positive aspect of this teaching. As in the quote above, if our moment of death could come whether we're tossed about in the raging ocean or just sitting on our living room couch, why should we have more fear about one situation over the other? The peasants of Shinran's time wanted to feel safe by paying witch-doctors to bring good farming weather and by avoiding punishment from the overlords, but Shinran showed them in the truth of impermanence all of life is risky so why be slaves to the delusion of security? With the keen awareness of the transience of life, people were able to live more courageously and make the most of their time with other lives. As Shinran showed in his own life, one can survive even the most painful setbacks and find new experiences of joy and creativity.

Although *Moby Dick* ends tragically, there is much in the content about examining one's own life and appreciating the diverse lives around us. At the time the book was quite revolutionary for showing men of different races and cultures working together as equals even if they couldn't understand each other's customs and beliefs. That acceptance of other lives as worthy and taking down our pride in our own reason is *Namu Amida Butsu*.





## The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

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### JANUARY 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
	1 11 am New Year's Day service	2 11 am Qigong 1 pm Ukulele	3 7 pm Buddhism Study Class	4 7:30 pm Meditation	5	6
7 9 am Meditation 11 am Monthly Memorial Service	8 7 pm laido	9 11 am Qigong 1 pm Ukulele	10 7 pm Buddhism Study Class	11 10 am Bulletin Submissions due 7:30 pm Meditation	12	13
14 9 am Meditation 10 am Children's Taiko 11 am Service/Dharma School	15 7 pm laido	16 11 am Qigong 1 pm Ukulele	17 7 pm Buddhism Study Class	18 7:30pm Meditation	19 7 pm Taiko	20
21 9 am Meditation 11 am Service/Children's Taiko 12:30 pm Board Meeting	22 7 pm laido	23 11 am Qigong 1 pm Ukulele	24 7 pm Buddhism Study Class	25 7:30 pm Meditation	26 10 am Bulletin Mailing 7 pm Taiko	27
28 9 am Meditation 10 am Children's Taiko 11 am Eitaikyo Service/Dharma School 12:30 pm Temple General Meeting	29 7 pm laido	30 11 am Qigong 1 pm Ukulele	31 7pm Buddhism Study Class	7:30 pm Meditation	7 pm Taiko	



