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**Resident Minister**

Rev. Patti Nakai

**President**

Bill Bohlman

# The Buddhist Temple of Chicago

# BULLETIN

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## Gratitude for the New and Old Years

*In the light of the Buddha of Unhindered Light,  
There are innumerable Amidas.  
Each and every one of these transformed Buddhas  
Maintains the true mind of awakening.*

-- Shinran Shonin, *Jodo Wasan* (translated by Michael Conway)



Rev. Patti Nakai  
Resident Minister

It is customary at New Year's for ministers to thank the members for their support in the previous year and ask for the continuance of that support in the new year. Of course, I am grateful for everyone's support in 2018, particularly for the help and well wishes while I was recovering from surgery in April. But in 2019, instead of asking you to support me personally, I would like everyone to reflect on what the seventy-five years of the temple means to you and to hundreds of others and decide whether BTC is worth your support this year and the years ahead.

For me the feeling evoked by this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year is gratitude. To think of the first- and second-generation Japanese Americans coming out of the wartime camps and rallying around Rev. Gyomay Kubose to get the Chicago Buddhist Church going in October 1944, I can't help but thank them for their courage and dedication. In the postwar years in the Hyde Park area and during the move in the 1950s to our current Uptown location, so many people poured their time, efforts and resources into developing and growing the temple despite their own struggles to raise families and work in a society with lingering anti-Japanese sentiment.

This article  
continues  
on page 6,  
column 1.

## A Year for Choices

On New Years Day, after service, we take turns ringing the outside bell a total of 108 times. This signifies the ringing out of the 108 bonnos that keep us trapped in samsara. The New Year brings us the opportunity to start anew; to make the choices that could lessen the dukkha we will inevitably face. The dharma gives us the tools we need; are we ready to use them?

*"All that we are is the result of what we have thought. It is founded on our thoughts; it is made up of our thoughts."* This opening line of the Dhammapada selection *Choices* gives us the key to overcoming suffering in our lives but also the source of this suffering: our ego based thoughts. But what are the thoughts that lead to suffering? *"He abused me. He defeated me. He robbed me. Brood on such thoughts and you live in hate."* Of course, in this line also from *Choices* we can substitute she or they for he. I also feel that hate is too strong a word as we understand it in English; perhaps dislike or separation are better suited. In this past year I have experienced these emotions.



Bill Bohlman  
BTC President

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

This article  
continues  
on page 6  
column 2.

## JANUARY 2019 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* <<<

- January 1—**New Year's Day service**
- January 27 – **Eitaikyo service**

#### Regular Temple Services

- **Religious Service** (in English)—Sundays, 11 am.

#### Temple Meetings & Community Service

- **Bulletin mailing**—2<sup>nd</sup> to last (or last) Friday every month, 10 am; volunteers welcome. This month: January 25.
- **Bulletin submissions**—Deadline for notices and articles: every month, 6 pm, the Thursday 15 days prior to mailing. This month: January 10.
- **Temple Board Meeting**—Once a month, Sunday, 12:30 pm. This month: January 20.
- **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. Starting January 23, the class will meet in the afternoons, 1:30 – 3:00 pm.
- **Dharma School (for school-age children)**—Sundays, 11 am. This month: Jan. 13 and Jan. 27.

- **Introduction to Buddhism**—offered periodically throughout the year. Next session starts in February 2019. E-mail Nancey Epperson at [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**—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. NO meeting in January.
- **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. **Children**, 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays at 11. Email [kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org](mailto:kokyotaiko@buddhisttemplechicago.org) to confirm.
- **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, 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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- 11/1-6 Rev. Nakai participated in the Parliament of the World's Religion in Toronto as part of the Chicago Buddhist-Catholic dialogue presentation. Candy Minx also attended. \*\*\* 11/4 Rev. Nakai was guest speaker at the Toronto Buddhist Church.
- 11/4 Monthly memorial service, lay speaker was Wendy Fawcett.
- 11/10Volunteers made chirashi for the Japanese American Service Committee's Holiday Delight.
- 11/11Regular service. \*\*\* Sutra study class met.
- 11/14Rev. Nakai conducted memorial service for Joseph Korner at Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Hillside.
- 11/15Rev. Nakai conducted memorial/49<sup>th</sup> day service for the late Mrs. Shizue Nakanishi at BTC. Mrs. Nakanishi is survived by sons Shizuo, Jack and Kenneth and daughter Judy Tracey.
- 11/16Rev. Nakai conducted memorial service for the late Mr. Caleb Farley at BTC. He is survived by parents Darrell and Carli Farley and sister Georgia.
- 11/17Asoka Society met. \*\*\* Luncheon and informal discussion with guest speaker, Rev. Christina Yanko.
- 11/18Ho-on-ko service with Rev. Yanko. \*\*\* Ho-on-ko seminar with Rev. Yanko.
- 11/23December bulletin mailing.
- 11/25Regular service. \*\*\* Dharma School community service project at Sarah's Circle. \*\*\* Board of directors met.
- 11/30 Elaine Siegel attended Department of Justice seminar on "Protecting Places of Worship" at the Chicago Loop Synagogue.

## Dharma School Outing



(photo: Diana Schoendorff)

## THANK YOU!

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

### Service & Hospitality

- **Sunday Service Participants:** Ruth Abbinanti, Sue Balsam, Anita Bassiri, Bill Bohlman, Wendy Fawcett, Glenn Fujiura, Gwen Kato, Stan Oda, Elaine Siegel, Miriam Solon, Gabriella Spencer, Ann Yi
- **Lay Leaders:** Bill Bohlman, Nancey Epperson, Wendy Fawcett, Lynnell Long, Miriam Solon
- **Musicians:** Drea Gallaga
- **Audio Controls:** Wendy and Jacob Fawcett, Gary T. Nakai
- **Bulletin Mailing:** Antoinette d'Vencets, Sadae Kasamoto, April Kellman, Alice Murata, Ruby Tsuji, Ann Yi
- **Sunday Service Refreshments:** Asoka Society, BTC Iaido Dojo, Genevieve D'Aquila, Noreen Enkoji, Nancey Epperson, Haru Ito, Japanese Language Class, Gwen Kato, Alice Murata, Arlene Nozawa, Ruby Tsuji, Frank Valdez

### 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: Sue Balsam, Nancey Epperson, Adam Kellman
- **Sweeping and mopping:** Gary T. Nakai, Michael Yasukawa
- 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 Fawcett
- Cleaning minister's residence: Dharma School
- **Administrative Office Volunteers:** Ruth Abbinanti, Nancey Epperson
- 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!

(left)

On Sunday December 8, the Dharma School learned about the oneness of nature, visiting the North Park Village Nature Center.



## Bodhi Day Ti-Sarana

On December 8, five members of the BTC community received Ti-Sarana confirmation in a ceremony during the Bodhi Day celebration. Ti-Sarana, which means Three Treasures, is a recognition of the spiritual growth and development of temple members with a strong history of service to the temple, demonstrated dedication to the Dharma, and clear willingness to continue to serve.



(photo by Jerry Morishige)

Ti-Sarana class of 2018 (L to R) Candy Minx, Gary T. Nakai, Albert Gonzalez, Rev. Patti Nakai, Carlos Mesa, Mary Harvey



(photo by Jerry Morishige)

The Bodhi Day service was enhanced by the performance of our ukulele musicians: Ruth Abbinanti, Sue Balsam, Kathy Kelly, Adamandia Kapsalis.

## Hoshidan 2018

Various temple groups in Japan visit the Higashi Honganji head temple as a hoshidan, or "Offering to Work Group". Technically they're there to do chores such as clean up, but it's more of a pilgrimage that includes lectures and services held at the head temple dormitory "Dobo Kaikan." The North America District sponsors an adult Hoshidan every other year at Ho-on-ko time and a youth Hoshidan during the summer of the other years. It is left to the temples to choose representatives (one or several) - BTC is graciously invited to be part of both Hoshidans. This year's hoshidan was Nov. 26 to Nov. 30. It also included sightseeing, shopping, lectures by Michael Conway and the highlight event, the grand Ho-on-ko service on Nov. 28. Lynnell S. Long was the BTC delegate. Her reflections are on page 5.

## Noreen is 88



(photo: Rev. Patti Nakai)

**and has the shirt to prove it!**

On November 17, the Asoka society along with 18 members of Noreen Enkoji's extended family celebrated her 88<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## A Visit to the Homeland of Jōdo Shinshū

By Lynnell Stephani Long

Last November, I was in Japan for the annual Shinran memorial Ho-on-ko service as part of the North American delegation, returning to Chicago on December 2. It took me a few days to put words on paper because it was a very magical, thought provoking and spiritually uplifting experience, and I needed time to process it. There were many days while in Japan where I had to take time for myself just to process it all.

It was more than amazing to be in a country where people LIVED their religion. Everyday there, visiting many other temples, I felt regret for the years I underestimated the power and wisdom of Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism.

There are times in life when we are given an opportunity to reshape our lives with the new knowledge given, I could never deny the affect Japan had on me, and it has definitely changed the way I view Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism.

I was also astonished to learn that I don't know as much about Jōdo Shinshū as I believed. I think it's easy, living in America, to take Buddhism for granted. For some reason I always thought it was

necessary for me to learn as much as possible about all Buddhist sects instead of focusing on just one. It's nice to know a little about many different sects, but I would be lying if I said I don't regret just focusing on Jōdo Shinshū

This quote by Alfred Bloom from *The Essential Shinran* has helped me to focus my study: "An individual who has entrusted himself/herself to Amida in a single-minded way, that is, a person of *Shinjin*, receives the inner assurance of rebirth in the Pure Land, and thus arrives at true peace of mind (*anjin*). For such persons who have received this assurance of rebirth, the continued recitation of the Name is no longer seen as act of supplication asking to be saved and be reborn in the Pure Land, but as an act of sheer gratitude to Amida for this assurance."

The thing is, as I've stated, life has a way of opening our eyes. My trip to Japan deepened my understanding of Jōdo Shinshū and left me a thirst to learn more. I wish every non-Japanese Buddhist could have an opportunity to visit the home of Shinran.

Gassho.



(photo: Rev. Tomoyuki Hasegawa)

*Front row Left to right*  
Overseas Districts Abbot,  
Rev. Choyu Otani  
his son, Rev. Yu "Yul" Otani  
*Back row - Left to right*  
Prof. Michael Conway  
(Otani University)  
Joseph Deschenes (Berkeley)  
Nicole Shrieves (Los Angeles)  
Phillip Underwood  
(West Covina)  
Lynnell Long (BTC)  
Rev. Tomoyuki Hasegawa  
(North America District)  
Rev. Kenshi Ise  
(Kyoto Headquarters)



## Gratitude for the New and Old Years

(continued from page 1)

The second quarter century of the temple saw the increased participation of young people – the third generation Japanese Americans, as well as many non-ethnic Japanese. Our temple's reputation as a Dharma learning center became known worldwide through the books, classes and lectures by Rev. Gyomay Kubose and Rev. Gyoko Saito.

Now at the end of our temple's third quarter century, we have seen conflicts and splits as well as new types of activities that make our neighbors of all ethnicities feel welcome. Although the number and types of people participating in regular and occasional temple events has gone through fluctuations, the basic mission of the temple has remained intact - to be a place where people encounter the BuddhaDharma in a way that makes sense to them and directly impacts their lives.

Because my life was deeply impacted by the teachings I received at BTC from Revs. Kubose, Saito, Ashikaga, Dr. Haneda and the many members, I am grateful for those seventy-five years and I want the temple to go forward, staying true to its mission. It would be a shame to only feel gratitude and not do anything when the things you feel grateful for are in danger of being destroyed.

Each of you has to make up your own mind from your point of view, but for me, the precious jewel of Sangha is what makes the jewels of the Buddha and Dharma shine. And our sangha is the embodiment and manifestation of the nembutsu – the call of Namu Amida Butsu. Our sangha is not an exclusive club of celibate monks or of competitive meditators climbing through stages of higher consciousness. A nembutsu sangha is one of ordinary people who come as they are – who should be free of the burden of being judged and of having to judge others. "Amida" is the basis and the expression of all-embracing reality, as unwieldy and messy as it gets at times.

Unlike what is written about Jodo Shinshu by outsiders, "Amida" is not a specific divine being but is just a term for the full set of all beings, of all causes, conditions, events and happenings. As in the poem quoted above, there isn't just one being designated as "Amida" but in the light of dynamically moving truth, there are gazillion Amidas all around us. Looking on our temple's seventy-five history – so many of those

(continued in next column)

## A Year for Choices

(continued from page 1)

The Eightfold Noble Path speaks of right speech, right thoughts, right actions; am I capable accomplishing these? The stark realization is that these are beyond my reach; I am simply bonbu driven by my ego. I like to think I know what right speech, right thought and right action are, yet if what I say, think or do causes anyone or anything anywhere to suffer then it is not right in the absolute sense. Too often, because of ego or vanity, I think I am the arbiter of what is right. Yet, in these realizations there is not sorrow, rather there is joy. To see the light the darkness must first be accepted. Am I able to do this?

Unlike Dharmakara I don't have five kalpas in which to meditate on this question. Thankfully I don't need this much time; the answer has been provided for me. All I need is the nembutsu, Namu Amida Butsu. Not just the words, but the deeper meaning. This is the call to me to open to the unbounded light and life all around me; to accept life as it is not as I wish it to be. Obviously this is easier said than done, yet the nembutsu is my constant reminder of this aspiration.

*"Give up the old ways of passion, hate and ignorance – know the truth and find peace."* This closing line of *Choices* sums up the way to overcome suffering. The nembutsu shows the path to overcoming the three poisons; the New Year is a good time to start.

On behalf of myself and the board of directors we wish you a happy and healthy New Year. Namu Amida Butsu.

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(continued from previous column)

Amidas have passed through our doors, doing things to guide and challenge us to realize our "true mind of awakening."

I hope as many of you as possible who have been with this temple many years will help the newer members appreciate the people of the past by sharing your stories about them. We can all learn from the people who came before us and I'm finding them a great source of encouragement for my continuing to work for this temple. In Buddhism all things are subject to change, but in some form or another, I want the temple to be here for those who are struggling with life's problems and searching for answers based in Namu Amida Butsu, rather than in materialistic, ego-attached delusions.

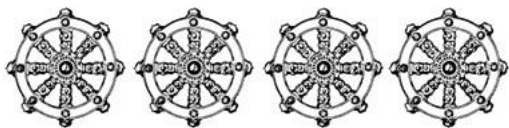
## A Visit to India



(photo by Jane Morishige)

Jerry points out the Dhamek Stupa, one of the resting places of the Buddha's remains.

In November, Jerry and Jane Morishige took a voyage to India, and visited places sacred to Buddhism. One place they saw was the Dhamek Stupa inside the Deer Park at Sarnath. This version of the stupa was built in about 500 CE, to replace an earlier one commissioned by King Ashoka in 249 BCE. King Ashoka built stupas to enshrine cremated remains and other relics of the historical Buddha and his disciples. An Ashoka pillar with an edict engraved on it stands near the site. Deer Park is said to be the spot where the Buddha gave his first sermon, revealing the Noble Eightfold Path.



## BTC 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reflections

### **Sitting Like Maitreya: Remembrance of Fred Babbin**

By Rev. Patti Nakai



It was a diagnosis of terminal cancer for his wife Florence that set Fred Babbin on a search for a new religion. And it was at our temple that they found at the teachings that helped them cope with the situation. I first met them in Dr. Nobuo Haneda's weekly study class and when I saw how Fred listened to Haneda-sensei with an attentive but calm expression with his chin in one hand, I couldn't help thinking of the images of Maitreya, the bodhisattva who represents the Buddha of the future.

After Florence's passing, Fred devoted himself to BTC. He eventually became our go-to guy for Buddhist education – speaking to visiting school groups, going out to speak at universities and museums and holding the Introduction to Buddhism and other study classes. He also got involved in promoting Buddhism through the Buddhist Council of the Midwest and he always made sure Jodo Shinshu had a presence among the many varieties of Buddhism presented at the annual Visakha gatherings.

He personified oneness during times when the temple seemed divided among “tribes.” Fred and his second wife Ruth were seen having enjoyable conversations with everyone at the temple - with the old-time Japanese American members as well as the young newcomers of various ethnic backgrounds. I am still moved when I think of how Fred handled the suicide of his stepdaughter. At the Jewish ceremony where family and friends were gathered, Fred told the story of the Buddha and his disciple Kasyapa. When the Buddha said nothing but held up a beautiful flower, Kasyapa smiled. As sad as the situation was, Fred said the life of his stepdaughter was like that flower, held up briefly for us to see and smile.

*(editor's note: Throughout 2019, the Bulletin will feature short articles remembering people and events from our Temple's history. We would like to hear from readers – send your 2-3 paragraph stories to: [btcbuledtr@hotmail.com](mailto:btcbuledtr@hotmail.com))*



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## JANUARY 2019 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.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> <b>11 am New Year's Day service</b>  NO Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>  7 pm Taiko	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9 am Meditation 11 am Monthly Memorial 5 pm Aikido	<b>7</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>8</b> 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Bulletin submission deadline 7:30pm Meditation	<b>11</b>  7 pm Taiko	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service / Dharma School 5pm Aikido	<b>14</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>15</b> 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:30pm Meditation	<b>18</b>  7 pm Taiko	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9 am Meditation 11 am Regular Service 12:30 pm Board Meeting 5 pm Aikido	<b>21</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>22</b> 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	<b>23</b> 1:30 pm Study Class	<b>24</b> 7:30pm Meditation	<b>25</b> 10 am Bulletin Mailing  7 pm Taiko	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9 am Meditation 11 am Eitaikyo Service / Dharma School <b>1 pm ANNUAL MEETING</b> 5 pm Aikido	<b>28</b> 7 pm Iaido	<b>29</b> 11 am Qi Gong 1 pm Ukulele	<b>30</b> 1:30 pm Study Class	<b>31</b> 7:30pm Meditation		